

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Biblical foundation for CPM.....	11
3. The Person that God uses.....	41
4. The goal of a sustained church planting movement.....	49
5. A strategy for getting to sustained CPMs.....	61
6. Case studies presented.....	70
7. Case studies: commonalities and distinctives.....	90
8. The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM.....	105
9. The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM.....	121
10. Evaluation of the lessons learned.....	146
Bibliography.....	165
Appendix A: Pauline case study.....	167
Appendix B: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #1.....	170
Appendix C: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #2.....	172

AMPLIFIED ABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. The research question.....	1
1.2. The working hypothesis	1
1.3. Underlying assumptions & theological paradigm.....	2
1.4. Definition of terms	2
1.5. Value of the study	5
1.5.1. Personal.....	5
1.5.2. Missions.....	5
1.5.3. Church.....	5
1.5.4. Society.....	6
1.6. Organization of the Study	6
1.7. Development of the research method.....	8
1.8. Sources	9
2. The Biblical foundation for CPM.....	11
2.1. The parables of the kingdom of God.....	11
2.1.1. The Parable of the Sower and the Soils (Mt 13:3-23; Mk 4:1-20; Lk 8:4-15) ..	13
2.1.2. The Parable of the Tares (Mt 13:24-30)	17
2.1.3. The Parable of the Seed Growing Quietly (Mk 4:26-29)	18
2.1.4. The Parables of the Mustard Seed & Leaven (Mt 13:31-33).....	19
2.1.5. The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Mt 13:44-46).....	19
2.1.6. The Parables of the Talents and Minas (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:11-27)	20
2.1.7. Applications from the parables	21
2.2. The growth of the early church in the Book of Acts.....	22
2.2.1. Precursor to Acts: the mission of the seventy disciples in Luke 10:1-20	23
2.2.2. The Province of Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12, 15:39).....	24
2.2.3. The Province of Phrygia (Acts 13:14-52, 14:21-23, 16:1-5, 18:23).....	25
2.2.4. The Province of Galatia including Lycaonia (Acts 14:1-23, 16:1-5, 18:23)	25
2.2.5. The Province of Macedonia (Acts 16:12 – 17:14; 20:1-5)	26
2.2.6. The Province of Achaia (Acts 17:16 – 18:18; 20:2-3).....	28
2.2.7. The Province of Asia (Acts 18:23 – 20:1)	28
2.2.8. The Province of Illyricum (Rom 15:19)	29
2.2.9. Applications and evaluations from the Pauline journeys.....	29
2.2.9.1. Timeframe for starting churches.....	30
2.2.9.2. Targeting Strategic Centers	31
2.2.9.3. Multiplication of new believers and churches.....	32
2.2.9.4. Receptivity.....	33
2.2.9.5. Priorities of missionaries	35
2.2.9.6. Methods	36
2.2.9.7. Harvesting forces.....	37
2.2.9.8. Cost of discipleship and expansion	38
2.2.9.9. Departure of missionaries or church planters	39
2.2.9.10. Partners	40

3.	The Person that God uses.....	41
3.1.	The spiritual character of persons God uses.....	41
3.1.1.	Integrity of heart and skillful hands.....	42
3.1.2.	Godly character and evaluation.....	42
3.1.3.	Spiritual character issues in other church planting models.....	43
3.2.	The changing SC role.....	45
3.2.1.	Keep evolving the role as the need changes and understanding grows.....	45
3.2.2.	Key changes in the evolution of the SC role.....	45
3.2.3.	Evaluation of insights from the evolving SC role.....	47
4.	The goal of a sustained church planting movement.....	49
4.1.	The need for sustained CPMs.....	49
4.1.1.	CPM defined.....	50
4.1.2.	The introduction of sustainability.....	51
4.2.	Inadequate forms of “CPM”.....	51
4.2.1.	Pseudo-CPM.....	52
4.2.1.1.	Church planting is done by addition by outsiders rather than by multiplication by insiders.....	52
4.2.1.2.	Church planting is done by paid insiders.....	52
4.2.2.	Unsustained CPM.....	53
4.3.	A model for sustained CPM.....	53
4.3.1.	Sustained CPM defined.....	54
4.3.2.	Sustained CPM prescribed.....	54
4.4.	Sustained CPM compared with six church planting models.....	55
4.4.1.	Allen.....	55
4.4.2.	Redford.....	57
4.4.3.	Brock.....	57
4.4.4.	Akins.....	58
4.4.5.	Patterson and Scoggins.....	59
4.4.6.	Cole.....	60
5.	A strategy for getting to sustained CPMs.....	61
5.1.	Path: End-visioning the critical path of sectors that must be reached.....	61
5.1.1.	Step 1: Look at the final result you want to achieve and then find the critical path that gets you there.....	61
5.1.2.	Step 2: After looking at the end, ask what the stages of a movement look like just prior to reaching the end-vision.....	62
5.1.3.	Step 3, 4 5+: Continue this process until you can see how and where to begin.....	64
5.1.4.	Alternate ways of end-visioning.....	65
5.2.	Presuppositions: Mental boundaries and expectations of what God will do.....	65
5.3.	Principles: the unchanging ways of God’s kingdom.....	67
5.4.	Plans: Actions plans that expect that God will honor such efforts.....	67
5.5.	End-visioning and a strategy for CPM compared with other church planting models.....	68
6.	Case studies presented.....	70
6.1.	Large Asian urban and rural CPM.....	70

6.1.1.	History.....	70
6.1.2.	Summary of the SCs' activities.....	71
6.1.2.1.	Prayer.....	72
6.1.2.2.	Witnessing to the lost	72
6.1.2.3.	Training every believer (new or pre-existing) to be trainers of others	72
6.1.3.	The training trainers (T4T) process	74
6.2.	Z people.....	77
6.2.1.	History.....	78
6.2.2.	First three years.....	
6.2.3.	2001 and after	
6.3.	H people	81
6.3.1.	History.....	81
6.3.2.	First three and a half years	82
6.3.2.1.	Devised a plan that was based on the multiplication of "seed" churches in key sectors (Smith SR 2004b:1)	82
6.3.2.2.	Mobilized culturally-close willing partners (:1).....	83
6.3.2.3.	Pursued multiple tracks of planting the first "seed" churches until some succeeded (:1)	83
6.3.2.4.	Devised a CPM training method appropriate for and reproducibly by non-literate farmers (:2)	84
6.3.3.	Breakthrough and CPM progression.....	84
6.3.4.	Lessons: B.R.E.D.....	87
6.4.	South Asia	87
6.5.	Summary	89
7.	Case studies: commonalities and distinctives.....	90
7.1.	CPM commonalities: what was the same in each case study.....	90
7.1.1.	Characteristic one: The strategy coordinator believed a CPM could occur and worked relentlessly along the critical path toward that.	90
7.1.2.	Characteristic two: Training of local believers for multiplication occurred frequently.....	91
7.1.3.	Characteristic three: A single, simple, reproducible method was used.	91
7.1.4.	Characteristic four: The end-vision and ethos of CPM were owned by the target group.....	92
7.1.5.	Characteristic five: The focus of training was reproduction to multiple generations.....	92
7.1.6.	Characteristic six: The gospel was sowed widely in a person-to-person format.....	93
7.1.7.	Characteristic seven: Multiple streams of CPM were started but all streams focused on one type of task.	94
7.1.8.	Characteristic eight: Prayer was prevalent, especially prayer for needs, resulting in signs and wonders.....	94
7.1.9.	Characteristic nine: Boldness was the norm, even in the face of persecution. ..	95
7.1.10.	Characteristic ten: Leadership was multiplied to keep pace with the increase in new churches.	95
7.2.	CPM distinctives: what was different that set apart one case study from the others	95
7.2.1.	Characteristic one: Training of trainers	96
7.2.2.	Characteristic two: Increased breadth and number of training groups.....	97
7.3.	Comparison with other CPM assessments	98

7.3.1.	Garrison's ten CPM universal characteristics.....	99
7.3.1.1.	Ten universal characteristics and ten common characteristics.....	100
7.3.1.2.	Comparison with NEXT findings.....	100
7.3.2.	The 2007 CPM assessment studies.....	103
8.	The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM.....	105
8.1.	A proposal for how to proceed down the critical path.....	105
8.1.1.	High yield or high value activities.....	105
8.1.2.	Effective patterns of beginning.....	106
8.1.2.1.	Effective partners.....	
8.1.2.2.	Evaluation of an SC's starting point.....	
8.1.2.3.	Prioritization of activities for greatest impact.....	
8.2.	Responses of strategy coordinators.....	111
8.2.1.	Prioritization of activities and schedule.....	111
8.2.2.	Defining whom to invest time in.....	111
8.2.3.	An increase in the amount of evangelism SCs and their teams engaged in.....	112
8.2.4.	Freeing them up from activities that were not high value.....	112
8.2.5.	Increase in the amount of vision-casting by the SC.....	113
8.2.6.	Increasing the number of groups they trained.....	113
8.2.7.	Having a simple tool to use in training.....	113
8.2.8.	Confidence that CPM could immediately start where they were.....	114
8.3.	Evaluation of the proposal.....	114
8.3.1.	NEXT conference CPM case studies.....	114
8.3.2.	2007 CPM assessments.....	118
9.	The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM.....	121
9.1.	A template for initiating CPMs.....	121
9.1.1.	The templates from each NEXT conference.....	122
9.1.1.1.	NEXT 1 and 5.....	122
9.1.1.2.	NEXT 2.....	125
9.1.1.3.	NEXT 3.....	127
9.1.1.4.	NEXT 4.....	128
9.1.1.5.	NEXT 6.....	129
9.1.1.6.	NEXT 7.....	131
9.1.2.	A comparison and synthesis of the templates.....	132
9.1.2.1.	A comparison of the templates.....	132
9.1.2.2.	A synthesis.....	137
9.2.	Evaluating the template.....	138
9.2.1.	Possible prejudices.....	138
9.2.2.	Comparing the synthesis to Garrison and the two 2007 assessments.....	139
9.2.3.	A revised NEXT conference synthesis.....	144
10.	Evaluation of the lessons learned.....	146
10.1.	Ancillary factors contributing to the positive results.....	146
10.1.1.	Intervention.....	147
10.1.2.	Settling doubts.....	147

10.1.3. On-going training.....	148
10.1.4. Close supervision.....	148
10.1.5. Conclusion.....	148
10.2. The implementation process.....	148
10.2.1. Twelve Month Action Plans.....	149
10.2.1.1. Step One: Determining the highest value activities.....	150
10.2.1.2. Step Two: Scheduling these activities.....	151
10.2.2. Supervisor Accountability.....	151
10.3. Results.....	152
10.3.1. Analysis parameters.....	152
10.3.1.1. Categories.....	152
10.3.1.2. Time-frame.....	154
10.3.2. Momentum Results.....	
10.3.2.1. Overall post-conference momentum results.....	
10.3.2.2. Comparison with pre-conference results.....	
10.3.3. Growth Results.....	161
10.3.3.1. Overall post-conference growth results.....	161
10.3.3.2. Comparison with pre-conference results.....	161
10.3.4. Emerging CPMs.....	163
10.4. Conclusion.....	164
 Bibliography.....	 165
 Appendix A: Pauline case study.....	 167
 Appendix B: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #1.....	 170
 Appendix C: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #2.....	 172

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: NEXT conferences 1 through 7.....	49
Table 2: Results of Large Asian CPM.....	71
Table 3: Results of Z People CPM.....	78
Table 4: Results of H People CPM.....	81
Table 5: Characteristics of CPM found in NEXT conferences.....	99
Table 6: CPM characteristics according to Garrison.....	100
Table 7: CPM characteristics from two 2007 CPM assessments.....	103
Table 8: SC core competencies from 2007 assessments.....	119
Table 9: A comparison of CPM templates from seven conferences ordered by frequency of appearance of each item.....	134
Table 10: A comparison of the synthesized NEXT template with other assessments of CPMs.....	141
Table 11: Synthesized and revised template for initiating sustained CPMs.....	145
Table 12: Post-conference momentum results.....	157
Table 13: Post-conference compared with pre-conference momentum results.....	158
Table 14: Momentum - new church starts.....	159
Table 15: Momentum - new believers.....	159
Table 16: Post-conference growth results.....	161
Table 17: Post-conference compared with pre-conference growth results.....	161
Table 18: Growth -total churches.....	162
Table 19: Growth - total church members.....	162

1. Introduction

1.1. The research question

A study of the dynamics of developing sustained church planting movements in Asian nations, based on lessons learned in the 2004-2005 NEXT conferences in East Asia. This question has arisen out of my involvement as a Strategy Coordinator with a large missions organization working in a largely unreached nation in East Asia. For over six years I was responsible for developing a team and strategy to evangelize a remote ethnic minority group of 1.4 million persons. Our strategy was based on developing a sustained church planting movement in which the critical factor was new local believers empowered by the Holy Spirit starting new churches that repeat the process until the whole people group is saturated with the gospel. Our own work began to develop into a church planting movement. In addition, I was able to observe several other emerging CPMs in East Asia. My current responsibilities for helping with the supervision of missionaries targeting 1.4 billion people in East Asia as well as training other strategy coordinators around the world require that I adequately understand the ways of the Spirit in this type of ministry and how missionaries can cooperate with Him.

My expectation is that there are common dynamics and principles true in each sustained church planting movement. Adherence to those principles can enable missionaries to experience exponential types of evangelistic and church planting growth among their target groups. Many of these principles are already emerging and being implemented in other target groups with encouraging results.

1.2. The working hypothesis

Principles are being discovered and methodologies developed in East Asia on how to build sustained church planting movements around the world. To understand these, consolidate learning, and apply that learning in a variety of cross-cultural ministry contexts, a series of conferences were hosted by my wife and myself. Eight week-long “NEXT conferences” were held, consisting of sixty experienced strategy coordinators plus eleven regional supervisors, to wrestle with these issues. This paper is based on the findings of these conferences; specifically, that there are divine principles and particular methodologies which enable missionaries to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in developing sustained church planting movements that saturate ethno-linguistic people groups and cities of Asia, and ultimately, the rest of the world.

1.3. Underlying assumptions & theological paradigm

The assumption made in this paper is that a church and/or missions effort *postured* to cooperate with what the Spirit of God wants to do is very likely to see a church planting movement begin. While the missionary cannot initiate this – it is a movement of the Spirit – he or she can intentionally cooperate with the Spirit in such a way that invites a phenomenon of spiritual and numerical growth not normally seen in ministry situations. The assumption here is that the Spirit desires this type of ministry, but that too often missionary endeavors do not cooperate with the Spirit for explosive growth for a variety of reasons.

My findings are filtered through my evangelical perspective. I approach the Scripture as an inerrant and eternal authority of all of life. I trust that in Scripture are found the answers needed for any missionary's ministry. I believe that the Holy Spirit is active and working in the same manner that He has since the days of Christ. At the same time, I welcome input and questions that other theological perspectives may bring to my assumptions. I recognize that my understanding of the ways of God and my interpretation of Scripture are subjective, and thus open to evaluation and critical feedback.

1.4. Definition of terms

Church planting movement (CPM) – a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment (Garrison 2003:2). A simpler way to describe it is: local indigenous churches multiplying rapidly.

Sustained CPM – a CPM that continues on beyond a few months or a year or two. This type of CPM demonstrates consistent exponential growth measured in years and generally *saturates* a population segment or people group.

Stream of CPM – an observed phenomenon that a sustained CPM typically involves several streams of multiplication in different geographical or relational sectors that tend to evolve semi-independently of each other. One stream may continue growing while another may stall. By nature, sustained CPMs are rarely homogenous or uniform due to the explosive nature of the growth and the unpredictable paths it takes along lines of relationship.

First, second, third or fourth generation church: This concept defines at which stage a new church fits within a CPM. Typically, a church started by a non-indigenous person is defined

as first generation. When individuals from that church start a new church, the second church is described as second generation. CPMs begin to emerge when members of second generation churches start third generation churches, and the progression moves into the fourth generation and beyond. Most CPMs are difficult to track after the fourth generation.

Kingdom of God – Foundational to this study is the concept of the kingdom of God. This concept will be limited in this study primarily to the evangelistic growth of the kingdom, including the spread of churches through church planting. Although there are many facets of the kingdom of God (social dynamics, justice, mercy, reconciliation, peace, etc.), I will deal primarily with the growth of the church in its evangelism and discipleship.

People group – an ethno-linguistic population segment linked by common cultural and language affinity. Generally a people group demonstrates a larger cultural homogeneity that raises no insurmountable cultural barriers within it so that the gospel, when introduced within the people group, can spread throughout the people group without marked change in cultural or linguistic presentation.

Church planting – For the focus of this paper, church planting focuses on starting and reproduction of local congregations.

Church – this will be a subject of discussion in this study, but a very simple definition is built upon only the most basic biblical requirements: a group (at least 2-3) of people who have turned from their sins to trust in Jesus Christ and are baptized as a sign of their faith. They recognize themselves as a church and covenant to meet regularly for worship, teaching from God's Word, fellowship, prayer, witness, and the Lord's Supper. In the study of CPMs, churches are usually small (10-50 individuals) meeting in a home.

House church – can have one of two meanings, determined by the context. The first is a church, as defined above, meeting in a home or other location not used exclusively for church meetings. The second refers to churches of an established house church *network*.

House church network – In oppressive countries, those opposed to Christianity or its expansion, churches meet clandestinely in homes, and form a loose affiliation based on theology, practice, geography and/or a founder.

State Church – In this context, churches officially registered and controlled by the government of a nation, usually restricted in their actions and teaching.

Exponential growth – a phenomenon especially observed in church planting movements. Conversion growth (individuals) and church multiplication take place exponentially – one becomes two, two become four, four become eight, etc., rather than one-by-one conversion or church planting.

Pioneer missions – Missionary endeavors of bringing the gospel, making disciples and planting churches in an unreached ethno-linguistic people group or other population segment such as a city. “Unreached” refers to a population segment that has virtually no access to the gospel for the majority of its population. Such unreached segments in areas of pioneer missions usually number less than 1-2% Christian as a part of the total population.

NEXT Conference – a one week conference of fifteen or fewer experienced missionaries that seeks to explore the dynamics of CPMs in a forum format. The conference combines seminar presentations with round-table discussions to bring immediate application and follow-up to these experienced missionaries for the target groups they represent. The conference dates were as follows:

- NEXT 1 – March 2004
- NEXT 2 – April 2004
- NEXT 3 – May 2004
- NEXT 4 – June 2004
- NEXT 5 – June 2004
- NEXT 6 – November 2004
- NEXT 7 – March 2005
- NEXT 8 – November 2005

Strategy Coordinator (SC) – A missionary role in which the missionary takes responsibility to develop and implement a strategy to effectively evangelize an entire unreached city or people group.

Because of the non-conventional nature of church planting movements, in the course of this study many commonly-used terms will take on new meanings: terms like *leader*, *church*, *worship service*, *discipleship*, *training*, *maturity*, etc. These will be defined in their context.

1.5. Value of the study

The value of the study is significant in the area of both cross-cultural missions and same-culture evangelism and church planting. Its immediate effect will be felt in pioneer missions situations but these ideas are already spreading to more traditional missions settings and even to evangelistic work in traditionally evangelized cultures. A serious attempt at evangelizing a target population (whether a city, people group or neighborhood) often encounters barriers that give rise to a slower rate of growth than desired, or a rate of evangelistic growth that usually cannot keep pace with natural population growth. CPMs break that mold and often saturate large segments of the target population at rates far surpassing the natural population growth and influencing the population segment disproportionately. That CPMs are usually birthed in pioneer missions areas may signal that in non-churched cultures, unhindered by traditional evangelistic or church precedents, expectations of what God can do are high and often fulfilled.

If such works of the Spirit can develop in the situations cited in this study, they can be duplicated in other pioneer mission areas, and, with perhaps much more effort (to overcome traditional stereotypes and expectations), in traditional mission settings and churched cultures.

1.5.1. Personal

A study of the common characteristics of sustained CPMs will enhance my own personal ministry in unreached fields of Asia, as well as in the training of strategy coordinators around the world.

1.5.2. Missions

While the ethos and methodology of CPMs are beginning to affect missionary endeavors in some areas, it is still a fairly new concept to most missionaries. Application of the principles and methodologies uncovered from this study can begin transforming missionary praxis in a variety of cultural and geographical environments. In addition, the development of conferences and forums similar to NEXT Conferences in various mission agencies can lead to the transformation of ministries that seek to develop CPMs.

1.5.3. Church

A simple, reproducible model of church is developing throughout Asia in CPMs. This approach to church appears to be much closer to the fluid nature of early church beginnings

than most churches in traditional Christian settings today (no particular model, however, will be pointed to in this study as *the* New Testament model or *normative* model). CPM ethos will likely be resisted by many in the traditional church. However, many church leaders in traditional Christian settings can benefit from the model portrayed if they are willing to re-think the paradigm presented by CPMs. When that is the case, and if they are able to overcome traditional church expectations in their environments, they may be able to experience a level of spiritual and numerical growth in their work that exceeds previous expectations

1.5.4. Society

Any time a fervent evangelistic movement saturates a broad spectrum of a society, like salt and light, it begins to effect moral change in the society. Cultures affected by CPMs have demonstrated such changes. Societies around the world can feel the beneficial effects of Christian love perhaps more rapidly and lastingly when CPMs usher larger-than-expected segments of the population into life-transforming devotion to Christ.

1.6. Organization of the Study

Chapter one: Introduction

An introduction to the scope of the paper, definitions, value of the study, organization, method and sources. The assumption in the remainder of the paper will be that of presenting and evaluating the issues wrestled with in the NEXT conferences.

Chapter two: The Biblical foundation for CPM

An exploration into Biblical assumptions, teaching, and precedent for church planting movements. Foundational to this study is the concept of the kingdom of God. A study is made of the various parables of the kingdom and the lessons that can be learned for CPMs. Secondly, a brief study is made of movements as they developed in Acts.

Chapter three – The person that God uses

Prior to any missiological methodology being employed, of paramount importance is the type of person that God chooses to use. The focus of this chapter is on both the spiritual essentials of a strategy coordinator and the evolving SC role.

Chapter four – The goal of sustained CPM

Beyond simply *starting* a CPM, strategy coordinators are realizing that the goal must be *developing sustained* CPMs. A study is made of the need for CPM as a preferred process for evangelizing target groups, and the nature of sustainability versus pseudo-CPMs and unsustainable CPMs.

Chapter five – A strategy for getting to sustained CPMs

An initial exploration is made into the path needed to get to sustained CPMs. This is the mapped-out direction of the missionary strategy as well as the guidelines to evaluate progress toward CPM.

Chapter six – Case studies presented

A key factor in learning about CPMs is the examination of contemporary CPM case studies in Asia. SCs examined current CPM case studies to gain insights about how to develop CPMs in their own target groups

Chapter seven – Case study themes: what is the same and different

After the study of several case studies themes emerge. Of primary importance is understanding the themes that seem to be true in each of them. At the same time, while the common themes of case studies are critical, an exploration is made into the differences that enable one CPM to soar beyond the others, or what is uniquely different.

Chapter eight – The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM

Since missionaries have a limited number of hours in their week, it is crucial that they prioritize their time and give it to activities that have the highest value toward CPM. This is the core methodology of the missionary strategy.

Chapter nine – A template for evaluating ministry

The lessons of the NEXT conferences are distilled and consolidated into a few key principles that are essential for a CPM to develop. These principles can be used as a template to evaluate missionary activity in any Asian context.

Chapter ten – Evaluation of the lessons learned

An evaluation is made of the lessons learned about developing CPMs, as well as the learning process of NEXT conferences and their effects among the ministries of various strategy coordinators.

1.7. Development of the research method

Published material on CPMs, apart from two or three sources, is virtually non-existent. Instead, most of what is being learned about CPMs around the world is happening in the form of seminars, conferences, and personal consulting. I, therefore, developed a seminar forum to explore the intricacies of CPMs and their application to the ministries of various SCs. Over the course of 2004 to 2005, eight conferences were held in Asia. All the SCs invited work in Asia, most in oppressive environments where Christianity is not welcomed. The sixty SCs (representing 42 target groups) that attended represented ministries targeting unreached populations of approximately 200 million people. In addition, twelve regional supervisors for Asia, including myself, facilitated the meetings and represented ministries targeting a total of over two billion unreached people. As such, the effects of the NEXT conferences are beginning to transform the missionary approaches of strategy coordinators in one of the world's largest missionary organizations.

Each conference consisted of a week of interaction and collaborative learning on presentations made by the facilitating missionaries on what seemed to be working or not in CPMs. In addition, presentations were made by myself and ten other missions strategists during the course of the eight conferences. Each of the missionaries and strategists attending were veterans who have each been implementing strategies toward their current unreached targets for several years. Most would be viewed as on the “cutting edge” of missionary strategy, and four of the presenters travel around the world training various mission organizations in CPM. Prior to arrival at the conferences, each SC attending completed a diagnostic assessment of how well his or her ministry was progressing toward a sustained CPM.

Originally I anticipated that the lessons learned from each conference would be homogenous. However, I was pleasantly surprised that the collaborative learning and conclusions were unique to each conference and that the lessons learned from one conference became instrumental in shaping the learning environment of subsequent conference. I believe this reflected the integrity of honest interaction between the various practitioners and strategists. Each conference took on a direction of its own based on the experiences and research of

its own participants. While I was the facilitator, the participants themselves were the main contributors.

In this conference forum, the thesis was discussed and copious notes taken. Each SC left the conference with a set of action plans and accountability structures to pursue these plans. Evaluating the effectiveness of these conferences was made by personal interview and examination of annual statistical reports for mission work among each target group.

1.8. Sources

The sources used for this paper are primarily personal interviews, unpublished presentations, and unpublished notes primarily from the NEXT conferences. Due to the sensitive political environment of limited access nations in Asia (intolerance of missionary and evangelistic endeavors), sources quoted will remain unnamed to protect their identities, although I keep full references in my personal file. In the same regard, the identity of the population segments will remain undisclosed to protect the national believers involved. Due to the nature of intense persecution in these countries, this non-disclosure is essential. Non-disclosure, however, will not hinder the accuracy of the study of each situation.

While I am not a completely objective observer of the NEXT conferences, the teaching and learning in them was in large part from the other participants. By compiling various notes, reports and presentation developed by participants other than myself, I believe I can maintain enough critical distance to draw objective conclusions. This is evidenced by the fact that many times the conclusions the group came up with were not in fact those that I anticipated.

For the sake of increased critical discourse, I will not only compare the findings between the various NEXT Conferences, but will compare and contrast those with published works referencing similar types of ministry in other nations and eras. In particular I will compare NEXT findings with six major church planting models: These are models by *practitioners* not theoreticians, which makes their situation a rough equivalent to that of NEXT conference participants. Each of these will be used as valid models since all have directly resulted in significant numbers of churches around the world (with the possible exception of Allen). Their observations in comparison and contrast will be discussed when appropriate. Three of the models used are out of the Southern Baptist tradition which is same tradition that the strategy coordinators in the NEXT conferences operate within.

- Roland Allen's Anglican model advocated in the early 20th century, especially in Asia which is a comprehensive framework for targeting an area.
- Jack Redford's Southern Baptist model in the US that began in the 1970s and represents a very traditional, time-tested system.
- Charles Brock's Southern Baptist model in the Philippines that began in the 1980s and first emphasized reproducible, indigenous church planting in mission fields.
- Wade Akins' Southern Baptist model in Brazil that began in the 1990s and took Brock's model further by emphasizing church multiplication in mission fields.
- George Patterson in Central America (Theological Education and Evangelism by Extension) and Richard Scoggins in the USA (Fellowship of Church Planters, Rhode Island, USA) have developed a model that had roots in the 1980s but has recently been widely disseminated, emphasizing church multiplication movements.
- Neil Cole's Church Multiplication Associates' house church movement model beginning in California in the 1990s, illustrating to the greatest degree of these models a *spontaneous movement* of church planting, but is primarily geared toward an American audience rather than the pioneer field.

While Allen presents a theoretical framework, the latter five models offer practical frameworks. Each successive model (from Redford, to Brock, to Akins, to Patterson, to Cole) moves successively closer to the model of CPM that NEXT participants evaluated. This is most likely due to a progression of learning in each model built upon lessons from the previous one.

2. The Biblical foundation for CPM

The roots for church planting movements can be found in Scripture. While there is no space in this study for the post-New Testament historical precedent of CPMs, a basic understanding of the spiritual dynamics of them can be lifted from the New Testament. Two concepts are primary to this understanding: 1) the kingdom of God as described in Jesus' parables, and 2) the growth of the early church in the book of Acts and its antecedents in Luke 10. During the course of the eight NEXT conferences, various strategy coordinators made presentations about the roots of CPMs found in the parables and the book of Acts.

God's thoughts and ways are described as much higher than ours (Is 55:8). His nature of working on this earth runs counter to our natural human expectation. Principles of His kingdom's expansion are often counter-intuitive to the principles of this world. It is not uncommon for the work of the kingdom to begin in a pioneer area only to be quenched by sincere, zealous servants of God who revert naturally to human ways that are dependent primarily on human effort and/or expectations. The New Testament gives principles that can elevate a cross-cultural ministry consistently to supernatural ways rather than natural ones.

2.1. The parables of the kingdom of God

Foundational to the preaching of Jesus was the concept of the kingdom. While the term "church" is used by Him only twice, the word "kingdom" is used over a hundred times, including his first statement in Mark (Mk 1:15). In order to understand the expansion of the church (which is the focus of Acts), one must first understand the expansion of the kingdom. For Jesus, the kingdom parables were the center point of His preaching. In the course of their deliberations, the NEXT conference participants came to the conclusions that follow.

Because the ways of the kingdom are counter-intuitive to the philosophies of this world, Jesus painted many word pictures of the kingdom in the form of parables. The ways of the kingdom are described as mysteries, yet can be unlocked by followers of Christ (Mt 13:11). These parables become images of the kingdom, each one pregnant with one or two specific ideas that lodge themselves in the minds of the listener. Most parables start with the words "the kingdom of God / heaven is like. . ." Jesus began them this way in order to help finite men and women to understand the ways that the Spirit of God works – the ways of the King. Jesus, through the parables, taught heaven's ways of redeeming mankind.

Studying parables is a dangerous enterprise. It is easy to fall into the trap of reading too much into a parable. Parables are not usually meant to be allegories where every word or

idea stands for something else. Rather they are usually meant to convey one or two main ideas. Nor is any single parable meant to describe all the truth there is about the kingdom of God. It is easy to fall into the trap of expecting a parable, especially an in-depth one such as the sower and the soils, to become an exhaustive explanation of the kingdom of God. Instead, each parable is told to describe a special aspect of the kingdom. Sometimes the various aspects taught by two or more parables seem to be in paradox, just as passages that speak alternately about God's compassion and God's judgment seem to be in paradox. However, when all the parables are studied in relation to the others, a well-rounded picture of God's kingdom results. In this manner, we can develop an understanding of how the Spirit operates in this world, and how we can cooperate with Him.

There are many aspects of the kingdom we could study, but we will focus on the growth of God's kingdom, especially as it relates to evangelizing areas for Christ. The focus in each NEXT conference was how to see the fullness of God's kingdom break into a cross-cultural ministry so that many people come to Christ, churches are started and the process continues to multiply spontaneously under the prompting and leading of the Holy Spirit. Shenk and Stutzman affirm this intimate connection between the kingdom and church planting. "The kingdom of God becomes visible in any community whenever a cluster of people gather in Jesus' name" (Shenk & Stutzman 1988:23). They agree with the urgent link between church planting and the kingdom. "Church planting is thus the most urgent business of human-kind. It is through the creation (or planting) of churches that God's kingdom is extended into communities which have not yet been touched by the precious surprise of the presence of the kingdom of God in their midst" (:23).

At the same time we must be careful not to equate the kingdom of God with the church. In his seminal work on a biblical understanding of the kingdom, Ladd states, "The Church therefore is not the Kingdom of God; God's Kingdom creates the Church and works in the world through the Church. Men cannot therefore build the Kingdom of God, but they can preach it and proclaim it; they can receive it or reject" (Ladd 1959:117). The kingdom is always greater than the visible expression of the church. However, in keeping with this spirit, NEXT participants focused on the visible and urgent business of the church extending the kingdom and itself being created by the kingdom.

Repeatedly NEXT participants equated a church planting *movement* (not church) with kingdom expansion or a kingdom movement. Their experience in pioneer movements gave them a unique set of lenses with which to view the kingdom parables. Their interpretation is similar to that of Niebuhr in his study of the kingdom movement in the first two centuries of

American Christianity. “Christianity, whether in America or anywhere else but particularly in Protestantism and in America, must be understood as a movement rather than an institution or series of institutions. . . . The true church is not an organization but the organic movement of those who have been ‘called out’ and ‘sent’” (Niebuhr 1937:*xiv*). In CPMs the explosive nature of visible conversion and expansion is closely allied with church expansion. Thus for the sake of NEXT conferences, principles uncovered were applied primarily to conversion and discipling of souls and planting of churches – both the inward and outward expression of God’s rule over the lives and communities of new believers in pioneer areas.

We will not focus on the kingdom’s manifestation in changing political or social structures of society. Rather with Ladd we agree that in this age (prior to Christ’s return) the kingdom attacks the sovereignty of Satan rather than man. It makes changes primarily in the spiritual order and in the lives of men and woman rather than political (human) structures (Ladd 1959:55).

2.1.1. The Parable of the Sower and the Soils (Mt 13:3-23; Mk 4:1-20; Lk 8:4-15)

This parable is the closest that Jesus gives to an extended analogy in which each item depicted corresponds to something in real life. In addition, this parable seems to be foundational in introducing the concept of the kingdom (Mk 4:13).

The spread of the kingdom is based on the proclamation of the word of the kingdom. The emphasis in this parable is that we are to be faithful in sowing the gospel and expect to find four types of responses to it. The gospel must be proclaimed clearly, widely (Westbrook 2004; Hoff 2004; Hughes 2005) and understandably for there to be response (Matt. 13:19). The responsibility for the missionary is to proclaim the gospel widely, not to try to *pre-determine* the type of response (Smith SR 2004e; NEXT8 2005). When there is a clear proclamation, there will always be a response, and usually one of four responses. Out of the four responses, only one is the desired response. Therefore, the missionary should not be discouraged by negative responses to his proclamation of the gospel; they are rather to be expected (Westbrook 2004). The focus of this parable is, therefore, on the soils to help us understand the nature of responses to the gospel (Smith SL 2004; Hughes 2005). The missionary can expect a good return when the gospel is shared faithfully and the right soil is found (Smith SR 2004f). Ladd agrees that the message of the kingdom of God is not irresistible. Men can and will reject it (Ladd 19:59: 56-57).

Foundational to the message of this parable is that one cannot pre-determine what type of soil a recipient of the gospel message will be. The key to finding the right type of soil

is by broadly and frequently sharing the gospel (Hughes 2005; NEXT8 2005). Though the parable does not teach a strict dichotomy of percentages (i.e. responses fall into four equal percentages), sharing the gospel with only a few people might mean that one never discovers the “good soil” types (Hughes 2005) upon which CPMs are built.

The first type of soil, the hard soil, describes those who do not understand the gospel. They do not receive the word implanted, so in essence there is no positive response. It is incumbent upon all proclaimers of the gospel to find ways to proclaim the eternal gospel in culturally understandable ways, especially in cross-cultural environments (Smith SL 2004). Many a movement has been thwarted because gospel-bearers have failed to achieve this.

In a sense, the remaining three responses can all be described as “positive”. However, not understanding the difference between the types of “positive” responses can result in reaping stunted growth rather than a movement of God. In actuality, the main message of the parable is that only one can truly be viewed as positive and adequate; the others are inadequate kingdom responses.

The primary difference between the inadequate positive responses (rocky ground and thorny ground) and the appropriate positive response (good soil) is that of whole-hearted, steadfast obedience. Frequently in the proclamation of the gospel there will be those who respond with great joy. Too often the evangelist welcomes them into the kingdom without first evaluating the nature of their responses. This is especially true in a visible movement of God as many jump on the bandwagon of faith.

The rocky soil followers are primarily those who respond before they fully count the cost of following Christ and, therefore, subsequently fall away. Jesus spent much time *discouraging* such people from following Him until they were willing to count the cost. In endeavoring to develop a CPM, unless there is a gospel message that challenges listeners to true repentance and costly followship, there will be many casualties and shallow movements that do not last (Smith SL 2004).

The thorny soil followers are primarily those who are not challenged to live in light of eternity; instead their focus is on earthly gain or affairs. Often, hearers are encouraged to respond to the gospel without realizing that they are going to have many difficulties in the kingdom life. Only the weight of eternity puts the difficulties and allures of this life in perspective. Unless there is a message that challenges listeners to abandon friendship with the world and live as aliens on this earth, there will be double-hearted followers and stunted movements.

Such responses will not usher in the fullness of God's kingdom or lead to church planting movements. Only responses characterized by the good soil will usher in the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, many SCs get sidetracked by focusing on the first three soil types. Neil Cole's multiplying work in the USA confirms similar emphases. "I am convinced that we have made a serious mistake by accommodating bad soil in our churches. When we see people come to Christ and slip away, we assume a responsibility that is not ours. We would not take it on if we truly listened to this parable" (Cole 2005: 69). However in contrast to the NEXT findings, Cole feels he can pre-determine the good soil by looking at it, whereas NEXT found that the only way to find good soil is just to sow the gospel seed and see who makes a radical response.

What are the characteristics of good soil followers? They understand the word and its demands on them (Mt 13:23). Powerful movements of God's kingdom are not built upon shallow responses. Rather, true movements are built upon fervent followers, whose response is fervent whether quick or not. The kingdom does not come in fullness to any heart that does not fully submit to Christ the King and His claims upon it. The missionary who sows the seed of the gospel widely, making its demands clear, must then focus on the good soil followers in the same manner Christ did, rather than spend the bulk of his or her time with rocky or thorny soil followers (Smith SL 2004).

