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**2 Thessalonians 3: 10**

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*“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”*

**Colossians 3:17**

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*“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!’”*

**Matthew 25:21**

## **Lesson 1: Biblical Basis of Ministering to Physical Needs**

**Objective:** For the individual Christian and church to see their responsibility to minister to those around them in word and in deed.

**Key Text:** “Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.” (*Proverbs 3: 27*)

The Garden of Eden as it is described in *Genesis 2*, was the perfect community. God created an environment that provided Adam and Eve with all the food they needed, protection against the wilds, unhindered fellowship with God, peace, and occupation. This perfect environment was disrupted with the entrance of sin, and sin has affected every community since then. However, God’s desire for community for each person has not changed. We see in *Deuteronomy 15* a description of a God centered community:

- People are debt free (v. 1)
- No poor living there (v. 4)
- God centered (v. 5)
- Generous to others (vv. 6-11)
- Honest bosses and laborers (vv. 12-18)

Is a community like this possible with the fall of man? After all, in the same chapter, we also read, “There will always be poor people in the land” (v. 15). Yes, there will always be the needy and the poor in all communities due to sin. This is part of the curse placed upon the earth with the fall. However, we also see how Jesus commands and exemplifies how we can minister to the needs of those in the community of the church and the community surrounding the church.

## Common Needs

There are basic needs that are common to all people. Needs that must be met for life. Most people have these needs met, but some lack them. Some of these needs are:

- Food
- Protection
- Clothing
- Health
- Means to obtain necessities (economy)
- Occupation
- Spiritual needs

It is plain that throughout the world and throughout our local communities, that some lack some of these most basic needs. The reasons for these problems vary greatly from community to community and from person to person. Some things that impede people from having these basic needs include:

- Alcohol & drugs
- Gambling
- Over spending & debts
- Illness
- Extenuating circumstance
- Laziness
- Lack of work
- Lack of education
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of resources
- Age
- Physical impediments
- Natural disaster
- Oppressive government

Looking at this list and other similar lists, we can see that not all the causes for a person to lack basic necessities are directly the fault of the person himself. Nor can he totally throw off his responsibility to provide for himself and/or his family.

## Man's Spiritual Needs

Included in the list of basic needs of all people is their *spiritual* need. Not only do we see almost all cultures throughout history incorporating religion into their societies, but also we see the Bible giving direct and specific teaching about man's need for God.

We see that man is just not a biological being made up of organs and tissue. *Genesis 1: 27* teaches that man is made in the

*image* of God. This means that the life of each person has great value to God and to each of us. A human life cannot be discarded as lightly as an animal's. This life is more than just the breath the person takes, but also the *quality* of the person's life. The Bible says that the human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be cared for, kept pure, and used to glorify God, Himself (*1 Corinthians 6: 18-20*). But we know that man is a fallen creature, and that this image is tainted. We know that all (every man, woman, and child born) have sinned and is separated from God (*Romans 3: 23*). But in God's love, he sent His only son, Jesus, to die for our sin and to join us together again with God for all eternity (*John 3: 16*), and that through Jesus, alone, we come to the Father (*John 14: 6*) for all eternity (*1 John 5: 12*). Certainly, we see that ministering to man's spiritual needs is the highest priority of all. For without Jesus, the person passes out of this temporal world into an eternity separated from God.

Yet, the Bible also puts the responsibility on the church and the Christian to minister not only to the spiritual needs of man, but also to his physical needs.

### **Biblical Basis of Ministering to Physical Needs**

The evangelical church recognizes their responsibility to minister to the spiritual needs of people. But it is just as important to understand our responsibility to minister to their physical needs.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us our responsibility to minister both to the soul and to the body. Read *Matthew 5: 14-16*. There are four points to be drawn from this passage:

1. We are the *light* of the world. In *John 8: 12*, Jesus says that He is the light of the world. In other words, the light of Jesus shines through all who are saved by Him.
2. We should allow this light to shine to all those around us, and not try to hide it. This implies that it should also shine in such a way that all will *understand* it.

3. This light should shine to all. In so doing, it says that they will “see your good deeds”. In allowing the light to shine to those around you, you will naturally do “good deeds”.
4. The result of their seeing your good deeds will cause a spontaneous response of their “praising your Father in heaven”. In other words, your deeds as well as your words will testify to God and His love.

In *Galatians 6: 9, 10*, we read:

“And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

As Christians and as a local church, we are mandated never to give up doing good to others. Further, it says to seek opportunity to do good, first to the brethren of the church, but also to the non-believers around us. In these passages (and in *James 2: 14-20*), we see ministry of word and works should not be separated. The works verify God’s will and love, and works alone gives glory to man, not God.

