

▶▶ ACCELERATE ▶▶

Special Edition

An Application combining CPM Methodologies & Inductive Bible Studies

Presented at AGM Greece 2004

▶▶ F.I.R.S.T. Priorities

Fervent Prayer

- ▶▶ We must continually practice, encourage, and generate prayer for our people.

Intentional Church Planting

- ▶▶ We must minister in ways that foster the environment for CPMs to occur.

Reaching New People

- ▶▶ Our missionary mandate compels us to continually push to the edges of lostness.

Spiritual Vitality of Missionaries

- ▶▶ Personal evangelism, church attendance, and Godly lifestyles are modeled, not just preached.

Training

- ▶▶ We approach our task as continual learners. In turn, we seek to help train others in multiple levels of leadership, discipleship, and ministry.

Strategy Associate Ed Tarleton

Creating Leaders And Inductive Bible Studies

In order for exponential growth to occur, you must have a steady supply of leaders. “Exponential growth” is the key phrase.

If the goal is simply “to grow,” then a steady supply of leaders is not as crucial.

To illustrate exponential growth, Curtis Sergeant draws a distinction between elephants and rabbits. I think his illustrations are quite helpful.

▶▶ Elephant Growth

Elephants are huge animals, have virtually no natural predators, and live long lives. When it comes to reproducing, however, Sergeant notes the following:

- Elephants are only fertile four times per year.
- Elephants only produce one baby per pregnancy.
- Elephants have a 22month gestation period.
- Elephants take 18 years to reach sexual maturity.

So, if you combine all of these factors, you could start with a healthy pair of elephants—that are already sexually mature—and at the end of 3 years you would have grown from 2 elephants to 3 elephants. Growth is growth; so on one hand going from 2 to 3 is better than declining, stagnating, or simply maintaining a plateau.

▶▶ Rabbit Growth

Rabbits, on the other hand, are very small, have many predators, and don’t live extremely long lives. When it comes to reproducing, though, Sergeant notes these statistics:

- Rabbits are practically continuously fertile.
- Rabbits average seven babies per pregnancy.
- They have a 1month gestation period.
- Rabbits reach sexual maturity within 4 months.

So, if you combine all of these factors, you could start with a healthy pair of rabbits—and within the ideal environment—at the end of 3 years you would have grown from 2 rabbits to 476,000,000 rabbits! That is an illustration of exponential growth.

▶▶ Applying the Illustrations to Bible Study Leaders

Please note: I’m intentionally using the phrase “leader” as opposed to “teacher.” At the end of this article, I’ll expound on this point.

At a very fundamental level, missionaries face at least 4 decisions related to Bible Studies:

1. They can focus on multiple other issues and never participate in/nor lead Bible studies.
2. They can lead Bible studies themselves.
3. They can equip national partners to lead Bible studies.

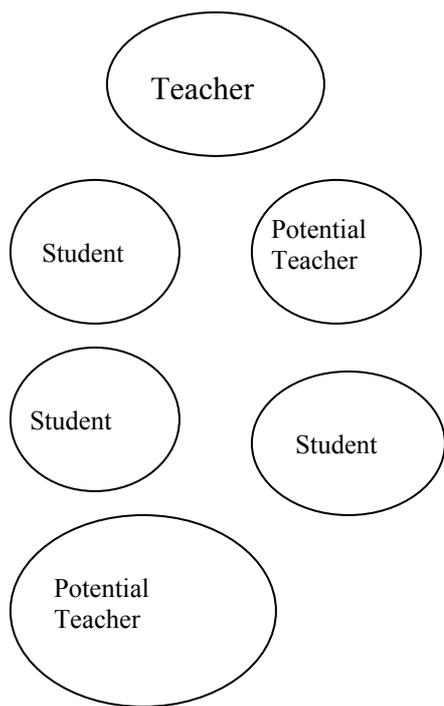
4. They can lead Bible studies themselves and equip nationals at the same time.

My ideal preference, of course, would be that all missionaries could find a way to do #4. For various reasons, though, we often are unable to obtain the ideal.

Nonetheless, I think being vision driven means that we start with the very best option. Then, we strive to come as close to that ideal as possible.

▶▶ “Elephant” Approach to Creating New Bible Study Leaders

Intuitively, missionaries often use the following schemata in creating new leaders:



There is nothing wrong with this approach. It yields good, steady, predictable growth.

It helps maintain consistency in doctrine, thought, and practices.

Many of us on the mission field were nurtured by a system like this; i.e. there was a teacher, youth director, pastor who saw value and potential in us. That person nurtured and disciplined us. In turn, when it was felt that we had mastered some of the rudi-

mentary skills, we were allowed to lead a children’s Sunday School Class, a youth group, etc.