Good soil followers accept these demands of the gospel (Mk 4:20). They have settled in their hearts and minds that they will live a life of self-denial and complete obedience to Christ and His word. The watchword here is *obedience*. Movements that grow without obedience to God's word are usually works of man and quickly stray from biblical paths, often welcoming false teaching and cult-like or immoral practices. Only a foundational value of obedience to Scripture as the defining parameters of the believer's life will result in kingdom movements that stay in biblical tracks. Kingdom movements and CPMs typically result in repentance and deep heart change; they are not superficial movements.

Good soil followers with honest and good hearts, hold fast to the word (Lk 8:15). Concentrating ministry time on such individuals should be the main task of the missionary in the beginning stages of a movement, for these are the ones who will hold fast to the word when things become difficult. Only these individuals will produce the fruit that comes with perseverance. The test is not who will accept the message, but who will endure to the end. Thus to foster kingdom movements, it is essential to encourage believers to hold fast God's word and to expect persecution as a result. This will result in a boldness and perseverance that bears much fruit.

The parable teaches that fruit will result from these followers. The beauty of this is that the fruit borne is in much greater proportion than the seed sown (Smith SL 2004; Smith SR 2004e; Westbrook 2004; Hoff 2004). In some cases it is thirty times, sometime sixty times, sometimes one hundred times. Understanding the nature of seeds planted in the ground that bear fruit many times greater than what was sown should encourage all servants of the gospel. Kingdom movements cannot be explained in human terms. Human works normally produce addition growth (growth in increments). Kingdom works produce exponential growth (growth by exponential multiplication) (Smith SR 2004f). In some traditional church planting efforts growth is similar to the former case, churches started one by one by the same individual. In church planting movements today growth is similar to the latter: two churches multiply and become four, which then become eight, then sixteen and so on because new generations of churches are being started by the newly won converts. But CPMs do not develop without an *expectation* by the missionary that exponential growth is both possible and practical. The different levels of harvest (30 times, 60 times, 100 times) simply show that all kingdom movements do not produce the same amount of fruit. However, all kingdom movements do produce fruit, and the fruit is always exponential. Each is commended (Smith SL 2004). Exponential growth is *normal* in the kingdom of God.

The critical point of this parable for CPMs is to build a movement on the fourth type of soil. This is where many ministries which pursue CPMs sputter and fail; they fail to spend the majority of their time with “good soil” responders. Missionaries and local believers should proclaim the gospel widely. Then, they should focus on the followers that count the cost, follow in whole-hearted obedience and produce fruit. Laboring too much with persons of the first three responses does not get to a CPM. CPMs are birthed in the fourth soil. This is where lasting and exponential results emerge.

Roland Allen, in the early 1900s, became an advocate for the type of spontaneous church planting movements studied and advocated in NEXT conferences as opposed to contemporary models of missions in Allen’s day. He advocated “the unexhorted and unorganized activity” of believers and churches spontaneously reproducing their lives. “We must not exaggerate the efficiency of our modern highly organized Missions” (Allen 1927:12). Rather, he, too, urged fellow missionaries to go with good soil followers. In his mind, movements started with individuals captured and empowered by the Spirit of God and equipped and released by mentoring missionaries to fulfill that call:

“If we seek for the cause which produces rapid expansion when a new faith seizes hold of men who feel able and free to propagate it spontaneously of their initiative, we

find its roots in a certain natural instinct. Spontaneous expansion begins with the individual The Spirit of Christ is a Spirit who longs for, and strives after, the salvation of the souls of men, and that Spirit dwells in them. That Spirit converts the natural instinct into a longing for the conversion of others which is indeed divine in its source and character” (Allen 1927:14).

In other words, Allen called on missionaries to recognize those new believers who were fourth soil types and expand the movement with them.

2.1.2. The Parable of the Tares (Mt 13:24-30)

This parable is the “reality check” parable. Its essential message is that the enemy (Satan) will sow counterfeit decisions in the kingdom. A common by-product in a movement of God is that there will be fake followers. Any time there is rapid expansion, there will be problems. To avoid working toward a kingdom movement out of fear of associated problems is a response the Master warns us against making.

In the early stages of CPMs, it may be difficult to distinguish between true followers and counterfeit ones (Smith SR 2004f; Hoff 2004). An endless scrutiny of followers and a crusade to keep away problems can paralyze missionaries from ever moving toward exponential growth (Smith SR 2004e; NEXT8 2005). A fear of failure or of cultish deviations keeps many a missionary from adopting a CPM mindset. Yet, it is this very thing that Jesus warns against. He promises that the kingdom will be explosive, and that there will be many “tares” since there is a spiritual war raging.

A proverb says, “Where no oxen are, the manger is clean, but much revenue comes by the strength of the ox.” (Pr 14:4) Where there is life and growth, there will be problems. As in any evangelistic work, CPMs have problems, but these are problems associated with *life*! Just as a living, growing child experiences sicknesses, so too growing movements have their particular set of problems. The key is not to not to focus on the problems (Westbrook 2004; NEXT8 2005) but to focus on the life and growth of the movement. Problems will be addressed along the way. The answer is not to stop a movement for fear of failures or problems. The Master promises to sort out many of them at the end of the age (Smith SR 2004f; Westbrook 2004; Hoff 2004).

One important check on the interpretation of this parable in the eight conferences is given by Ladd who sees the counterfeits not as within the church. Rather, he sees the main point of this parable as being that believers will co-exist in this *world* (not church) with non-believers until the day of Christ’s return. However, he does see the application NEXT participants gave of this parable as appropriate for the parable of the drag-net (Ladd 1959:57, 63).

2.1.3. The Parable of the Seed Growing Quietly (Mk 4:26-29)

This parable's main idea is that as we do our part in cooperating with kingdom ways, God will inevitably do His part and bring the increase (Hoff 2004). In this story a man plants seed and one day awakens to see that it has sprouted. He does not understand how, only that it has sprouted; he just trusts the process. In terms of the kingdom, this parable testifies to the innate power of the gospel of repentance and faith in Christ, and the germination brought about by the Holy Spirit.

There are two things that the missionary is responsible for based on this parable: sowing the gospel and reaping decisions. The process of conviction and bringing to a point of repentance is God's responsibility (Smith SL 2004). Ladd on the other hand fails to note any responsibility for harvesting, just for sowing (Ladd 1959:64). NEXT Conference participants determined that this is an insufficient response (to sow but never reap) that has too often been the foundation for non-expanding ministries they have participated in.

The nature of kingdom growth always retains a sense of mystery (Smith SR 2004e). For the missionary to wait until he understands CPM before working toward it is to deny the divine nature of church planting *movements* (Hughes 2005). The word "movement" implies that they are a work of the Spirit, one that is not completely fathomable or rationally dissected.

The great encouragement of this parable is that the kingdom is characterized by spiritual life. If we are faithful to sow kingdom seed, the Spirit is faithful to bring it to fruition. The seed of the gospel has innate power to accomplish what God desires (Hughes 2005). Therefore, the kingdom does not need to be propped up by human endeavors but can be entrusted to the Holy Spirit as the One in control. In a sense, the *less* we do to hinder the work of the Spirit, the more a CPM grows; there is a rhythm to the labor between God and us in the process of getting to CPMs (Hoff 2004). In the kingdom equation, there is a role for us and for God, and we must allow each his role (Smith SR 2004f). If we minister in kingdom ways, we should have faith that God will do His unique part. If the missionary trusts to the inevitability of the work of the Holy Spirit and does not quench His work but rather releases his or her own control, very often an explosive movement results. Only one can be in control: the missionary or the Spirit.

2.1.4. The Parables of the Mustard Seed & Leaven (Mt 13:31-33)

The main emphasis of these two parables is the inevitable growth of the kingdom of God. If we plant the right type of seed, then kingdom growth is inevitable. The DNA with which a missionary begins a new work is essential (Smith SL 2004). Great care must be given to starting church planting work with *kingdom* DNA.

The theme is demonstrated in the growth of the kingdom from a small seed into a large tree. In the beginning of a CPM, the work starts small and may not be obvious but eventually kingdom-faithful efforts will result in a pervasive spread of the kingdom (Smith SR 2004e). It is easy for an SC focusing on an entire people group or city of millions to be overwhelmed by the immensity of the task. Yet the encouragement of this parable is that if one begins with kingdom-cooperating efforts, the work may grow into a movement.

Therefore, the strategy coordinator should not despise small beginnings or be discouraged that only a handful respond to the gospel in the beginning (NEXT8 2005). The key is not in *how huge* a beginning the SC makes but rather in the *how* the SC *starts*. Starting a work with even a handful of disciples utilizing reproducible methods that have at their core DNA the multiplication of disciples and churches may soon result in a mushrooming church planting movement. So, careful attention must be given in how the SC begins. God is much more glorified when He takes a small beginning and makes it large than when He takes a large beginning and makes it larger (NEXT8 2005).

In stark contrast to these interpretations, Ladd fails to see any expansionist idea in these parables. Rather he feels these parables point to the unobtrusive and secret nature of the kingdom that is small now (and remains small or obscure) but will become full when Christ returns. “The truth is not that of the gradual permeation of the world by the Kingdom. Scripture nowhere else teaches this” (Ladd 1959:58-61). NEXT conference SCs, however, consistently disagreed with this approach to the parables. In addition, Ladd’s comments stand in remarkable contrast to the message of the book of Acts which follows below.

2.1.5. The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Mt 13:44-46)

The kingdom truth emphasized in these two parables is that the infinite worth of the kingdom is worth any sacrifice we must make. The parables stress the great value of the *King* – the emphasis is on Him rather than us (Smith SR 2004f). SCs must stress the importance of helping those who hear the gospel discover the great value of the King and His kingdom (Westbrook 2004). Too often missionaries stress hasty decisions rather than kingdom-valuing disciples.

Yet the message of the parables is that the kingdom is so valuable, it is worth any sacrifice. Men and women are willing to lay down their lives if there is something worth laying down their lives for. Any great movement of God seems to be grounded upon a spirit of joyful sacrifice made by believers (NEXT8 2005). Giving new disciples a true understanding of the value of the King and His worth is essential for a CPM to start and continue. Only then will disciples joyfully endure what persecution may come (Hoff 2004). SCs should begin gospel proclamation by doing the hard work of showing hearers the value of the kingdom and calling for them to radically give up all to gain the King (Smith SR 2004f). The question asked must be “What kind of converts are we looking for?” (NEXT8 2005). The kingdom will be built around those who joyfully give up all to follow the King. Referring also to Mt 11:12 and Lk 16:16, Ladd agrees that the essential response called for by the kingdom is a radical decision. “The Kingdom demands a response so radical that it may be described in terms of violence and force” (Ladd 1959:99).

However, we do not take this radical commitment message so far as to refer to the overt or even violent task to “unmask and resist” political institutions that are corrupt as Costas sees as the logical next step (Orlando Costas in Scherer & Bevans 1988:10). Rather the violence or radical commitment we refer to is the relentless decision by the new believer to let nothing keep him from submitting fully to his King.

2.1.6. The Parables of the Talents and Minas (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:11-27)

Jesus told two parables that were very similar, both basically emphasizing the same truth: the Master equips us with resources and will hold us accountable to faithfully bear fruit. In both parables, amounts were given to various servants but in each instance, the master expected a significant return on his investment (Smith SR 2004e). For workers in the kingdom, God entrusts each one with the abilities and resources to fulfill a task and will hold each worker accountable for how he or she utilizes these abilities and resources.

This parable underscores a sense of *urgency* to the task. SCs have been given responsibilities to reach cities and people groups. God equips each to faithfully invest His resources to bring about a significant return. The SC does not have time to be lazy; in fact, laziness is condemned as wickedness (Smith SR 2004f).

The lessons for SCs are numerous. First, the work of ministry is not a matter of faithfulness *or* fruitfulness. The Master expects a return on His investment. True kingdom faithfulness will eventually result in fruitfulness (Smith SR 2004f). If there is no fruitfulness, then it is likely an indicator that the worker is not being faithful in the right types of endeavors.

Though the amounts of fruitfulness will vary, the types of results expected by the Master are exponential (multiple times the initial investment).

Second, each of us will give an accounting of our work one day. Accountability is a hallmark of kingdom life (Hoff 2004). Kingdom workers should expect to give an accounting to God and should develop an ethos of accountability to one another to spur one another on to fruitfulness. In CPMs observed around the world, strong accountability among believers for obedience was a consistent theme in keeping with these parables.

Third, both parables underscore a theme mentioned first in the parable of the tares: eternal damnation (Hughes 2005). The reality that those who die separated from the forgiveness of God will spend an eternity in hell drives kingdom workers to live with a renewed sense of urgency in preparation for the Lord's return. The vision of the lost compels them to see everyone come to know the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Fourth, working in the kingdom involves risk. Fear of taking a risk can paralyze the missionary into inactivity (Smith SR 2004e; Hoff 2004). The unfaithful servant in the parables was not condemned for fear of taking a risk, but for inaction. Every SC must take risks to see CPMs birthed in his or her target group. Trying and failing in various endeavors is acceptable; *not trying* is not (Hughes 2005). CPMs require SCs to take risks. However, the Master praises servants who take risks and bring a return however large or small it may be (Westbrook 2004).

2.1.7. Applications from the parables

Strategy coordinators in the NEXT conferences developed a series of applications for starting church planting movements based upon the kingdom parables (applications taken from minutes of all eight NEXT conferences):

- Proclaim the gospel widely and clearly in culturally understandable ways in order to find individuals prepared by the Holy Spirit to wholeheartedly obey the scripture.
- The SC should focus his or her energies on the small percentage who obey and bear fruit (especially the fruit of becoming evangelists themselves) rather than become distracted by the larger percentage who respond positively but do not demonstrate steadfast obedience.
- The SC should expect exponential numerical results when the kingdom takes root in the lives of obedient disciples.

- In any explosive CPM problems will emerge (as in any movement). Fear of these problems should not paralyze the SC from attempting to start a CPM. Problems can be addressed along the way.
- The SC must trust in the work of the Holy Spirit and guard himself from placing extra-biblical restrictions that can slow down or stop the movement. Man-made prerequisites for ministry (church buildings, advanced degrees for indigenous church planters, minimum sizes for church to qualify as a “real church”, etc.) that go beyond scripture can keep a movement from ever beginning.
- The SC should not worry about the size of the beginning of his ministry. Rather, he or she should give diligent attention to the patterns set, for the DNA of the movement is determined in the very beginning.
- In order for a CPM to begin, new disciples must be given a true understanding of the value of the King and the joyful sacrifice they must make to follow Him. The movement may well be proportional to the sacrifice made.
- True kingdom faithfulness results in fruitfulness. Strong accountability for fruitfulness is essential in CPMs.
- SCs must take risks to see CPMs start, yet a strong vision of the lostness of their target groups can compel them to take risks to bring them the message of salvation.

2.2. The growth of the early church in the Book of Acts

Overall, the parables of the kingdom describe an electric atmosphere of kingdom expansion. Church planting movements are a visible manifestation of such a kingdom expansion. The mechanics and dynamics of such CPMs can be studied in the growth of the early church in the book of Acts. While the parables describe the *nature* of the kingdom, the book of Acts *illustrates* its expansion. As Shenk and Stutzman note, “The book of Acts begins and ends with references to the kingdom of God” (1988:22). Acts was the spiritual outworking of the kingdom as introduced by Jesus.

The precedent for CPMs is evidenced in Acts, especially in the three Pauline journeys. Due to the limited amount of information in the book of Acts, it is impossible to make a one-to-one comparison of modern-day CPMs to the movements narrated in Acts. We do not have enough information to do a thorough case study of each Pauline journey. However, the magnitude of the events in Acts when put on a time-line and map argue very strongly in favor of something similar to the CPMs of today.

During the NEXT conferences, an exhaustive study was made of the three Pauline missionary journeys in Acts, as well as the precursor to this in the mission of the seventy disciples in Luke 10. Particular attention was given to placing the activities of Acts 13:4 – 20:38 on a timeline and a map showing the administrative provinces of the Roman Empire. Such a study enabled the SCs to learn lessons about what types of places Paul targeted, how long he stayed in a place, the types of activities he utilized to begin an expanding work, the scope of how many people were reached and churches started, and what difficulties he encountered. From this they drew conclusions for their own work.

First, it is of great importance for SCs to understand how Paul approached the administrative structure of the empire's *geography*. During the course of three journeys Paul targeted at least seven provincial areas effectively with the gospel. SCs today target extremely large unreached populations, and often the only full-time workers are the SCs and a handful of team members (if any). Paul faced a similar situation: targeting the eastern half of the empire (Jerusalem to Illyricum) with just a small team. Understanding how Paul tackled such a large area is insightful for SCs.

Second, the *time frame* is critical. According to the estimates of most New Testament scholars, the three journeys lasted a total of eight to ten years. The work was of such a saturating nature that after this time Paul felt that he had no place left to work in the eastern half of the empire (Rom 15:19-23). The fruit God bore through Paul in this short time challenges the assumptions of pioneer work today. If God still works today in the same way, SCs can adjust their expectations for how quickly their target areas can hear the gospel of Christ.

Third, the *methods* Paul used to start and sustain a work in each area demonstrate an understanding of how the kingdom works. In virtually every instance, Paul, an outsider, found a way to bring the gospel to the lost, start churches and quickly leave them in a manner that kept the work expanding. SCs desiring similar results must employ a similar ethos and method.

2.2.1. Precursor to Acts: the mission of the seventy disciples in Luke 10:1-20

A study of Pauline strategy must first hark back to its precursor in Luke 10. Jesus sent out seventy disciples on mission to places the kingdom message had not yet penetrated (Lk 10:1). Paul's strategy shows significant correlation to the strategy set forth by his Master in targeting unreached areas. The SCs in NEXT conferences developed the following implications of Luke 10 for their own ministries.

Foundational to the reaching new areas is to discover God-prepared *persons of peace* (Lk 10:6; Smith SR 2004f). These individuals are prepared already to receive the missionary and his message. It is through such individuals that the kingdom begins to spread rapidly and naturally along lines of his relationships (Smith SR 2004c). Without discovering people of peace, the missionary will be stymied in bringing the gospel to a new region. From the beginning, a person of peace can receive a vision (via the missionary) of how, through him, the kingdom of God can penetrate not only his family but his whole people group (Smith SR 2004f). Finding people of peace is like unlocking gateways into unreached areas.

In order to reach a person of peace several elements are essential. First, when an evangelist finds a receptive person, he should focus his efforts in that home and not move on (Hoff 2004). In the USA an emerging movement of multiplying church planting among the unchurched is exemplified by Neil Cole. He confirms this same approach in a different culture than the ones we targeted in NEXT. “Most people setting out to start new churches automatically think of starting in their own home, but Jesus’ idea of starting in the home of the new converts is a small shift with global implications” (Cole 2005:186).

Second, the missionary should expect a demonstration of God’s power as he prays for the needs of this person (Lk 10:9; Smith SR 2004f). Miraculous intervention was expected by the seventy and should be expected by missionaries in a pioneer context. Ladd sees the exorcism of demons and healing of the sick as “proof that the Kingdom of God has come among men and is at work among them” (Ladd 1959:47). The implications of his argument are that if there is no evidence of such, then the kingdom may not actually be expanding in an area.

Third, a clear proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom is essential for the person of peace to accurately interpret what God is doing in his life and respond to Him (Lk 10:9; Smith SR 2004c).

Finally, if the evangelist finds no one who receives him and the gospel message, he is to move on to another place. There are many prepared individuals awaiting the gospel message; evangelists do not have time to linger in unresponsive areas. By moving on, the evangelist is more able to find those responsive areas (Smith SR 2004f).

2.2.2. The Province of Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12, 15:39)

Paul utilized these same lessons in his three missionary journeys. A cursory overview of Paul’s activities is given in the following sections. [See Appendix A for a chart and map

showing this timeline.] After this, applications made by SCs for their work are delineated. (Source material for the provincial summaries apart from the book of Acts: Smith SR 2005a).

Paul and Barnabas did not haphazardly approach the Gentile world. Instead, they targeted Roman provinces, usually going straight to the provincial capital. They spent approximately one to two months targeting their first Roman province – Cyprus. They began at the eastern end of the island and worked their way to the capital Paphos at the western end. In these few weeks, they preached the gospel through the whole island (13:6). At Paphos through a miracle and gospel proclamation the proconsul in charge of Cyprus, most likely a person of peace, believed.

Little more information is given, but the apparent results are numerous believers and perhaps churches throughout the island. The response from one to two months of activity was so significant that Barnabas later returned to the island to continue the work (15:39).

2.2.3. The Province of Phrygia (Acts 13:14-52, 14:21-23, 16:1-5, 18:23)

The large mainland province just north of Cyprus was Phrygia. Paul and Barnabas made a beeline for the capital – Pisidian Antioch. Paul and Barnabas appear to have been here two to four weeks. They boldly proclaimed the word of God first to the Jews in the synagogues and then to the Gentiles. By the second week the entire provincial capital was in an uproar. Not only did many people believe (and the church begin) but “the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region” (13:49). Apparently in the two weeks an explosive movement started and began to spread to the whole Phrygian province. Something similar to a church planting movement began. Having begun an expanding work in the province of Phrygia, Paul and Barnabas, run out by persecution, moved on to their next province.

2.2.4. The Province of Galatia including Lycaonia (Acts 14:1-23, 16:1-5, 18:23)

The province immediately to the east was Galatia including a sub-region called Lycaonia. At this time in the Roman Empire, there was no clear provincial capital since this area was a conglomeration of sub-regions. Therefore, Paul and Barnabas spent the next three to four months targeting the three leading cities of the region: Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

At Iconium, Paul and Barnabas boldly proclaimed the gospel and God confirmed their witness with signs and wonders. They worked for a “long time” (Acts 14:3), which the context indicates was probably several weeks. Such large numbers of people believed that, again, the city was divided. When plots to stone them were uncovered, Paul and Barnabas fled to the next city. They left behind a thriving church(es) they would soon re-visit.

At Lystra, Paul and Barnabas healed a lame man and then used that occasion to boldly proclaim a gospel message that started with the non-Jewish worldview of the Gentile audience. Within a short time (probably one to two weeks) Jews came from Iconium and Pisidian Antioch, stirred up the crowds against Paul, stoned him and left him for dead. However, Paul did not die but rather encouraged the many new disciples and then left with Barnabas for Derbe.

At Derbe, in what appears to be just a few weeks, Paul and Barnabas won over many new disciples.

At this point, Paul and Barnabas spent the next few weeks re-visiting the churches they had just started (14:23) in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. It was at this time that they appointed leaders for each of the new churches despite the fact that most of these new believers were just a few weeks or months old in the faith. They continued to call the many new disciples to great sacrifice (14:22) reminiscent of the parable of the treasure hidden in the field. From there they preached briefly in a nearby province (Pamphylia) apparently without much success and returned to Antioch.

Altogether, the first journey took approximately twelve months. In this short time, churches were planted in the provinces of Phrygia and Galatia, and most likely Cyprus also. Growing CPM-like work was begun in three separate provinces in the span of about one year.

The work in Phrygia and Galatia most likely continued to expand similar to CPMs today. Paul later made two more visits to the churches in these areas to continue to strengthen the believers in addition to writing them letters of encouragement. During the second and third missionary journeys, these visits back probably lasted several months. Overall, Paul quickly left the churches he started but did not neglect them. The impression we gain from these subsequent visits is of generally healthy believers and churches increasing in number and continuing to spread the word of God throughout their regions (16:5, 18:23). These fit the pattern of expanding church planting movements.

2.2.5. The Province of Macedonia (Acts 16:12 – 17:14; 20:1-5)

In Paul's second journey, after re-visiting churches he had previously started, he traveled west with Silas to Europe. The first major province he came to was Macedonia. Following his usual pattern, he went to the capital Philippi. Paul's first strategy was to find a person of peace in the place of prayer. He shared the gospel message with Lydia, and she believed along with her whole household. They were immediately baptized.

In the course of the next few days, Paul cast a demon out of a fortune-telling slave-girl. This caused such an uproar that he and Silas were beaten and then put in jail. As Paul and Silas praised God in the prison, the prisoners listened. After an earthquake opened the prison doors, Paul intervened into the life of another person of peace, the jailer. He, too, believed and was baptized immediately along with his family. The next day, Paul and Silas as Roman citizens were released. Paul proceeded to encourage the believers in Lydia's house before departing.

The entire Philippian episode probably lasted only two weeks. The result was a church birthed in the house of Lydia and probably one in the house of the jailer. The means were assorted: finding persons of peace, working of miracles, boldly making clear gospel presentations, exhibiting joy and boldness in the face of persecution.

Although Paul was run out of the capital, he continued his work in the province. He and Silas proceeded to Thessalonica. For three weeks, Paul reasoned with the Jews convincingly in the synagogue. Many Jews believed along with a great multitude of Gentiles (Acts 17:4). Yet, jealous Jewish leaders stirred up a riot. Already, Paul's reputation for starting movements was well-known ("upset the world" - 17:6). Several local disciples were arrested though Paul and Silas escaped capture. Immediately that night, the local believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. The work in Thessalonica apparently lasted only four to five weeks but resulted in a multitude of new believers and a church. This was accomplished through bold proclamation of the gospel.

In Berea, Paul and Silas encountered a more receptive audience. The Jews in the synagogue there received the word with great eagerness examining it against the Old Testament scriptures. The result was that many of them believed as well as a number of prominent Gentiles (17:12). As in Thessalonica, no miracles are mentioned, just bold proclamation of the word of God. In terms of the time frame, apparently within a few weeks, the Jews from Thessalonica came down and stirred up the crowds against Paul. The local believers sent him away while Silas and Timothy stayed a while longer.

In all, the Macedonian mission lasted about three to four months and resulted in growing churches in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Approximately five years later, Paul personally re-visited these churches at the end of his third journey (20:1-2). However, prior to that he maintained contact with these churches via letters he wrote and emissaries like Timothy that he sent. The picture formed from his letters is of churches that continued to grow and expand into the surrounding regions (1 Thes 1:8). They possessed the DNA of the kingdom.

2.2.6. The Province of Achaia (Acts 17:16 – 18:18; 20:2-3)

Paul proceeded to the next province south – Achaia. Again, he targeted the capital Athens. Paul utilized a combination of reasoning with the Jews in the synagogue and debating with the Greek philosophers. He preached a very culturally-appropriate message to these philosophers but most chose not to believe. Only a handful of people in Athens believed. Apparently because of these poor results, Paul left after just a few weeks.

From there, Paul proceeded to the commercial capital of Achaia – Corinth. The Corinthian mission marks a turning point in Paul's missionary endeavors. Altogether, Paul stayed in Corinth one and a half years (18:11), much longer than he had spent in any other place previously. While he waited for Silas and Timothy to join him from Berea, Paul worked as a tent-maker with Priscilla and Aquila. Each Sabbath for several weeks he reasoned with Jews and Greeks. Upon the arrival of Silas and Timothy, Paul began to devote himself full-time to the work of evangelism. When the Jews resisted him, he moved on to preaching to the Gentiles. Several persons of peace are mentioned in this episode: Priscilla and Aquila, Titius Justus in whose house Paul preached, and Crispus the leader of the synagogue. These people all became key entry-points for the gospel. The result was that many Corinthians were believing and being baptized (18:8).

As a result of this large response, Paul settled there for a year and six months teaching the word of God. The Jews tried to evict Paul through the legal system, but his right to stay was upheld by the proconsul. It appears that, not only did a church start in Corinth, but that the city became a base of operations for the believers to reach out throughout Achaia (2 Cor 1:1). In fact it is apparent at this point that Paul thought in terms of provinces and regions, not simply cities (1 Thes 1:7-8). In a very rare circumstance, Paul finally left Corinth of his own will (not due to persecution) in order to return to Antioch.

2.2.7. The Province of Asia (Acts 18:23 – 20:1)

On his third journey, Paul was finally able to reach out to the strategic Roman province of Asia, one that he had wanted to reach previously. Once he was forbidden by the Holy Spirit (16:6) and once he was restricted in time (18:19-21). However, at the end of his second journey he was able to leave Priscilla and Aquila there to prepare the way for his return. They labored there for several months while they awaited Paul. In addition, the Jewish apologist Apollo labored there for some time.

Ephesus represents the pinnacle of Paul's work. The greatest movement of Paul's career developed during the three years he worked there (19:10, 20:31). This movement demonstrates the most parallels with modern-day church planting movements.

As usual, Paul began in the synagogue boldly proclaiming the kingdom. After three months, the resistance of the Jews compelled him to reach out to the Gentiles. He utilized the school of Tyrannus as his training base daily reasoning there for the next two years. The result of his training was that the word of the Lord spread throughout the entire Roman province of Asia within the two years (19:10).

The Ephesian ministry was marked by extraordinary miracles on the part of Paul (19:11-12), sacrificial repentance and life transformation (19:18-19), and rapid expansion of the gospel throughout the region (19:20). This continued for about three years at which time a riot broke out against Paul's work. This riot was instigated by idol makers who were losing business due to the success of the Ephesian mission. It was at this point, after three years, that Paul finally departed. Paul re-visited the Ephesian elders once more a few months later at the end of his third journey.

The scope of the Asia effort is enormous. The Scripture attests to *everyone* in the province at least hearing the gospel (19:10). Not only was a church (probably many churches) started in Ephesus, but the other six churches named in Revelation were most likely started during this time. The impression given from Acts is that Paul utilized Ephesus and its new believers as a base for reaching out all over the province and starting churches in various places.

2.2.8. The Province of Illyricum (Rom 15:19)

Somehow during the course of these three journeys Paul found time to preach the gospel in a seventh province – Illyricum. This journey is a testament to the magnitude of what occurred in the three journeys of Paul. There is much evangelistic work that goes unmentioned in Acts including this outreach. Most likely it occurred at the end of his third journey when he was visiting the believers in Macedonia.

2.2.9. Applications and evaluations from the Pauline journeys

The various strategy coordinators participating in the NEXT conferences wrestled with the implications from the mission of the seventy and the journeys of Paul for their ministries. Huge paradigm shifts were made as they examined the size and scope of this work. For many, the applications they developed posed a marked shift in expectations of how a CPM

can start and expand. The lessons they learned outlined below, then compared and contrasted (when appropriate) with other church planting models.

2.2.9.1. *Timeframe for starting churches*

- NEXT findings: From plotting the known church plants on the timeframe of Paul's three journeys, it is remarkable that Paul averaged only six to eight weeks to start and leave a thriving church that did not rely upon his daily presence (Smith SR 2004e). SCs should change their expectations: growing indigenous churches can start and grow quickly without a long-term missionary presence on-site.
- Other models:
 - Allen: Allen proposes a rapid model based on the Pauline one where Paul “preached in a place for five or six months and then left behind a church” capable of expanding (Allen 1962:84). He concurs that in ten years the church was effectively established through Galatia (including Phrygia), Macedonia, Achaia and Asia and that Paul established them rapidly: weeks and months, not years (:3). He speaks of new little churches “constantly springing up” because of the witness of ordinary persons (Allen 1927:140).
 - Redford: Redford used a very traditional church planting model for Southern Baptists (USA). At the time it was a step forward, for many churches had never planted a new church. A fictional example Redford gives involves several months of work to establish home fellowships among believers, then these believers meeting for two years to become a mission fellowship (not yet a church). He strongly advocates not starting worship services too soon for fear of the new fellowship getting overwhelmed. In this model, new autonomous churches do not develop for three years and usually much longer (Redford 1978:61-62, 70)
 - Brock: Utilizing evangelistic Bible studies, churches are birthed between ten and fifteen weeks from the beginning of the studies. Brock's model may have been the first practical model of the 20th century to advocate short time frames for establishing fully autonomous, indigenous churches (Brock 1981:89).
 - Akins: Akins makes reference to Paul starting churches within two to three weeks (Akins 1999:33) but then proposes what is essentially a 28 week model for starting new churches (:99).

- Patterson & Scoggins: This team does not give a clear model in church planting but allows for much innovation and variance. However, from anecdotal illustrations, the model generally calls for reproduction of churches within six to twelve months (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:163, 182).
- Cole: Cole's model is very *organic*, meaning not very structured. As such, clear guidelines such as timeframes are generally absent. However, the most successful example that he cites is of a church started by him with two new believers. This church initiated twenty daughter churches in five years which could be consistent with the timeframes given in the NEXT findings (Cole 2005:200).

2.2.9.2. Targeting Strategic Centers

- NEXT findings: In targeting large geographic or population areas, SCs need to plant churches in strategic centers and help those churches immediately fulfill a vision of reaching that area (Smith SR 2004e; Hoff 2004; Hughes 2005). It is not necessary for missionaries to plant churches in every locale, but rather for them to plant a few churches that have a vision to reach a whole area. Just as Paul did, SCs can expect a newly planted church to take on very large responsibilities for whole regions or people groups (Smith SR 2004f). Like Paul, the SC needs to see himself as the catalyst of an expanding movement (NEXT8 2005). Targeting regional centers greatly simplifies the missionary's task.
- Other models:
 - Allen: This is a key concept for Allen who believed that the key to the missionary task was establishing bases in strategic centers and reaching whole provinces *through the new local believers*. Missionaries of his day established missions in centralized areas, but not often for such purposes. "It is not enough for the church to be established in a place where many are coming and going unless the people who come and go not only learn the Gospel, but learn it in such a way that they can propagate it." They become strategic centers because the missionary makes them such. By establishing such churches in two to three places, Paul "claimed that he had evangelized the whole province" (Allen 1962:13, 16).
 - Redford: Redford's model is not aiming at strategic centers; but rather is focused on the creation of a single new church. With that in mind, he advocates starting new churches in any neighborhood that has no evangelical churches (Redford

1978:37). The concept of moving to unreached areas, however, is consistent with NEXT findings.

- Brock: No strategic centers are described though Brock advocates for a church “within walking distance of every person” (Brock 1981:67).
- Akins: One of the great strengths of Akins’ model is that it advances traditional church planting models to the arena of multiplication. His strategy does not deal with strategic centers per se, but does advocate starting a new church for every one thousand people in target populations (Akins 1999:30).
- Patterson & Scoggins: This model does not provide for a strategy toward strategic centers but does encourage looking for responsive groups within a culture (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:124-125).
- Cole: Cole does not advocate *where* to start other than with very pagan people. But he does advocate a system that expands like a virus uncontrollably (termed “chaordic”) which is similar to the findings in NEXT (Cole 2005:123ff).

2.2.9.3. Multiplication of new believers and churches

- NEXT findings: Strategy coordinators need to have strong expectations that even a few disciples and churches can, with the right vision and equipping, multiply into hundreds and thousands (Hoff 2004). Accountability and expectation that multiplication is normal for each new church is paramount (Hughes 2005).
- Other models:
 - Allen: This was the bedrock of Allen’s views. New converts empowered by the Holy Spirit can multiply endlessly. “The very first groups of converts must be so fully equipped with all spiritual authority that they could multiply themselves without any necessary reference to us: that, though, while we were there, they might regard us as helpful advisers” (Allen 1927:7).
 - Redford: “Church planting is the normal and natural function for a church. If it does not take on this task, it has become rootbound” (Redford 1978:23). However, his model advocates church planting for *mature, long-established* churches, not new believers or new churches. Multiplication of new churches is not within his church planting paradigm.

- Brock: Brock introduces the concept that every church should be a multiplying, church planting church (Brock 1981:55). However, the concrete model he proposes does not specifically include steps to move the new church toward multiplication, but rather to let it begin leading itself so that the *original church planter* can move on to plant new churches (:37). The closest he comes is to encouraging new churches to form an association that will encourage them to further penetrate their area for church planting. The seeds for the idea of church multiplication were planted in this model in the 1980s but it would take two more decades to see this seminal idea fleshed out into reality.
- Akins: As mentioned, Akins' model stresses multiplication of new churches by trained lay evangelists. Multiplication is built into the DNA of the new church. One factor, however, that will limit it is that churches have a very formal process in recognizing new evangelists they will send out to new areas to start new churches, rather than an informal model in which every member can start a new church (Akins 1999:18, 31).
- Patterson and Scoggins: This model is called the "Church Multiplication Guide." However, the majority of training is to start the *first* church, not to affect the *multiplication* of successive generations. Ideas are given for getting to second generation churches occasionally. NEXT conferences found that in CPMs the *most critical* element in getting to multiplication is emphasis on second, third and fourth generation. Patterson and Scoggins give ideas of how to multiply churches (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:147-153) but do not place much emphasis on how to get to third and fourth generations.
- Cole: The heart of Cole's model is in agreement with NEXT findings – that the DNA of a church should be that it lives to follow Jesus and reproduce itself endlessly. Such a church is "bent on a mission to continue to reach the lost" (Cole 2005:23, 185).

2.2.9.4. Receptivity

- NEXT findings: Just as Paul expected people to believe when he preached the gospel, strategy coordinators should expect unreached areas to be responsive to a clear presentation of the gospel (NEXT8 2005). From the admonitions of Jesus in Luke 10 about prepared people of peace to the final journey of Paul, the testimony of Scripture

is that the Holy Spirit is at work preparing people to receive the gospel. Each field is white for the harvest. If one locale is not receptive, it is an indication to move on to a new area (NEXT8 2005).