We are all familiar with the greatest commandment: “*Love God with all your heart, your soul, and your mind*”. The second greatest is like it: “*Love your neighbor as yourself*” (*Matthew 22: 37-40*). We are to love our neighbor as we would love ourselves. This includes caring for his needs as you would care for your own. Jesus defines our “*neighbor*” as the one who has needs (*Luke 10*).

In examining portions of Jesus’ ministry on earth in Matthew’s gospel (*Matthew 4: 23-25; 9: 35-38; 14: 14-20*), we see certain characteristics that we should in our own ministry:

1. Jesus taught wherever he went
2. Jesus preached the gospel wherever he went
3. He healed the sick (ministered to physical needs)

4. He had compassion to those whom he ministered

In the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas to be missionaries to the Gentiles, Peter instructed them in only one area: to remember the poor, something that Paul said was in his heart (*Galatians 2: 10*). Being that Peter mentioned only this, gives it great importance in daily ministry. This importance is passed on to each of our churches and to us.

It should also be noted that nowhere in the Bible does it separate helping others being delegated only to the wealthy. In fact, Paul praises the early churches for their generous giving despite their own poverty.

**Questions for Review and Reflection**

**Read the following verses and explain what the Bible says about ministering to the physical needs of others.**

**Luke 3: 11** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Matthew 25: 35-46** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Luke 6: 35-36** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What are some simple ways that you and your church can minister to the needs of those in your church and community?**

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## **Lesson 2: Why are there so many people in need?**

**Objective:** 1. To understand where evil comes from  
2. To see the love of God manifested despite the evil.

**Key Verse:** “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”  
(*John 10:10*)

Recently during a tour of a factory in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, one of the bosses of the factory turned and asked me, “Why does a loving God allow suffering in the world?” This fellow was not asking for himself; he is wealthy, educated, and healthy with a wonderful family. In fact, he had no personal complaints at all, and he himself is generous to his workers and tries to help those in need.

His question is possibly one of the oldest and most difficult questions asked by people of all generations and peoples. If there is a loving God, why does he allow terrible suffering?

*A child is born to a wealthy couple that provide not only for his needs, but also his desires. He becomes well educated, receives a good paying job, marries a wonderful woman and has a son whom he provides for just his father.*

*Another child is born physically handicapped to a poor woman living in an impoverished city. He has no father, grows up uneducated, is unable to work due to his handicap, and spends his short life begging on the street and eating the garbage that others throw out.*

Of these two people, does God love the first more than the second? Does God help only those “who help themselves?”

Worse yet, we see horrific evil all around us and all through history:

- Genocide of whole populations is occurring in the name of “ethnic cleansing”, many in the “name of God”.
- Famine, disease and ignorance kill millions
- Terrible storms and natural disasters kill thousands indiscriminately.
- The rich exploit the poor leaving these people in misery while the rich seem to get richer.
- It seems that evil tends to afflict the innocent more than the guilty.

If there were a loving God, a God who has power to create and change the universe with just a thought, why would such a God allow these evil things to occur? These types of questions have haunted men for all of time.

Anytime we discuss having a ministry with people with physical needs, we are faced by these tough questions. It is important to have a Biblical basis of these issues.

### **Is there a loving God?**

Before we can explore such deep questions, let us first hear what God has said about himself in the Bible. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In each step of the creation, it says that God looked at what He created and said, “It is good” (*Genesis 1: 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25*). God built a creation where evil did not exist, and where want did not occur. God’s desire was for man all through history to live in joy in the presence of God.

Even with the fall of many as described in *Genesis 3*, God still desires us to have full lives. In *John 10: 10*, Jesus says that he came that we might have life. God so much desires to give us life, that despite the guiltiness of man, God sent his only son to become man, die for us on the cross and then give us eternal life with him (*John 3: 16; Romans 5: 8*).

In *Isaiah 25: 8* and *Revelation 7: 17*, it says that God will wipe away all the tears from our eyes. This does not mean that God will take out a celestial handkerchief and wipe away our tears like a well-meaning mother will kiss a “boo-boo” on her son’s knee. But God will take away all of the pain, misery, suffering, and grief that we have ever had.