It is a very good application of 2 Timothy 2:2:

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

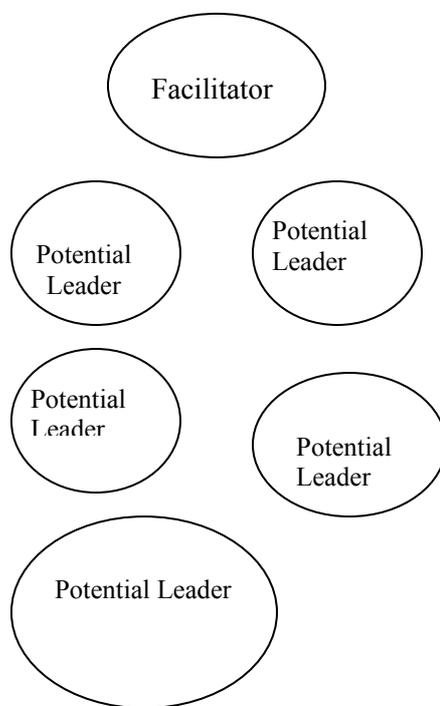
It is also a good application of Paul’s admonition in 1 Timothy 5:22a:

“Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands...”

By nature of the approach, though, it does not tend to produce exponential numbers of leaders. Theory says that it could, practice demonstrates that it rarely does.

▶▶ “Rabbit” Approach to Creating New Bible Study Leaders

A modified approach to the first model, is what I call the “rabbit” approach:



In this approach, the missionary assumes a very different attitude and practice. The content of the lessons may actually be very much the same as in the “elephant” approach.

This approach relies on a radical adherence to John 14:22-27, which results in these distinctives:

1. The mark of “discipleship” is obedience to Christ’s commands, not just increased knowledge. John 14:23
2. God the Father is always present to those who are obedient to His Son. John 14:23.
3. The Holy Spirit is the teacher. Any leader of the group is merely that; a leader or facilitator of discussion.

▶▶ First Goal is Producing Disciples. Secondary Goal is Identifying Teachers

In this “rabbit” approach, there is the primary goal of producing disciples. People are encouraged, empowered, and equipped to obey Christ, to rely on the comfort of the Father, to look to the Holy Spirit as their teacher.

Yes. Through the course of time, God reveals whom He has called to be teachers, apostles, pastors, etc.... My first task, however, is not to play the role of God and decide who has received these spiritual gifts. My first task is to equip all the members of the group to fulfill 2 Timothy 2:2.

▶▶ Application of Rabbit Model And Inductive Bible Teaching

Inductive Bible study is a ready-made bridge for the approach I’m advocating.

Few people, though, have actively participated in an ongoing inductive Bible study. It is hard for us, therefore, to model something that we have rarely lived.

In it’s most essential form, inductive Bible study follows a

teaching method called the “Socratic Approach.”

Socrates taught his students by asking them a series of open-ended questions. An open-ended question is something like, “How can a person experience joy?” Or, “what is justice?” There are multiple “correct” answers.

A close-ended question, conversely, only has one correct answer. For instance, “When did Christopher Columbus sail the ocean blue?”

Strangely enough, children in all cultures are intensely curious until they reach somewhere around age 4. They are sponges for all sorts of answers and ask “open ended” questions to “close ended” answers.

The 4 year old is full of things like:

- Why is the sky blue?
- Where do babies come from?
- Who do you love the most? Sissy or me?
- If God lives at church, how can He be at all the churches at the same time?

In the process of answering these questions, parents often become exasperated. Because, sometimes the only real answer is “because!” But, oh how the parent anguishes over this incessant mind that will not “hush-up.”

Little by little, the little “questioners” of the world wear their parents and teachers down. So, most people end up relying on deductive teaching models that tell them both “what” and “how” to think.

Russian actually has a great word “почемучка,” [“questioner”] which is either a little boy or girl who is full of questions. In the bookstores, you can occasionally buy books for little “почемучка.”

Now then, for us as teachers of the Word we must avoid two extremes. There is objective truth and we must teach it. Black is black. White is white. Sin is sin. People without Jesus are lost and going to hell. We must avoid theories of “subjectivity” that say, “all truth is relative.”

On the other hand, we need to facilitate all people becoming disciples. Deductive lessons and teaching plans are very good and needed. Inductive lessons, however, facilitate greater interaction of all participants.

► An Extremely Usable Inductive Bible Study Approach

Returning once more to Curtis Sergeant, there is an existing inductive Bible Study Approach called “Models of Ministry.”

In this model, Sergeant outlines a 1 page inductive Bible study approach that can be taught to virtually anyone.