- Other models:
 - Allen: Allen concurs that “St Paul expected his hearers to be moved . . . If they rejected him, he rejected them” and moved on (Allen 1962:74-75). He beseeches readers to expect a harvest and move on if there is no harvest.
 - Redford: Redford represents a model that is the antithesis of NEXT findings. Namely, receptive areas are found through extensive surveying and canvassing – virtually a scientific approach. There is no expectation of a very receptive welcome to a broad and bold proclamation of the gospel (Redford 1978:45).
 - Brock: Brock encourages church planters to target receptive areas but does not define those. He operates from an assumption that most people will require six to eight weeks of in-depth Bible study before being able to make a sincere commitment to Christ (Brock 1981:70). This may be because of Brock’s assumption that Catholics take a long time to change from a Roman Catholic perspective to an evangelical one. Also, this model ignores Spirit-prepared persons of peace that may be ready to believe immediately.
 - Akins: Akins’ work started in South America in an area heavily exposed to Catholicism. As such, he assumes it takes several weeks of evangelistic Bible studies for people to believe (in order to overcome some anti-evangelical feelings). However, in areas that are truly pioneer (little exposure to the gospel) he assumes it will take longer for people to respond to the gospel. The shortest amount of time mentioned overall is eight weeks and in many situations much longer (Akins 1999:44).
 - Patterson and Scoggins: One of the great strengths of this model also confirms that of the biblical models presented in this chapter, namely finding responsive fields via persons of peace. Patterson usually defines these individuals as male heads of households. There is an attempt at times to define a responsive field as “bad people” (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:85). This model does encourage church planters to move on from unresponsive fields. But it also acknowledges implicitly that responsiveness is found by appropriately sharing the gospel, and that many missionaries do not share the gospel appropriately before naming a field unres-

ponsive (:133). However, in truly unresponsive areas, missionaries are encouraged to keep moving until they find responsive people (:125). Patterson and Scoggins expect the process of evangelism to take at least five to seven weeks for most people, but several years for Muslims (:103). While this model is very close to NEXT findings, it still gives an expectation for length of conversion time that may exceed the norm Jesus advocates in Luke 10 or Paul demonstrates in Acts.

- Cole: Cole assumes that receptive fields are all around us in the forms of persons of peace prepared by God. He believes one can predict good soil people by going to the “worst” people (Cole 2005:68ff). These are people who are the most sinful and in need of Jesus. NEXT findings would differ with the expectation of consistently predicting good soil types. However, Cole confirms NEXT findings in advocating sharing the gospel immediately with the lost to find who is interested and who is not. NEXT findings agree that this is *the* fundamental way to find receptivity. If a small group does not respond, move on and find others. There *will* be receptive groups (:177-179).

2.2.9.5. *Priorities of missionaries*

- Just as Paul’s main priority was winning new disciples, starting churches and helping them multiply their witness, this should be the highest priority of workers targeting new areas (Hughes 2005). SCs should not get distracted by many “good” activities that are not essential to getting to CPMs. SCs should win a few people and then invest their energies into training them to grow in faith, win others, start churches and train other new believers to repeat the process (NEXT8 2005).
- Other models:
 - Allen: Allen was bewildered by how missionaries of his day got side-tracked by so many things. “The first and striking difference between his [Paul’s] action and ours is that he founded ‘churches’ whilst we found ‘Missions,’” implying that churches were not autonomous and that missionaries often prioritized activities that did not contribute toward a spontaneous expansion of the church (Allen 1962:84).
 - Brock: Brock keeps the focus of church planters very clear: church planting. He calls on them to keep first things first and not get distracted from this (Brock 1981:13).

- Akins: For the evangelists trained in Akins' model, evangelism and training of new converts to grow in faith and win others is the highest priority (Akins 1999:31).
- Patterson and Scoggins: This is a difficult item to assess as the model calls for various individuals with various spiritual gifts to perform different functions on a broader church planting task group. However, every task group is to be headed by an *apostle* who is freed up to do evangelism and train near-culture believers to reach a new people group. This is very similar to Paul's activities.
- Cole: Cole greatly emphasizes the very findings mentioned above. The highest duty of a church planter is to live in the world of the lost, witness to them regularly, start churches in their homes (not the church planter's home) and begin to train them to repeat the process (Cole 2005:177ff).

2.2.9.6. Methods

- Various methods can be utilized in reaching a new area, but the most direct are preferable: finding persons of peace, praying for miraculous intervention in their lives and boldly proclaiming the gospel to them (NEXT8 2005).
- Other models:
 - Allen: His model is virtually identical to NEXT findings, that the gospel traveled mainly via people of peace convinced through miracles and the bold preaching of the gospel.
 - Redford: His model requires months of extensive community projects to meet people, befriend them and then finally make evangelistic visits to them. Rather than entering a community, looking for people of peace and witnessing, a longer model is used based on friendship evangelism (Redford 1978:54-59).
 - Brock: Brock opts for a five week Bible study format that calls for a decision after seven weeks of interaction with group members (Brock 1981:73-82).
 - Akins: While Akins toys with the idea of rapidly finding and winning persons of peace, the typical model he proclaims is a seven to eight week approach to filtering and winning persons of peace which is longer than that found by NEXT conference SCs (Akins 1999:67).
 - Patterson and Scoggins: This model is largely in agreement with the NEXT findings above. At times, simply presenting the gospel is appropriate, usually to per-

sons of peace. However in some contexts ‘power encounters’ or community development might be appropriate for speaking the gospel effectively (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:56).

- Cole: This model advocates a combination of loving the lost where they live, quickly sharing the gospel clearly, and praying for needs to demonstrate God’s provision, which closely aligns with the NEXT findings (Cole 2005:188).

2.2.9.7. *Harvesting forces*

- Large church planting teams are not essential. Instead evangelists, church planters and team partners will come *out of* the harvest of new believers (NEXT8 2005). This is foundational to CPMs. The resources for reaching the lost are in the new believers. The best evangelist of tomorrow is probably not yet saved today. SCs need to be willing to share responsibility for the work with young believers.
- Other models:
 - Allen: For Allen, Chinese must reach China and Indians must reach India. We can never supply enough missionaries to reach the entire world. “Our missions ought to prepare the way for the evangelization of the country by the free spontaneous activity of our converts, and their success must be measured not so much by the number of foreign missionaries employed, or by the number of converts, as by the growth of a Native Church in the power to expand” (Allen 1927:24).
 - Redford: This model employs a well funded church planter who partners with a sending church and often starts new fellowships with existing believers. Churches are “formed largely with new converts or reclaimed Christians who have been inactive” (Redford 1978:59). Redford is very evangelistic in outlook, though the churches started in this model often are begun primarily by reaching unchurched Christians in new communities. The idea of raising up evangelists from the harvest field is foreign to this model.
 - Brock: Brock set new patterns in advocating that anyone can start a church (Brock 1981:66). However, in reality the model lays emphasis on someone who is a full-time church planter (professional) and does not focus much effort on raising up many lay church planters out of newly started churches (:13).
 - Akins: Akins wholeheartedly concurs with the concept of raising up resources from within the harvest. He advocates raising up new evangelists from the new

group of believers and training the young believers to lead themselves as soon as possible. Akins advocates a church planting approach of four seven-week cycles. During the first two cycles the evangelist does most of the leading, though getting assistance from the new believers in cycle two. By cycles three and four (fifteen to twenty-eight weeks into the process) new believers should be leading themselves with the evangelists exiting around week twenty-eight (Akins 1999:93-101).

- Patterson and Scoggins: This model agrees with the NEXT findings by advocating that the most effective evangelists come from the harvest. New believers are by far the most effective evangelists. Stress is put on training new believers to immediately reach their family and friends and to start new churches around these new clusters (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:54-55, 100-101, 166). Prior to having new believers in the target group, the most effective evangelists are near-culture partners (:123).
- Cole: Cole confirms the findings of NEXT. One of the highest values of this model is that the best evangelists come from the harvest field mainly because they have lost friends and their life transformation is a powerful witness (Cole 2005:149ff). However, while this model started out winning the lost and raising them up as evangelists, there is recent indication that many of the newer churches formed in this model are actually reclaiming unchurched Christians in the USA who are attracted to a non-traditional approach (Personal email to myself).

2.2.9.8. Cost of discipleship and expansion

- Church planting movements are begun and sustained at great personal cost to the missionary and local believers. Persecution is normal in such situations. Believers must be willing to boldly continue proclaiming the gospel in the face of much opposition (NEXT8 2005). Boldness is contagious, as is fear.
- Other models (not addressed in Redford and Akins):
 - Allen: Foundational to Paul's expansion was that he immediately expected his new converts to become missionaries (Allen 1962:93) with all of the difficulties that brought of being rejected and counting the cost. Paul expected this to be a normal part of the Christian life.

- Brock: Persecution may befall the newly planted churches, so it is critical for the new churches to have informal association amongst themselves to mutually encourage one another to stand firm (Brock 1981:35).
- Patterson and Scoggins: Foundational to this model is a clear call to repentance from old lifestyles and subsequent faith in Christ. Part of the repentance process is a willingness to count the cost in following Jesus. The authors go to great length to stress the importance of raising up genuine disciples not simply getting temporary decisions (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:33ff). Their main recommendation for dealing with persecution is keeping churches small and letting them mutually encourage one another (:150-151, 169).
- Cole: While Cole does not discuss persecution much, he does issue a stern challenge to any would-be church planter to be willing to lay down his life for the sake of those he reaches. Until an evangelist counts the cost, nothing will happen (Cole 2005:103-105).

2.2.9.9. *Departure of missionaries or church planters*

- Strategy coordinators need to learn the proper balance of moving on quickly to allow a new church to mature, and returning occasionally to help it move to new stages (Hughes 2005; NEXT8 2005; Smith SR 2005a). Usually missionaries need to leave a work before they *feel* it is time, but this is in the best interest of the young maturing believers. However, this does not mean abandoning them. Missionaries need to find ways to return to give on-going training and input into these movements.
- Other models:
 - Allen: Paul was successful in part because of the *shortness* of his stay in each place. The presence of a great teacher “sometimes tends to prevent smaller men from realizing themselves.” Instead a missionary must exit the day to day supervision of a new church for “only by retirement can he prepare the way for real independence” (Allen 1962:93, 159).
 - Redford: In this model, church planters do not exit quickly. Rather they stay throughout the multi-year process of planting the church and often stay on as the pastor.
 - Brock: Brock introduced the very important concept of the church planter making everything he does reproducible so that the average new believer can do the same.

The church planter should gradually transfer leadership responsibilities to a few individuals and transition out after a few months (Brock 1981:55-61, 93).

- Akins: As mentioned previously, the evangelist departs after about six to seven months into the process of starting a new church (Akins 1999:100).
- Patterson and Scoggins: When a church planter should depart is very nebulous in this model, but generally a church planter helps a new church develop leaders and slowly transitions out over the following six to twelve months.
- Cole: Cole advocates a model in which each church planter immediately empowers new believers to share in the leadership. He does not delineate a timeframe for withdrawal but instead encourages a life-long discipleship process.

2.2.9.10. *Partners*

- Just as Paul used an extensive network of partners (e.g. Timothy, Titus, Priscilla and Aquila), SCs should learn how to utilize co-workers who can visit emerging CPMs to help with on-going training (Hughes 2005; Smith SR 2005a). This helps to sustain momentum of a movement.
- Other models:
 - Allen: Allen does not discuss this topic in the two works cited.
 - Redford: This model emphasizes the starting of a single church, not the strategy of reaching a whole city or people group.
 - Brock: The closest that this model comes to encouraging the partnerships of NEXT findings is among newly planted churches themselves. They should visit one another for the purposes teaching, encouraging, counseling and correcting (Brock 1981:35).
 - Patterson and Scoggins: Generally, this model advocates keeping foreign missionary teams small and primarily mobilizing near-culture believers who can most effectively work with target group individuals (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:122-123).
 - Cole: Cole's model for a network of partners is vague. At times he mentions recruiting many church planters and encouraging partnerships, but his primary message is to not put much emphasis on mobilizing existing Christian leaders. Instead he encourages new leadership from among the lost who will get saved and then interaction among them (Cole 2005:204-205).

3. The Person that God uses

One of the first lessons learned about the dynamics of developing sustained church planting movements is as follows: *God builds CPMs around a man or woman of his choosing, and this person has particular spiritual qualifications and ministry role.* Foundational to the implementation of any strategy is the spiritual character of the missionary implementing it. Since a church planting movement is a spiritual endeavor, missionaries must be living in a spiritually significant relationship to God. One question the NEXT participants wrestled with was what kind of person God uses in bringing about church planting movements.

Within this question are two areas of focus. The first is the spiritual nature of persons God seems to be using in CPMs. The second is how the strategy coordinator role is evolving to better cooperate with God in seeing CPMs begin and spread. The first deals with the issue of character and spiritual quality. The second deals with how the SC views his role and thereby structures his ministry.

3.1. The spiritual character of persons God uses

NEXT participants started with a fundamental assumption: God uses people of godly spiritual character for a spiritual work. However, this does not mean that if a missionary is a godly person he will definitely experience a CPM. But rather it means that if a missionary is not a person of godly character, it is unlikely that he will see God begin a church planting movement through his ministry. Since a CPM is a movement of the Spirit of God, SCs must *position* themselves to be used by him, and foundational to that is that they are submitted to him (Smith SR 2004j:2).

At various NEXT conferences different discipleship themes were examined: integrity, godly character, faith, humility, holiness and solitude. The goal of these studies was not to analyze in-depth the spiritual nature of men and women God has used in the past in CPMs. Instead, the goal was to help SCs examine their own hearts to evaluate whether or not there were any spiritual barriers to them hearing from God, being willing to be changed and being willing to be used in fresh ways in the pursuit of his kingdom spreading in their target groups.

Thus, the issues discussed were for the purpose of helping strategy coordinators start the week with an examination of their spiritual lives and to come to a point of fresh surrender. This was deemed necessary for a very important reason: they were going to encounter radical ideas during the course of the week that might upset and alter their current ministries. There-

fore, they were going to need to have eyes to see and ears to hear (Matt 13:16). The SCs needed to be in a position to hear God with hearts that were *willing* to change as he dictated.

3.1.1. Integrity of heart and skillful hands

A scripture reference that guided each NEXT conference was Psalm 78:72 (NIV): “And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.” Each NEXT conference was built upon these two components: 1) SCs must be men and women of integrity before God (character), and 2) SCs must implement ministries skillfully in a way that cooperates with God in striving toward CPMs.

Integrity, therefore, relates to who we are before God and is the foundation of building a ministry of skillful hands. The basic question SCs asked in regard to integrity was: “Am I the kind of person that God would want to use?” (Hoff 2004:3) Integrity was defined in various ways but essentially meant being honest before God and others, transparently being the same in public as in private (Hoff 2004:3).

“If God uses men, not simply methods, then am I the type of person God would use?” (Smith SR 2004j:2) NEXT participants determined that they must be men and women honest before God, that he could shape as needed. Only then would he entrust them with a CPM. It is quite possible that any of these SCs could see an exploding movement of God in terms of thousands of new believers and hundreds of new churches. At the center of such a movement, God desires to have a person he can continually shape according to the needs of that movement and one that he can call back if he wanders into sin.

3.1.2. Godly character and evaluation

In addition to integrity, which was examined in every conference, other character qualities were examined in some conferences: holiness, humility, faith, and godly character. Various facilitators examined various aspects of these issues as led by God. No profile developed of the “perfect” type of SC that God uses. The theme however was not that God uses perfect people, but those growing in Christ-likeness.

Therefore, as a part of the process of SCs evaluating themselves and their work, SCs were given several hours of solitude and self-examination instruments (Bates 2004) to evaluate their spiritual lives. Emphasis was placed on moving themselves to a point of submission to God again as well as repenting of any sin issues that had crept into their lives.

In effect, the entire first day of each NEXT conference was a spiritual retreat of personal self-examination. The result was that SCs began the next day of the conference with hearts more open to hearing whatever God wanted to speak to them.

3.1.3. Spiritual character issues in other church planting models

While no particular spiritual profile was erected in NEXT conferences, the value established was that God would use men and women of integrity who were growing in Christ-like character. They do not need to be spiritual giants, but must be moldable, teachable and submitted to God. It may be helpful at this point to examine what other church planting models espouse about the spiritual nature of church planters.

- Allen: Roland Allen does not give a specific set of criteria for missionaries. However, he gives hints to what is needed for missionaries to be used in a spontaneous expansion of the church. For example, for elders he argues that the most important qualities are moral not intellectual qualifications. He goes on to advocate a certain spiritual nature. “It is a fact that some men reveal, in speech and act, a sense of the reality of spiritual things which others do not possess, and that these are the men who are best qualified to help others (Allen 1962:102).” Such thinking is consistent with what NEXT participants deduced: God will use men who are of a moral, spiritual nature (rather than putting emphasis on intellectual attributes or ministry experience). In regard to missionaries themselves, Allen believes that the chief restraining force to spontaneous expansion of the church is the missionary himself; namely that missionaries are not willing to submit themselves to the mighty rushing nature of a spiritual movement. Missionaries fear losing control. However, to be used by God, a missionary must be willing to submit to whatever type of work God wants to do through him (Allen 1927:16-18). This idea corresponds very closely to the NEXT findings of honestly submitting oneself before God to be willing to minister in whatever manner he dictates for the sake of spreading his kingdom.
- Redford: Redford has no clear parallel in his book to the role of strategy coordinator. However, his emphases for a pastor of new churches are: 1) a strong sense of call by God to his place of service; 2) a growing spiritual life; 3) faith in the fundamental doctrines and word of God; 4) love for his congregation and 5) growth in Christ-like attitudes (Redford 1978:110-122). His conclusions are similar to NEXT findings: emphasis on spiritual character is foundational to being used by God.

- Brock: Brock's main emphasis for church planters is that they depend absolutely on the work of the Holy Spirit. "A danger faced by all planters is that a strategy may become so methodical that the conscious dependence upon the Spirit fades away (Brock 1981:21-22)." He highlights a theme heard in NEXT conferences that God uses men, not simply methods, and that we must in integrity submit ourselves to God continually. Other than this, Brock establishes no other criteria.
- Akins: Akins advocates that anyone can be a pioneer evangelist who "feels the call to be an evangelist and to fulfill the Biblical qualifications (Akins 1999:16)." These biblical qualifications are: 1) be saved; 2) receive the call; 3) be filled with the Spirit; 4) know how to use the Bible; 5) desire to please and obey God; 6) love and take care of new converts; 7) know how to pray; 8) live a pure life and 9) be firm in the faith. Akins' qualifications are similar to NEXT findings in emphasizing spiritual qualifications over intellectual or educational ones.
- Patterson and Scoggins: Their model emphasizes two qualifications for church planters. First is a willingness to change and pursue a methodology of church multiplication (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:11-16). Essentially, this is an open and teachable attitude. Second "the most important thing to multiply churches is to obey our Lord Jesus Christ in childlike faith and love (:21)." Both of these criteria lay emphasis on submission to God which is similar to NEXT findings.
- Cole: Cole also emphasizes character as essential to the type of person God uses. God is not looking for perfect, spiritual giants. Instead he is looking for several things: people who devour the scripture and obey it wholeheartedly (Cole 2005:67-68, 155); and, people who submit themselves to the Spirit's leading, willing to let the movement get out of their personal control (:87-88).

What is remarkable about all six church planting models is how similar they are to NEXT findings in this particular category. All too often extrabiblical qualifications are stressed in the work of church planting: amount of education, intellectual abilities, recommendation by others, length of Christian life, etc. Instead, foundational to initiating a movement of God is that a person be submitted to God and in obedience growing in godly character. God will use such a person.

3.2. The changing SC role

Since SCs began the second day of each conference with spiritually sensitive hearts, they were ready to tackle the difficult issues of what the strategy coordinator role was and how it had evolved since their first days of training years before. NEXT participants were all strategy coordinators who had been received their initial training anywhere from four to ten years earlier. Since their initial training, the role of strategy coordinator had changed drastically, based upon our growing understanding of what is needed from the human side of things in initiating CPMs. In order for the NEXT SCs to effectively target their people groups, they had to wrestle with the gap between what was needed in the SC role to reach their targets and how their own role was structured. Effective SCs need to bring their role and work into alignment with what is needed to initiate sustained CPMs.

The chief tension in this endeavor was in how much the role has changed since it was created in 1989 (Phillips 2004b:1). Many of the SCs attending NEXT conferences were recruited to one job and found that over the years the job had changed on them. Most were willing to make the changes realizing that the main expectation of a strategy coordinator is “under the lordship of Christ to do whatever it takes to see this people group won and *multiplying* churches started” through “sustainable CPMs” (Fudge 2004b:1). For the purposes of helping these tenured SCs change, a history was given of how the role had evolved. For the purposes of this study, the history is not as important as the lessons learned in what an SC needs to emphasize in order to get to sustained CPMs.

3.2.1. Keep evolving the role as the need changes and understanding grows

The nature of the mission field is changing as nations open or close more to mission work. As such, the SC role needs to continually grow and adapt to meet these changing conditions (Smith SR 2004f; Westbrook 2004). In addition, as we grow in our understanding of what is most essential for CPMs to occur, missionaries must remain teachable and be willing to let their role evolve to fit this (Smith W 2004d:1). Finally, the role also changes depending on where a strategy coordinator is in his personal progress toward a sustained CPM. What he needs to give his attention to early in the work may be very different from what is needed later in the work. Effective SCs see “the leading edge of where they are and where they need to go (NEXT8 2005:2).”

3.2.2. Key changes in the evolution of the SC role

The greatest lessons SCs learned about how the role has changed and what they must give their attention to are as follows:

From simply trying to establish a missionary presence in “closed” countries . . . to giving a target group access to the gospel in whatever form is needed (Smith SR 2004k:1). SCs must go beyond establishing a “presence” in countries closed to traditional missions. SCs must give themselves to finding ways to give *all* people in their target groups access to the gospel message.

From being conduits of all ministry to being catalysts of what needs . . . to happen (Smith SR 2004k:1). In previous days, SCs tried to catalyze any type of ministry possible to get a Christian presence among their target groups. Now SCs must narrow their focus to what is most essential in catalyzing new believers in the target group to get to multiplication of believers and churches.

From establishing beachhead churches . . . to catalyzing CPM (Smith SR 2004k:1). In earlier days, SCs were thrilled to simply get the first church ever among an unreached people group. Now, however, SCs realize that a beachhead church is insufficient to reach their entire people group. They must find ways to catalyze the *multiplication* of churches.

From “all that is possible to do in ministry” . . . to “what is missing in the mix for a CPM to occur” (Smith SR 2004k:1). For most SCs this was the most radical change in role. Previously SCs tried anything that might work since there were very few working models in the world of a real church planting movement. As more and more CPMs developed, training of SCs began to focus more on what has been proven to work (Smith W 2004d:1). Essentially, an SC should look at his situation, evaluate what ingredients necessary for CPM are missing and then give his energies to incorporating those missing ingredients. As such, the SC role has become much more focused on “high-value activities” that demonstrate a proven track record in getting to multiplication (Smith SR 2004k:1; Smith W 2004d:3). This focusing means that SCs can narrow the spectrum of activities to devote themselves to. For most SCs attending NEXT conferences this meant a radical change in how they spent their ministry time.

From principles and theories . . . to practical tools (Smith W 2004d:1). With more CPM case studies, SCs can now focus on utilizing practical tools that have a track record of helping churches multiply. This is a major shift from earlier days when all SCs had were *theories* on how to get to CPM. As a result, SCs should focus their attention on equipping their local partners with practical tools (Smith SR 2004k:1). In this scenario, the SC becomes

the mentor of others by demonstrating practically with the tools in hand what he expects them to do.

From mobilizing outsiders . . . to mobilizing insiders (Smith W 2004d:1). In earlier days, SCs spent most of their time trying to mobilize other foreigners like themselves to evangelize their target groups. In recent years, we have learned that CPMs develop when SCs spend most of their efforts on finding same-culture or near-culture Christians and training them to reach the target group. They already speak the language and can travel about freely without attracting too much attention.

3.2.3. Evaluation of insights from the evolving SC role

Comparing the insights obtained regarding the evolution of the SC role with the six church planting models is insufficient since those models do not address the SC role per se. However, a recent set of conferences offers a chance to evaluate the NEXT conference insights in an effective manner. In January 2007, I hosted a meeting of trainers of strategy coordinators from around the world. In March 2007, I hosted a similar meeting with over twenty supervisors of strategy coordinators in East Asia. In both meetings, eight to twelve case studies of CPMs were examined in depth. Three fundamental questions were asked about each case study:

- *What were the key steps that helped this work become a church planting movement?*
- *What part did the strategy coordinator play in seeing this develop?*
- *How did the training and supervision he received help the SC in getting to a CPM?*

These twelve case studies provide a more empirical benchmark for evaluating the most important ingredients of the SC role. How did these new insights compare with the findings from the eight NEXT conferences of 2004 and 2005 regarding the SC role?

The insights from the 2007 studies confirmed the findings from NEXT conferences though they expanded greatly our understanding of key SC competencies and tasks beyond what we learned in NEXT. NEXT conferences made no attempt to do empirical evaluations of effective SCs from around the world, though they did examine several CPMs. The 2007 meetings attempted to provide a more empirical analysis of CPMs and the SCs behind them.

Significant for this study is that the 2007 meetings confirmed the elements learned from NEXT conferences regarding the of spiritual character and the SC role. The following confirmations are especially noted:

- *A person of faith who grows in his relationship with God* (Cunnyngham 2007:1) or *a man or woman of spiritual nature who is prayerful* (Smith SR 2007b:18). The SC prioritizes staying in close relationship with God.
- *The SC hears God and obeys immediately* (Stevens 2007:1). This stresses the importance of being submitted to God and being teachable to new lessons (Smith SR 2007a:1).
- *Demonstrated Christ-like character* (Smith SR 2007b:19). Effective SCs are not only submitted to God but it is evident in their godly character.
- *The SC prioritizes relationships with local believers* (Cunnyngham 2007:1). The SC spends most of his time winning and training local believers rather than raising up missionaries from his home culture.
- *The SC narrows and focuses his work on the most essential plans that get to a CPM* (Stevens 2007:1). He spends the majority of this time on these simple plans that most quickly and effectively get to CPM and ignores things that distract him from CPM. For most SCs this means simplifying and boiling down from the multitude of activities they can give themselves to (Smith SR 2007a:1).
- *The SC ruthlessly evaluates his work and adapts as necessary* (Stevens 2007:1). This confirms the idea that an SC must remain teachable and grow with the role as the need demands at each stage in getting to a church planting movement. He must be a person who remains flexible in his work (Cunnyngham 2007:1).

The high value activities that a strategy coordinator needs to give his attention to are the subject of the chapters five through ten. The essential factor to note at present is that effective SCs need to focus on the most important activities in a spiritually-attuned manner in order to get to a sustained CPM.

4. The goal of a sustained church planting movement

After examining the spiritual character and role of an effective strategy coordinator, the next critical lesson is as follows: *In order to reach a whole target group within a few years, the only model we know sufficient is a church planting movement. Beyond simply getting a CPM started, the goal must be sustained church planting movements that will saturate a whole target group.* Up to this point in missions history, the only viable model we have found for reaching a whole people group in a short time is the CPM model. Genuine CPMs, since they are so far outside the paradigm of most missionaries, are difficult to start. But SCs must be careful that, in the joy-filled process of seeing one start, they also help it be sustained, not short-lived.

4.1. The need for sustained CPMs

The key question that strategy coordinators must ask is: “What will it take to finish the task in a people group or city?” (Fudge 2004b:2) Missionaries from the various NEXT conferences possessed varying lengths of service on the mission field. Yet a common refrain from them was that prior models they had used in mission work were inadequate to see a target group completely saturated with a clear gospel message and churches started within access of every person. Many participants came to the NEXT conference with some degree of conviction that a different approach was needed, usually akin to a CPM model.

However, very few who attended NEXT conferences had ministries that were characterized as “in CPM.” Two or three of the SCs attending were experiencing church planting movements at the time of their conferences, but the remainder were mainly experiencing church planting without much multiplication of churches. Statistics for the first seven conferences are listed below, taking out those for one SC who is overseeing perhaps the largest CPM in Asia (churches numbering in the thousands):

Table 1: NEXT Conferences 1 through 7 (Results: 1)

# of target groups	36
Aggregate population	150+ million
# of new churches previous year	670
# of new believers previous year	4,771

It is apparent from the statistics that, while there was very good evangelization work developing, it was insufficient to reach the whole target population. With only 4,771 new believers in a target population of 150 million persons, it was unlikely that the majority would hear a gospel message in the next few years.

In addition, SCs were asked to fill out a pre-conference survey about their greatest struggles. A majority expressed frustration at being able to help newly started churches multiply to the second and third generation.

Through a combination of presentations and collaboration, the theme of NEXT conferences was that SCs must find ways to help new believers multiply their witness and help new churches start additional new churches. New believers and churches multiplying exponentially is the only adequate model we know for saturating entire people groups with the gospel message and giving them a way to grow in faith in the body of Christ.

A key teaching from scripture, presentations and case studies was that the Lord desires reproduction of believers and churches. The Holy Spirit desires to do this, and he desires to initiate it *now*. The conviction was that God wants a CPM to start in each people group immediately (Fudge 2004b:1).

A key dynamic in getting to CPM is for SCs to come to the conviction 1) that CPMs (multiplication) are essential in reaching a people group in a short time, and 2) that the Holy Spirit is ready to initiate it immediately if we cooperate with him (Hughes 2005:10). Without multiplication, a few target people will hear the gospel and a few churches will start, but it will be generations before the entire group hears the gospel message.

4.1.1. CPM defined

As is apparent from the numbers in the table above, the types of churches being started in CPMs are radically different from traditional churches. The average church started in the ministries of the SCs began with only ten to twelve people, with an average of seven new believers among them. In CPMs churches are usually small in order to remain highly reproducible by average young believers.

SCs attending NEXT conferences were already familiar with the concept of starting small, reproducible churches, so very little attention was given to this concept. However, for the purposes of understanding the remainder of this study, a few terms should be defined. The typical reproducible church in a CPM is sometimes termed a *POUCH church* (Garrison 2003:345). This acronym stands for

Participative Bible study groups (there is little formal sermon preparation)

Obedience to God’s word as the mark of a normal Christian life (as opposed to emphasis on acquiring or transferring large volumes of knowledge alone)

Unpaid church leaders (so that churches can multiply endlessly)

Cells (or)

Homes are the normal setting for church meetings

Such a church remains highly flexible and reproducible by the average new believer. By keeping the forms of evangelism and church life simple (but not simplistic), new believers are equipped to spread the gospel and train those they win to repeat the process.

When target group believers and churches begin to take responsibility to evangelize and start new churches, and then the second generation of believers and churches repeats the process, a CPM begins. A CPM therefore is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment (Garrison 2003:2). A simpler way to describe it is: local indigenous believers and churches multiplying rapidly. CPMs are a “way that God is drawing massive numbers of lost persons into saving community with himself (:27).” It is the most effective way we know of winning a whole people group to faith in Jesus Christ (Smith SR 2004f:3).

4.1.2. The introduction of sustainability

Over the last fifteen years, a considerable number of CPMs defined in this manner have begun, just a handful in the beginning but many more in recent years. These CPMs have given the missions community a number of case studies to learn from. In the beginning, simply getting a CPM started was considered a gigantic step forward, and rightly so.

However, in recent years, after observing a number of unsustainable and/or pseudo-CPMs, a new element has been introduced into the CPM equation: *sustainability*. A number of examples of CPMs starting and suddenly stopping began to emerge. NEXT conference SCs learned that there are two key steps in reaching their target groups: 1) getting CPMs started and 2) helping them continue in a sustained manner (Fudge 2004b:2). For the sake of long-term viability and saturation of a target group with the gospel, a CPM must continue in a manner that can be sustained.

4.2. Inadequate forms of “CPM”

Rapid church planting that is not sustained gives hope for evangelization of a people group but disappoints in the end. These models are not bad, but they are *inadequate* for reaching an

entire group. SCs must look for church planting models that are adequately structured to saturate entire target groups.

4.2.1. Pseudo-CPM

One inadequate model has been termed a “pseudo-CPM” (Fudge 2004b:2). Pseudo-CPMs have the appearance of being CPMs due to the large numbers of churches being started. Upon closer examination, however, church planting in this model is not really a multiplication movement. Normally one of two reasons exists.

4.2.1.1. Church planting is done by addition by outsiders rather than by multiplication by insiders.

Upon close examination, a pseudo-CPM may be characterized by church *addition* rather than church *multiplication* (Smith SR 2004k:1). That is, many new churches are being started by trained church planters, usually from the outside, but the new churches planted are not in turn starting new churches. This type of church planting is inadequate for the task of saturating a people group because the number of new churches started each year does not grow appreciably. For example, if an estimated five thousand new churches are needed for a group to be saturated with the gospel, and the church planting team can start fifty new churches a year, it would take the team one hundred years to complete the task.

Pseudo-CPMs of this manner are encouraging in the beginning; on paper they look like genuine CPMs: many new churches are being started (Smith SL 2004:16). However, over time the SC realizes that this model is insufficient for reaching the entire target group. The *only* way to discern a pseudo-CPM from a genuine CPM is by tracking the *generational level* of new churches started. In a pseudo-CPM, virtually all churches are first generation, that is, started by trained church planters who successively plant many churches.

Genuine CPMs exhibit multi-generational growth by insiders, new believers and churches. Church planters start first generation churches. These new churches and believers start second generation churches. These second generation churches start third generation churches, and so on. The only way to distinguish the difference between CPMs and pseudo-CPMs is by monitoring what generation each new church is (e.g. 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.).

4.2.1.2. Church planting is done by paid insiders

A variant form of pseudo-CPM (which still employs addition over multiplication) is by insiders, but they are *paid* insiders (Fudge 2004b:2). This variation gives an even greater appear-

ance of a genuine CPM since *insiders* are doing the church planting. However, in this model, outsiders subsidize the indigenous believers to start churches. In effect, this ingredient of subsidy limits the amount of church planting that will be done. All church planting will continue to be first generation addition-style growth because there are a select number of individuals hired for the church planting task. New believers and churches do not expect to start new churches unless they are paid by outsiders to do it. This was the very model criticized by Roland Allen in China in the early 1900s. In regard to saturating an area with the gospel, he remarked “that object could only be attained if the first Christians who were converted by our labours, understood dearly that they could by themselves, without any further assistance from us, not only convert their neighbours, but establish Churches (Allen 1927:7).”

4.2.2. Unsustained CPM

A second inadequate model of CPM is an *unsustained* CPM. Three examples of these were studied in NEXT conferences: a large city in E Asia, a remote people group in E Asia and a remote people group in Central America (Fudge 2004b:2). Each of these CPMs began with promising starts. New believers and churches expanded through multiplication. However, each example bore within it critical flaws that prevented it from continuing. The most common of these was leadership overload (Smith SR 2004f:3).

In unsustained CPMs, new churches multiply according to the expectation of a CPM. They are genuine CPMs exhibiting multi-generational growth. However, the number of leaders is not being replicated to keep pace with the increase in churches. There are not adequate leadership training systems in place (Smith SR 2004k:1). Eventually a limited number of leaders attempt to lead an increasing number of churches. As each leader reaches his limit, the CPM will stop or slow drastically (Fudge 2004b:2).

4.3. A model for sustained CPM

NEXT conferences had the advantage of assembling a number of missions leaders and practitioners who for years had been implementing strategies aimed at starting CPMs. Through years of implementation, systemic flaws in CPM strategies began to emerge. By watching several CPMs start and then stop, SCs were able to make major corrections to their CPM strategies, especially to begin adding elements that would encourage sustainability once a CPM had begun. A prescription for moving past pseudo-CPMs and unsustainable CPMs began to emerge.

A model for sustained CPMs began to emerge. Having this model clearly established as an attainable vision for NEXT participants greatly aided in helping them establish concrete action plans for getting there.

4.3.1. Sustained CPM defined

A sustained CPM is defined as “a rapid and exponential increase (doubling in 12-18 months) of indigenous churches with simultaneous and timely provision of local leaders (trainers) to maintain the exponential increase (Fudge 2004b:2).”

Multiplication: In a sustained CPM, churches multiply. Whether new churches are started by a concerted plan of an existing church or by the efforts of a passionate individual, many new churches are being started by believers and churches that are relatively young in the faith. The expectation of new believers and churches is that they be active in evangelism and church planting and pass this expectation on to their new converts. The element of multiplication is what separates CPMs from pseudo-CPMs.

Rapidity: Rapidity is a crucial component of CPMs. In non-CPM contexts, many churches multiply over time, but this may take years or decades. Observation of CPMs has shown that churches and the movement as a whole double often and at a maximum of every twelve to eighteen months (Smith SR 2004e:1). Anything longer than this is not a spontaneous movement. As will be seen in chapters six and seven, most CPMs experience multiplication of churches on the order of every few weeks, and not usually longer than every six months.

Sustainability: The element that separates sustained CPMs from unsustainable CPMs is multiplication of leadership. Any model that focuses on church multiplication but that ignores leadership multiplication sets itself up for leadership overload. SCs that initiate strategies to saturate an entire target group must develop leadership multiplication structures that grow alongside church multiplication. In some ways, church planting movements are really leadership multiplication movements. The most effective model trains every new believer to win friends to Christ, lead them in a discipleship process, form them into churches and then train them to repeat the process. Each new believer has the DNA of leadership planted within him.

4.3.2. Sustained CPM prescribed

After establishing the goal of sustained CPMs for the ministries of the various SCs, the remainder of each NEXT conference was dedicated to developing plans for achieving them.

Developed plans encompassed strategies both for multiplying believers and churches, and also multiplying leaders of those churches.

The model of training trainers who train new trainers emerged as the most comprehensive strategy for achieving these dual aims of multiplication of both churches and leaders. This model will be explained in detail in chapter six.

4.4. Sustained CPM compared with six church planting models

Three questions emerge when comparing the model of sustained CPM with other church planting models:

- Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group?
- If so, how rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement?
- What provision is there to sustain the multiplication in a long-term manner?

4.4.1. Allen

While Allen was a missionary, most of his model is theoretical. He never really had a chance to implement this model to any great extent. Therefore, his model does not include many of the internal components that arise from having encountered a difficulty to the model and having found a way to work around the difficulty. Yet, Allen's model proposes elements very consistent with a CPM model.

The central component of Allen's model is the expansion of the kingdom by men who are on fire for God who employ a "simple application of the simple organization of the Church (Allen 1927:150)."

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? Allen advocates a model that anticipates multiplication as *the* means of spreading the gospel. As in Paul's strategy, missionaries should start a reproducible model church in a strategic center that has a vision for reaching its entire area (Allen 1962:12-13). From the beginning, churches should be autonomous not dependent upon the outside church planter (:83-84). The way to accomplish this is by starting churches that have simple, reproducible organization that the average indigenous believer can maintain and reproduce himself (Allen 1927:142). When the model church is composed of individuals infused with an evangelistic and missionary fervor, they are impelled to spread the gospel and organize new churches without any formal training program or initiative on behalf of the

church itself (:140). New groups begin to spring up in a spontaneous manner.