For nine years, my wife, Elizabeth, and I prayed for a child. We had a wonderful life, but not having children was extremely painful for us. Then, she was pregnant. During the second trimester of pregnancy, we found out that the child died. The pain and grief we suffered was horrible for us. How could this happen? Were we not good enough for God? Then she became pregnant again, but this baby also died before the child was born. Then, after eleven years of marriage, Hannah Grace was born to us. As I held her in my arms for the first time, great joy filled my heart. I could think of nothing but the joy of having this child. Where was my grief I had for so many years? God had wiped it away, leaving only His wonderful answer to our prayers.

In *1 John 4: 10*, it says that we didn’t even love God, but that God loved us first, and through this love, God sent his son Jesus, to die allowing us to experience God’s love for eternity. God describes himself as “love”. This does not mean, however, that love is the manifestation of God, whereby we can gain God’s favor or become like God by our love for others. But God is described as pure and undefiled love.

### **From where did evil come?**

The first question we need to ask is, “*Did a loving God create evil?*” After all, didn’t God make all things? This question is important because if God created evil, then he is responsible for all the evil we have and is therefore “not good”.

The answer is definitely “NO”. We learn earlier than the creation of man, that God created angels. These angels had free will: the ability to choose to do good or evil. Some *chose* to do evil, and they were cast out of heaven. One was Lucifer whose name was changed to Satan or the Devil. In Genesis, it says that God created a perfect world (free of evil and want), created man and woman in his image (free from sin), and put them into this environment. God also gave mankind the choice to either follow God or to do evil. Adam and Eve *chose* to eat from the Tree of Good and Evil, thereby choosing to do evil. God did not create evil, but created the opportunity for mankind to choose to follow God in a world free from sin and evil, or to choose to disobey God and therefore to choose to do evil. God told Adam the consequences of choosing evil. Not only would man lose the close fellowship and life he has in God, but that the whole universe would also fall. In *Genesis 2: 17*, it said that if man ate from this tree, he surely would die. When he did, death entered the world. God never intended for death and suffering to occur in the world. Not only did physical death occur, but spiritual death also occurred. The Bible says that we are dead in our sins (*Colossians 2: 17*). The penalty of sin is death (*Romans 6: 23*). This death is universal for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (*Romans 3: 23*). Not only does all men sin actively, but man is born into sin as a result of Adam’s original sin (*Romans 5: 18*). Sin is evil, and all those who have sin is considered evil in God’s sight. When we consider that all mankind is evil, we can begin to see why there is so much evil in the world.

## Types of evil

Some have described two types of evil: *natural evil* and *moral evil*.

**Natural evil** is evil brought on by natural causes in the world such as floods, earthquakes, and tornadoes. Many diseases are also thought to be natural evils. In other words, these are evils caused by no fault of man. In modern times, these

are often called “acts of God” since they occur either by God’s direct hand or by His permission. Man is not generally the cause of these terrible things.

As we saw from the study above, natural evil was not intended to exist in the world. Natural evil occurred as a direct result of the fall of man.

**Moral evil** is evil brought on by man’s direct greed, hatred, or overindulgence. War is often fought due to people’s desire for power, wealth, or hatred. One man’s greed for money and all that it can buy may disregard the needs of others thereby thrusting others into poverty, enslavement, or danger for his own sake.

We struggle with both types of evil. Recently an earthquake struck India killing over 12,000 people. Why does God allow such suffering when it was not “anyone’s fault”? Why does God allow a few men in power to wage war against millions of people causing genocide? Why does AIDS kill innocent children because they received a blood transfusion of tainted blood? Why doesn’t God punish the “evil ones” and spare the innocent?

First, God hates evil. He hates all types of evil. When Jesus approached the tomb of his good friend Lazarus, he wept bitterly (*John 11: 35*). He never intended death to occur. In *Proverbs 6: 16-19*, it describes things that God hates. These things listed are the base of much of the world’s evil and suffering: pride, lying, shedding of innocent blood, those who make evil schemes. There is no doubt that God hates evil, both natural and moral evil.

God is also a *just* God. It says in *2 Thessalonians 1:6-7*:

“God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is

revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.”

Over and over in the Bible, it says that God will correct the wrongs he sees; not just the wrongs that we see, but also all wrongs. But remember, God is just in every area. If he wipes out some evil, he must wipe out all evil. All evil would include all of mankind. This would include you, all people, and me. The total cessation and punishment of evil will occur as it is described in Revelation. Examples of God’s wide sweeping punishment of evil are found in the time of Noah where God punishes the evil of man and how he starts anew (*Genesis 6-9*). He also wipes out Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 13*). But God also withheld wide sweeping punishments upon people (*1 Samuel 12: 22; 2 Kings 8: 19; Isaiah 37: 35; Jonah 3: 10*).