The complete “Models for Ministry” is available in both Russian and English versions on your CD from our last 3 AGMS or Prayer Retreats.

Without using the term, Sergeant describes sound principles for exegesis that I’ve taught at institute, college, and seminary levels. The five Components to his approach are:

1. Observation—what does it say?
2. Interpretation—what does it mean?
3. Application—what should I do? [Extremely good!]
4. Discussion—questions to be answered by everyone.
5. Accountability—actually producing disciples.

► Putting the Model into Practice.

Week 1: Invite a group of people to your Bible study. Model that you are a facilitator of discussion. Emphasize that the Holy Spirit is our teacher. Show the entire group the complete list of questions that we will ask every time we meet. Show them the Bible passages that we will study for the next 13 weeks.

Weeks 2-13: Lead the group discussions making sure that you do not “answer all the questions” too quickly. Also, begin practicing this technique:

Q. Brother Ed, what are we supposed to do about baptism?

A. Great Question! Let me ask you a question: when you read the Bible, what does it tell you about baptism?

The point is: often we say that “the Bible is our guide for all of our practices,” but we answer questions so quickly and people begin looking to us for all of their decisions.

Weeks 14-26: Assign every member of the group a week to lead the study. There is often great reaction at this point: “Bro. Ed, I’m not a teacher.” “Bro. Ed, I don’t have all of your training.” “Bro. Ed, I wouldn’t know how to start.”

Gently push them back to the same pages that you’ve all been using for the past 13 weeks. Then, tell them that the assignment is to “lead” the study, not “teach” it. One by one, as they lead an inductive study, you are on your way to producing leaders.

Weeks 27-39: Assign new groups to leaders. Assist them as they grow. Yes. I’ve tried this approach! Yes. It works.

Excerpt From:
Models for Ministry: From New Believers to Reproducing Churches
Written by Curtis Sergeant

[*Notes on the right side are Ed T's comments]

Bible Study Approach

Observation—what does it say?

Who was involved?

What happened? Ideas are expressed? Are the results? Is the purpose?

Where did this take place?

When did it take place?

Why did it happen?

How are things accomplished?

Interpretation—what does it mean?

What did it mean to the original audience?

What does it mean now?

What is the main idea?

How does this passage relate to the rest of the chapter/book?

What other Scripture passages might shed light on this one?

Application—what should I do? (*SPECK*)

Is there a *sin* for me to avoid?

Is there a *promise* to claim? A *praise* to give? A *prayer* to pray?

Is there an *example* for me to follow?

Is there a *command* for me to obey?

Is there *knowledge* for me to learn?

Discussion—to be answered by everyone.

What did you like about the passage?

What did you not like about the passage?

What did you not understand about the passage?

What will you take with you or remember about the passage?

What was the main idea of the passage?

What should you do as a result of knowing this passage?

More application ideas from 2 Timothy 3:16

Teaching: what we should know.

Rebuking: what we should avoid doing or stop doing.

Correcting: what we should do differently.

Training in righteousness: what we should begin or continue doing.

Accountability includes:

- Accountability to teach others what one has learned (2 Timothy 2:2) and
- Accountability to apply what one has learned. Application includes items of both omission and commission.
- Discipleship is not merely knowledge. There is a knowledge component, but it is primarily patterns and processes to practice and pass on. This means that as much is taught by example as by content. The methods and principles of Bible study, the patterns of prayer life and worship, and the encouragement, fellowship, support and equipping of the Body are all being learned as the leaders model.
- An attitude of servant hood, humility, urgency, faith, passion for extending God's Kingdom, and love for fellow believers and the lost on the part of the leaders are also vital aspects of this approach. These aspects of discipleship are caught more than taught.

It is unlikely that you would ask all of these questions each time you approach a new passage. Remember: the *process* of “asking” not just “telling” is at the heart of the inductive method.

Yes. It does matter what the passage meant to the original audience. Don't get bogged down on these questions, but remember that context is very important.

Hey! Make Sure You Get This!!!
You must make practical application if you want Bible studies to actually lead to training instead of just teaching.

A couple of big words of caution about the first two questions: Don't let people stray too much from the impact of the Scripture by asking, “what did you like?” In fact, I often would not ask these first two questions

I think Curtis does a good job here of giving brief definitions of words that we often use very interchangeably.

This last section is possibly the “biggie” that causes us to stumble. Almost all of us came from a teaching environment where there was a strong emphasis that went something like this: I'm not here to teach you “what” to think, I'm here to help teach you “how” to think. Remember that “training” and “disciple making” are much closer to “coaching a sports team,” or “teaching someone how to play a musical instrument,” than to learning “deep intellectual truths.” If you fail to hold people accountable, then you probably will not produce many disciples.