The Church expanded simply by organizing these little groups as they were converted, handing on to them the organization which she had received from her first founders. It was itself a unity composed of a multitude of little Churches any one of which could propagate itself, and consequently the reception of any new group of Christians was a very simple matter (1927:140).

Hence, the emphasis on a multitude of “little Churches” springing up and being added to the movement is Allen’s proposal for how the gospel should spread.

According to Allen, the churches must remain very simple in organization. The basic key components each needs are 1) full spiritual power and authority, 2) the Creed or basics of Christian belief, 3) the clear gospel message to believe and propagate, 4) the Sacraments self-administered and 5) the ability to lead themselves (1927:143). Such a simple church can multiply endlessly when propelled by fervent, Spirit-filled believers. Allen’s “spontaneous expansion of the church” is virtually identical to “church planting movement.”

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement?

Allen does not give a certain timeframe for multiplication, in part I believe, because his model is theoretical and not refined after years of implementation. He believes the planting of the first church in an area need not take more than five or six months (Allen 1962:84). It appears that he envisions new congregations being started much more rapidly once the gospel takes root in the lives of local believers (Allen 1927:140) though he gives no specific timeframe. Allen assumes that believers will start new churches and do not need to be admonished to do so (Allen 1962:94). This model agrees with the CPM model of multiplication developing rapidly, no longer than every twelve to eighteen months.

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? Because Allen did not have the opportunity to implement this model over years or decades, sustainability is not as developed as other topics are. However, he advocates clearly the need for the missionary to step back from the young believers and allow them to develop as leaders through their study of the scripture. The missionary over the next few months and years should see that they learn how to feed themselves but he should not feed them himself. He must watch and assist them from a distance, but not abandon them. Allen envisions that the long-term growth of the church will come over generations as a system of “religious education” is developed in which each believer learns to study the scripture and teach others (Allen 1927:146). By the church learning to use its own “faculties,” emerging leaders will be revealed and trained to keep pace with church expansion (:146). While Allen’s methods of long-term leadership de-

velopment are not fully expounded, his findings are consistent with NEXT findings: the key component to sustainability is the multiplication of leaders to keep pace with the movement.

4.4.2. Redford

Redford's model focuses on individual church planting. The question that arises, however, is whether or it is a model that can be utilized for multiplication of churches throughout a society. Redford's model (or a variation on it) became the standard model of Southern Baptist church expansion in the late twentieth century. From an historical standpoint, Redford's model was a departure from the precedent of church planting multiplication established by Baptists in North America in the mid-eighteenth century. Early Baptists emphasized lay preachers who traveled widely preaching the gospel and starting new churches (Garrison 2003:155-159). This model continued to be used on the frontiers of American expansion throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. In this model, any Baptist was authorized to evangelize and start new churches.

Redford's model reflects the entrenchment of many Southern Baptist churches into an organizational structure that does not encourage such spontaneity by individual believers. Therefore, his strategy encourages existing churches (that may never have started another church) to organize themselves to start a daughter church (Stetzer 2005) rather than developing pioneer church planters to target an unreached area.

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? The multiplication that Redford envisions is the starting of a new church by a mature, long-established church. His model is not a multiplication model per se.

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement? New church starts generally take three years or longer. This rate of "multiplication" does not fall within the rapid rate of CPMs (twelve to eighteen months).

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? The model Redford espouses is sustainable primarily because it does not multiply churches quickly. Finding enough leaders for the new churches is not a problem. Leaders can be raised up and trained at a pace that mirrors the expansion of the church.

4.4.3. Brock

Brock's model is a step forward from Redford in moving toward a model of multiplication of reproducible churches.

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? Brock's model emphasizes church planting in a manner that can be followed by the average new believer (Brock 1981:55). Normally, the church planter "should not do anything which the people cannot do themselves shortly after they are saved (:57)." However, the model emphasizes the starting of individual churches by a single church planter. Brock does not take it a step further to advocate multiplication that will saturate an area with the gospel. There is no expectation for multiplication of new congregations. Rather the person who started the new church then goes on to start other new churches (:37). This implies growth through addition rather than by multiplication.

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement? The model employs a church planting method that is consistent with the rapid multiplication needed for a movement. The timeframe confirms the parameters set forth at NEXT conferences. Generally, the model starts churches in ten to fifteen weeks (:89). The model could employ the idea of multiplication every ten to fifteen weeks but there is no explicit mention of this expectation.

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? Brock's model emphasizes sustainability of the work in two ways: 1) keeping church forms extremely reproducible so that young believers can lead themselves, and 2) raising up new leaders from within the new congregation and providing them specialized in-context training for at least three months by the church planter. In essence, Brock confirms the ideas of sustainability found in NEXT conferences by emphasizing raising up leaders from among new converts and providing on-going training. In this manner, the number of new leaders keeps pace with the development of new churches.

4.4.4. Akins

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? Akins' model envisions multiplication of churches as "the key to winning the entire world to Christ (Akins 1999:31)." On the whole, the model promotes reproducible forms of evangelism and church, though at times it strays to less reproducible church meeting forms (e.g. renting of meeting halls, combining smaller home groups into larger worship groups, etc.). However, the main emphasis is on reproducibility of churches. In effect, Akins is in agreement with the CPM model advocated in NEXT conferences.

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement? New churches are formed on a twenty-eight week model. Though he does not state an expli-

cit multiplication time frame, Akins does seem to expect these new churches to reproduce within six to eight months (1999:101). This confirms the lessons from NEXT conferences that churches need to multiply within a maximum twelve to eighteen month timeframe. One point of departure from the CPM model emerging from NEXT conferences is the emphasis on *churches* organizing new church starts (:101) rather than individuals being empowered to evangelize and start new churches. It is possible that this emphasis may in ways hinder the spontaneity and rapidity of a CPM.

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? Akins affirms the need for leadership training in order to sustain the long-term viability of the movement. Much of his emphasis (1999:93-101) is on the church planter immediately raising up leaders, mentoring them on a weekly basis, giving them new responsibilities and eventually exiting the work after six to seven months. His model stresses raising up enough leaders to keep pace with the multiplication of churches.

4.4.5. Patterson and Scoggins

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? This model by definition is a multiplication model. As was mentioned in chapter two, the model places most stress on how to start the first church and how to help it multiply the first time. It strongly advocates this type of multiplication as the means of reaching a new area. In theory, it advocates multiplication of successive generations of churches, though the methods for accomplishing this are nebulous. This model endorses the same *concepts* of multiplication that the CPM model espouses.

However, one point of departure from the CPM model is the emphasis on churches starting through division of the original church. A sub-model sometimes referred to by Patterson and Scoggins is that church members do evangelism, bring new believers into their church and then to divide (multiply) when they get too large (Patterson & Scoggins 2002:181). In a CPM model, most churches are started through the evangelistic work of members who reach new people and start new churches with them rather than bringing them back to the original church which multiplies at a later point.

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement? No timeframe is promoted in this model though incidental references seem to convey an expectation for new churches to reproduce in six to twelve months. This timeframe fits with the timeframe proposed by the CPM model.

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? This model puts great stress on raising up leaders to keep pace with church multiplication. “Multiplying churches is almost synonymous with multiplying leaders (2002:85).” Great care is given to training new converts to lead the church. The method is on-the-job mentoring by the original church planter (:125).

4.4.6. Cole

Does the model involve multiplication of reproducible churches as a means of reaching a target group? Cole’s model centers on the DNA of multiplication of disciples and churches in the effort to reach a lost world (Cole 2005:127).

How rapid is this multiplication? Is it fast enough to be considered a movement? Cole does not give clear guidelines on times for reproduction. The general flavor of his teaching implies fairly rapid reproduction on the order of months not years. Cole’s model seems to fit within the same time framework espoused in NEXT conferences.

What provision is there to sustain the work in a long-term manner? Cole builds into the fabric of each church strong discipleship and accountability groups (Life Transformation Groups) that encourage all new believers to grow in faith and lead out in the church (2005:27-28). Such a model stresses long-term sustainability by multiplying disciples in way that eventually multiplies leaders that eventually multiply churches (Cole 2007).

2.1.2. Conclusions

The six models provide a large degree support for NEXT findings. While this neither verifies nor refutes the veracity of the dynamics of CPMs espoused in NEXT conferences, it does add a weight of affirmation that the lessons gleaned by NEXT participants were consistent with what has been learned by others.

5. A strategy for getting to sustained CPMs

After clarifying that the goal of strategy coordinators is sustained church planting movements, the next critical lesson learned at NEXT conferences was as follows: *SCs that get to CPM utilize a strategy of end-visioning which addresses the basic question of “What will it take for all of my target group to hear the gospel within the next five to ten years?”* SCs must understand not only the concept of CPM, but also how to develop a CPM strategy that is applicable to their particular situation.

5.1. Path: End-visioning the critical path of sectors that must be reached

Effective strategy coordinators strive toward CPMs out of a desperate desire to answer the question of “What will it take for all of my target group to hear the gospel within the next five to ten years (Smith SR 2004c:1)?” What sets them apart from other missionaries employing strategies that emphasis exponential growth is adhering to one particular question rather than another more commonly asked question:

“What will it take to see my people reached?”

rather than

“What can I do to minister to my people?”

Both questions are worthy questions. However, SCs ask the first question because they *take responsibility for the evangelization* of an entire people group or city. The question of “What will it take?” forces them to seek answers and resources beyond themselves, resources that are adequate for reaching the entire group. The question of “What can I do?” focuses on themselves only and usually results in strategies of much smaller scope than strategies built upon “What will it take?”

5.1.1. Step 1: Look at the final result you want to achieve and then find the critical path that gets you there (Smith SR 2004c:2)

CPMs begin because the SC asks questions and seeks answers about starting a process that reaches an entire people group or city. When an SC asks what it will take to reach an entire target group, he comes up with different answers than he might if he only asks what good ministry he can bring to the target group. The end-vision is a vision of what the end will look like when every person in a target group has had an opportunity to respond to the gospel.

For example, what would an end-vision look like for a remote unreached people group dwelling in 4,800 villages? The gospel message would be widespread among them; there might be churches in all 4,800 villages (4,800 churches), and the group would be boldly proclaiming the gospel to the remaining lost individuals as well as among neighboring unreached people groups. In this scenario, end-visioning determines that what is needed is 4,800 evangelistic, reproducing churches (Smith SR 2004c:2).

A strategy coordinator takes responsibility for an entire people group. Therefore, he or she develops a strategy that finds a way to plant a sufficient number of multiplying churches (e.g., 4,800 churches) among his or her people group. This is the end-vision. Such a vision of the end appears to be impossible to most SCs, and humanly speaking, it is. SCs do not change the end-vision because it appears impossible. Instead, inspired by biblical precedents and modern-day case studies, they find ways to cooperate with the Spirit of God to begin a movement that can have such a result.

The most direct strategy for achieving such a movement is called the *critical path* (Smith SR 2004e:5). Such a path helps the SC to focus attention on what most needs to happen for a movement to expand to every sector of the people group. SCs are then free to minimize activities that do not contribute to the critical path for getting to the end-vision. One SC commented in NEXT conference #2 that the concept of a critical path was the most “freeing” thing he learned during the entire conference.

5.1.2. Step 2: After looking at the end, ask what the stages of a movement look like just prior to reaching the end-vision

Discerning the critical path is not an intuitive activity. Most missionaries are not trained to think in such ways. To use the example above, understanding how to begin from no converts and no churches, and get to a movement consisting of 4,800 churches and thousands of new believers is a difficult task. Therefore, the next critical step in end-visioning is to visualize a *progression* for building momentum from the current status of the SC’s ministry to the end-vision (Smith SR 2004k:1).

That progression is a multi-step process that begins with the end-vision and employs reverse problem-solving. Garrison, in examining various CPMs around the world, refers to reverse engineering (Smith SR 2004k:11) as a means of breaking down a CPM into understandable parts and a timeline of phases that progress from little evangelistic activity to a full-blown CPM. In NEXT conferences, SCs spent time trying to determine what the stages of a

progression toward a pervasive CPM in their target group would look like. To achieve this, they started at the goal and worked themselves backwards.

If the end-vision is the final stage of the work, then to determine the critical path, SCs must determine what the stage just prior to arriving at the final end-vision might look like (Smith SR 2004c:2). Such a second-to-last stage might look like this:

- Since the gospel tends to travel along lines of relationship, ***multiple streams of separate CPMs would be starting in each relational sector of the target group.*** These sectors might be geographical (e.g., counties) in fairly homogenous rural people groups, or they might be socio-economic (e.g., professionals, blue-collar workers, migrants, etc.) in tiered societies such as cities.
 - The gospel would be traveling rapidly throughout the relational sectors with such momentum that it would eventually saturate every area with the gospel message.
- ***The movement would be characterized by a spiritual climate that would enable it to reach the edges of lostness of the target group.***
 - Target group believers would possess a **vision** to reach every lost person in their target group.
 - Target group believers would have **simple, reproducible means** of evangelizing, starting churches and growing as disciples.
 - Target group believers would **expect to obey** the scriptures as a lifestyle. Evangelism and church planting by average believers would be the norm.
 - Target groups believers would be willing to **die** to make this happen. They would live a life of sacrifice that boldly spreads the kingdom despite opposition.

Returning to our example of a remote people group dwelling in 4,800 villages, the second-to-last stage of a CPM would be at a point that has not yet reached every remaining village but with its momentum is just on the edge of getting there. With an end-vision of 4,800 churches among 4,800 remote villages the SC would need to ask what the strategic centers of the second-to-last stage might be. In this particular context, each village trades goods on a weekly basis in small market towns. In this East Asia example the SC determined that about ninety such market towns service all 4,800 villages. Suddenly the critical path for the SC became clear. The SC does not need to help get 4,800 churches started but instead ninety churches. If each of the ninety market towns has a church that is evangelistic and has a

vision for reaching all the villages in its district then the 4,800 villages may be reached by the ninety churches (Smith SR 2004c:2). The second-to-last stage of the critical path, therefore, is not 4,800 churches but only ninety. This makes the task much more manageable.

5.1.3. Step 3, 4 5+: Continue this process until you can see how and where to begin.

The end-visioning process continues working backwards from the final stage until the strategy coordinator can see how to begin down the critical path from his or her current point in ministry. For SCs with few churches or believers, attempting to get to the second-to-last stage is a daunting task. For example, attempting to start ninety new churches in ninety separate, remote locations is a path most SCs still do not have the means to walk upon.

Therefore, the end-visioning process employs as many reverse problem-solving steps as necessary for the SC to know how to begin effectively. If the second-to-last stage appears to be unachievable, then the SCs asks what the stage leading to that scenario might look like – the third-to-last stage.

In the previous example, if the second-to-last stage includes churches in each of the ninety market towns, what would the stage just prior to these ninety churches being started look like? In this context, the SC determined that these ninety market towns were situated in a weekly traffic flow pattern on thirty-five key road systems. Usually one market town on each of the road systems was the most influential of the three or four market towns on that road. Most of the traffic to the other market towns first passed through the key market town. Therefore, in the third-to-last stage, if the SC could help establish thirty-five churches in these thirty-five key market towns – churches that had a vision to start churches in the other market towns that would in turn have a vision to reach every village – it would be likely that the end-vision would result in time. This stage of the critical path is more achievable for the SC than the stage after it (ninety churches) or the final stage (4,800 churches).

However, in this scenario (Smith SR 2004b:1), the SC determined that this third-to-last stage was still too daunting. Therefore, he determined what the fourth-to-last stage might look like. The thirty-five key market towns are located within only eleven administrative counties of which seven contain ninety percent of the target population. The SC determined that if he were able to establish just seven churches with CPM ethos in seven counties, he was well on the way down the critical path of a saturating CPM. For these seven churches would eventually target thirty-five key market towns, which would eventually target ninety market towns which would eventually target 4,800 villages. At this point in the end-visioning

process, the SC determined that he was at a place in ministry that he could marshal the resources to start these seven important churches (in the seven most populous counties) with a vision and plan for reaching the entire target group.

Most SCs at the NEXT conferences found such a reverse problem-solving exercise helpful in developing a strategy for target groups of several hundred thousand to several million non-Christians. Several of the case studies employed a similar strategy (see especially *Smith SR 2004b*).

5.1.4. Alternate ways of end-visioning

Not all minds, however, find such an end-visioning process helpful. Fortunately, one particular large CPM case study (see *Smith W 2004b*) utilized a different process that achieved the same end. In this scenario, the SC focused on developing new believers and churches that had such strong ethos for CPM that they immediately began multiplying to successive generations. Churches soon numbered in the thousands and believers in the tens of thousands. The SC's attempt at end-visioning amounted to starting multiple streams of CPMs in numerous locations. He then watched how they spread along geographic and socio-economic lines. Often they jumped relational boundaries to new social strata previously untouched by the CPM. As the SC periodically looked at the major relational sectors of his target group, if the CPM was not spilling over into these sectors, he purposefully began a new CPM stream in this sector (*Hughes 2005:5*). The SC continues to do this as he strives toward the end-vision of every geographical and social grouping of his target group being reached.

Such an end-visioning process does not employ the process of reverse problem solving but it does still strive toward fulfilling the mission of reaching an entire target group with the gospel in a short period of time. Both methods try to effectively respond to the question "What will it take to reach my entire target group within the next five to ten years?"

5.2. Presuppositions: Mental boundaries and expectations of what God will do

Walking down the critical path to such an end-vision is a daunting endeavor that challenges the presuppositions most missionaries come to the field with. These presuppositions revolve around how quickly God can reach a people group or city with the gospel. Presuppositions are the ways missionaries think that set guidelines and parameters for how they approach their ministries. They are mental assumptions about what will and will not occur in ministry

(Smith SR 2004c:4). The problem discovered at NEXT conferences is that many SCs have sub-conscious presuppositions of how they expect God to work, yet they may not be aware that they have them.

In order to achieve the end-vision of CPM, it is necessary for missionaries to alter their presuppositions and bring their thinking in line with a biblical understanding of God's ways of working. In NEXT conferences this meant challenging faulty presuppositions and helping SCs look for more correct presuppositions through interaction with the scripture and case studies of current CPMs. Examples of presuppositions that SCs had to wrestle with were:

- How quickly will people believe once they hear the gospel?
- What constitutes a church?
- How old does a church have to be to start a new one?
- How quickly can new churches operate independently of the church planter?
- Can a movement spread quickly and at the same time mature deeply?
- Do church planters need financial subsidy?
- Can CPMs start among “resistant” people groups (e.g. Muslims, Tibetans)?
- Do non-literate people groups require forty or fifty chronological Bible stories before they can effectively respond to the gospel?
- Can CPMs start in mission fields with a strong tradition of mission work?

Developing an effective strategy toward sustained CPM requires that SCs identify their assumptions about how God works. Changing presuppositions radically alters how SCs structure their ministry. For instance, SCs were asked the following question:

“If you assumed that God wanted to reach your entire target group in five years rather than fifty years, how would you plan your ministry differently? (Smith SR 2004c:5)”

SCs realized that their answers to such questions determined their level of faith about what God would do, and thereby determined what they attempted in ministry. A major goal, therefore, of strategy development for CPMs is to examine individual presuppositions and continually replace them with those that are consistent with the ways of the kingdom (see chapter two). This should be a life-long process for all missionaries.

5.3. Principles: the unchanging ways of God's kingdom

As SCs grappled with the answer to the question above (five years versus fifty years), they learned that the next step in building a strategy is to discover and implement principles that will guide them toward a sustained CPM. In this context, principles are the unchanging ways of God's kingdom (how God acts) that are discovered both in the scripture and in looking at historical examples of how God has worked (Smith SR 2004k:2). These principles are timeless and never change, though the particular way of implementing them may (Smith SR 2004c:5). Therefore, before developing any specific plans, SCs must understand *principles* of how God's kingdom works.

In NEXT conferences, these principles were discovered through scripture studies (chapter two) and CPM case studies (chapters six and seven). For example, a study of the three Pauline journeys gave evidence that maturing churches can be started by the power of the Holy Spirit and left within a matter of six to eight weeks. Therefore, many SCs began to make plans to start churches in a manner that cooperated with the Spirit to start such churches.

5.4. Plans: Action plans that expect that God will honor such efforts

The final stage in developing an effective strategy for sustained CPMs was the development of clear action plans. All too often missionaries live in the theoretical world of principles with little concrete application. SCs at NEXT conferences learned that “principles that do not lead to practice are pointless. Plans are the step to make practices out of principles (Smith SR 2004c:7).” Plans are concrete steps that the missionaries take to apply the principles they learn.

At NEXT conferences, the SCs each developed concrete twelve-month action plans (Smith SR 2004a). These plans were categorized as follows:

1. What is your critical path? Where are you on it? Where do you need to go the next twelve months?

2. What high-value activities do you and your team need to give yourself to the next 12 months?

3. In what practical ways will you and your team train willing locals to live out the DNA of CPM and be willing to pay the price to live it out?

- Who will do the training?
- How often?
- How?
- Whom will you train?
- What material will you use?

- How will you hold them accountable?

4. What will you turn loose of or adjust to see this happen?

5. How do you want to be encouraged and held accountable by your supervisor and this group of SCs?

After developing these specific plans, the SCs then scheduled them on a twelve-month calendar. They met with their supervisors to devise an accountability relationship for these plans. This last step was deemed important because SCs determined from their discussions that persistence on the critical path was essential. Specific action plans may fall through but persistently doing the *types* of things that lead to CPM should one day reap full-blown church planting movements. A second reason for the accountability relationship was to help the SCs learn to dismiss opportunities that appear good but are not on their critical path.

5.5. End-visioning and a strategy for CPM compared with other church planting models

Strategic planning is not a concept unique to the CPM model or to the dynamics learned at NEXT conferences. What may be unique, however, is the process of end-visioning as a guide to developing a critical path for evangelizing a people group. Therefore, it is helpful to compare this aspect of strategic planning to the other six church planting models.

The concept of end-visioning appears to be foreign to much of the thinking in the six models. In none of the models is any sort of question asked such as “What will it take for this entire target group to be reached?” The concept of devising a critical path that breaks down the progress toward the end-vision step by step, beginning with the end, is also a foreign concept. Allen alone gives attention to some of these ideas in his chapter on “strategic points (Allen 1962:10-17).” In this chapter, he introduces the concept of starting reproducing churches or streams of a movement in key centers of a target area and expecting them to expand to saturate the area. This is a good attempt at trying to find a model of breaking down a large target into manageable sizes. For Allen, this is the critical path, and this concept is very close to the concepts learned in NEXT conferences.

Other models see multiplication of churches as an avenue for reaching a target group, but do not develop any sense of end-vision or critical path. They do not propose a specific strategy for reaching a target group within a certain time period. While NEXT conference SCs would not *limit* their work to a specific window of time, say five years, they *made plans*

as if they had only that time. This added a sense of *responsibility* (“Under God, I am responsible to see this group reached with the gospel”) and *urgency* (“God wants to reach them now”) that seems to be lacking in the other five models.

In the plethora of missionary roles in the world, it seems that the role of *strategy coordinator* is fairly unique. It incorporates a sense of urgency and responsibility that is seen in the ministry of Paul (Rom 15:15-24). What sets it apart is this very concept that “before God I am responsible to do whatever it takes to see this entire people group reached in the next few years.” It is this what-will-it-take-to-reach-them-now attitude that has become the mantra of strategy coordinators, a guiding force in church planting movements and even the inspiration for CPM guru David Garrison in naming his resource network, WIGTake Resources (Garrison 2003).

The relative absence of these end-visioning and critical path ideas from the five sources (outside of Allen) does not invalidate this path of strategic reasoning. If the CPM model did not have valid and current examples of large numbers of people coming to faith (see chapters six and seven) in Christ and churches starting, the value of strategic reasoning in missions might be thrown into doubt. However, given the precedent of numerous CPMs that have developed around the world the last fifteen years, the strategic process of end-vision and critical path may be one of the distinctives that sets the CPM model apart as a worthy avenue of pursuit for missionaries around the world.

The aim in several of the models (Akins, Patterson and Scoggins, and Cole) of church multiplication agrees with the aim of the CPM model of NEXT conferences. The models proposed by those authors may develop into movements that *do* saturate people groups and cities. However, the added component in NEXT conferences of end-vision and critical path provides an urgent and practical framework that demonstrates a growing track record of assisting missionaries to evangelize entire people groups and cities.

6. Case studies presented

Aside from the scripture studies and presentations from learned practitioners, a major source of learning about the dynamics of CPMs came through the examination of several current CPM case studies. Through the study of these CPMs, NEXT participants began to draw lessons about how CPMs start and grow. *NEXT participants learned that CPMs demonstrate common characteristics, and strategy coordinators at the center of them invest in similar types of ministry.* Each case study was presented by the facilitators and then examined by the NEXT participants. After each presentation, a list of themes and lessons was developed. Generally, each NEXT conference afforded enough time to examine four case studies in-depth. After completing all four studies, NEXT participants developed a list of similarities and a list of dissimilarities for the four CPMs, with certain themes consistently emerging. The largest set of themes related to what was similar in each. However a second set of lessons was developed that explored unique characteristics that might set one CPM apart from another in terms of effectiveness. In this chapter, a comprehensive overview is given for each case study. In the following chapter, CPM themes are presented and are compared with those of other CPM assessments.

Each of the CPMs examined occurred within nations antagonistic to missionary activities. For security reasons, the places and exact names will not be revealed in this paper. However, each case study is supported by objective verification and extensive documentation.

6.1. Large Asian urban and rural CPM

6.1.1. History

The largest CPM examined was located in an Asian country that has a history of missionary activity but has been closed to traditional missions for several decades. However, the SC couple for this target group have daily access to them. The target group itself is primarily urban but is a very diverse group. It is a cluster of cities with a core population of thirty million (Smith W 2004b:2). The high population is due to the proliferation of thousands of factories that draw migrant workers from all over the country. Included in this cluster of cities are numerous small towns and villages. The SCs targeted all three types of sectors: urban dwellers, factory workers and villagers.

Protestant Christianity first arrived in this area more than one hundred years ago. Due to its easy access, even after the closure of this nation to traditional missions, many Christians have continued to quietly enter this area to evangelize it. The result is that this province contains many Christians who meet in a few state churches and a plethora of underground house churches. However, the percentage of the total population that were Christians at the start of the SCs’ ministry was still quite low (less than two percent).

The SC couple are ethnically similar to the target culture and speak the language fluently. This enables them to travel around their area without attracting much attention. The couple began their work in November 2000. Not quite four years later, in September 2004, an assessment was done of their work. Objective assessors estimated the following extraordinary results from ministry initiated by the SCs (Smith W 2004b:4):

Table 2: Results of Large Asian CPM

	<u>Nov 2000</u>	<u>Sept 2004</u>
Number of new believers	0	483,235
Number of new churches	0	44,096

In the history of this organization’s work in this area, this was by far the largest movement ever experienced. Many streams of CPM were begun among this group, most extending multiple generations. In one stream, eighteen generations were documented (Smith SR 2004e:2).

6.1.2. Summary of the SCs’ activities

For several years, the SC couple was involved in a traditional missions environment in Asia. They planted one new church each year, pastored it and then, turning it over to a new pastor, started a new church. When they transitioned to the role of strategy coordinator, they did not plan any essential change to their strategy. However, the SC husband has often remarked that during his four week strategy coordinator training in 2000, each day he pondered a disturbing question: “How many of my people will hear the gospel today?” This question of reaching thirty million people haunted him and drove him to do two things. First, he made a radical departure from his previous paradigm of ministry. Second, he pursued a path that was different from the normal path SCs were taking at the time of SC training in the year 2000. The question of how to help all thirty million people to hear the gospel drove him to develop a new paradigm which has changed the way we develop CPM strategies.

The SC couple determined that their target areas consisted of only two types of people: 1) lost people who needed to be witnessed to, and 2) saved people who needed to be

trained to reach the lost (Smith SR 2005b). With extreme discipline and focus, the couple began to focus most of their energies in three areas of ministry and eschewed other normal missionary activities that would divert their attention from these three.

6.1.2.1. Prayer

The SC husband in particular spent one to two hours every morning in prayer. He prayed for his own personal holiness, for power to fulfill his ministry, for the non-Christians that he would witness to that day and the many believers he would train. The couple prayed that the Holy Spirit would bring supernatural breakthroughs among the individuals and groups they were ministering to (Smith W 2004b:5). The SCs' prayer life has become a model for new believers they train. The whole movement is pervaded by prayer.

6.1.2.2. Witnessing to the lost

With exceptional intentionality, the SCs individually gave a gospel witness to five to ten people each week. In addition, they created an intentional and accountable expectation that each believer personally witness to at least five people each week through a testimony and simple gospel presentation. As the number of new believers expanded, this evangelistic ethos created an environment in which eventually *daily* tens of thousands of non-believers would hear a testimony or gospel presentation from a neighbor, co-worker, relative or friend. The result was that thousands responded to personal invitations to follow Christ (Smith W 2004e:1). In four years almost 500,000 people made decisions to follow Christ because *millions* heard gospel presentations from believers who cared about them.

6.1.2.3. Training every believer (new or pre-existing) to be trainers of others

The key to this movement is its exceptional focus on training every new believer to be a trainer of others to then become trainers of others and so on. The SC couple based this concept on 2 Tim. 2:2 (NASB): "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." The goal of the SC couple was to create cascading and expanding generations of believers whose expectation was to follow Christ, witness effectively, start churches and train their new believers to do the same (including training *their* new believes to do the same).

As a consequence, the SC couple spent most of their time searching for indigenous believers who were willing to be trained in this "training for trainers (T4T)" process. They trained any group of believers that was willing to be trained. The SCs filled their days with

as many groups of trainees as possible. As their ministry progressed, they trained between fifteen and thirty separate groups of believers every two weeks. These groups sometimes were as small as three or four individuals but normally numbered twenty to fifty individuals (Smith W 2004b:2). They came from a variety of backgrounds: state churches, house churches or new believers the SCs had won.

Each training session was obedience-based, meaning that the trainees were expected to immediately obey the lesson and pass it on to someone else. Training occurred once every two weeks so the trainees had time to witness and start their own groups on the off weeks. When trainees returned for the next session with the trainer, they were asked questions that held them accountable for what they had learned. Particularly, they were held accountable for three things:

- Did they obey the lesson from the previous session (e.g. to pray, to study the Bible, etc.)?
- Did they faithfully witness to the people on their lists and begin training those that believed?
- Were the people they were training faithfully witnessing and training others who had believed?

Such questions developed an ethos of obedience and multi-generational expansion of the gospel.

The design of the training was that *each group* started by the trainees would become a new church meeting in a home, factory, dorm room, storefront, etc. In actuality the movement was very varied in its expression. The majority of training groups became churches, but an assortment of other expressions developed among which the two most common are:

- Some training groups combined each week to worship with other training groups in a slightly larger church environment.
- Some training groups remained as home Bible studies since they were a part of a larger state church.

The SC couple typically continued training a particular training group for nine to twelve months until they were confident it had successfully initiated multiple generations of training groups and churches and could continue on its own with only periodic follow up.

6.1.3. The training trainers (T4T) process

The genius of the process was its simplicity. Because this CPM was the largest studied at the NEXT conferences, extra attention was given to the process of training for trainers, or T4T as it has come to be known. The aim of the process was to train trainers who train trainers to train in a never-ending process of evangelism, discipleship, church planting and leadership development. The chief characteristics of this process were as follows:

A simple, reproducible method and curriculum: The SCs used six photocopied basic fill-in-the-blank discipleship lessons as the foundation of their training. The lessons were so simple that each new believer could immediately (i.e. the following week) teach this lesson to other new believers (Smith W 2004e:1). The first lesson included a clear gospel presentation that also doubled as an assurance of salvation lesson for believers. Instead of memorizing a lengthy gospel presentation, trainers were taught how to share a short personal testimony (two to three minutes), then to go through the first lesson with non-believers and at the end invite them to trust in Christ. Each of the successive lessons was learned and then taught to those who believed. In addition, these new trainers expected their new believers to repeat the process with others they knew. The only materials each new generation of trainers needed were six simple photocopied sheets of paper. To initiate the evangelism process, the first session answered three questions (Smith SR 2005b):

- *“Why should I share the gospel message?”* To address the apathy many believers had in regularly witnessing to the lost, the first training session, as well as several subsequent sessions, included a strong vision-casting element concerning the Great Commission. Each trainer was taught to pass on not only the content of the new discipleship lesson but also the vision casting component.
- *“Whom should I tell?”* To answer this question, the first session was designed to help trainees identify non-Christians in their circle of relationships with whom they could begin sharing the gospel and then train in T4T. In the first session, trainees wrote out a list of as many unbelievers as they could think of. Most of these lists included names of at least thirty or forty family members, friends, co-workers and neighbors that needed to hear the gospel. At this point, the names were prioritized into groups of five. The trainees’ priority was to share the gospel with each of the five individuals in the first priority group the first week, and then with five new ones each subsequent week.

- “*What do I say?*” In the first session, trainees were taught how to share an interesting short salvation testimony that they could utilize in witnessing to individuals on their name list. Immediately upon finishing their testimony, trainees were encouraged to go right into lesson one with the non-believer. The goal of lesson was to lead the unsaved individual into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Repeating the process: Any time an individual or group believed, those new believers were immediately taught to repeat the process (Smith W 2004b:2). For instance, at the end of the first lesson, if the individuals believed, they were taught the same three things: 1) why to share the gospel, 2) whom to tell (they made their own name list) and 3) what to say (they learned a simple testimony and how to teach lesson one). The powerful part of this process was as follows:

- The initial training group learned lesson one on week one.
- The trainees witnessed to lost friends that week and began their own new training groups on week two.
- On week three, while the trainees in group one came back for another lesson, the trainees in group two were witnessing and beginning their own training groups.

In numerous streams of training, new generations of training groups were starting *every week or two*. The rapidity of this movement startled all of us who were familiar with the situation.

The three parts of a training session (Smith SR 2005b): To enable this multi-generational process to unfold, each of the training sessions included three basic parts. To give adequate time to each part, training sessions could last two to three hours or longer.

Part 1 – Vision-casting, pastoral care, worship and accountability: The beginning of each session normally included another short vision-casting component to keep the trainees motivated to share the gospel. It also included some time of worship and prayer. Any questions or difficulties the group members were facing were addressed by the trainer through counsel, encouragement, exhortation and prayer. As the trainees began leading their own training groups, this time afforded them an opportunity to ask questions about how to lead. In essence, over the following months this a strong leadership training component of each session. Finally, this part included strong accountability for obedience. Many questions were asked from time to time but the primary three were:

- Did they obey the lesson from the previous session?

- Did they faithfully witness and begin training those that believed? Each person was expected to witness to five people a week.
- Were the people they were training faithfully witnessing and training those who believed?

Part 2 – Teaching of new content: A simple lesson was taught during this time. In the early weeks of each group, this would be one of six prescribed lessons. After completing the six lessons, the group learned an inductive Bible study process and began studying the gospel of Mark.

Part 3 – Practicing the lesson and commissioning: During the weeks the trainees were learning the prescribed six lessons, at the end of each session they divided into pairs and practiced teaching the freshly-learned material (NEXT 2:3) until they had confidence to train their own groups the following week. The SCs found that without this practice time, trainees lacked confidence to go out and repeat the process. Upon completion of the practice time, trainees made a fresh commitment about whom they would witness to and train, and then were prayed for and sent out.

The transition of training groups to churches at session four: The fourth lesson of T4T taught a simple form of church from Acts 4. Most T4T groups were functioning as churches by the fourth session (eight weeks into their group life), but the clear teaching of lesson four helped them recognize themselves as churches and address any deficiencies they might have for healthy church life.

Since only fifteen to twenty percent go on to train trainers, invest in trainers who reproduce: The SCs learned an important lesson in implementing training for trainers. They discovered that, despite their best efforts, in most groups only fifteen to twenty percent of the trainees actually began training new groups of trainees. In a typical T4T group, a high percentage of the trainees began witnessing and some even started groups (churches), but only a small percentage went on to train members of these groups to repeat the process. A very important note is that the SCs did not get distracted by the eighty-five percent that did not become trainers but instead invested heavily in the fifteen percent that did (NEXT8 2005:13). These new trainers were like the good soil in Matthew 13 that produced crops of thirty, sixty and a hundred fold. Each new trainer was taught to also invest in the same types of fruitful trainers.

Since only fifteen to twenty percent go on to train trainers, train as many groups as possible: Another lesson learned from this was that if SCs begin with too few people (two to three people) they may never find the fifteen percent that will become trainers of trainers

(Smith SR 2004f:6). Therefore, like the SCs in this CPM, NEXT participants were challenged to start as many training groups as possible in order to find the few fruitful trainers.

Average believers are equipped to lead through the training for trainers experience: This model of encouraging all new believers to obey the scripture and to immediately pass this teaching on to others strongly encouraged average believers to grow quickly in their faith and take on leadership roles (Smith W 2004b:5). A very high percentage of believers in the movement were serving in some sort of leadership capacity. This component added depth to the movement as well as long term sustainability.

2.1.3. The development of mid-level and top-level trainers

As the movement began to grow, the SCs realized that they needed others who could help them shepherd the movement. They began to watch the various trainers to see who was generating multi-generational growth (at least three more generations beyond their training group) and possessed spiritual gifts to lead. The SCs began to give these individuals extra training as “mid-level trainers”. These mid-level trainers helped to shepherd various streams of churches. As the movement continued to grow, the SCs watched for individuals who had gifts to lead at the top level. They began to take these “top-level trainers” with them in ministry in a mentoring process. Their goal for these top-level trainers was that they take a role similar to the SCs’ in guiding whole sections of the CPM and implementing specialized training for mid-level trainers.

At the time of the NEXT conferences, the SCs and top-level trainers together were coordinating fifteen to twenty mid-level trainer retreats each month (Smith W 2004e:1). Each retreat might be attended by ten to thirty mid-level trainers. Each mid-level trainer attended such a retreat approximately every four months. As a consequence, the SC was facilitating the training of 1200-1500 mid-level trainers who were each overseeing small networks of churches. These two expanding levels of leadership meant that leadership multiplication was able to keep pace with the multiplication of churches. The movement possessed elements that sustained it at each new level of growth.

6.2. Z people

The next two case studies presented at NEXT conferences were very different in nature and scope than the first. Both involved rural people groups whereas the first case study was primarily urban in focus. However, while located in the same country, the two rural CPMs va-

ried considerably. The *Z People* had had an SC strategy in place since 1989, whereas the *H People* became the target of an SC strategy only late in 1997.

6.2.1. History

The Z people are located in an Asian country that has a history of missionary activity but has been closed to traditional missions for several decades. They are the largest minority people group in this nation with a population of almost seventeen million. They were the first group in the world to be targeted with a strategy coordinator model.

From 1989 to 1996 the first trained SC couple (not the current SC) began work among this group (Hughes 2005:14). Implementing a strategy to evangelize an unreached people group in a “closed” nation was a novel concept at the time. A variety of approaches was developed but none centered around a CPM model (which was not popularized until about 1997). At the end of the period, only a handful of Z believers existed.

The current SC took over the role in 1996. She inherited an on-the-ground team of two-year personnel. At first very few converts or churches resulted from her work. However, in 2001 a CPM began to develop with the following results in this SC’s ministry (Smith W 2004a):

Table 3: Results of Z People CPM

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Total churches	6	17	83	220	516

Though these results pale in comparison to the numbers of churches in the previous case study, these results were very remarkable for a rural people group that was more difficult to access than the urban areas of the first CPM.

6.2.2. First three years

For the first three years, the SC primarily tried to understand the current situation of the work and find ways to transition it to a CPM model. She gradually tried to phase the team away from old styles of working that were not contributing to a CPM-type strategy. The SC identified several factors as helpful in her effort to move the work toward CPM (Hughes 2005:14).

- The SC continued to supply existing indigenous evangelists with evangelistic materials and Bibles, but phased out prior commitments the team had made that were not conducive to getting to CPM. Instead, she organized them to begin praying regularly for the salvation of the Z people.

- The SC recruited two long-term teammates who were ethnically similar to the Z people and could speak the trade language of the country. These two colleagues became the key trainers in the CPM that emerged.
- For both short term trips and long-term partnerships, the SC began to mobilize partners who were culturally close to the Z people, rather than mobilizing foreigners (e.g., Americans) who had no trade-language abilities. Her philosophy was that the people who were closest to the culture would be the most effective evangelists (Smith SL 2004:28).
- The SC employed end-visioning to determine how many sectors of the Z people CPMs would need to start in. She identified three primary groups among the Z people: 1) rural people (85% of the Z people) where Westerners could not evangelize, 2) county seat towns that would be suitable for Westerners and culturally-similar workers to work in, 3) cities where anyone could evangelize. Overall, the SC determined that she would need fifteen to seventeen CPMs to start in various sectors (Smith SR 2004f:7).
- The SC broke down the overall population into language affinity groups. She recruited other SCs to take responsibility for sub-groups of the Z people and she kept about nine million (the heart of the Z people) for her own strategy. This enabled her to better focus her energies (Smith SR 2004f::7).
- The SC streamlined her team by getting everyone on the same page with a CPM mindset. Until this point, various team members had pursued whatever strategy they pleased. The SC trained her team in CPM methodologies. Any team members that continued to resist this new philosophy were released from the team. Thus by 2000, the SC had a team she felt confident could evangelize and start churches in a CPM way, as well as train national partners to do the same (Smith SR 2004e:3).

6.2.3. 2001 and after

The real breakthrough came in 2001. Up to this point, the value on the Z people team had been to include many national partners and workers from Christian organizations in the work. In the process of developing unity among a highly inclusive group of partners, it had been necessary for the team to dilute their emphasis on CPM. However, for the sake of reaching all of the Z people, in 2001, the SC and team made a decision to pursue only CPM methodologies. They then cast this vision to their national and expatriate partners. Whoever agreed to

this strategy they continued to train. However, they did not continue to invest their energies in those who opposed CPM. With the large middle ground of colleagues that were uncertain, the team continued to train them as long as they were willing to implement what they were learning (Smith SR 2004e:4).

CPM workshops: The various team members began conducting CPM workshops for anyone interested: nationals or expatriates. They immediately began ten different CPM trainings in ten different areas. The next month they broadened the number of places they were training. They trained anyone willing to be trained by them.

MAWL: In these CPM trainings, they introduced a process called MAWL: Model, Assist, Watch and Leave. Team members first modeled what they expected their partners to do. From this point on, each team member personally started at least one new church every year. To facilitate church planting and modeling by team members, the SC moved the team members to very remote places living among the Z people. After modeling what they expected, team members then assisted their partners in doing the same thing. Once the partners felt comfortable in these new activities (evangelism and church planting), the team members pulled back and only watched them occasionally, rather than helping them in each ministry project. Finally, once the partners demonstrated competence and confidence, the team members phased out regular mentoring and only occasionally did follow up training with them (Westbrook 2004:7). When team members encountered new Christian partners, they evaluated where the partners were in the MAWL process and began investing in them at the appropriate level.

Faith estimates: To help partners move toward multiplication, each training session involved the setting of faith estimates (Smith SR 2004f:7). Evangelists from one major house church network set a faith estimate of helping 115 churches get started. A cluster of county level trainings set a faith estimate of over five hundred churches. For the next two years, many new churches were started. Most were still first generation with a few second generation. As the work expanded, the work moved into multi-generational growth.

Use of a simple model: As the SC began to hear about T4T, she began to train her team members in it. Prior to this they were using another simple tool. Overall, however, the SC and team invested much effort into finding a single methodology or tool they could use with literate Z people, and another one they could use with non-literate Z people. This enabled the training process to be highly reproducible for Z people in each target area (Hughes 2005:15). Offering too many methods tended to confuse people and caused them to lack confidence in evangelism (Westbrook 2004:8).

Best results from new believers: The SC and team trained a variety of partners: national evangelists, national pastors, expatriate missionaries, Z people evangelists, etc. Their best results came from new Z people believers and young people (Smith SR 2004e:4). The SC has found that new believers have few anti-CPM presuppositions and are very teachable in the process of CPM training.

Start multiple initiatives: The SC and team started many different avenues or initiatives of evangelistic effort and training. The SC felt this was critical as most initiatives did not produce churches that multiplied. However, without many similar efforts in many different places, they would not have discovered the people that proved to be most fruitful (Hoff 2004:16). In fact, out of a total of ten to twelve separate CPM initiatives, only one bore significant numbers of churches past second generation.

6.3. H people

6.3.1. History

The H people are a very remote, animistic people group located in same country as the Z people. They number 1.4 million and are much less accessible to the outside world than are the Z people. They are ranked as one of the poorest people groups in the nation and are only fourteen percent literate. In late 1997, the SCs began to target this people group with a CPM strategy. They did not speak the local dialect or even the national trade language at that time. Up to this point, the H people had had very little contact with the gospel, though in the early 1900s two small sub-groups of the H people had received a gospel witness. For three and a half years there was little breakthrough, but in 2001 a CPM began with the following results in the SC-initiated ministry:

Table 4: Results of H People CPM

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Total churches	0	25	76	175+
% 2nd+ generation	0	32%	47%	75%

(Statistics are end of year totals)

At the time each new church began, the average size was twelve persons. The percentage of second-plus (second, third, or fourth) generation indicates a very important factor in CPMs: the percentage of churches started by insiders (second-plus generation) versus the percentage started by outsiders (first generation). Sixty-eight percent of the churches started in the year 2001 were started by outsiders (not H people). In 2002, the idea of church multiplication had

begun to permeate new churches and almost half the new churches were started by the H people themselves. By 2003, three quarters of all new church starts were by unfunded H people.

6.3.2. First three and a half years

The few years prior to 2001 involved preparation for the breakthrough that came in 2001. Aside from learning the language, the SCs invested their time bringing together the pieces needed for a CPM to begin. During this time the SCs primarily focused on the following areas:

6.3.2.1. Devised a plan that was based on the multiplication of “seed” churches in key sectors (Smith SR 2004b:1)

4,800 villages each needed a church. These 4,800 villages were spread out over remote mountain ranges that required days to reach. They were inaccessible not only from cities, but also from one another. In order to reduce this to a manageable tasks, the SCs employed the end-visioning example used in chapter five. Since the security situation did not permit overt evangelistic forays by foreigners, the SCs determined that the only way to reach 4,800 villages was for H people to be won to faith and catch the vision for reaching their own people.

Therefore, through the end-visioning process, the SCs broke down the task into manageable avenues of beginning. The key to reaching 4,800 villages was the planting of an evangelistically fervent CPM church in ninety different market towns that serviced the 4,800 villages. The key to planting these ninety churches was the planting of CPM churches in the thirty-five key areas that serviced the ninety market towns. The key to planting these thirty-five churches was the planting of CPM churches in eleven key counties, of which seven held the majority of the H people.

Therefore, the SCs began to focus their efforts on establishing seven “seed” churches, one in each of the seven key counties. The vision was for each church to be the “seeds” of a CPM in that area permeating every key area, every market town and every village in its sphere of influence. Since there were so few H people Christians, the SCs believe it was necessary for these first seed churches to be started by outsiders. However, once they were started, new H people Christians learned to evangelize and start churches themselves.

6.3.2.2. Mobilized culturally-close willing partners (Smith SR 2004b:1)

The SCs determined that the most effective evangelists among the H people would be other H people who knew them and spoke their own unique dialect. However, until there were sufficient numbers of H people believers, the SCs mobilized evangelists from culturally-close neighbors that could speak the national trade language to bi-lingual H people (those who spoke both the H dialect and the national trade language). In addition, it was believed that culturally close evangelists were less likely than Westerners to attract the attention of security forces. The SCs attempted to mobilize all culturally-similar believers they could gain access to, both inside and outside the host country. Out of the many attempts over the next three years, most ended in failure. However, three mobilization efforts resulted in solid partnerships:

- Two expatriate single Asian women who were fluent both in English and in the national trade language joined the SCs' team in 2000.
- Thirty-three farmers from a related, previously-evangelized people group in the same province committed to spending two years in church planting efforts to help get the CPM underway. They joined the effort at the end of 2000.
- Six young evangelists from a national house church network committed to teaching for two years in a remote village school for evangelistic purposes.

6.3.2.3. Pursued multiple tracks of planting the first "seed" churches until some succeeded (Smith SR 2004b:1)

At the time the SCs started their work, the number of CPM case studies available for examination was small. There were few proven tools for starting a CPM. Therefore, the SCs began casting vision, mobilizing and training as many different groups of believers as they could, as well as engaging in various evangelistic efforts (English as a Second Language teams, community development outreaches, literature distribution, etc.), in the hope that some efforts would bear fruit to help them get to the first "seed" churches. Out of ten to fifteen different initiatives, two eventually bore significant fruit, and one became the main avenue for the new CPM. However, for three and a half years prior to this, the SCs tenaciously persisted, waiting for one or two to break through with success.

6.3.2.4. *Devised a CPM training method appropriate for and reproducibly by non-literate farmers (Smith SR 2004b:2)*

In the beginning, the SC husband developed a one hundred page CPM manual based on all he had learned about CPMs. Yet faced with the challenge of training barely literate farmers, he realized that whatever he used was going to have to be extremely simple and reproducible by farmers. He reduced the various concepts down to ten basic steps that were easy to memorize. Eventually all evangelism, church planting and discipleship used an oral approach appropriate for non-literate persons.

6.3.3. Breakthrough and CPM progression

The breakthroughs came through the partnership with the minority farmers and the six school teachers (Smith SR 2004b:2). In the long run, however, the work with the farmers bore the greatest fruit. Once the farmers committed to the work, the SC husband and two Asian teammates (referred to in 6:3:2:2) trained them in the non-literate ten-step method and sent them to key areas to plant churches.

Training method (Smith SR 2004b:2-3): The training method involved several key steps toward a CPM progression. The farmers did a good job of following the progression once they understood it.

- *Vision casting:* Every training session included a significant amount of time casting the vision for CPM and for reaching all of the H people. The trainers did not feel that the trainees would implement the process effectively if they did not understand the end-vision.
- *Step 1: Prayer* – Every evangelist was required to have at least ten persons praying for him daily. The trainers anticipated much opposition by the police as well as spiritual opposition by demonic forces.
- *Step 2: Begin evangelism through people of peace* – Using Luke 10 as a model, the farmers were trained to expect persons of peace to be waiting for their gospel message in each town and village they entered. Once they found the person of peace they began to share the gospel with this person and his or her whole family. The farmer-evangelists used a clear gospel presentation that adequately but quickly addressed the worldview of the H people. In keeping with Luke 10, if the farmer-evangelists were not received in a place, they quickly moved on to a new village.

- *Step 3: Start churches instead of just reaping converts* – By evangelizing the entire household of the person of peace, the evangelists often reaped whole groups of people who believed at once. They immediately formed them into churches that had a simple format that new H people believers could participate in and lead.
- *Step 4: Model a pattern of discipleship for the new believers based on obedience to scripture* – As soon as people believed, they were taught to obey the scripture and grow in their faith. The goal was for the evangelists to model the Christian life for the new believers.
- *Step 5: Make everything reproducible and give responsibilities to all new believers* – Since there would be no full-time pastors of the new churches, the evangelists were taught to minister and lead in a reproducible manner, and help many new believers share in responsibility for the new church.
- *Step 6: Give the church a vision for Acts 1:8*. Each church from the very beginning was given a vision to fulfill Acts 1:8. They were trained to go to neighbors in their own villages and to nearby villages to begin the evangelization process.
- *Step 7: Raise up leaders through MAWL (Model, Assist, Watch and Leave)* – The design was for the outside evangelists never to lead the churches but to immediately raise up H people believers to lead, while the evangelists stayed in the background using the MAWL process to develop the new leaders. In actuality, the evangelists sometimes did this, but other times assumed some responsibility for leading the churches.
- *Step 8: Model and encourage boldness for the new believers* – It was clear from the beginning that persecution would begin as soon as H people began to believe. Within two months of the farmer evangelists traveling out to the villages, most were arrested, beaten, interrogated and jailed. In fact, of the thirty three farmer evangelists, only eight persevered for the full two years. However, the boldness of these eight inspired new H people Christians to be bold in the face of persecution. Beyond modeling it, boldness was encouraged in three other ways as well:
 - Immediate baptism of new believers. This insured that they became bold witnesses very early. In fact, the new H people believers devised a question to ask at each baptism: “When they come into your house and drag you away and throw you into prison and threaten to kill you, will you still follow Jesus?”

- Such questions led to the second method of encouraging boldness which was helping inquirers count the cost before following Jesus.
- The third way was for young believers to memorize the promises of scripture for when they were in the midst of persecution.
- *Step 9: Help the new church multiply within six months* – In a rural context, the SCs determined that most villages would only have one church no matter how large the church might grow (e.g. eighty to one hundred persons). Therefore, emphasis was placed on helping these new churches make purposeful attempts to start churches in neighboring villages. The goal was for each church to start at least one other new church every six months. In reality, some churches started multiple churches concurrently and some never started another church. As the movement began to build, an average of seventy-five percent of all new churches started other churches, and the total number of churches tripled every twelve months.
- *Step 10: After leaving the church, plan for follow-up training of the leaders* – The plan was for the original evangelists to return to the churches every few months to do follow-up training with them. In actuality, many of the evangelists just moved on to plant new “seed” churches in other regions. Eventually the SC team began to pick up the responsibilities for on-going leadership training of the emerging leaders. At the time of the NEXT conferences, the training of leaders of H people churches was the greatest challenge to the CPM, primarily due to the limited access the SCs’ team had to the H people leaders.

Progress of the work (Smith SR 2004b:3): The SC and trainers found that the evangelists needed repeated training in the same methodologies before they “unlearned” many old habits and learned to minister in CPM-friendly ways. The trainers found that they needed to re-train the evangelists every three months for most effective implementation. At each training, evangelists set faith goals for the number of new churches (and generations) they hoped to initiate for the subsequent three months. These goals were prayed for and the evangelists were held accountable for them each time they returned. The SCs and trainers ruthlessly evaluated the work by the results. Until they saw second, third and fourth generation churches starting they did not feel they were on track in a particular area, and they worked to correct any deficiencies. If the work was not resulting in multi-generational growth, they made changes to get there. Eventually, as H people leaders emerged, the SC team shifted their

training focus from the outside evangelists to the H people evangelists, training them in the same CPM process.

6.3.4. Lessons: B.R.E.D.

At the time of the NEXT conferences, the SCs identified four key characteristics that helped the CPM be B.R.E.D. in this remote area (Smith SR 2004b:4).

Big vision – Each evangelist and each H people church understood the vision to reach all of the H people with the gospel. Trying to fulfill the end-vision of reaching all the lost drove their efforts and kept them from settling for something less than all people hearing the gospel.

Reproducing methods – Each method used was simple enough that a non-literate farmer new to the faith could utilize it. Emphasis was on reproduction of all believers and churches. Reproducing methods also included reproducing leaders for each new church.

Expectations and accountability – Every believer and church was expected to follow Christ and fish for men. This was considered the normal Christian life. Believers were lovingly held accountable for this.

Death (Jn 12:24) – In order to bring the gospel and spiritual life to the lost, average believers had to be willing to die to see this happen. *Boldness* in the face of persecution was expected. Believers remembered the eternal weight of glory awaiting them in heaven and were willing to make sacrifices on earth.

6.4. South Asia

The final CPM case study was actually a training process from South Asia that resulted in a cluster of emerging CPMs. In this scenario, a regional trainer employed a training method called Acts 29 in which he trained expatriate SCs alongside national SCs to implement CPM strategies for numerous targets in several nations in South Asia. At times the trainer trained national SCs alone; at other times, with an expatriate partner. In no circumstance would he train an expatriate alone. His desire was to send a message of empowerment to national believers, that God could use them to finish the task of evangelization in their various nations. Altogether the trainer had probably trained around five hundred national SCs at the time of the NEXT conferences (Westbrook 2004:8). Some left the training and did not implement.

Some implemented and saw a few churches start. A handful implemented and saw explosive growth (Carlton 2004:2-3):

- One national SC saw four hundred new churches start in Nepal.
- A national SC in India saw about 833 churches start in one people group, and the movement crossed into a neighboring people group where eighteen new churches had just started at the time of the NEXT conferences.
- An expatriate SC targeting a staunchly Buddhist group in the Himalayan region saw the first churches ever start among them.
- A national SC in India had trained church planters in one state to start 175 churches. After Acts 29, he re-trained them and the number very quickly grew to 375 churches.

The region where the Acts 29 trainings were conducted and implemented was very different from the areas where most NEXT participants were ministering in that overt ministry was much better tolerated in the Acts 29 areas. Still, the lessons learned from Acts 29 were very helpful for NEXT conference participants.

National believers and expatriate workers were trained on equal footing in CPM strategy. The regional trainer had two values in his training. First, he himself never trained without a national colleague co-teaching him (Smith SR 2004f:8). He not only wanted to raise up and mentor national leaders, but he also wanted to communicate to the national SCs that God could use them (not outsiders) to finish the task. Second, he never trained expatriate SCs without at least one, and usually three or four, national SC partners. Together, they developed a plan that incorporated what God was saying to them as partners. This shared vision became a powerful force in the months and years following.

To find the few fruitful SCs, the regional trainer trained hundreds. He did not expect every SC to get to a CPM. He was willing to train hundreds to sift through and find those that would bear the fruit of multiplication.

Training was done in an interactive and practical manner appropriate to national believers. Since some of the national SCs were non-literate, the nine to ten day training was highly interactive with many oral applications. Even non-literate SCs could devise a plan through drawing pictures, role play or singing songs. Evangelism and church planting lessons had very practical applications. Often the trainees ended early in the day and went out into the community in pairs to apply the lessons they had just learned.

The trainers helped the SCs learn how to end-vision for their target groups which helped them in turn greatly expand their previous evangelistic efforts (Carlton 2004:4). Rather than apply the end-visioning process only to expatriate SCs, the trainers helped national SCs undergo the same process with their expatriate colleagues. The effect was that many national SCs who were already good evangelists became much more fruitful through an expanded vision.

The national SCs were given practical entry strategies for their target groups (Hughes 2005:16-17). Acts 29 training spent little time on the theory of CPM and gave immediate handles for enabling national SCs to enter a target group, identify persons of peace, begin an evangelism process and start churches. Acts 29 also provided the SCs an opportunity to brainstorm about possible secular platforms they could use to support themselves and gain an opportunity to live among the people they were targeting. At the time of the NEXT conferences the regional trainer was making major changes to the Acts 29 training. He still did not feel the tools for reproduction were practical enough. Instead, he was beginning to introduce T4T into the Acts 29 conferences.

6.5. Summary

The various case studies presented a variety of social contexts and circumstances, yet each resulted in church planting movements. SCs at the NEXT conferences could generally find at least one case study that resembled the context of their own ministry. This helped them draw practical applications to transfer to their own situations. After studying several case studies in rapid succession, common themes began to emerge and SCs were ready to draw overall lessons from them.

7. Case studies: commonalities and distinctives

In each conference, after all four case studies were examined individually, NEXT participants identified a set of commonalities and distinctives. The question asked was: “What factors specifically helped this ministry move past evangelism and church planting to become a church planting *movement*?” These factors were then listed. Two types of characteristics emerged: those that were common to all the case studies and those that were unique to one. The largest set of themes related to what was similar in each. However, one CPM was markedly more prolific than the others. Thus a second set of lessons was developed that explored characteristics unique to that one CPM. A key lesson learned was this: *In order to see CPMs develop, SCs should implement strategies and methodologies that are common in CPMs.*

7.1. CPM commonalities: what was the same in each case study

The case studies presented in chapter six were studied in great depth, often in dialogue with the SCs leading those CPMs. Chapter six highlights the most distinctive features of each CPM. Not all of the characteristics mentioned below were explicitly mentioned in the summaries in chapter six, though they were present in each one.

The great advantage of studying four current CPMs in quick succession was that similar characteristics became evident. These common characteristics then served as a foundation for NEXT participants to adapt their own strategies for sustained CPMs. The power of the characteristics was that each CPM possessed them in varying degrees and, therefore, they came to be seen as universal characteristics needed for a CPM to develop.

7.1.1. Characteristic one: The strategy coordinator believed a CPM could occur and worked relentlessly along the critical path toward that.

In each case study, the SCs did not make half-hearted attempts at developing sustained CPMs. Instead, though surrounded by people who doubted the validity of CPMs, they chose to believe that God would start a CPM in their target groups. They completely believed in the reality of CPMs and possessed an expectation that they would occur (Smith SR 2004f:8).

The SCs then began to work relentlessly along a critical path to get there (Smith SR 2004f:8). Relentlessness, or undivided focus, characterized each SC in regard to their ministry. They rarely let anything divert them from the types of activities that would move them down the critical path but instead maintained a “brutal focus” (Smith SR 2004e:8) on getting

to CPM. These activities might vary depending on where they were on the critical path, but they did the right things at the right times to cooperate with the Holy Spirit (Smith SL 2004:30). Along the way, the SCs evaluated their efforts by the results they were getting and made adjustments along the way (:30).

7.1.2. Characteristic two: Training of local believers for multiplication occurred frequently.

Training was a common theme heard frequently in each case study. However, the word “training” connotes a wide range of meaning. In the context of these four CPMs, the concept meant that *training of local believers for multiplication* occurred frequently (Smith SR 2004k:2). In fact, training was often mentioned as the first characteristic in each case study.

Training was focused on obedience to scripture and on reproduction (NEXT8 2005:16). The goal of the training was to help believers and churches find a simple way to follow Christ and help other non-believers to do the same. Not all CPMs followed a training of trainers model, but all the case studies did place great emphasis on equipping local believers to evangelize and start new churches. Each case study also went one step further: they trained local believers to equip these new second generation believers and churches to repeat the process and pass that ethos down through subsequent generations.

The training of local believers occurred frequently (Smith SR 2004k:2). It was not a hit and miss process but a comprehensive training that occurred at frequent intervals over an extended time. It involved a high level of accountability with the persons trained (:2). Trainees were expected to obey the training and were asked about their obedience upon each subsequent training session.

In the various CPMs, a common characteristic of training was that the SCs “went wide” in their search for local believers to train (Smith SR 2004e:8). They were not content to find one group of local believers to train but instead developed multiple groups they were investing in. A growing conviction that came out of NEXT was that CPMs often develop proportionate to the number of groups enlisted in training that leads to multiplication.

7.1.3. Characteristic three: A single, simple, reproducible method was used.

In each case study, the SC eventually chose to utilize only one culturally-appropriate, reproducible method for evangelism, discipleship and church planting. This enabled local believers to become proficient in that one method and effectively achieve reproduction (Smith SR

2004k:3). In each CPM, the method was extremely basic. Any new believer could use this method for spiritual growth, for evangelism and for church planting.

The SCs could have created much more complex methodologies, but in so doing would have diverged from the goal of equipping local believers in a method they could use *effectively*. A realization developed in most NEXT conferences that a key factor in developing CPMs was to keep things extremely simple.

In all the CPMs, multiple methods of achieving the same thing (e.g., multiple types of gospel presentations) were avoided. The SCs found that when they used multiple methods, the believers they trained were confused and did none of them well. Each SC had a simple model of church that was clearly understood by local believers (Smith SL 2004:30). The local believers understood in their mind when they had become a church and when they had not.

7.1.4. Characteristic four: The end-vision and ethos of CPM were owned by the target group.

In each CPM, local believers understood the basic vision of reaching the entire target group and had taken ownership of this as their own dream (Smith SR 2004k:3). This ownership began with the SC casting the vision for CPM often, usually in each training session. Over time local believers began to believe that it could happen and incorporated into their identity the DNA of CPM vision (Smith SL 2004:30).

It is an overstatement to say that all new local believers understood the vision for reaching their entire target group with a CPM. For many, their vision extended only to their family, friends and neighbors. But it was common for average believers to have *some* vision for reaching the lost, usually employing a reproducible method. Each CPM also possessed a few local believers who understood the overall end-vision and took up the vision for CPM as their own.

7.1.5. Characteristic five: The focus of training was reproduction to multiple generations.

A common concern among NEXT participants was difficulty in their own ministries in either 1) helping first generation churches start second generation churches, or 2) getting past second generation churches to third and fourth generation (Note: from a compilation of information-gathering worksheets completed by SCs prior to each conference). A common characteristic of the CPM case studies, however, was that the focus of training was reproduction

to multiple generations, *especially* to third and fourth generation (Smith SR 2004k:3). In fact, a movement is not generally categorized as a CPM until it has reproduced to at least the third, but more often the fourth generation (Smith SL 2004:30).

Therefore, a common characteristic of the four CPMs was their focus on training local believers to effectively multiply to multiple generations (not stopping at second generation). None of the SCs was satisfied with work that did not result in third and fourth generation (and beyond) churches. SCs asked questions that reinforced multiplication and held believers accountable to develop succeeding generations of believers and churches.

7.1.6. Characteristic six: The gospel was sowed widely in a person-to-person format.

A common characteristic of each CPM was “broad seed-sowing;” not mass evangelism such as radio broadcasts or literature distribution, but hundreds and thousands of individuals hearing person-to-person gospel presentations (Smith SR 2004k:3). This did not mean that mass evangelism projects did not exist in the target groups; they did exist in at least one. But the primary engine driving each church planting movement was the Holy Spirit empowering ordinary believers to frequently share their testimonies and gospel presentations to people they knew in their circle of influence (NEXT8 2005:16). Once large numbers of people started coming to faith, it was a fairly easy step to group them into small churches that usually met in homes. Multiple churches could not be planted until significant numbers of people began to believe in Christ.

A common concern that SCs had at NEXT conferences was that not a lot of new churches were starting in their work. However, as they examined their work, many realized that the underlying problem was that not a lot of evangelism was taking place on a regular basis. For example, in the large Asian CPM, 500,000 new believers were reported in four years. In this area of Asia, it is common for ten percent of the people hearing gospel presentations from someone they know to decide to follow Christ. Based on the numbers reported, it is quite possible that in four years, 5,000,000 individuals heard gospel presentations, or 1,250,000 persons a year. That means that on a typical day in this target area over 3,400 *persons* heard a gospel presentation from someone they had a relationship with (Smith W 2004e:1). CPMs cannot occur until the gospel is being shared frequently by local believers.

The nature of this evangelism was important. It was personal evangelism versus mass evangelism. In earlier years, SCs had stressed mass evangelism methodologies (e.g., radio broadcasts, literature distribution, etc.) in order to saturate their people groups with the gospel

(Smith W 2004d:2). As CPMs began to emerge around the world, including the four studied in these conferences, it became apparent that the type of evangelism that was most effective was M2E – mouth to ear evangelism. In other words, personal evangelism bore much greater fruit than mass evangelism efforts. So a goal that NEXT participants made in their action plans was to increase the amount of M2E evangelism taking place each day in their target groups.

7.1.7. Characteristic seven: Multiple streams of CPM were started but all streams focused on one type of task.

Each case study demonstrated a common characteristic: to effectively saturate a target group, multiple *streams* of CPM were needed (Smith SR 2004f:8). Each CPM was a complicated movement with streams of CPM emerging separately from other streams, based on lines of relationships. In the H people CPM, at least twelve distinct church planting streams or initiatives developed in twelve different places with people totally unrelated to one another. At least four of those streams developed into CPMs that had little or no awareness of the others, whereas the remainder of the streams initiated church planting that did not result in church planting *movements* (Smith SR 2006a:4). In the large Asian CPM, dozens of major streams and hundreds of smaller streams developed (Smith W 2004b:3). Starting multiple streams was deemed as essential to saturating an entire target group. One stream might spread through only one geographical area or social stratum. Thus new initiatives in others sectors were needed.

However, the starting of multiple streams of work was not the starting of multiple *types* of ministry. Instead, the case studies demonstrated remarkable clarity in implementing the *same* methodology, but doing so in multiple environments (Smith SR 2004f:8). In other words, the SCs in the case studies were not doing many different types of things. They were doing basically the same type of training with each group of people.

7.1.8. Characteristic eight: Prayer was prevalent, especially prayer for needs, resulting in signs and wonders.

Prayer was a widespread characteristic of each CPM (NEXT8 2005:16). Prayer for the salvation of the target group was common in the SCs, their teams and their local partners. Prayer for the needs of individuals, especially non-Christians, was prevalent (Smith SR 2004k:3). Local believers exercised great faith that God would answer their prayers, and often these prayers were answered in miraculous ways: in physical healings, exorcism and even raising

people from the dead. In short, the SCs, teams and local believers were seeking God to fulfill what appeared to be impossible, and in the process, they and non-believers were encountering God in dramatic ways (Smith SL 2004:30).

7.1.9. Characteristic nine: Boldness was the norm, even in the face of persecution. Boldness on the part of local believers characterized each CPM. New believers and church leaders demonstrated a willingness to endure persecution and opposition, even death, in order to follow Jesus and make him known (Smith SR 2004f:8). Persecution was present in each case study; however, persecution was not the reason for the CPM. Rather, *boldness in the face of persecution* was. Each CPM found different ways of encouraging believers to be bold, but the common theme was that believers so valued Jesus Christ, that any price they paid was still worth it. NEXT participants learned the importance of helping each new believer discover the value of the King, his kingdom and new life in that kingdom. When salvation is highly valued, persecution and opposition do not rob believers of boldness. In each of these movements, hundreds and thousands of believers were boldly following Jesus and making him known to others on a daily basis.

7.1.10. Characteristic ten: Leadership was multiplied to keep pace with the increase in new churches.

In various ways, each CPM found ways to identify, equip and multiply leaders to keep pace with the increase in new churches (Smith SR 2004k:2). This was the key factor in their sustaining the growth. Each SC went about this in a different way but the net effect was that leadership kept pace with growth in churches. Usually this meant that there were multiple layers of leadership, with older leaders training newer leaders. In each CPM, the SCs focused their energies on the leadership component, knowing that failing here would slow down or halt the growth of the movement.

7.2. CPM distinctives: what was different that set apart one case study from the others

The CPMs were remarkable for their degree of similarity. SCs evaluated what was the same in each in order to identify characteristics of CPMs in general. However, in the NEXT conference case studies, the large Asian CPM far excelled the others in magnitude. Undoubtedly,

there were social factors that helped it: access to numerous indigenous and near-culture Christian evangelists, long-term exposure of the region to the gospel, ethnic and language abilities of the SC, and greater anonymity on the part of missionaries working there. These were factors that could not be changed in the other scenarios and that may have helped this CPM to grow faster. It is possible that these factors alone set this case study apart from the others in order of magnitude. However, there also appeared to be two other factors that especially enabled this CPM to grow faster than the others, and these were factors of *methodology*.

7.2.1. Characteristic one: Training of trainers

One factor that separated the large Asian CPM from the others was that it used a training for trainers model (Smith W 2004b:1). The difference was that the SC trained *individuals* to plant churches whereas the SCs in the other case studies primarily trained *churches* to plant churches. This difference was subtle yet significant. The training for trainers approach was explained in chapter six. This approach emphasizes that each new believer obey, evangelize and become a trainer of others. Thus, new generations of trainers develop very quickly (often every week or few weeks). Each new trainer is empowered to start new churches. Every new trainer is a vital link in the chain of new generations generated. In the course of dozens and then hundreds and then thousands of trainers evangelizing and training others, hundreds and then thousands of new churches start. In this model, evangelism and training of trainers is the Spirit-empowered engine that drives church planting.

The models from the other CPMs focused more on training *churches* (or specially designated individuals) to plant churches. Not every individual was trained to witness and start churches, though it was in the realm of possibility. Practically speaking, emphasis was placed on starting churches, not on training trainers. But churches cannot be started without evangelism. So, in this model, church planting drives the need to do evangelism. The difference from the training for trainers model appears to be critical. In this model, not everyone is expected to become a church planter. In the training for trainers model, every believer is. This difference in expectation was most likely a key difference that propelled the Asian CPM beyond the others.

A strength of the training for trainers approach was that *leadership development* was built into the normal discipleship of *every* believer rather than being specialized training given only a few, as in the latter model. This difference contributed to the large Asian CPM demonstrating a greater resilience and sustainability than the latter model.

7.2.2. Characteristic two: Increased breadth and number of training groups.

A second factor that set apart the large Asian CPM was the breadth of training that the SCs demonstrated in the beginning of their work (Smith W 2004b:2). The SC couple began training one group of believers but quickly determined to fill up all of their available ministry hours training other groups. In the beginning, they trained groups on a weekly basis. When they discovered that they did not have enough time in their week for the number of groups that wanted to be trained, they began training each group every other week. This instantly doubled their capacity for the number of groups they could train. On a weekly basis they could train about fifteen separate groups. But on a bi-weekly basis, they could train thirty groups with an average of about twenty participants in each. Therefore, in an average two-week period, the SCs trained six hundred individuals to be trainers of others. In no other CPM did the SCs evangelize and train with such breadth.

In addition, the SCs learned quickly that only twenty percent of their trainees became trainers of others. But because they trained broadly (large numbers of people), they found enough individuals who repeated the process and were channels for the continued expansion of the CPM. In the other case studies, it is possible that a similar percentage of individuals were reproducing, but in those situations, it was harder to find the CPM-producers due to the smaller numbers of people in training.

After studying the large Asian CPM, a spreadsheet was developed to help SCs understand the power of training trainers and the power of starting with great breadth in their work. To illustrate this point, we can insert the activities of the original SCs into the spreadsheet and then follow a hypothetical progression. The following progression develops when inserting their scenario into the spreadsheet (see Fudge 2005) based on the following assumptions:

- The SCs train thirty groups of about twenty people
- Twenty percent of those trained go on to train others
- Each of these trainers, after actively witnessing, on average trains two new groups of five people each
- Each subsequent generation results in similar outcomes: twenty percent of trainees who go on to each train two new groups of five people (on average)

This hypothetical scenario mirrors the original activities of the SCs in this case study. In a perfect world, such a scenario would yield the following results in twenty weeks (a new generation each week):

- **125,829,000 trainers**
- **Training 629,145,000 new believers** (see Appendix Two)

In other words, this movement would have resulted in over 600,000,000 new believers. But this is not a perfect world, and the movement did not spread this fast in twenty weeks. However, the pace of its growth was astounding nonetheless.

Could a new SC who does not have quite the language ability or as extensive indigenous resources as these SCs have a similar impact? The spreadsheet demonstrates another scenario that is very realistic for the SCs at NEXT conferences. It assumes that the SC only begins by training five groups of eight people each. In each group, twenty percent obey and become trainers of trainers. Each new trainer starts two new groups of five trainees. Such a modest beginning would generate the following results in twenty weeks:

- **8,388,600 trainers**
- **Training 41,943,000 new believers** (see Appendix Three)

It is just such an emphasis on training trainers that began to transform the thinking of NEXT participants and continues to transform the thinking of newly trained SCs in their expectations of what God can do. Many are moving more actively to a *training trainers (individuals)* approach over a *training of churches (or specially designated individuals)* approach.

7.3. Comparison with other CPM assessments

Comparing the characteristics of these CPMs with the six church planting models we have been using is not a helpful exercise at this point because they provide no similar case studies with which to compare NEXT findings. Instead, what is most helpful at this point is to compare NEXT findings with other similar assessments of CPMs. Three such assessments exist. The first was carried out by David Garrison using a completely different set of CPMs (though he was just becoming aware of the large Asian CPM). The second and third assessments made by two conferences in early 2007. In these latter conferences, multiple strategy coordinators, SC trainers and researchers (including David Garrison) evaluated a set of eight to twelve case studies. In these latter assessments, three of the case studies from NEXT conferences were included whereas one was not. Many more case studies were included to provide a broader base of evaluation.

As a reminder the ten characteristics found in NEXT were as follows:

Table 5: Characteristics of CPM found in NEXT Conferences

- 1. The strategy coordinator believed a CPM could occur and worked relentlessly along the critical path toward that.**
- 2. Training of local believers for multiplication occurred frequently.**
- 3. One simple, reproducible method was used.**
- 4. The end-vision and ethos of CPM were owned by the target group.**
- 5. The focus of training was reproduction to multiple generations.**
- 6. The gospel was sowed widely in a person to person format.**
- 7. Multiple streams of CPM were started but all focused on one type of task.**
- 8. Prayer was prevalent, especially prayer for needs, resulting in signs and wonders.**
- 9. Boldness was the norm, even in the face of persecution.**
- 10. Leadership was multiplied to keep pace with the increase in new churches.**

Plus the two distinctives of the large Asian CPM :

- 11. Training of trainers**
- 12. Increased breadth and number of training groups**

7.3.1. Garrison's ten CPM universal characteristics

SCs at NEXT conferences possessed a base-line of understanding of CPMs adapted from the work of David Garrison. In 1998, Garrison met with missionaries and researchers to examine the known CPMs at the time. Their desire was to list “the characteristics that were present in each of the movements they had seen (Garrison 2003:18).” Garrison published his findings in a short booklet in January 2000 under the title *Church Planting Movements*. This booklet formed the baseline for many missionaries hoping, by God's grace, to get CPMs started. In 2004, Garrison updated the findings slightly based on new CPMs emerging, though the basic twenty characteristics he listed did not change.

7.3.1.1. Ten universal characteristics and ten common characteristics

Garrison's assessment group found twenty characteristics of CPMs. Ten of these were true in all of them (Garrison 2003:172), while the remainder were true in most of them (:221-222).

Table 6: CPM Characteristics according to Garrison

<u>Universal Characteristics</u>	<u>Common Characteristics</u>
1. Extraordinary prayer	1. A climate of uncertainty in society
2. Abundant evangelism	2. Insulation from outsiders
3. Intentional planting of reproducing churches	3. A high cost for following Christ
4. The authority of God's Word	4. Bold fearless faith
5. Local leadership	5. Family-based conversion patterns
6. Lay leadership	6. Rapid incorporation of new believers
7. House churches	7. Worship in the heart language
8. Churches planting churches	8. Divine signs and wonders
9. Rapid reproduction	9. On-the-job leadership training
10. Healthy churches	10. Missionaries suffered

7.3.1.2. Comparison with NEXT findings

The difficulties of comparing Garrison's findings with NEXT findings are two-fold:

1. The case studies used by Garrison are earlier versions of CPM, prior to many lessons being learned in more recent days. He mainly studied CPMs up through late 2002 and could not take advantage of some of the progressions made in CPM understanding.
2. The questions he and other researchers were asking in 1998 are not the same questions being asked today. CPMs were so new in 1998 that Garrison's taskforce focused on the most foundational principles needed for a CPM and did not think to ask questions that are being asked at this later stage.

For the NEXT participants, Garrison's twenty points were almost second-nature. Most had been trained in these characteristics early in their ministries. Most had incorporated them as a matter of course, especially the first ten. Therefore, in NEXT conferences, SCs *assumed* many of the characteristics that were new to Garrison's research group, and consequently they felt no need to repeat many of these.

Thus, in comparing NEXT findings with Garrison's work it is helpful to determine if there are any major points of difference between the two. Of Garrison's twenty characteristics, three stand out as diverging from NEXT findings. None of these three are on the first list of universals; rather, they are on the second list of characteristics that are *commonly* true.

Some characteristics on this second list were determined to be required for a CPM to occur. When Garrison made the second list, the missions community was just learning about CPMs and characteristics that he could not absolutely validate in each case study were placed on this second list (often, the lack of validation was due to the lack of information).

The first point of divergence is the characteristic of “a climate of uncertainty in society.” At the time of the initial research (1998) many of the CPMs were emerging in countries closed to traditional missions and experiencing varying degrees of unrest. The CPMs studied in NEXT conferences still occurred in countries closed to traditional missions, but the climate of uncertainty was not apparent. There was a large degree of persecution (if this could be deemed uncertainty), but the governments of these countries were stable.

The second point of divergence is “insulation from outsiders.” NEXT participants determined that it was important to protect the CPM *ethos* of the new believers in an emerging CPM, but not all the CPMs exhibited extreme social isolation from outsiders.

The third point of divergence is “family-based conversion patterns.” Three of the four NEXT conference case studies displayed family-based conversion patterns. The fourth (large Asian CPM) demonstrated evangelism along lines of relationship, but did not necessarily see whole families believing in the gospel at one time.

Of the NEXT findings, five aspects diverge or advance upon the foundation laid by Garrison. These aspects demonstrate advances in our understanding of sustained CPMs.

First, while Garrison references leadership training (2003:234), his emphasis is only on leaders. NEXT conferences stressed the importance of training of all believers in evangelism and church planting. The lessons learned from the large Asian CPM emphasize the importance of training *every believer* to be a trainer of others. This type of training goes beyond the normal concept of on-the-job leadership training.

Second, NEXT conferences determined that the use of one simple, reproducible method was important. This learning point goes beyond the lessons learned from Garrison’s assessment who did not address this issue.

Third, NEXT conferences emphasized the importance of the vision and ethos of CPM being owned by the target group. Garrison mentions this idea under “churches planting churches (2003:193)” but does not emphasize it to the degree NEXT participants felt was needed.

Fourth, NEXT conferences stressed the importance of multiple streams of CPM starting. Garrison does not address this issue.

Finally, NEXT conference findings agreed with Garrison regarding on-the-job training of leaders, but expanded this idea to stress *multiplication* of leadership. Garrison emphasized training leaders, but NEXT conferences took that one step further to encourage multiplication that keeps pace with new church multiplication.

One final point of divergence is between what NEXT participants learned from the T4T model and what Garrison calls “churches planting churches.” Garrison’s point is specifically that churches reproduce spontaneously (2003:193) but his stress is on a concerted effort by *churches* to start new churches. This was true also in three of the NEXT conference case studies. However, the T4T model of the large Asian CPM emphasized the ability and initiative of every new believer (trainer) to start new churches. It is this degree of *individual* initiative that seems to be expanding this CPM beyond previous models of CPM. Churches planting churches requires some organization by a church body to start a new church. In the T4T approach of the large Asian CPM, less organized effort is required and churches seem to start more spontaneously.

7.3.2. The 2007 CPM assessment studies

The two CPM assessments of January and March 2007 took a broader approach at studying case study themes. In all, these two assessments examined approximately twelve emerging CPMs. The two assessments independently drew similar conclusions about CPM characteristics:

Table 7: CPM characteristics from two 2007 CPM assessments

<u>January 2007 (Smith SR 2007b:18)</u>	<u>March 2007 (Cunnyngham 2007:1)</u>
1. <i>Simple system for reproduction</i>	1. <i>Reproducible system for evangelism, church planting and training</i>
2. <i>Simplified training</i>	2. <i>Simple evangelism method</i>
3. <i>Vision casting by SC</i>	3. <i>The SC is a person of faith and vision</i>
4. <i>The SC has passion</i>	4. <i>Locals take ownership of the movement</i>
5. <i>Training of nationals and focus on them primarily</i>	5. <i>Key local partners are raised up to carry the torch</i>
6. <i>M2E evangelism that calls for a decision</i>	6. <i>Abundant M2E evangelism</i>
7. <i>A burden for the lost that asks "What will it take?"</i>	7. <i>Prayer at a strategic level, desperate for people to come to faith</i>
8. <i>Train trainers to train</i>	8. <i>Frequent and constant training of trainers</i>
9. <i>Aggressive accountability for reproduction</i>	9. <i>Accountability and obedience to training</i>
10. <i>Multiple streams</i>	10. <i>Multiple streams</i>
11. <i>Obedience-based discipleship</i>	11. <i>Boldness in the face of opposition</i>
12. <i>Dogged perseverance by the SC</i>	12. <i>Support structure that is sustainable as the movement expands</i>
13. <i>Evaluation, problem solving and adjusting the work</i>	13. <i>Shared leadership: new believers are expected to take part</i>
14. <i>The SC pours attention into right people (multipliers)</i>	14. <i>Simple church structure</i>
15. <i>The SC is directive</i>	
16. <i>Signs and wonders</i>	
17. <i>Believers have access to scripture</i>	

(Characteristics that are *italicized* indicate those that are similar in the two assessments.)

Although I was involved in both conferences, none of these assessors was coached to provide the answers similar to those found in NEXT conferences. What is striking upon looking at both lists is how similar the first ten points are. After the first ten points, they diverge by emphasizing different aspects of CPMs. The findings from the assessments did not contradict each other, and comparing both provides a more comprehensive understanding of CPM characteristics than either list does alone.

When compared with NEXT findings, every one of the characteristics uncovered in NEXT conferences is confirmed by this broader survey of CPMs. What the 2007 assessments provide for the NEXT findings, however, is an expanded understanding of CPMs, just as NEXT conferences provided an expanded understanding beyond Garrison's research. This progression in learning is expected. In comparison with the NEXT conferences, the 2007 assessments addressed in greater detail the role of the SC in getting to CPM. One point that especially stood out was that SCs in large CPMs have found key national partners who *shared* the SC role with them. SCs learned to discern these types of people and pour their lives into them. When they did this, the work expanded much faster. NEXT conferences *began* to consider this in the Acts 29 model, but not to the degree studied in the 2007 assessments.

8. The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM

Central to each NEXT conference was a proposal for how SCs should proceed most effectively in ministry to achieve sustained CPMs. In each of the eight conferences, this session was often the turning point for the SCs in their own thinking. The proposal was a paradigm shifter for the practical implementation of their strategies. The proposal was this: *In order to see sustained CPMs develop, SCs should spend their time in implementing the highest value (yield) activities. Implementing these strategies effectively can result in a CPM emerging immediately.*

This proposal was made by the Regional Leader (RL) of the organization who ultimately supervised all who attended the first seven NEXT conferences. The proposal was made based on his perspective of reading monthly reports from over a hundred SC teams over the last ten years in East Asia as well as his intimate knowledge of several. For the purposes of this paper, we will examine three areas: 1) the proposal itself as a means of getting to CPM, 2) the response of the NEXT participants to this approach, and 3) an evaluation of such an approach based on the four NEXT conference case studies and the 2007 CPM assessments.

8.1. A proposal for how to proceed down the critical path

The proposal was made early in each conference, usually prior to case studies being presented. The advantage of this timing was that SCs were able to evaluate the proposal based on the four case studies that immediately followed. The case studies confirmed the proposal made by the RL and gave the SCs confidence to follow this plan of action.

8.1.1. High yield or high value activities

The strategy was proposed as the most direct way to arrive at a sustained CPM in a target group. The central tenet of the strategy was that with limited hours in their weeks, SCs should focus their efforts on the activities most likely to yield a CPM. These activities were called “high value” activities (Fudge 2004b:2). A better term might be “high yield” activities for they are activities intended to most quickly yield a sustained CPM.

The proposal attempted to answer two questions (Fudge 2004b:2):

- How does a strategy coordinator initiate a sustainable CPM?

- How and with whom does the SC begin?

CPMs are movements in which indigenous, target group individuals under motivation and empowerment of the Holy Spirit actively evangelize, disciple and start churches and train newer believers and churches to repeat the pattern with themselves and successive generations. Central to this concept is that target group believers exist, and that they have this vision and motivation. High value activities are aimed at mobilizing such believers for the vision and initiation of CPM. High value activities also include any activities that help SCs get to this point if they have no target group believers that are willing to move in this direction.

The use of the term “high value” activities does not imply that other activities such as mercy ministries are not of value in the kingdom of God. Instead, “high value” in this context is used to refer to activities most likely to contribute directly and immediately to the initiation of a CPM.

8.1.2. Effective patterns of beginning

How does an SC begin this process of mobilizing and equipping target group believers for the efforts that lead to a CPM? Three steps are deemed important in the process: 1) partnering with the right individuals, 2) evaluating where the SC is starting in the critical path toward a CPM and 3) prioritizing how he or she spends time each week on ministry activities.

8.1.2.1. *Effective partners*

Since CPMs are dependent on indigenous believers spreading the gospel and starting churches, the strategy centers around how to effectively raise up such partners. Finding partners for the work of initiating CPM is the central tenet of this strategy. With the right partners, a CPM can begin immediately (Fudge 2004b:2). Partners are evaluated in the light of two main criteria: cultural proximity to the target group and willingness to partner in a way that leads to CPM.

Cultural proximity to the target group: The strategy proposes that, all things being equal, believers from within the target group will be the most effective evangelists and CPM initiators. This is because they speak the language, know the culture, travel around unnoticed (in oppressive countries) and have already paid the price of living on the same level as other target group individuals. Target group believers will have the greatest impact for initiating a CPM (Fudge 2004b:2). The problem is that many SCs have no target group believers that they can partner with because they are truly *unreached* people groups.

Effective partners can be found elsewhere if no target group believers exist. However, their cultural proximity to the target group is important. The closer they are to the target group the more likely they will . . .

- speak a language the target group can understand
- ethnically fit in and find acceptance
- move around within the target group area without raising the suspicions of opposing government officers
- be comfortable with the target culture and have less cross-cultural adjustment trauma.

The RL proposal, therefore, ranks potential partners in terms of cultural proximity. They are ranked in order of probable impact (Fudge 2004b:2):

- Target group partners
- Near-culture national partners – partners ethnically similar who live within the same country
- Near-culture international partners – partners ethnically similar who live outside the country. These can be prioritized by . . .
 - Those who speak the target language and/or trade language
 - Those who do not
- Distant-culture partners – partners who are ethnically different from the target group. In all likelihood they do not initially speak the target or trade language

Willingness to partner in a manner that leads to CPM: Cultural proximity is only half of what is required in effective partners. Their spirit of willingness to partner with the SC in trying to initiate ministry that leads to CPM is of paramount importance (Fudge 2004b:3). Their teachable spirit and availability determine whether or not the SC can partner with them. Do these partners demonstrate teachability, obedience and an evangelistic heart (Westbrook 2004:3)? Without a willing spirit, partners will continue ministry in traditional ways that do not initiate CPMs and may even negate the work of others who are trying to initiate a CPM. They can rob an emerging CPM of its DNA of multiplication. Many missionaries spend whole careers trying to change unwilling believers into willing partners without success.

Not only must the believers be willing to change how they do ministry so that it emphasizes reproducibility and reproduction, they must also be willing to enter into a partnership with the SC. The SC's desire is to begin training them for effective ministry that in-

initiates CPMs. Their willingness to enter into such a partnership is a guiding factor in what believers SCs should invest their time in.

Willingness and great sacrifice are so important that they can make a distant culture partner more effective than a close culture partner (NEXT8 2005:4). However, if partners come with the same spirit of willingness and sacrifice, same or close culture partners have demonstrated an ability to initiate CPMs more quickly.

8.1.2.2. Evaluation of an SC's starting point

SCs must realize the value of finding such partners within the target culture or one culturally close to it. Then the Regional Leader proposed that they evaluate their situations to determine where they fall on the critical path toward CPM (Fudge 2004b:3). SCs should first determine how many potential target group partners they have and their state of willingness. SCs with a great number of potential target group partners should devote the bulk of their energies in training them for CPM.

However, most SCs are not in this position. Therefore, they should evaluate how many other potential partners they have and rank them according to cultural proximity and willingness. They should start with the highest value partners and fit in lower priority partners as they have time. The RL proposed that SCs with significant numbers of target group partners could see a CPM begin within a matter of weeks. Those with more distant culture partners could see CPMs emerge in a matter of months.

8.1.2.3. Prioritization of activities for greatest impact

Prioritizing partners and activities is the most important step that SCs can take in moving down the critical path toward CPM. The RL gave a clear set of guidelines for how SCs should prioritize their schedules and activities. Ministry activities should be ranked in the order of priority listed below (Fudge 2004b:3). SCs should attempt to fill up their schedules with activities from the highest value categories. As they have time in their schedules, they can fit in activities from lower value categories. The goal of each activity is to win and train willing local partners in CPM since they are the insiders that God will use to initiate a church planting movement.

Priority 1 – Willing local (target group) partners: If SCs have willing partners from the target group, they should immediately train them in a training for trainers format. SCs should give them just one simple tool, not multiple tools (Smith SR 2004f:3). In the process of training, they should emphasize several things. First, eve-

ryone is taught the importance of witnessing to people within their sphere of influence and then given a simple way to do this. They are taught that this is the norm for every new believer. Second, each believer trains those he or she wins to faith including training them how to obey the scripture and to train others. Third, believers are held accountable in each training session for obedience and are given time to practice what they will teach others the following week. Finally, the trainers must model for the new believers worship, accountability and obedience to the Lord so that healthy churches result. If believers are trained in this fashion, then subsequent generations of believers and churches can start in a matter of weeks. Willing target group believers become the “force multipliers” that are the foundation of a CPM (Smith SR 2004e:1).

In this process of training local partners, training existing church leaders is less effective than training lay people and especially new believers (Hughes 2005:8). The latter often demonstrate teachability to learn CPM ways, whereas the former are so vested in the status quo that it is difficult for them to change.

Priority 2 – Uninterested or uncertain target group partners: If SCs determine they have few or no *willing* local partners, they can turn to other target group believers that have not yet demonstrated willingness. These would be believers that at the present time are uninterested in CPM or have not been approached about CPM. In such cases, SCs should cast vision for CPM to them and try to persuade. However, this exercise is frequently not successful (Smith SL 2004:16). Therefore, if after a reasonable period of time, these believers do not demonstrate a desire to partner with the SC, the SC should bless them and move on to mobilize others. Later on, as the SC begins to experience significant results in CPM, these original uninterested parties may become later adopters (:16).

Priority 3 – Personal evangelism that results in willing local partners: If after all of these efforts, SCs find they have no local partners or very few local partners (that do not fill up an SC’s schedule), the work of the SC and team is to personally engage in evangelism, hoping to then invest in these new believers as local partners. The SC and team should attempt to fill up their schedules with as many groups of local believers as possible for training purposes.

In terms of mobilizing local partners, personal evangelism results in extremely willing partners. New target group believers are generally willing to follow the train-

ing of the person who led them to faith. Therefore, SCs and their teams should begin training them in a T4T-type format that leads to CPMs. SCs and teams, who struggle as outsiders with language and culture, are not generally the most effective evangelists (compared with a national believer). However, it is important for them to continue the work of evangelism even after they have many local partners (though they may not give as much time to it as before), for they serve as examples to these young believers.

Priority 4 - Willing near culture partners: If SCs and their teams do not have the language or access to the target group for evangelism, it is often advantageous to turn to near culture partners who can help them evangelize target group individuals and begin training them in a T4T-type format. To do this, SCs should cast vision for CPM to the near culture partners, then train them in evangelism and T4T. SCs should especially train them to find people of peace; share the gospel; start simple, culturally appropriate churches; and train trainers (Fudge 2004b:3). It is critical that SCs train them in CPM methods since most of these near culture partners have a DNA of already-learned ministry that will not lead to CPM (Smith SL 2004:16). Once a sufficient number of local believers are available for training, SCs may shift their attention to the training of local partners.

Priority 5 – Willing distant culture partners: If SCs and their teams have no local partners and cannot mobilize near culture partners (or if they have very few), they should turn to distant culture partners who can initiate evangelistic activities that result in willing local partners. Such partners often require a greater amount of energy and preparation on behalf of SCs since the partners do not usually speak the trade language of the area. However, if SCs have time and can adequately prepare them, distant culture partners can engage in evangelistic activities (especially bi-lingual activities) that lead target group individuals to faith (Smith SR 2004f:4). This provides the SC with new believers to begin in T4T-type training.

In prioritizing their time, SCs should concentrate on fitting in as many high value activities as possible (Fudge 2004b:3). As they have time, they fit in lower value activities. Developing breadth of training groups is important for SCs. SCs with only one or two training groups may never see a CPM emerge because they are not spending enough time with

enough people training them for multiplication. SCs should look at a sample two-week schedule and fit in as many T4T-type training groups with local believers as possible. Once this takes place, the potential for CPM is great (see Appendix C). Until this point, SCs should use lower value activities to produce groups of new local believers they can add to their bi-weekly schedule of training. Until SCs are spending significant amounts of time in high value activities, CPMs are unlikely to develop (Smith SR 2004f:4).

Such a prioritization of time should help SCs not to burn out in ministry (Smith SR 2004e:2). Without such a prioritization, SCs often engage in a multitude of activities that overload them. In addition, when they do not see CPMs emerge, it is easy for SCs to become discouraged and drop out of the work.

8.2. Responses of strategy coordinators

In each NEXT conference, the presentation of this strategy for beginning effective ministry provided a turning point for SCs to have an understanding and hope for seeing a CPM begin in their ministries. SCs responded quite positively to the strategy of prioritizing high value activities. SCs expressed several ways that the presentation was helpful in devising their own strategies for CPM:

8.2.1. Prioritization of activities and schedule

Several SCs found the RL presentation extremely helpful in determining how to conduct the next phase of their ministries. With many demands on their time, the SCs were often confused about how to spend their time. One SC living in an extremely populous city that experiences much expatriate traffic found that many people were placing demands on his time. However, most of these demands were not high value activities. As a result of NEXT, the SC determined to invest the bulk of his time in training one thousand new believers in his target group that had come to faith through a house church network he partnered with (Smith SL 2004:31). He significantly reduced his time serving the requests of traveling expatriates. Over the next three years the SC's ministry demonstrated unparalleled growth through the multiplication of churches.

8.2.2. Defining whom to invest time in

Understanding the prioritization of partners according to willingness and cultural proximity was helpful for many SCs in defining which partners to invest their time in. One SC couple

exemplified this. They had been involved in good ministries but not the highest value ministries. Part of the reason was that they had no clear guideline for evaluating which partners to invest in. A result of the RL presentation was that they identified three distinct groups of individuals to begin training – one same culture group, one national near culture group and one international near culture group (Westbrook 2004:11). Their work jumped from five new churches in the year prior to the conference to forty-nine churches in the year following. They attribute this directly to identifying the highest-yield groups to begin training (Smith SR 2006b).

8.2.3. An increase in the amount of evangelism SCs and their teams engaged in

Many SCs came to a realization that they and their teams were doing very little evangelism. As a result, they had few willing local partners to train for multiplication. As a result, many SCs made a fresh commitment to increase the amount of evangelism they and their teams were doing. They often set goals for each person on their team to make gospel presentations to non-Christians five or even ten times a week. One SC expressed, “We are not waiting on outsiders any longer [to do evangelism]. We are going to create believers of insiders ourselves. We were reminded that you reap what you sow and you should sow abundantly (Smith SR 2005c:7).” This SC works in a very difficult place with a remote people group. For several years, with no believers among their people group, they had waited in vain on trade-language speaking, near culture partners to begin doing evangelism. With no commitment from these national partners, the SC and his team have developed a remarkably organized system for their own consistent evangelism that tracks each person who receives a gospel witness. For the first time in the history of ministry to this people group, new believers and churches are emerging.

8.2.4. Freeing them up from activities that were not high value

Rather than adding many new high value activities to their already full schedules, most SCs expressed real freedom in being able to stop engaging in activities that were not high priority. They expressed hope at ordering their ministry and personal life in a way that was sustainable and prioritized their own spiritual life and time with family members. Removing a commitment to lesser-value ministry items enabled SCs to have more time for high-value activities and not burn out in the process. One group of NEXT participants came up with this lesson: “If it’s not getting us to the main thing, let it go (Hoff 2004:11).”

8.2.5. Increase in the amount of vision-casting by the SC

To develop willing partners, SCs realized that they must hone their skill in vision-casting for CPM, and cast vision much more often. Some SCs had not realized the importance of vision-casting, and many could not do this in the target language in which they worked. However, to mobilize same or near culture partners was going to require them to learn how to do this in the target or trade language. The result was that many SCs immediately and frequently began using the trade language to cast vision to as many groups of same and near culture believers as possible. One SC working among a remote people deemed resistant to the gospel began to actively cast vision to a few believers among them, as well as to near culture believers. This vision-casting led to the formation of three churches very quickly thereafter, and approximately one year after the conference the SC was consistently casting vision to about seventy-five same and near culture believers (Smith SR 2005c:6).

8.2.6. Increasing the number of groups they trained

Some of the SCs attending NEXT conferences were already engaged in high-value activities. However, they were training only a few small groups and were seeing minimal results. The lesson they learned was to “go wide” in looking for new groups of willing nationals to train (Smith SR 2004e:8). They realized that they always needed to be looking for more groups of willing believers to train for reproduction. One SC who was already seeing some good results realized that he could see much greater results by training more groups. He responded that his plan for his target group was “Training, training, training. Find the people. Train the people (Westbrook 2004:11).”

8.2.7. Having a simple tool to use in training

Although a number of the SCs were already involved in training national partners, many of them expressed frustration that their training had been too complex and non-reproducible. They determined to identify one simple tool (such as T4T) to use for evangelism, discipleship, church planting and multiplication. One SC discovered that his personal desire for a “perfect” method (quality) was limiting his willingness to train broadly (quantity) because he had not found a method he was willing to use (Smith SL 2004:31). He committed to shifting his focus from quality (perfecting the ultimate tool) to quantity (using an adequate tool with many groups of people).

Another SC found that he had been using too many tools in his ministry and that the persons he had trained became confused and ineffective. He decided he needed to just use

one “cookie cutter” that was suitable for the majority of his local partners to use (Smith SL 2004:32).

8.2.8. Confidence that CPM could immediately start where they were

Several of the SCs expressed new-found faith that God would begin a CPM in their target groups. Learning a simple approach for getting to CPM gave them hope in the complex world of ministry they found themselves in. One group of SCs, after this presentation, remarked, “God can do it!” The group agreed, but then one person added, “No, God *will* do it (Hoff 2004:11)!” What they were expressing was a new confidence in God’s desire to honor their faithful efforts in the right types of activities by initiating a CPM.

8.3. Evaluation of the proposal

The fact that the strategy coordinators found great encouragement in the midst of each conference from the RL presentation does not necessarily validate it as an effective approach to initiating CPMs. However, the strategy proposal given by the RL can best be evaluated by comparing it to SC ministries that have exhibited growth, multiplication and/or CPM. To do this, it can be compared with three sets of data: 1) the four case studies examined at the NEXT conferences; 2) the lessons learned from the 2007 CPM assessments; 3) the results actually achieved by the SCs who implemented this strategy. The first two categories will be used as an evaluative tool in this chapter. The latter one will be used in the last chapter. Evaluating the strategy against the six previously-cited church planting models is largely ineffective at this point for two reasons: 1) several of those models do not attempt to start CPMs and 2) statistics that give results from those strategies are not cited by their authors.

8.3.1. NEXT conference CPM case studies

How does the strategy proposed by the RL compare to the actual ministries of the SCs in the four case studies examined at NEXT conferences? This comparison should be a good barometer to the effectiveness of this strategy.

The four case studies demonstrate a striking similarity with the presentation given by the RL. This is most likely because he developed this plan after observing these and other CPMs in Asia.

Working with culturally same or similar partners: Each of the case studies demonstrated this as the highest priority in ministry. Rather than focusing on outside, distant-

culture partners, each focused instead on finding believers from within the target group or nearby.

- Large Asian CPM: most new partners were from within the target group itself.
- H people CPM: since few believers existed in the people group, partners were mobilized from an ethnically similar people group in the same province.
- Z people CPM: a combination of same culture and near culture partners were developed but the greatest results came from a group of new target group believers won to faith by team members.
- Acts 29: raising up national SCs from the target group or near-culture group was the primary strategy.

Initiating evangelism where no believers existed before: Several of the target groups in the case studies already had large numbers of believers. However, the two target groups did not have many believers:

- H people CPM: in this scenario the SCs and team could not do much evangelism in the villages due to security issues. However, by mobilizing near culture partners they were able to generate enough evangelism to begin training target group believers themselves.
- Z people CPM: in this scenario, the greatest results came from the new believers evangelized by the SC team in the city where they lived.

Prioritizing the training of new believers over trained professionals: Three of the four case studies demonstrate a track record in this area that corresponds exactly. One case study offers insufficient data.

- Large Asian CPM: the SCs quickly determined that they did not want to train church leaders. Instead, they asked church leaders to let them have access to lay people, especially new believers.
- H people CPM: the farmers from the neighboring people group who were mobilized in this venture were predominantly lay people who had no previous experience in church planting.
- Z people CPM: the SC and team trained leaders and lay people. However, they experienced the best results by far with new believers who had no prior church leadership experience.
- Acts 29: insufficient data.

Training them with one simple, reproducible method: Each case study demonstrated this in varying degrees.

- Large Asian CPM: the SCs used only one approach – training for trainers (T4T).
- H people CPM: the SCs used one method with two components: one for the overall vision for CPM and the second for day-to-day evangelism and discipleship. They found that using additional methods confused their trainees. Instead they trained their evangelists in the same method over and over.
- Z people CPM: after several years of little growth, significant growth began after the SC settled on only one method (Swan 2004:1).
- Acts 29: a key component to Acts 29 training was giving national SCs specific tools for CPM. Several saw great results, but the majority experienced fewer results. Later in the process, the key Acts 29 trainer realized that he was not giving one simple method that everyone could use and began to incorporate a more simplified T4T approach in his training (personal conversations with the author).

Breadth of training: Two of the four case studies especially demonstrate a breadth of training and its significant results.

- Large Asian CPM: this is the best example of the importance of breadth of training (number of individuals and groups in training). The SCs' priority was to fill every available ministry hour with groups to train in T4T (see Appendix B).
- H people CPM: the SCs attempted to train many groups but the number of near culture partners willing to be trained was small. Instead the SCs spent much time casting vision to same, near and distant culture partners so that out of this group a few would commit to the work. As a result of having fewer groups to train, the results of this CPM are smaller than the other examples.
- Z people CPM: the SC and team emphasized training but probably did not emphasize breadth to the degree of the large Asian CPM. As a result, like the H people CPM, the numbers are smaller.
- Acts 29: this scenario is slightly different from the others. The trainer was not training average target group believers but rather national SCs. However, he

trained as broadly as he could. This resulted in a few that saw significant CPMs begin, numbering in the hundreds and thousands of churches.

Prioritizing high value activities to the exclusion of lesser-valued activities: The four case studies demonstrated diligence in prioritizing high value activities.

- Large Asian CPM: the SCs essentially invested in no SC activities other than witnessing to and training same culture people.
- H people CPM: the SCs prioritized the high-value to low-value progression. When they had no same culture believers, they cast vision to near-culture believers. When they could not find those, they cast vision to distant-culture believers.
- Z people CPM: in early days, the SC prioritized lower value items. As time when by, however, she began to invest in higher value items with commensurate results.
- Acts 29: the main efforts of the regional trainer was to train same or near culture partners to the exclusion of almost all else.

Utilizing a training trainers approach: This is the aspect of the RL presentation that is most in question. Three of the four case studies did not use a strict training trainers approach. However, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, the fact that the large Asian CPM stressed training trainers may be what set it apart from the others in magnitude. The main difficulty that faced the H people CPM and the Z people CPM in using a training for trainers approach was the issue of regular *access* to the people group for training. In a T4T approach, the trainer must meet with the trainees frequently, preferably every two weeks. However, in the Z and H people case studies, access to their village believers was much more restricted. In the H people situation, it was difficult to train villagers more frequently than once every three months (for security reasons).

In addition, in T4T every believer is to witness to neighbors. However, in a rural village situation, the number of unevangelized neighbors quickly dwindles. Unless the believers in that village make a concerted effort to get outside their small world (village) to target new villages, the evangelization process stops. T4T does not specifically address this issue as well as a *training of church planters* approach does. In a *training of church planters* approach, strategies are developed for taking the gospel from one village to another.

All of this continues to raise questions about the validity of a *training for trainers* approach in a rural people group situation. Missionaries (including myself) in the last three years have piloted modified T4T approaches to people groups, adding in components to deal with limited access, village strategies and non-literacy. The early results look promising but it is too early to confirm a T4T approach for remote, limited-access areas.

8.3.2. 2007 CPM assessments

In the two years following these NEXT conferences, more examples of CPMs have emerged in Asia. The two 2007 assessments attempted to specifically track the role SCs played in developing CPMs. In the previous chapter, the first of three questions about CPMs was examined: “What were the key characteristics that helped these ministries become CPMs?” The lists given in the previous chapter correspond very closely to the actions recommended in the RL presentation (see chapter seven).

In the two assessments, a second question was asked which is helpful for evaluating the RL presentation: “What did the SC do to contribute to this work becoming a CPM? What key competencies did he or she exhibit?” Each assessment stated these differently but was similar to the other and the line between CPM themes and SC actions became very blurred. In addition, the assessments evaluated more than simply what the SC did, but also what type of person he or she was. For the purposes of comparing the assessments with the RL strategy, I have primarily included elements of SC actions, not their character and/or personality.

Table 8: SC core competencies from 2007 assessments

January 2007 (Smith SR 2007a:1)

1. Understands and implements a simple plan and process that gets to reproduction
 - a. Lots of personal evangelism that leads to training trainers who witness and train trainers and in the process start simple churches that multiply also
2. Perseverance – dogged tenacity doing the right things to complete the task, pressing through obstacles that come
3. The SC prays for the lost and mobilizes fervent prayer for the lost, especially by nationals
 - a. Expects God to demonstrate His power, often miraculously
4. Able to boldly share the gospel, start simple house churches and mentor emerging leaders
5. Trains the maximum number of trainers (both new and old believers) in training that results in multiplication (e.g. T4T)
6. Ruthlessly evaluates and adapts based on the fruit he sees
7. Relates primarily to local believers that are same or near culture to his/her target group
8. Spends large amounts of time finding national partners, casting vision to them, and training them for reproduction. Always trying to start new streams of training
9. Exercises frequent loving accountability for obedience and reproduction with those he/she trains
10. Mentors and trains the right leaders – those who are training trainers who train trainers
 - a. As it becomes evident who is bearing fruit, the SC filters those he trains and spends the majority of his time with fruit-bearers
11. Protects the movement from DNA that would slow or halt the movement
12. Raises up upper level leaders as the movement grows and helps them multiply and guide the movement

March 2007 (Cunningham 2007:1)

1. The SC breaks down the vision into a simple plan to be implemented.
2. The SC demonstrates resilience, bouncing back after setbacks
3. The SC prays for the work demonstrating a strong burden for the lost.
4. The SC initiates the type of ministry needed; does not wait to be prompted by someone from the outside.
5. The SC is personally involved in training of local partners at some level.
 - a. The SC is trusted by the local partners
6. The SC continues to learn, self-evaluate and adapt the work as needed.
7. The SC prioritizes relationships with local believers.
8. The SC is always attempting to start new streams of CPM.
9. The SC communicates the vision with passion.
10. The SC works diligently toward the vision, willing to take risks to achieve it.
11. The SC exercises great faith.
12. The SC takes charge of the plan and directs the strategy.

How did the RL presentation compare with the actions of SCs observed in the CPM assessments?

- ***Working with culturally same or similar partners:*** this was seen as a high value in the 2007 assessments in all of the CPMs assessed.
- ***Initiating evangelism where no believers existed before:*** this also was confirmed in the assessments. The assessors observed that SCs needed skills in evangelism to initiate evangelism where no target group believers existed.
- ***Prioritizing the training of new believers over trained professionals:*** an observed phenomenon in the assessments was that the majority of effective evangelists in the movements were not trained professionals. However, in the larger movements, there commonly was a key national or two who had been believers for several years and may have been church leaders who took the vision for CPM as their own (Smith SR 2007b:18). This was a phenomenon not observed in NEXT conferences but is probably a characteristic that accelerates CPMs.
- ***Training them with one simple, reproducible method:*** this was seen as a high value in the 2007 assessments in most CPMs.
- ***Breadth of training:*** the 2007 assessments confirmed that the best strategy we are aware of for getting to CPM involves continually adding new streams or groups for training.
- ***Prioritizing high value activities to the exclusion of lesser-valued activities:*** this was especially observed in the relentless approach on the part of the SCs to do things that directly contributed to a CPM starting.
- ***Utilizing a training for trainers approach:*** some sort of reproducible training was used, but not all CPMs utilized a training for trainers approach.

9. The priority of high yield activities in progressing down the critical path toward sustained CPM

Midway through each NEXT conference, after multiple presentations on strategy, biblical studies and case studies, the participants in each NEXT conference consolidated and distilled their learning about how to initiate sustained CPMs into one set of guidelines. They felt that these principles could be used as a template to evaluate missionary activity that attempts to initiate CPMs. This set of guidelines then became a template for evaluating their own ministries and for the group to use in giving wise counsel to each SC participating.

The lesson learned at this point in each NEXT conference was: *The development of CPMs demonstrates a common pattern. When SCs adhere to this pattern and implement ministry according to it, the Holy Spirit often initiates kingdom movements known as sustained church planting movements.* This set of guidelines proved to be the primary lessons learned by the SCs regarding CPMs.

9.1. A template for initiating CPMs

A template is something that serves as a pattern. In each NEXT conference, SCs developed a pattern to use for evaluating their own ministries. They based this upon what they learned from 1) the studies from Scripture about how kingdom movements spread, 2) the presentations about how successful SCs in recent years have initiated CPMs, and 3) the themes that surfaced in each case study. As a result, the templates they developed were more comprehensive in scope than the RL presentation. All of these lessons were consolidated to one sheet of paper. The SCs attempted to reduce all of the learning to an irreducible minimum of what is needed for sustained CPMs to develop. The consolidation was made by group decision. Any item that was not agreed upon by every member as an essential principle of CPMs was not included in the template. This consolidation allowed the most important ministry principles to be clarified so that SCs would know how they should proceed in their own ministries.

When a template is applied to a piece of wood in carpentry, the carpenter traces the pattern and cuts away any wood that does not fit within the outline drawn. NEXT participants attempted to do this same thing in the realm of ministry. Halfway through the conference, the SCs made a presentation to the group about how their ministries had progressed through the previous few years. They invited the other participants to evaluate their minis-

tries based upon the template the group devised and then to give them feedback on how they should change their ministries to move toward sustained CPMs. SCs were encouraged to stop any ministries or aspects of ministry that did not fit within the template and to initiate ministries that were in the template yet lacking from their current work.

SCs found themselves at various points along the continuum of the progression toward CPM. Some SC ministries had many new churches (some at second or third generation) while others had only a handful of converts and few, if any, churches. Therefore, the counsel each SC received varied depending on where he or she fell in the progression toward CPM. The template helped them evaluate which activities were most essential at their point in the continuum toward CPM.

The templates developed in each NEXT conference serve as the primary consolidation of lessons learned in the conferences. As a consequence, they serve as the fulfillment of the thesis proposed in this paper: *A study of the dynamics of developing sustained church planting movements in Asian nations, based on lessons learned in the 2004-2005 NEXT conferences in East Asia*. Therefore, an attempt will be made to synthesize the various templates into a general guide for developing sustained CPMs based on the lessons learned from the eight conferences. It is hoped that this template will be useful for missionaries in various parts of the world who attempt to reach entire cities or people groups with the gospel through church planting movements by providing them practical guidelines for their ministries.

9.1.1. The templates from each NEXT conference

Templates are available from each conference except the last (it was not recorded in that conference). The templates were varied yet showed common themes. However, each one was expressed in a way that reflected the personalities of the group and reflected where they were on the continuum toward sustained CPM. To preserve the integrity of this study, each template is presented below verbatim. Where needed, I have added explanations in *italics* to clarify various points.

9.1.1.1. NEXT 1 and 5

The following template is a compilation of templates from both NEXT conference one and NEXT conference five (Smith SL 2004:30). The same individual took notes in both conferences and consolidated them into one template that reflected all of the points from each one. Therefore it is longer than the other templates.

DNA that is sufficient to finish the task: *inherent in the movement is an ethos or DNA that will motivate local believers to finish the task of the evangelization of that target group.*

- Vision
- Prayer and worship
- Acts 1:8 - “It CAN be done”

The value of the kingdom and that the king is worthy: *stemming primarily from the parable of the hidden treasure and the lifestyles exhibited by believers in the CPM case studies, this characteristic was developed to emphasize the need for developing the right type of converts that a CPM is built upon.*

- Radical obedience
- They have a part in it (the kingdom)
- Future reward

Pervasive, reproducing leadership training: *in this context “leadership” refers to the training of all believers not simply those who serve in a leadership capacity.*

- Shorten the reproductive cycle
- True discipleship in terms of character and growth

An ongoing evaluation by results and not activity: *the SC continually evaluates how the work is progressing and makes changes based upon results not primarily upon other criteria.*

- You judge a tree by its fruit

Servant leadership

Simplicity: *referring primarily to a simple methodology that is used to get to CPM.*

Doing the right things at the right time (a process): *this reflects the concept of SCs being at different stages along the continuum of progress toward sustained CPMs. What SCs need to emphasize in ministry varies depending upon where they are on the continuum.*

- Start small and seek to grow, rather than make a big splash: *it would appear that this conflicts with the idea of utilizing breadth of training multiple groups of people. However, that is not the case. The group emphasized starting multiple training*

groups with whomever the SCs could mobilize rather than planning large-scale projects such as radio broadcasts and mass literature distributions that do not demonstrate a track record of initiating CPMs. This concept is confirmed by the following two items.

- Pursue multiple tracks
- Invest on high value items

A willingness to make the hard calls on your team: *specifically that SCs streamline their teams so that the individuals on their teams believe in a CPM vision and are willing to work towards that rather than oppose it.*

- These are dictated by the end vision.
- Having FAT people on the team helps: *FAT = Faithful, Available, Teachable*

It is a lay led movement: *the SC initiates it and helps to develop it, but eventually the movement is owned and sustained by lay people.*

There is an assumption of broad seed sowing: *rather than assume it, the group clarified that the simple CPM method emphasized broad-scale personal evangelism by each new believer.*

Working toward sustainability

- Especially leadership training: *at this point, the group was specifically referring to leaders of churches*
- This is related to the question: “When do we exit?” *When is the work moving in such a manner toward saturation and sustainability that the SC is no longer needed?*
- There need to be third and fourth generation churches: *this was the barometer of a genuine CPM developing. The existence of first and second generation churches only did not indicate a CPM had truly started yet.*

Somehow, people are encountering God: *the work is not a human-centered work based on methodologies. Rather every method centers around helping people experience God, draw closer in relationship with him and be empowered by him.*

An understanding and agreement of what a church is: *without a clear understanding of what a church is, it would be difficult for target group believers or the SC team to know how to start them.*

- Especially on your team
- This is likely best done on a minimalist basis: *that is, a simple form of church that is taken from Scripture rather than one that includes many traditional but perhaps extra-biblical requirements.*
- Actually, the East Asia Region already has one. It is on the Annual Statistical Report: *the missionaries in this organization already possessed a definition that the organization uses in defining a church.*

9.1.1.2. NEXT 2

The template for NEXT 2 is as follows (Smith SR 2004e:8):

Critical Path - a purposeful end-vision

- Know where I am and where I need to go: *along the critical path continuum toward sustained CPM.*
- Releasing non-critical things: *not spending time on ministries that do not contribute toward CPM.*
- High value items: *SCs spend their time on items that move them toward CPM.*

Find willing nationals (target group or close culture)

- Cast vision, ownership, jump the gap: *“jump the gap” refers to the importance of moving from churches that are initiated by evangelists from outside the target group to the starting of churches by new target group believers. Evangelism and church planting jumps the gap from something that “outsiders” do to something “insiders” do.*
- Train, train, train for reproduction (e.g., T4T), especially among those who obey

Wide or broad training and work

- Multiple tracks and streams of CPM

A reproducing model and method: *reproducing* as opposed to *reproducible* referred to the concept that the method used was not simply one that was reproducible in theory but one that was actually being implemented and bearing fruit through indigenous believers.

- Intentional, accountable: *believers are accountable to obey what they learn and this accountability is intentional in stressing multiplication.*
- Implementing the model
- Time-stamped: *specific plans are made in time (e.g., “I will share the gospel with five persons this week.”) rather than teaching believers non-specific principles.*
- Simple, practical, specific model
- Process, not just the content: *the process or manner of helping believers multiply is as important as the content they are taught. SCs must train them in manner that enables them to evangelize and start churches (e.g., the three parts of each T4T session from chapter six).*
- Adaptable
- Focus – gets you to your target

Ruthless evaluation: *SCs, their teams and local partners evaluate ministry based on results and change ministry as needed to achieve the results of consistent multiplication.*

DNA or ethos of the kingdom (CPM): *having an ethos that is kingdom centered will be the same as having an ethos that is conducive to CPM.*

- Reproducing, pervasive
- Deeply obedient, maturing
- Going command and training: *the training emphasizes the Great Commission’s command to go*

Sustainability

- Leader training that keeps up: *with the multiplication of churches*
- Rapid and staying ahead of curve: *of new churches starting*
- Faith that God may move fast and our adaptability: *SCs must give special attention to this area in the expectation that new churches will start and multiply quickly.*

Challenge assumptions: *SCs should keep learning as new lessons about CPMs emerge and adapt their ministries accordingly.*

9.1.1.3. NEXT 3

The template for NEXT 3 is as follows (Smith SR 2004f:9):

The more you train, the more results: *that is, the greater number of groups and individuals trained.*

Train local willing Christians closest to your target group

Essential to start with right DNA and continue in the same DNA: *the DNA or ethos of multiplication and training of trainers that leads to CPM*

Decide the content of your DNA (KISS): *DNA for CPM does not develop automatically. SCs must specifically think through how they implement ministry so that the right ethos and direction is established. KISS = Keep It Short and Simple, meaning that the method should be simple and reproducible.*

- Starts with who you are: *SCs must model the ethos of a kingdom movement, not just teach it.*

Practical process of training: *emphasis is on both a concrete method of approach and a manner of training that equips indigenous believers to reproduce.*

Ruthless evaluation

Decide your critical path (how many churches and where): *referring to the end-visioning process.*

Specific plan of implementation: *SCs need a specific plan of action that moves beyond theoretical principles of ministry.*

- Just start: *even when the entire vision is not clear or the methods being used are not “perfect” or completely understood, it is important for the SC just to begin and not procrastinate.*

God uses humble people of faith: *emphasis on being the type of person God uses to build CPMs around.*

9.1.1.4. NEXT 4

The template for NEXT 4 is as follows (Westbrook 2004:9):

Our work comes from the overflow of our walk with God. (Question: How’s your walk with God?): *This was a reflection of the fact that God builds CPMs around men and women of God and was an attempt to help SCs continually evaluate their own spiritual lives.*

Sow the word often, widely, expectantly, face to face: *specifically this referred to personal evangelism.*

Train many others who will train with accountability widely toward an end result of CPMs: *multiple emphases are here. 1) Training for reproduction. 2) Accountability for reproduction. 3) Breadth in the number of groups of people being trained. 4) Evaluated by how effective the training is in achieving multiplication and ultimately CPM.*

Intentionally multiply CPM streams to all sectors, seeking out persons of peace: *similar to the other templates but emphasizing that new streams of CPM in new areas are often begun by finding a non-Christian who is a person of peace and letting the evangelism flow through that new believer.*

Keep casting the vision and ethos of CPM.

Find simple, reproducible tools that work and just do it: *“just do it” emphasizing that the SC not procrastinate but make a definite start.*

Get to reproducing churches: *the emphasis being both 1) starting churches (as opposed to simply evangelizing) and 2) making sure the churches reproduce in a way that leads to CPM.*

Focus on high value, willing local partners, or starting with whom you have: *this is the progression demonstrated in the RL presentation of starting with same culture partners, but if there are not many, starting with near culture partners.*

Focus on high value activities: *specifically the training of the same or near culture partners for reproduction.*

Boldly do whatever it takes: *boldness must be modeled by the SC and team, or local believers will not be bold. Without boldness, the movement will never begin effectively.*

We will walk with God to the degree that we sow His word, training others with accountability with a view toward multiplying CPMs through constantly casting the CPM ethos and vision, resulting in reproducing churches through working with high yield local partners (or any partners we can find), boldly focusing on high value activities to do whatever it takes to achieve God's purposes: *this was an attempt to summarize the template in one mission statement.*

9.1.1.5. NEXT 6

The template for NEXT 6 is as follows (Hoff 2004:18):

Doing comes out of being. Am I spending time with Father? *Emphasis is on beginning the work by looking within and evaluating one's spiritual nature and then making adjustments to draw close to God.*

Keep it simple: *referring to the plan of action, especially the method used for CPM.*

Prioritize critical path activities: *this is equivalent to high value or high yield activities.*

Say "no" to non-high value activities: *SCs should minimize their commitment to activities that do not move them down the critical path toward CPM.*

Sow the seed a lot: *referring to initiating large amounts of personal evangelism, especially by indigenous believers.*

Training reproducing, willing national partners: *with emphasis on CPM-type training that leads to reproduction of believers and churches.*

Extraordinary prayer: *prayer that is focused on the high value items the SC and team are engaged in as well as the salvation of those hearing the gospel, and that expects miraculous (extraordinary) answers.*

Persistence - expect problems: *results come as the SC persists in the right things and does not get side-tracked when problems develop. It also alludes to the fact that the SC needs to prepare the new believers to be bold in the face of persecution.*

Implement - do it and be accountable: *“accountable” referring to accountability to obey the Scripture, evangelize and train others.*

Start small - find obedient followers: *does not imply that there should not be breadth in training but emphasizes not investing in mass evangelism projects. Rather the SC should spend time developing local believers through a training process.*

Evaluate preconceptions: *SCs should keep learning and allow their presuppositions to be challenged and changed as they learn new truths.*

MAWL – models: *SCs utilize a Model, Assist, Watch and Leave format for developing local believers and leaders. Many of the SCs up to this point envisioned their role as an encourager and strategist rather than an implementer. However, it is important for SCs to model to their teams and local trainees what they expect them to do.*

20% rule (make choices in relationships). 80% failure: *in the T4T process typically on twenty percent will go on to train others to be trainers. SCs should continue to make choices to invest in those fruitful people. They should not be discouraged by or overly invest their time in the eighty percent who do not reproduce.*

Train broadly: *that is, train many individuals and groups.*

Find persons of peace: *initiate new streams of CPM in unevangelized areas by looking for persons of peace (Luke 10).*

Timely raising up of leaders: *a system must be in place for selecting and equipping leaders in time to keep up with the multiplication of churches.*

9.1.1.6. NEXT 7

The template for NEXT 7 is as follows (Hughes 2005:18):

The gospel must be proclaimed widely and boldly: *specifically through personal gospel presentations, not mass evangelism such as radio or literature distribution.*

Have a clear vision of the end and cast it often: *SCs need to understand the end-vision and the critical path, and cast this vision often to their teams and local partners.*

Periodically evaluate activities (and modify) to make sure they are high value activities.

We must posture and model ourselves for holiness, prayer, golden rule (ethics), the great commands, etc.: *“posturing” refers to SCs putting themselves in a position of integrity and willing spirit so that God can use them effectively.*

A 2 Timothy 2:2 principle is used of investing in people that do the same with others (as it relates to training): *this refers to the training for trainers process where new disciples pass on to other newer disciples what they have learned and expect them to do the same with other newer disciples.*

Live with a sense of urgency: *the SC must begin immediately, and reproduction is the only way to proceed because so many individuals in the target group die daily and spend an eternity in hell. Urgency drives the SC to initiate a CPM that quickly saturates the target group.*

Need a simple method (reproducible).

Find and maintain access to local inside partners.

Accountability for life and work: *the accountability process in training applies to obedience to the Scripture studied (life), and evangelism, church planting and training of others (work).*

Give them the value of the Word as authority and teach them to study and obey it rightly: *new believers should be taught to obey Scripture so that the movement will stay within biblically orthodox boundaries.*

Multiple streams needed.

Intentionality: *SCs and those they train must intentionally focus on CPM or it will not result.*

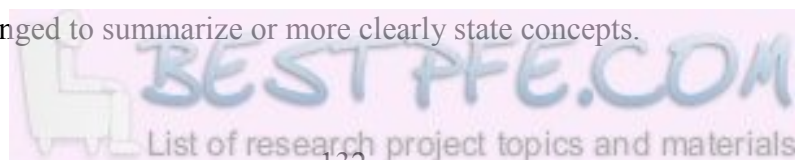
Intentionally plant and model churches with multiplying DNA.

Ongoing leadership training – self sustained: *a system is in place for selecting and equipping new generations of leaders to keep pace with the number of new churches. This system is something the target group believers can keep going and does not rely on outside help.*

9.1.2. A comparison and synthesis of the templates

9.1.2.1. A comparison of the templates

In order to better evaluate the lessons learned from the templates in each NEXT conference, it is helpful to compare them side by side to see which lessons are emphasized most often. In addition, one conference may have left important gaps in the template that other conferences filled in and a comprehensive comparison helps to provide a healthier CPM framework. An attempt is made below to compare the lessons. For the sake of clarity, original wording has sometimes been changed to summarize or more clearly state concepts.



After evaluating them side by side, a consolidated list of lessons learned about the dynamics of starting sustained CPMs is developed. It is hoped that this list will enable other missionaries to know how to cooperate with the Spirit of God to initiate sustained CPMs.

It should be noted that all of the items mentioned in the templates are valuable characteristics. However, the frequency with which an item was mentioned seems to emphasize its *unique importance* in helping ministries become movements. For example, prayer is listed in two of the templates and Scripture affirms the importance of prayer. However, prayer may not be a *distinctive* that sets apart ministry that gets to CPM from ministry that does not. Items mentioned in at least half of the templates are entered in **boldface** in the summary column.

By identifying the items that occurred in at least half of templates, the process of compiling the most important items into one list becomes easier.

Table 9: A comparison of CPM templates from seven conferences ordered by frequency of appearance of each item.

SUMMARY	NEXT 1 and 5	NEXT 2	NEXT 3	NEXT 4	NEXT 6	NEXT 7
A simple method for reproduction	A simple method for reproduction	A reproducing model and method	Simple content of DNA (or model) and a practical process of training	Find simple, reproducible tools that work and just do it	Keep it simple	Need a simple, reproducible method
Train many groups	Multiple tracks of training are initiated	Broad training in multiple tracks	Train frequently to gain more results	Train widely	Train broadly	Multiple streams needed
Vision for CPM by SC and owned by local believers	DNA and vision for a saturating CPM is present in the target group	DNA or ethos of the kingdom that pervades target group believers	Start and continue with the right DNA	Keep casting vision and ethos of CPM		Cast the end-vision often; a sense of urgency
End-vision and critical path for CPM is understood		A purposeful end-vision and critical path for CPM	Decide your critical path (how many churches and where)	Intentionally multiply CPM streams to all sectors via people of peace	Find persons of peace	Have a clear vision of the end
Frequent training that emphasizes reproduction	Pervasive training that emphasizes reproduction	High value items are the focus: train repeatedly for reproduction.		Train many others who will train others with accountability for CPM	Training: start small and find obedient followers	2 Tim 2:2 training the reproduces
The most important partners are same or close culture		Find willing same or close culture partners	Train local willing Christians closest to the target group	Focus on high value, willing partners	Training reproducing, willing national partners	Find and maintain access to local inside partners
Evaluating the work by the results and adjusting as necessary	Ongoing evaluation of the results	Ruthless evaluation: SCs allow assumptions to be challenged	Ruthless evaluation		Evaluate preconceptions	Periodically evaluate activities to make sure they are high value
The SC spends the majority of time on high value activities	Investing in high value activities appropriate to the stage of work		Specific plan of implementation	Focus on high value activities	Prioritize critical path activities; 20/80% rule; invest in reproducers	Intentionality

The SC lives and models a godly lifestyle	Servant leadership		God uses humble people of faith	Work overflows from the quality of the SC's relationship with God	Doing comes out of being: relationship with God	SC models a godly lifestyle
Accountability for reproduction is built in to the training		Accountability for reproduction		Accountability toward an end-result of CPMs	Implement - do it and be accountable	Accountability for life and work
Much personal evangelism is occurring	Broad seed-sowing is occurring in much M2E evangelism			Sow the word often, widely, expectantly face-to-face	Sow the seed a lot	The gospel must be proclaimed widely
Boldness characterizes the believers	Believers value their salvation and are boldly obeying God			Boldly do whatever it takes	Persistence: expect problems	The gospel must be proclaimed boldly
The CPM is sustained by raising up and training leaders	Sustainability built in: exponential leadership training	Sustainability by multiplying leadership training			Timely raising up of leaders	On-going leadership training -- self-sustained
Simple churches are started intentionally	A simple definition of church is used			Get to reproducing churches		Intentionally plant and model churches that multiply
The SC does not spend time on low value activities		The SC does not invest in non-critical items			Say "no" to low value activities	
Prayer for CPM	Prayer for the end-vision				Extra-ordinary prayer	
People encounter God	People are encountering God; it is a spiritual movement					
The team is streamlined and focused	Streamlining the team to comply with the strategy					

A lay-led movement	A lay-led movement					
The SC models what is expected					MAWL: SC models what is expected	
Target group believers obey the Scripture						Local believers value and obey Scripture

9.1.2.2. A synthesis

The various lessons learned from the six templates can be distilled into one synthesized version. This version is helpful in that it emphasizes the most critical and distinctive components needed in a strategy toward sustained CPM. Some items in the individual templates do not appear in the synthesis because they do not fall into one of these two categories: 1) a unique distinctive for a CPM to emerge over non-CPM work and 2) though a part of CPMs, they are not deemed critical to state explicitly. For example, SCs not investing time in low-value activities is true in CPMs, but it is not critical to state it since it is assumed in the other category of the SC investing in high-value activities. Other items such as local believers valuing Scripture is assumed in the category of accountability in training (believers are trained to obey and reproduce).

A synthesis of the templates appears below. These are the fourteen activities deemed most important for SCs who wish to see sustained CPMs develop.

- ***The SC lives and models a godly lifestyle.***
- ***The SC has a vision for sustained CPM and casts it often so that it is owned by local believers.***
- ***The SC defines the end-vision and critical path, and intentionally moves down it starting streams in new sectors as needed.*** This end-vision is a plan for saturating the entire target group with the opportunity to respond to the gospel within a few years.
- ***The SC spends the majority of time on high value activities.*** The SC minimizes involvement in things that are not high value activities. High value activities are as follows:
 - ***A simple method for reproduction is used by all.*** A good example is T4T (training for trainers) which includes a process for evangelism, discipleship, church planting, leadership training, and multiplication of all of these.
 - ***Training that emphasizes reproduction is done frequently.***
 - ***The SC and team primarily train partners who are same or close culture willing believers.***
 - ***The SC and team train as many individuals and groups as possible.*** A goal for them is to spend as many ministry hours each week or two weeks in this activity, staying with each group until it births several generations.

- *Accountability for obedience and reproduction is built in to the training.*
This accountability is to help believers value and obey Scripture as well as to help them witness, start churches and train others to repeat the process.
- *The SC sustains the movement by raising up and training leaders to keep pace with the multiplication of churches.* A system is in place whereby leaders are identified and new generations of training emerge to provide enough leaders for each new church.
- *Much personal evangelism is occurring in the process of the SC initiating work personally and in training national believers.* Personal evangelism grows broader as the movement progresses because more people are coming to faith and repeating the process of evangelism.
 - *Boldness characterizes the believers in their witness and stance for Christ even in the face of persecution.*
- *Simple churches are started intentionally in the process of training local believers.*
- *The SC periodically evaluates the work based upon the results and adjusts the work as necessary to move down the critical path toward sustained CPM.*

9.2. Evaluating the template

9.2.1. Possible prejudices

One aim of this study is to provide helpful guidelines for missionaries who hope to establish sustained CPMs in their own ministries. The template above appears to provide a concise outline of the types of guidelines that historically have helped missionaries achieve this. The results of NEXT conferences (see chapter ten) and recent assessments seem to confirm the value of this ministry template in developing sustained CPMs.

However, NEXT conferences were not designed to be empirical assessments of CPMs, but rather avenues for helping strategy coordinators succeed in the task of reaching their target groups. As a result, there are three main factors that could have prejudiced the NEXT conferences to derive similar templates. Efforts were made in each conference to minimize casting pre-conceived ideas upon the group and to allow the learning process to develop naturally from the materials studied. Even so, three factors could have skewed the results:

- 1) *Each conference was led by my wife and me.* We doubtless brought our presuppositions about how we wanted each conference to proceed although we strived to let each group determine the lessons learned on their own. However, the NEXT conference process was not a scientific process in a controlled environment, so no doubt our ideas influenced how the learning process developed. It is hoped, however, that our facilitation of these conferences enhanced the emergence of principles of initiating CPMs rather than our own personal presuppositions. Part of this is apparent in how our personal knowledge base increased with each conference and shaped how we adapted the subsequent conference. We attempted to guard ourselves against relying on our own presuppositions by including in each conference mission leaders and trainers from various areas who could create a balanced learning environment.
- 2) *The Bible passages studied and presentations given were similar.* Similar passages were studied in each, and generally similar presentations were given in each. Therefore it is logical that each group would arrive at similar answers though we made efforts not to coach each group in its answers to the Bible passages. It is possible that other lessons would have been derived by the choice of other passages or presentation. However, efforts were made to use passages most closely related to the mission work the participants were engaged in.
- 3) *The case studies examined were usually the same.* There were only slight variations to supplement special circumstances (e.g., when we had missionaries focused on evangelizing Muslims, we added a suitable case study). It is logical that the SCs would derive similar lessons from the same set of case studies. Finding similar themes was perceived to be a confirmation that each group was rising above personal presuppositions about CPMs, but at the same time it is possible that other themes would have been derived by a different set of case studies.

9.2.2. Comparing the synthesis to Garrison and the two 2007 assessments

Three methods of objectively evaluating the CPM template exist. The first is to actually evaluate the results of each SC who followed the template consistently. That evaluation will be given in chapter ten. Second, the advice given in the six church planting models previously cited can be compared to the template. However, since the authors provide no metrics for demonstrating the effectiveness of their models, this proves to be an inadequate means of evaluation. Third, the results of assessments done in David Garrison's work and the 2007

assessments are based firmly upon the metrics related to CPM growth and may provide a helpful evaluation of the template established in NEXT conferences.

To compare the synthesis with Garrison's assessment would appear to be a simple matter since he gives twenty universal and common characteristics of CPMs. However, the difficulty with Garrison's work (Garrison 2003:177, 221-222) is that he *describes* what he observes in several CPMs rather than *prescribing* what SCs should do. The NEXT conference template, however, is a *prescription* for ministry that arises from a description of what has happened in several CPMs. A comparison, however, can be made for Garrison attempts to provide practical handles for initiating a CPM later in his book according to the following pattern (Garrison 2003:292):

- 1) **Vision** – A clear end-vision of CPM
- 2) **Training** – training in evangelism, discipleship, church planting, training and multiplication that will lead to the end-vision
- 3) **Passion** – there is passionate mutual encouragement toward the end-vision taking place among workers
- 4) **Co-laborers** – raising up harvesters from new converts is the top priority
- 5) **Accountability** – everyone is accountable to repeat the process of evangelism, discipleship, church planting and training.

In the table below, these last five prescriptions are added in **boldface** to supplement the twenty characteristics Garrison cites in regard to CPMs.

The two 2007 assessments (Smith SR 2007a:1; Cunnyngham 2007:1) attempted to move one step beyond *describing* characteristics of CPMs to *prescribing* what SCs should do to initiate a sustained CPM. They may provide a more helpful benchmark in evaluating the effectiveness of the NEXT conference template.

The table below compares the NEXT template with Garrison and the two 2007 assessments. Each of the 2007 assessments evaluated case studies from two perspectives: 1) what factors helped this ministry become a CPM, and 2) what the SC's role was in that. Many times these factors crossed over from one category to the other. In order to provide an accurate comparison, the NEXT template is compared to both categories in each of the 2007 assessments.

The NEXT template column highlights in **boldface** the items that were present in at least half of the templates from the seven conferences for which we have data. It is helpful to evaluate the NEXT template by its confirmation by at least two of the three outside sources (Garrison 2003; Smith SR 2007b; Cunnyngham 2007).

Table 10: A comparison of the synthesized NEXT template with other assessments of CPMs					
NEXT Template	Garrison	Jan 2007 SC work	Jan 2007 CPM themes	Mar 2007 SC work	Mar 2007 CPM themes
A simple method for reproduction		Understands and implements a simple plan and process that gets to reproduction	Simple system for reproduction; Simplified training	The SC breaks down the vision into a simple plan to be implemented.	Reproducible system for evangelism, church planting and training; simple evangelism method
Train many groups		Train the maximum number of trainers	Multiple streams		Multiple streams
Vision for CPM by SC and owned by local believers	Passion; Insulation from outsiders?	Spends large amounts of time finding national partners, casting vision to them, and training them for reproduction; Protects the movement from DNA that would slow or halt the movement	Vision casting by SC; SC has passion; The SC is directive	The SC communicates the vision with passion. The SC exercises great faith.	Person of faith & vision - the SC believes it will happen; Locals have taken ownership of the movement
End-vision and critical path for CPM is understood	Vision	Always trying to start new streams of training	A burden for the lost that asks "What will it take?"; Multiple streams	The SC is always attempting to start new streams of CPM. The SC works diligently toward the vision, willing to take risks to achieve it.	Multiple streams
Frequent training that emphasizes reproduction	Training; Rapid incorporation of new believers?	Trains the maximum number of trainers in training that results in multiplication	Train trainers to train	The SC is personally involved in training of local partners at some level.	Frequent and constant training of trainers
The most important partners are same or close culture	Co-laborers; Local leadership?	Relates primarily to local believers that are same or near culture to target group	Training of nationals and focus on them primarily	The SC prioritizes relationships with local believers.	Key local partners are raised up to carry the torch
Evaluating the work by the results and adjusting as necessary		Ruthlessly evaluates and adapts based on the fruit	Evaluation, problem solving and adjusting the work	The SC continues to learn, self-evaluate and adapt the work as needed.	

The SC spends the majority of time on high value activities		Perseverance – dogged tenacity doing the right things to complete the task, pressing through obstacles that come; Mentors and trains the right leaders – those who are training trainers who train trainers	Dogged perseverance by the SC; The SC pours attention into right people (multipliers)	The SC initiates the type of ministry needed; does not wait to be prompted by someone from the outside; The SC demonstrates resilience, bouncing back after setbacks	
The SC lives and models a godly lifestyle				The SC is trusted by the local partners	
Accountability for reproduction is built in to the training	Accountability; Churches planting churches; Rapid reproduction	Exercises frequent loving accountability for obedience and reproduction	Aggressive accountability for reproduction; Obedience-based discipleship		Accountability and obedience to training
Much personal evangelism is occurring	Abundant evangelism	Lots of personal evangelism that leads to training trainers who witness and train trainers & in the process start simple churches that multiply	Personal evangelism that calls for a decision		Abundant personal evangelism
Boldness characterizes the believers	High cost for following Christ; Bold fearless faith; Missionaries suffered				Boldness in the face of opposition
The CPM is sustained by raising up and training leaders	On-the-job leadership training	Raises up upper level leaders as the movement grows and helps them multiply and guide the movement			Support structure that is sustainable as the movement expands; Shared leadership: new believers are expected to take part

Simple churches are started intentionally	Intentional planting reproducing house churches; Worship in heart language				Simple church structure
The SC does not spend time on low value activities					
Prayer for CPM	Extraordinary prayer; Divine signs and wonders	SC prays for the lost and mobilizes fervent prayer for the lost, especially by nationals; Expects God to demonstrate His power, often miraculously	Signs and wonders	The SC is prays for the work demonstrating a strong burden for the lost.	Prayer at a strategic level, desperate for people to come to faith
People encounter God					
The team is streamlined and focused					
A lay-led movement	Lay leadership				
The SC models what is expected		Able to boldly share the gospel, start simple house churches and mentor emerging leaders			
Target group believers obey the Scripture	The authority of God's Word		Believers have access to Scripture		
	Healthy churches				
	A climate of uncertainty				
	Family-based conversion patterns				

9.2.3. A revised NEXT conference synthesis

Evaluating each of the fourteen activities of the synthesized NEXT conference template by its confirmation in at least two of the three outside assessments alters it slightly. Taken out of the template is:

- ***The SC lives and models a godly lifestyle.***

This does not imply that a godly lifestyle is not important! Rather, it probably implies that this is not unique to CPMs. Godliness is a trait needed by all missionaries in all contexts. Added in to the template is:

- ***There is much prayer for the lost and for the end-vision that often results in miraculous answers.***

Prayer was mentioned in two of the NEXT conferences as a critical component of CPMs. However, because it did not appear in at least half of the templates, it was not originally included in the template synthesis. Comparison with the outside assessments confirms the importance of it in CPMs, especially including the elements of prayer for the *all the lost* and the element of *miraculous answers*.

As a result the following template from NEXT incorporates the synthesis of seven NEXT conferences and adjustments in light of outside assessments. It reflects our best summary of how to initiate sustained CPMs.

Table 11: Synthesized and revised template for initiating sustained CPMs

- ***The SC has a vision for sustained CPM and casts it often so that it is owned by local believers.***
- ***The SC defines the end-vision and critical path, and intentionally moves down it starting streams in new sectors as needed.*** This end-vision is a plan for saturating the entire target group with the opportunity to respond to the gospel within a few years.
- ***There is much prayer for the lost and for the end-vision that often results in miraculous answers.***
- ***The SC spends the majority of time on high value activities.*** The SC minimizes involvement in things that are not high value activities. High value activities are as follows:
 - ***A simple method for reproduction is used by all.*** A good example is T4T (training for trainers) which includes a process for evangelism, discipleship, church planting, leadership training, and multiplication of all of these.
 - ***Training that emphasizes reproduction is done frequently.***
 - ***The SC and team primarily train partners who are same or close culture willing believers.***
 - ***The SC and team train as many individuals and groups as possible.*** A goal for them is to spend as many ministry hours each week or two weeks in this activity, staying with each group until it births several generations.
 - ***Accountability for obedience and reproduction is built in to the training.*** This accountability is to help believers value and obey Scripture as well as to help them witness, start churches and train others to repeat the process.
 - ***The SC sustains the movement by raising up and training leaders to keep pace with the multiplication of churches.*** A system is in place whereby leaders are identified and new generations of training emerge to provide enough leaders for each new church.
- ***Much personal evangelism is occurring in the process of the SC initiating work personally and in training national believers.*** Personal evangelism grows broader as the movement progresses because more people are coming to faith and repeating the process of evangelism.
 - ***Boldness characterizes the believers in their witness and stance for Christ even in the face of persecution.***
- ***Simple churches are started intentionally in the process of training local believers.***
- ***The SC periodically evaluates the work based upon the results and adjusts the work as necessary to move down the critical path toward sustained CPM.***

10. Evaluation of the lessons learned

In each NEXT conference, strategy coordinators received feedback on their personal ministries based on the CPM template. They spent one day developing a set of action plans to implement the subsequent twelve months. This included a plan by each strategy coordinator's supervisor to work closely with them on these plans – encouraging, holding accountable, trouble-shooting and offering resources and on-going training.

The validity of the CPM principles developed in the NEXT conferences can largely be confirmed through a careful analysis of the results of the SCs' ministries. Jesus said, "Each tree is known by its own fruit (Lk 6:44)." Assuming that the principles were properly and persistently implemented, it is reasonable to expect to see a positive set of results, especially those that demonstrate multiplication of believers and churches. For most SCs, data was analyzed over a six year period, three years prior to and three years after their NEXT conference. *Overall, it appears that the CPM principles discovered in NEXT conferences offer an effective plan for missionaries serving in Asian contexts and striving for kingdom multiplication in previously unreached groups.* My personal involvement in working with missionaries outside Asia who have implemented these principles suggests that these principles are valid in any context, but the case studies we examined in NEXT conferences only came from an Asian context.

10.1. Ancillary factors contributing to the positive results

I was able to procure six year data on twenty-eight out of the forty-two SC units that participated in the eight NEXT conferences (for various reasons, sufficient data was lacking for fourteen). Analyzing results from twenty-eight strategy coordinators from the first seven conferences is not an exact science but rather an interpretation. Each SC serves in a unique context with unique resources. However, standard reporting data from each of these SCs revealed very positive results.

While I was very encouraged by the results of these SCs in the quantity of new believers and churches for the two to three years after each of their conferences, I am cognizant that other factors may also contribute to their success in addition to (or even instead of) the implementation of the lessons learned from NEXT conferences. The premise that I have operated from for this paper was that the principles learned in NEXT conferences, when properly implemented, generally lead to multiplication, and often, church planting movements. Many of the SCs attending the NEXT conferences had been trained for CPM, but with vague

methodologies based on just a few case studies of CPMs in the early days. Therefore, the much more developed understanding of CPM and appropriate CPM methodologies was a huge step forward for many of them. In the initial feedback we gained from post-NEXT conferences evaluations, most SCs attributed the new lessons learned about CPM as what helped them move forward in their ministries. Even so, other factors may have had significant roles in helping the SCs achieve significant results.

10.1.1. Intervention

Many of the SCs attending NEXT had not had any comprehensive SC training for years. Each of them attended organization meetings and forums twice a year, some of which included training. However, these meetings did not comprise a comprehensive training similar to the one-month SC training they received at the beginning of their ministries, nor did they offer a forum for serious reevaluation with feedback by colleagues.

The very act of intervening in the ministry of each SC with a week-long evaluation and re-working of ministry plans surely contributed to positive results most SCs experienced. My best guess is that this intervention was helpful because it was based on biblically-sound principles of ministry found in NEXT conferences. However, the act of *intervention* alone (regardless of the effectiveness of the principles) may have helped many of the SCs make progress.

10.1.2. Settling doubts

Many of the SCs attending NEXT conferences entered the meetings with doubts about CPM in general or the leadership of their supervisory team. NEXT offered a forum in which the group was small and “safe” enough that emotional and spiritual breakthroughs were encouraged. Some SCs had been harboring ill will toward some of their leaders, but NEXT offered them a forum to hear each others’ hearts and find personal reconciliation.

Other SCs had doubts about the validity of church planting movements in general. However, over the course of the week, as they examined various CPM case studies, SCs settled doubts about the reality of CPMs. They generally gained a new level of faith that a CPM was possible in their own contexts. This alone helped push many SCs forward in their fruitfulness.

Both of these (settling doubts about leadership and CPM) were designed into the NEXT conference agenda. While this part of NEXT conference was helpful for SCs, it does not specifically validate (or invalidate) the CPM lessons learned in NEXT.

10.1.3. On-going training

As mentioned earlier, many SCs participating had not received a comprehensive SC training for years. While we believe the CPM lessons learned were very important, we recognize that the simple act of receiving a thorough re-training certainly assisted many of the SCs. Some of the SCs had been floundering in ministry due to lack of vision or ministry skills. NEXT attempted to address both of these issues. The very act of giving more comprehensive training may have been a major factor (in addition to the CPM lessons) in assisting the SCs in their ministries.

10.1.4. Close supervision

A critical part of the design of NEXT conferences was the close interaction of each strategy coordinator's supervisor with him or her in the NEXT conference process. This process is detailed more below. However, simply by getting the supervisors more involved and on the "same page" with their SCs was a significant factor that helped the SCs make progress. I believe this close interaction worked well because it was based on valid CPM principles. Yet it is possible that close supervision alone could have contributed significantly to the change in the results regardless of the principles learned.

10.1.5. Conclusion

In all, however, these factors alone do not appear sufficient to help the high percentage of SCs make significant progress in ministry *if* the lessons they learned were invalid. Learning the lessons of CPM may not have been helpful if these other factors were not in place. In fact, it is doubtful most SCs would have made much progress if they had not been in place (for example, if they had no support structure for their work). In the same regard, if these ancillary factors had been based on lessons that were *anti*-CPM, it does not appear that they would have had the positive effect that they in fact did have. This is because the results demonstrate marked progress toward *multiplication*.

10.2. The implementation process

Each NEXT conference was structured to allow each strategy coordinator to evaluate his or her ministry and to make specific plans for the following year. It was hoped that structuring the conference in this manner with supervisors present would enable SCs to realistically establish or continue ministries that moved toward sustained church planting movements.

The two prongs of this approach were **concrete action plans** based on the CPM principles the SCs learned and provision for on-going **support from supervisors** to empower them in their ministries.

10.2.1. Twelve Month Action Plans

Prior to their NEXT conferences, SCs had been trained in a one-month course called SC Training. For all of them, SC Training had taken place at least three years prior. Most SCs had received their SC Training at least five or more years prior. The result of SC Training was that SCs developed three year master plans for their ministries. These master plans were designed to help them initiate church planting movements in their people groups or cities.

The NEXT participants, however, possessed two major liabilities coming into their NEXT conferences:

- *Outdated master plans* – Most SCs were well past the three year horizon of their master plans. Few had taken time out of their busy ministries to develop new master plans and were continuing the type of activities they had included in their three year plan.
- *Underdeveloped CPM principles and lack of specific tools* – Most SCs received their SC Training in the early days of learning about CPM. The principles they learned were largely valid, but were still embryonic or underdeveloped. SCs trained in this period had vague ideas of what might be effective in initiating CPMs. However, the volume of information and clarification of CPM principle greatly increased in the period of time *after* their SC Training based on the increased number of CPMs being studied around the world. Integral to this increase in understanding was the addition of CPM-appropriate methodologies or tools that gave practical training for CPM-ministry. Unfortunately, most of these SCs did not have access to this information and training, or if they did, did not have time or inclination to seriously re-tool their ministries.

A specific goal of NEXT conferences was to give SCs the time and forum to develop new plans based on the new lessons learned about CPMs. Without practical implementation of these plans, the NEXT conferences would have been mere intellectual exercises. Given the scope of just six days, we did not feel that SCs had time to draw up new three year plans. Instead, SCs gave their attention to those ministries which were most crucial in the subsequent twelve months to move their ministries across the continuum toward a sustained church planting movement.

10.2.1.1. *Step One: Determining the highest value activities*

Based on the lessons learned from the early part of the one-week conference, and after receiving feedback from other SCs and presenters/supervisors on their particular situations, SCs began the process of evaluating their ministries in light of the CPM template and determining what ministry activities were most important for them at this stage. This step in the action plans was one of *clarification*. In their ministry contexts, many of the SCs were extremely busy, coordinating extensive teams and ministries. Out of all of this activity, we asked SCs to determine three things (Smith SR 2004a:1):

1. *What are the most critical high-value (high-yield) activities necessary at this stage of your ministry to propel you toward a sustained and saturating church planting movement?* SCs evaluated whether or not they were on the critical path toward CPM and which activities were most critical at their stage of progress. They were asked to distance themselves emotionally from their previous weekly time commitments and to evaluate as impartially as possible what few things were the highest priorities.
2. *Which of these are you (and your team) currently involved in, and how can you (and your team) do them more effectively and extensively?* Once the highest value activities were identified, SCs developed specific plans (who, when, where, how, etc.) for implementing them. Some SCs found they were already implementing these to varying extents and simply needed to emphasize these more. Others found that they were not giving much emphasis to high value activities and had to establish new ministries. Regardless, each SC then developed a plan to utilize all known resources to implement these high value activities.
3. *In order to allow time for these activities, what other activities do you (and your team) need to spend less effort on or eliminate altogether?* In recognition that SCs are only human and also subject to 168 hours a week, SCs were asked to reduce the time they and their teams spent on less-productive ministries in order to make time for high value activities. For many, this was an emotional time (both difficult and liberating) of turning loose of activities they had been involved in for years. However, only in this manner were they able to introduce high value activities and create sufficient margin in their lives for other things (marriages, parenting, etc.)

Once SCs developed these plans, they met individually with their supervisors to get feedback and make any adjustments. Once their supervisors approved of these new plans, they proceeded to the second step.

10.2.1.2. Step Two: Scheduling these activities

In the first two conferences, we neglected this step. We assumed that SCs would automatically schedule these activities over the coming months. Some did and some did not. In order to better assist the SCs, they were asked to implement a second step, that of calendaring their activities for the subsequent twelve months. Special emphasis was placed on subsequent week and month after their arrival back into their ministry contexts. This provided a framework for the SCs to implement real change as well as for their supervisors to hold them accountable and assist them properly. Once this second step was completed, SCs reviewed the twelve month schedule with their supervisors to assess how realistic it was and to covenant with the supervisor in its implementation.

10.2.2. Supervisor Accountability

Not only at this last stage (developing action plans) but in the entire learning process of NEXT conferences, the fruition of the training stood to be wasted if supervisors did not participate alongside their strategy coordinators. It was of very little help for the SCs to experience a paradigm shift in ministry if their supervisors did not concur. In some ways, having the supervisors attend was a way of helping them experience the same paradigm shift. In fact, those that had previously been SCs had undergone SC Training even before the SCs they supervised and needed the same re-training. In addition, by bringing the supervisors into the conference, decisions on ministry, training and resources could all be made immediately so that changes could be effected upon the completion of the conference.

Perhaps the most important part of supervisor involvement was their commitment to hold the SCs accountable for their twelve month plans. Supervisors often received a weekly follow-up report from the SCs for the first few weeks after the conference. Later, they received a monthly report. In these reports, SCs accounted for the implementation of their plans, sought feedback and gained assistance in their ministries.

10.3. Results

One very strong factor in helping to evaluate the lessons learned from NEXT conference was the meticulous data collected by the organization these strategy coordinators serve with. Official annual reports were collected on most of the SCs, and their results were analyzed by looking at a five or six year time frame.

10.3.1. Analysis parameters

Excellent data was gathered for twenty-eight SC ministries. In the other fourteen cases, a variety of reasons precluded their data from being analyzed:

- Seven attended too recently to offer sufficient post-conference data. It was feared that their results would not serve as a proper evaluation of the NEXT principles.
- Six transitioned out of their ministries too soon after their NEXT conferences to offer sufficient post-conference data.
- One operates in support role and does not turn in a data report.

Out of the twenty-eight, twenty-two attended early enough to present three years of data after their conference. For the other six, two years of post-conference data were presented.

Each strategy coordinator's situation is different making it difficult to be completely scientific in this analysis. They do not live in controlled environments, and there are a host of spiritual factors involved in their results (including spiritual warfare). However, based on my personal knowledge of each of their situations and on the data I received, I was able to make informed *judgment calls* on interpreting their reports.

Initially, upon completing the conferences, SCs gave glowing reports of what they learned. However, I have long since learned that a spiritual high must be translated into long-term action. Therefore, I have done my best to evaluate each ministry in light of the results, not in light of impressions (theirs or mine). These results are meticulously tracked in Annual Statistical Reports (ASRs) the strategy coordinators fill out annually and submit to the leadership of their organization (Courson 2006).

10.3.1.1. Categories

The ASR contains many categories that are tracked on each SC target group. For the purposes of evaluating the implementation of the lessons learned in NEXT conferences, four specific categories were monitored. The four categories most clearly demonstrate whether or not a

strategy coordinator is progressing toward a church planting movement. A fifth category also proved helpful, but is not the primary focus of this evaluation.

- *New Churches*: Each year, SCs report the number of new churches begun as a result of their ministry. This includes any churches that are started directly or indirectly through their ministry. For example, if they train national partners to start churches, they also count these churches since they came at the initiation of the SC's training. Churches have to meet a basic definition in order to be counted as a church and not simply a Bible study group. Generally, it is at least several baptized believers who meet together regularly to worship God, pray, obey the Scripture, fellowship, observe the Lord's Supper, evangelize and recognize themselves as a church (committed to one another). For the purposes of our evaluation, the number of new churches started each year is critical in evaluating the *momentum* each ministry has in reaching a specific target group. Generally, we look for increasing momentum that demonstrates that churches are multiplying (that is, being started by target group believers, not by outsiders). If the number of new churches stays the same each year, this is usually an indication that there is no multiplication of existing churches occurring, and that all church planting is being done by the same group of people (addition growth versus multiplication growth).

- *New believers*: SCs also record the number of new believers that came to faith directly or indirectly through their ministry. This number is often less precise due to the larger numbers to track. The number of new believers is a good barometer of the momentum of the work in enabling local believers to win others. If the number of new believers stays the same each year, it may be an indication that there is no multiplication of believers (generally because all the evangelism is done by a few people and not by the increasing number of new Christians).

- *Total churches*: In CPMs, tracking the total number of churches is essential for determining if a ministry truly is at CPM status and demonstrating net growth in a ministry. Generally, we look for a doubling of total churches every twelve to eighteen months (Fudge 2004b). "Total churches" also helps us know how well the ministry is doing at retaining churches (i.e. they do not die) from year to year. "Total churches" *should* simply be the total churches from the previous year *plus* the number of new

churches. If the total is less than this, it means that some churches have died or perhaps have moved outside the realm of contact by the SC ministry.

- *Total Church Members*: Unfortunately, the ASR does not record equivalent data in this area. It tracks new believers (whether baptized or not; whether church members or not) but only tracks the total number of *church members*. Church members would be local believers who are baptized and join a church. This is by nature a sub-set of total *believers*. However, it is virtually impossible to track the total number of believers from year to year. Tracking the total number of church members demonstrates whether or not multiplication is taking place and how well the ministry is doing at helping new believers become a part of churches. It is a good barometer of the overall net growth of a ministry.
- *Generational Growth*: This is a new category that the organization just began tracking a year ago. It is very effective at determining if a ministry is actually in CPM. This section of the ASR tracks how many churches are first, second, third and fourth-plus generation. When we see indicators of significant numbers of third and fourth-plus generation churches, it usually indicated that a CPM is underway.

Incidentally, one thing I will not report is the total numbers for all the strategy coordinators combined. This number proved to be ineffective in evaluating the effects of NEXT conferences because the numbers of believers and churches varied so much from SC to SC. Instead, I examined the growth on a case by case basis and then evaluated how effective the CPM principles were based on the changes in individual SC ministries.

10.3.1.2. *Time-frame*

Initially I studied the two to three years that reflected the work of an SC's ministry subsequent to their NEXT conference. If a strategy coordinator attended a conference in the first half of a year (e.g. June 2004), then I counted the ASR for the calendar year of 2004 as a post-conference result. This was because I felt that the SC had six months or more to make adjustments and achieve different results. If an SC attended a conference later in the year, I used the ASR from the subsequent year as the first post-conference results. In this manner, I

was able to collect three years of post-conference data on twenty-two SCs and two years of post-conference data on six SCs.

Studying post-conference data was helpful in terms of actually seeing how effective a strategy coordinator's ministry was. However, it did not necessarily reflect the *influence* of a NEXT conference on the SC's ministry. For instance, if a particular ministry demonstrated exceptional numerical growth but was simply a progression of pre-conference growth, this does not demonstrate that the post-conference results were the outcome of lessons learned at NEXT.

In order to attempt to determine the effect of the NEXT conference on the SCs' ministries, I collected data from the three years *prior* to their conferences. By comparing the pre-conference momentum and net growth (growing, plateaued, or declining) with their post-conference results, I was able to gain a better understanding of the effect of NEXT conferences and the implementation of those lessons in each of the SC ministries. This, of course, assumes that there were ancillary factors also at play in these ministries (noted earlier).

As I mentioned earlier, this is not an exact science but can help us gain some certainty about the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of the CPM principles learned in the NEXT conferences. The analysis of the ASRs demonstrated two types of results: 1) those demonstrating momentum in the ministry and 2) those demonstrating overall growth in reaching the target group.

10.3.2. Momentum Results

A CPM should demonstrate increasing *momentum* of growth of believers and churches. It should not demonstrate incremental growth that is similar from year to year. For instance, a CPM may demonstrate the following annual progression of total churches: 10 to 25 to 60 to 110 to 250. The total suggests doubling but more importantly the number of *new churches* is greater each year. This is an indication of multiplication. A progression as follows would demonstrate incremental growth: 20 to 31 to 40 to 52 total churches. In this progression, most of the church planting is probably taking place at the hands of a few people able to start about ten new churches each year.

Increasing numbers of *new* churches and believers is an indicator of a CPM. The momentum is growing from year to year. Actually, technically, the momentum may be the same (e.g. 100% growth) but in numerical totals demonstrates increasing numbers of new churches and believers from year to year.

Unfortunately, ASR results do not present neat progressions but often demonstrate two steps forward and one step backward. Therefore, I had to make interpretations as I analyzed the numbers and personally reflected on what I know of each SC's ministry beyond the numbers on a report.

To measure the momentum of each ministry, I analyzed two categories ("new churches" and "new believers") for the three years prior to a NEXT conference and the two to three years after the conference. I rated each period (pre- and post-) into four categories:

- *Double*: The number of new churches or believers is generally reflecting a doubling annually. For instance, the number of *new* churches annually exhibits the following progression:
 - Year 1: 10 new churches
 - Year 2: 20 new churches
 - Year 3: 40 new churches
- *More*: The number of new churches or believers is increasing each year but not quite doubling. An increase (including doubling) in the number of new churches or believers from the previous year demonstrates that momentum is *growing* in the ministry.
- *Same*: The number of new churches or believers is about the same from year to year. This is still a good situation (new people are being converted and new churches are starting) but the momentum is not growing. Therefore, the ministry is not demonstrating the multiplication process of a church planting movement. Something must be done to move the ministry from incremental growth to multiplicative growth.
- *Less*: If the number of new churches or believers is less in subsequent years, it demonstrates that the momentum of the ministry is declining and something must be done to remedy this.

10.3.2.1. Overall post-conference momentum results

The table (Smith SR 2007c) below demonstrates the overall results of twenty-eight strategy coordinators for the two to three years following their conferences.

Table 12: POST-CONFERENCE MOMENTUM RESULTS							
New Church Starts				New Christians			
	# of SCs		Positive		# of SCs		Positive
Double	11	39%	53%	Double	17	61%	68%
More	4	14%		More	2	7%	
Same	11	40%		Same	7	25%	
Less	2	7%		Less	2	7%	

The table does not reflect the overall growth of the ministry but rather the change in momentum post-conference. This enables us to get an idea the effectiveness of the conference and the implementation of the CPM principles from it. SCs with momentum in all four categories might be demonstrating overall growth in their ministries (e.g. even those with “less” might still be seeing an overall net gain in believers and churches but a lessening of momentum). However, if the number of new churches or believers is more from year to year, it is one indicator that the lessons learned from NEXT may be helping the SC move toward CPM.

In this analysis, sixty-eight percent of the SCs saw an *increase* in their momentum in evangelism (“new Christians”) while fifty-three percent saw an increase in their momentum in church planting (“new church starts”). Overall, this is an encouraging indicator that the lessons learned at NEXT conferences are valid principles that can lead to church planting movements. It must be remembered, however, that this *assumes* that the SCs *applied and implemented* the lessons they learned from NEXT. This was not always the case, so one should never expect a hundred percent positive change.

If these SCs were already demonstrating increases in momentum (e.g. “more” or “double” church starts), then the positive results seen here are a false indicator. Therefore, it is essential to compare post-conference with pre-conference momentum.

10.3.2.2. Comparison with pre-conference results

Comparing the post-conference data with pre-conference results requires two judgment calls, not one based on the same four categories (*double, more, same, less*). It is, however, a much more effective indicator of the validity of the CPM principles discovered in NEXT conferences.

Table 13: POST-CONFERENCE COMPARED WITH PRE-CONFERENCE MOMENTUM RESULTS							
Pre-conference New Churches				Pre-conference New Believers			
		# of SCs				Positive	
Double	2	7%	39%	Double	9	32%	46%
More	9	32%		More	4	14%	
Same	8	29%		Same	3	11%	
Less	9	32%		Less	12	43%	
Post-conference New Church Starts				Post-conference New Christians			
		# of SCs				Positive	
Double	11	39%	53%	Double	17	61%	68%
More	4	14%		More	2	7%	
Same	11	40%		Same	7	25%	
Less	2	7%		Less	2	7%	

The table above adds an element to the prior table by comparing momentum of the ministries of each SC *prior* to attending a NEXT conference with their momentum after the conference. For the sake of analysis, ministries in the “double” or “more” categories were classified as “positive momentum.” Pre-conference momentum was as follows:

- 61% of the SCs were plateaued or declining in momentum in relation to church planting. To state it positively, only 39% saw positive momentum.
- 54% of the SCs were plateaued or declining in momentum of evangelism (“new believers”). To state it positively, only 46% saw positive momentum.

As compared with the previous table analyzing post-conference results the results considerably changed as follows:

- *Positive church planting momentum from 39% of SCs to 53% of SCs*
- *Positive evangelism momentum from 46% of SCs to 68% of SCs*

This is a strong indicator that the lessons learned from NEXT conferences helped the SCs in moving toward church planting movements.

A further analysis can be made in regard to the effect of the lessons learned from the conferences. This is defined as a positive or negative relationship between pre-conference and post-conference results. For instance, if a ministry was demonstrating a decline in momentum pre-conference but post-conference moved to a plateaued status, this was a *positive* effect of the conference because the decline was arrested and a turn-around is being made.

Such results do not show up in the “positive” category but are an indicator that the lessons learned from NEXT may be effective in helping a ministry re-tool and begin to gain positive momentum again.

Table 14: MOMENTUM - New Church Starts										
Pre-conference momentum		Post-conference momentum			Possible effect of lessons learned from NEXT Conferences					
Positive	39%	Faster	3	11%	Positive	21	75%			
		Same	6	21%				Neutral	5	18%
		Slower	2	7%				Negative	2	7%
Plateau	29%	Faster	4	14%						
		Same	4	14%						
		Decline	0	0%						
Decline	32%	Faster	4	14%						
		Halt decline	4	14%						
		Continue	1	4%						
		Total SCs	28							

Table 15: MOMENTUM - New believers										
Pre-conference momentum		Post-conference momentum			Possible effect of lessons learned from NEXT Conferences					
Positive	46%	Faster	1	4%	Positive	23	82%			
		Same	10	36%				Neutral	3	11%
		Slower	2	7%				Negative	2	7%
Plateau	11%	Faster	1	4%						
		Same	2	7%						
		Decline	0	0%						
Decline	43%	Faster	7	25%						
		Halt decline	4	14%						
		Continue	1	4%						
		Total SCs	28							

In the middle section of the tables, the black boxes indicate a **positive effect** of the NEXT conference lessons on the SCs who attended. These six categories are defined as follows:

- The ministry was experiencing *positive* pre-conference momentum and its momentum grew *faster* post-conference.
- The ministry was experiencing *positive* pre-conference momentum and its momentum continued the same. At first this does not appear to be a positive effect from the conference. However, in ministries, the inherent inclination of positive momentum is to slow down. Therefore, if it continued at the same pace, it is prob-

ably an indicator that the lessons learned continued to fuel the momentum of evangelism and church planting.

- The pre-conference momentum was *plateaued* but post-conference grew *faster*.
- The pre-conference momentum was in *decline* but post-conference momentum was *faster*.
- The pre-conference momentum was in *decline* but the post-conference momentum was *plateaued* (i.e. stopped declining). This suggests that the lessons from NEXT helped to arrest the decline.

Categories that demonstrated a **neutral effect** (gray boxes) of the lessons learned on the ministry were as follows:

- The pre-conference momentum was *plateaued* and the post-conference momentum was the *same*.
- The pre-conference momentum was in *decline* and the post-conference *decline* continued. This is considered neutral in that the decline would have occurred with or without the conference.

Categories that demonstrated a **negative effect** (white boxes) of the lessons learned on the ministry (or were not applied) were as follows:

- The pre-conference momentum was *faster* each year but *slowed* after the conference.
- The pre-conference momentum was *plateaued* but *declined* post-conference.

Analyzed in this manner, the effect of the lessons learned from the NEXT conferences is remarkable, especially when one accounts for the certainty that some SCs will not apply the lessons even if they are valid principles. Without this analysis, the previous net change (pre-conference to post-conference) was as follows:

- *Positive church planting momentum from 39% of SCs to 53% of SCs*
- *Positive evangelism momentum from 46% of SCs to 68% of SCs*

However, analyzed by the new matrix, the following results can be observed:

- ***75% of the ministries experienced a positive change in their momentum in church planting.***
- ***82% of the ministries experienced a positive change in their momentum in evangelism.***

This seems to be a very strong indicator that the CPM principles learned from NEXT conferences, when properly applied and anointed by the Spirit of God, are effective in moving toward a church planting movement.

10.3.3. Growth Results

10.3.3.1. Overall post-conference growth results

In evaluating the overall growth demonstrated by various SCs ministries, the ASR analysis reveals the following post-conference results:

Table 16: POST-CONFERENCE GROWTH RESULTS							
Total Churches				Total Church Members			
# of SCs			Positive	# of SCs			Positive
Double	11	39%	82%	Double	14	50%	86%
More	12	43%		More	10	36%	
Same	4	14%		Same	2	7%	
Less	1	4%		Less	2	7%	

The number of SCs demonstrating positive growth in this analysis is remarkable. The large majority of ministries exhibited positive net growth in total churches (existing churches plus new churches) and total church members (existing church members plus new church members). Only one to two ministries demonstrated a decline (“less”) in net growth after the NEXT conference. Again, however, we must compare these results with the net growth prior to the conferences.

10.3.3.2. Comparison with pre-conference results

The same framework for analyzing the momentum results can also be applied to the growth results.

Table 17: POST-CONFERENCE COMPARED WITH PRE-CONFERENCE GROWTH RESULTS							
Pre-conference Total Churches				Pre-conference Total Church Members			
# of SCs			Positive	# of SCs			Positive
Double	3	11%	43%	Double	2	7%	64%
More	9	32%		More	16	57%	
Same	11	39%		Same	4	14%	
Less	5	18%		Less	6	21%	
Post-conference Total Churches				Post-conference Total Church Members			
# of SCs			Positive	# of SCs			Positive
Double	11	39%	82%	Double	14	50%	86%
More	12	43%		More	10	36%	
Same	4	14%		Same	2	7%	
Less	1	4%		Less	2	7%	

The tables above demonstrate a marked increase in the net growth of the SC ministries after the conferences as compared with before the conferences.

- In the total churches category, prior to the conferences, 43% of strategy coordinators saw net growth in their ministries as compared with 82% afterwards. This is almost twice as many SC ministries that began to experience growth.
- In the total church members, prior to the conferences, 64% of the ministries saw net growth compared with 86% afterward.

These results suggest that these ministries prior to the NEXT conferences were doing better at evangelism (resulting in net growth of church members) than they were in church planting. In other words, a good amount of evangelism was taking place in 64% of the ministries, but these new believers were largely being incorporated into existing churches. The lessons learned from NEXT definitely helped the SCs grow in incorporating better evangelism, but much more in church planting.

Table 18: GROWTH -Total Churches										
Pre-conference growth		Post-conference growth			Possible effect of lessons learned from NEXT Conferences					
Positive	43%	Faster	5	18%	Positive	24	86%			
		Same	6	21%				Neutral	2	7%
		Slower	1	4%				Negative	2	7%
Plateau	39%	Faster	8	29%						
		Same	2	7%						
		Decline	1	4%						
Decline	18%	Faster	4	14%						
		Halt decline	1	4%						
		Continue		0%						
Total SCs			28							

Table 19: GROWTH - Total Church Members										
Pre-conference growth		Post-conference growth			Possible effect of lessons learned from NEXT Conferences					
Positive	64%	Faster	8	29%	Positive	26	93%			
		Same	9	32%				Neutral	0	0%
		Slower	1	4%				Negative	2	7%
Plateau	14%	Faster	3	11%						
		Same	0	0%						
		Decline	1	4%						
Decline	21%	Faster	4	14%						
		Halt decline	2	7%						
		Continue	0	0%						
Total SCs			28							

In addition, we can measure the positive effect that the lessons from NEXT had on the SCs by using the same framework used in measuring momentum. In the analysis above, a measure of the effect the lessons of NEXT had on the net growth of the various ministries demonstrates the following results:

- In terms of net growth of *total churches*, 86% of the SCs experienced a positive effect from the CPM lessons of NEXT.
- In terms of net growth of *total church members*, 93% of the SCs experienced a positive effect from the CPM lessons of NEXT.

The results strongly suggest that the CPM principles discovered in NEXT conference, when properly applied, are effective (by the grace of God) to move ministries toward multiplication of believers and churches, hopefully leading to a church planting movement.

10.3.4. Emerging CPMs

One of the strongest indicators of a CPM is when the total number of believers doubles every twelve to eighteen months. In the charts above, eleven ministries moved into this category of doubling every twelve to eighteen months. In two of them, the total number of churches is still small, so it is too early to declare them church planting movements. For the other nine, the ministries appear to be emerging or fully-developed CPMs. Prior to the conferences, only two of the SC ministries were in this status.

However, at this point it is helpful to consult the final ASR indicator to evaluate the true status of these nine apparent CPMs. This ASR category tracks the generations of churches and attempts to label each ministry by status toward CPM. Each of the nine ministries is seeing significant numbers of new churches form each year. However, based on the generational growth, the following results emerge:

- Two of the nine are in fully developed CPMs. They demonstrate clear generational growth into the third, fourth and beyond generations.
- Four of the nine are in emerging CPMs but not fully developed yet. They are demonstrating second and third generation growth, but not enough fourth and beyond to be considered a sustained or fully-developed CPM.
- Three of the nine are not yet emerging CPMs because all of the churches are first or second generation. They could easily move into the CPM category if these second generation churches began to start new churches.

These results continue to help us clarify the process of assisting strategy coordinators in initiating sustained CPMs. The numbers alone would suggest nine CPMs, but a further

clarification of the data still puts some at a pre-CPM status. Given time and continued coaching, it is likely that these and others will move into sustained CPMs. As a testament to the validity of CPM principles, three of these emerging CPMs came out of ministries that were plateaued and showed little hope of progress prior to their NEXT conferences. In one of those three, the SC and team were so dysfunctional in their relationships and ministry prior to NEXT that the SC was almost dismissed from his role. However, close mentoring and a strict adherence to high value activities resulted (by the grace of God) into one of the most promising ministries in the region.

10.4. Conclusion

There is still much to be learned about developing sustained church planting movements in order to fully reach large people groups and cities. Our knowledge base for modern-day CPMs is still less than fifteen years old. In the early days of CPM training, the mission community possessed hints and vague ideas of how to help missionaries initiate CPMs by the help of the Spirit. NEXT conferences have moved us one step closer to clarifying which types of ministries are most often used by God to lead to sustained CPMs. The lessons from NEXT conferences have largely proven helpful for the SCs who have participated in them. We are seeing these principles applied in other ministries throughout Asia with similar effects.

There is still much to learn about the Spirit-empowered phenomenon of church planting movements, and our knowledge base continues to grow. At this point in time, however, if the NEXT conference lessons prove to be timeless kingdom principles, then it is hoped that they are valid in other contexts and will be helpful to other Christian ministries that attempt to complete the task of world evangelization.

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Appendix A: Pauline case study

<h1 style="text-align: center;">Pauline Case Study</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">(Total time 8-10 years) By Stephen Smith</p>			
Reference	PLACE	LENGTH	RESULTS
JOURNEY #1			
Province of CYPRUS			
13:4-5	Cyprus	4-6 weeks	Word shared in whole island of Cyprus
13:6-12	Paphos (Cyprus)	2 weeks	Proconsul believes -- possible church; Via miracle (magician)
Province of PHRYGIA			
13:14-52	Pisidion Antioch (capital of Phrygia)	3 weeks or more (possibly longer)	Church; word spread through the whole region (13:49); movement resulted - joy & HS filled disciples. Mainly Gentiles. Run out through persecution. Weekly or daily meetings.
Province of GALATIA (including Lycaonia)			
14:1-6	Iconium (Galatia Prov.)	"long time" - 4-8 weeks?	Church: large number believed (v.1). Bold witness with signs. Stayed until run out by persecution.
14:6-20	Lystra (Galatia)	2 weeks	Church. Some believers, no great results; stoned and run out of town by Jews
14:20-21	Derbe (Galatia)	several weeks?	Church & many disciples . Preached gospel - good results.
GALATIA & PHRYGIA			
14:21-23	Lystra, Iconium, P. Antioch (Galatia & Phrygia)	several weeks	Re-visit disciples, strengthen them, encourage them to continue in face of persecution. Appoint elders in each church (churches solidified). Commended to Lord.
Province of PAMPHYLIA			
14:25	Perga (Pamphylia)	1-2 weeks	Shared the gospel but no evidence of results

JOURNEY #2			
CYPRUS			
15:39	Cyprus		Barnabas and Mark re-visit disciples
GALATIA			
16:1-5	Derbe, Lystra, Iconium (Galatian region)	several weeks or months	Strengthen the churches and disciples. Impression that the number of churches has multiplied; disciples still increasing daily . Timothy taken as partner.
Provinces of ASIA, MYSIA, BITHYNIA			
16:6-7	Asia, Mysia, Bithynia	several weeks	FORBIDDEN by Holy Spirit from sharing. Not the right time???
Province of MACEDONIA (Europe)			
16:12-40	Philippi (capital of Macedonia)	2 weeks	Church & disciples; via 2 people of peace; miracle, sharing of gospel. Sent away by authorities.
17:1-9	Thessalonica (Macedonia)	4-5 weeks	Church & large number of disciples; Jason as leader? Run out by Jews. Weekly meetings "day & night". " Up-set the whole world! "
17:10-14	Berea (Macedonia)	several weeks	Church and many disciples ; Jews ran out Paul, but Silas & Timothy REMAIN a little longer .
Province of ACHAIA (Greece)			
17:16-34	Athens (Achaia)	2 weeks	Few disciples, possible church; left because of poor response?
18:1-18	Corinth (Achaia)	1 1/2 years	Weekly training. Great harvest . Raised up Priscilla & Aquila , Titius Justus. This time NOT run out but protected by authorities. Taught the word of God to them. Probably all of Achaia (Greece) reached from here.
Province of ASIA			
18:19-21	Ephesus (Capital of Asia)	1 week	Great interest from locals. Paul decides to return one day. Priscilla & Aquila left there .

JOURNEY #3

PHRYGIA & GALATIA

18:23 **Phrygia & Galatia** several weeks Re-visit churches strengthening disciples

Province of ASIA

18:24-20:1 **Ephesus (Asia)** 3 years
 Apollos continues witness. He leaves & Paul finds disciples there. Then begins witnessing & training **daily** regarding the kingdom of God. **Everyone** in Province of Asia hears word! 7 churches of Revelation started. Great miracles, radical commitment by disciples (life transformation). Apparently Ephesus is the base for mission (the new Antioch?). Great uproar. Night & day for 3 years with tears Paul admonished believers (20:31). Paul finally leaves.

MACEDONIA & ACHAIA (and Illyricum?)

20:1-2 **Macedonia** several weeks, months Re-visited and encouraged the disciples. In Rom 15:19 Paul mentions preaching in **province of Illyricum**. This is the most likely time he did that.

20:2-3 **Greece (Achaia)** 3 months Re-visited and encouraged the disciples; run out by Jews.

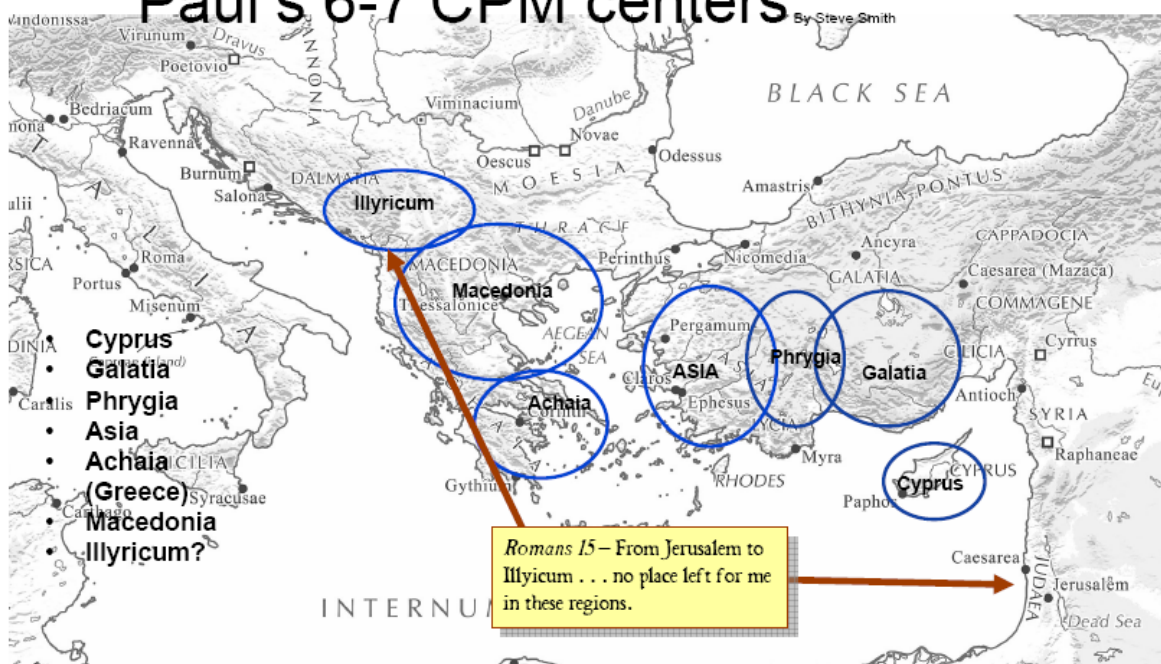
20:3-5 **Macedonia** short visit On way back to Jerusalem

ASIA

20:6-12 **Troas (Asia)** 1 week Encourages disciples from the Asia mission in Ephesus

20:15-38 **Miletus (Asia)** 1 week Final exhortation to Ephesian elders to take up their shepherding responsibilities

Paul's 6-7 CPM centers



Appendix B: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #1

Generations	My associates and I will begin by training this many groups of trainers (total)--	We estimate the average size of our groups of trainers will be--	If we have this many groups of this size, we will be TRAINING this many TRAINERS	We estimate that this percentage will begin TRAINING OTHERS IMMEDIATELY	Not including my associates and I, we will have this number of TRAINERS TRAINING OTHERS--		
	30	20	600	20%	120		
	Group(s) begun by each Obedient Trainer in Training	Estimated size of groups	Number being Trained by TRAINERS IN TRAINING	Estimated percentage to train others	Number of Trainees to begin Training IMMEDIATELY	TOTAL IN TRAINING	TOTAL Trainers training
1							
Gen #2 Week 2	2	5	1,200	20%	240	1,800	360
Gen #3 Week 3	2	5	2,400	20%	480	4,200	840
Gen #4 Week 4	2	5	4,800	20%	960	9,000	1,800
Gen #5 Week 5	2	5	9,600	20%	1,920	18,600	3,720
Gen #6 Week 6	2	5	19,200	20%	3,840	37,800	7,560
Gen #7 Week 7	2	5	38,400	20%	7,680	76,200	15,240
Gen #8 Week 8	2	5	76,800	20%	15,360	153,000	30,600
Gen #9 Week 9	2	5	153,600	20%	30,720	306,600	61,320
Gen #10 Week 10	2	5	307,200	20%	61,440	613,800	122,760
Gen #11 Week 11	2	5	614,400	20%	122,880	1,228,200	245,640
Gen #12 Week 12	2	5	1,228,800	20%	245,760	2,457,000	491,400
Gen #13 Week 13	2	5	2,457,600	20%	491,520	4,914,600	982,920

Gen #14 Week 14	2	5	4,915,200	20%	983,040	9,829,800	1,965,960
Gen #15 Week 15	2	5	9,830,400	20%	1,966,080	19,660,200	3,932,040
Gen #16 Week 16	2	5	19,660,800	20%	3,932,160	39,321,000	7,864,200
Gen #17 Week 17	2	5	39,321,600	20%	7,864,320	78,642,600	15,728,520
Gen #18 Week 18	2	5	78,643,200	20%	15,728,640	157,285,800	31,457,160
Gen #19 Week 19	2	5	157,286,400	20%	31,457,280	314,572,200	62,914,440
Gen #20 Week 20	2	5	314,572,800	20%	62,914,560	629,145,000	125,829,000

Appendix C: Planning for generational growth worksheet scenario #2

Generations	My associates and I will begin by training this many groups of trainers (total)--	We estimate the average size of our groups of trainers will be--	If we have this many groups of this size, we will be TRAINING this many TRAINERS	We estimate that this percentage will begin TRAINING OTHERS IMMEDIATELY	Not including my associates and I, we will have this number of TRAINERS TRAINING OTHERS--		
	5	8	40	20%	8		
	Group(s) begun by each Obedient Trainer in Training	Estimated size of groups	Number being Trained by TRAINERS IN TRAINING	Estimated percentage to train others	Number of Trainees to begin Training IMMEDIATELY	TOTAL IN TRAINING	TOTAL Trainers training
1							
Gen #2 Week 2	2	5	80	20%	16	120	24
Gen #3 Week 3	2	5	160	20%	32	280	56
Gen #4 Week 4	2	5	320	20%	64	600	120
Gen #5 Week 5	2	5	640	20%	128	1,240	248
Gen #6 Week 6	2	5	1,280	20%	256	2,520	504
Gen #7 Week 7	2	5	2,560	20%	512	5,080	1,016
Gen #8 Week 8	2	5	5,120	20%	1,024	10,200	2,040
Gen #9 Week 9	2	5	10,240	20%	2,048	20,440	4,088
Gen #10 Week 10	2	5	20,480	20%	4,096	40,920	8,184
Gen #11 Week 11	2	5	40,960	20%	8,192	81,880	16,376
Gen #12 Week 12	2	5	81,920	20%	16,384	163,800	32,760
Gen #13 Week 13	2	5	163,840	20%	32,768	327,640	65,528

Gen #14 Week 14	2	5	327,680	20%	65,536	655,320	131,064
Gen #15 Week 15	2	5	655,360	20%	131,072	1,310,680	262,136
Gen #16 Week 16	2	5	1,310,720	20%	262,144	2,621,400	524,280
Gen #17 Week 17	2	5	2,621,440	20%	524,288	5,242,840	1,048,568
Gen #18 Week 18	2	5	5,242,880	20%	1,048,576	10,485,720	2,097,144
Gen #19 Week 19	2	5	10,485,760	20%	2,097,152	20,971,480	4,194,296
Gen #20 Week 20	2	5	20,971,520	20%	4,194,304	41,943,000	8,388,600