Fortunately for all of us, God is also *love* (*1 John 4: 8, 16*). For this reason, God does not desire for any to perish but to repent from their evil (*2 Peter 3: 9*).

God’s love extends beyond the individual person, but is also personal. God promises that despite evil around us, both natural and moral evils), God will use all things, both good and bad for good (*Romans 8: 28*) and despite terrible things occurring around us, nothing will separate us from the love of God:

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (*Rom 8:38-39*)

In *Genesis 37* through *50*, we read about how Joseph suffered many evils: he was hated unjustly, sold into slavery, falsely accused of adultery, and thrown into prison. When he finally “catches a break”, he faces his brothers who sold him into slavery many years earlier. Joseph sees God’s mighty hand and

his desire for his people. In *Genesis 45: 1-11*), he described how God used man's evils to Joseph to save all of Israel.

So even in great evil, God is lovingly caring for us. God's greatest desire is for us to be saved not just from earthly evil, but also eternal evil: eternal damnation. God allowed his own son, Jesus, to be born into an evil world. Although Jesus had no sin or evil in him, God allowed him to "become sin" for us to be saved (*2 Corinthians 5: 21*). Jesus suffered under terrible evil, being accused falsely by the Jewish leaders and the Romans. He died an excruciatingly painful death dying for something that he was not guilty of. Why did God allow this? Why should he allow his own son to suffer such evil? Jesus accepted this evil for the good of all mankind, and in obedience to his heavenly father (*Philippians 2: 6-11*). This passage goes on further saying to the Christians to continue obeying God, accept the evil thrust upon them if it brings about better service to God.

God hates evil. He also promises to punish all evil. A reading of the Old Testament sees the nation of Israel being attacked and taken into captivity by evil empires. God uses his prophets to encourage his people saying that he will revenge the evil done to them. The book of Revelation shows God's ultimate plan and punishment of evil. He also shows his blessings that he will bestow on his people.

### **The extent of sin**

We hear of some crimes being considered "victimless crimes": crimes that do hurt anyone else besides possibly the person committing the crime. Can this be true of sin? Can we commit sin that does not hurt anyone?

The Bible says that sin does affect others. Most can see how a power-ambitious leader who takes his country to war can affect innocent people. Thousands or millions of people suffer under their sin. But we also see babies infected with the AIDS virus

at birth. The mother's or father's sin of drug or sexual use is often the problem. The consequence of their sin passes onto their child.

We hear of people saying that their use of drugs doesn't hurt anyone. The drug trade is based upon the greed of a few. Not only do many suffer addiction from the drugs, but there are many who suffer because of the violence inflicted from forced growing of the plants for cocaine and other drugs to drive by shootings killing innocent people. It is clear that sin affects many.

### **The Christians' response**

We have already seen in Lesson One of this study that God mandates that the Christian church and all its members to minister spiritually, physically and even emotionally to those suffering. In *Matthew 5: 14-16*, Jesus states that we should be the "light to the world". It says not only should we testify, but also that our good deeds should (and will) be seen by all men. This is clearly shown in *James 2*, the writer talks that you cannot separate faith from doing good. We are not saved by good works (*Ephesians 2: 8,9*), but our faith should be demonstrated by doing good to others.

Jesus not only mandates this ministry to the innocent who suffer, but he also mandates that we minister to the guilty (*Matthew 25: 35-46*). For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

### **Questions for Review and Reflection**

**Read the following passages and explain what the Bible says about evil:**

**Matthew 5: 44, 45** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Matthew 12: 35** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Romans 2: 9-11** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Romans 12: 17** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Romans 2: 12** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Romans 16: 19** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ephesians 5: 15, 16** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Read the following passages and explain what the Bible says about God's love for us:**

**Ephesians 2: 4-10** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Hebrews 2: 4-10** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 John 3: 1** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Lesson 3: Assessing Needs

**Objectives:** To begin to understand how to assess needs in your ministry.

**Key Verse:** ““What do you want me to do for you?” “Lord, I want to see,” he replied. Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.”” (*Luke 18:41-42*)

It is obvious that we all have needs: some are urgent needs, some less urgent; some are short-term needs, some are long-term; some are high-priority needs, and others are low-priority. How you respond to these needs (or not respond) will depend on a number of factors. In planning for your ministry, you should consider doing the following:

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- Determine the **need** of those whom you desire to help.
  - Determine your **resources** and the resources made available to you.
  - See how best to help those you want to help (setting **goals**).
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In this lesson, we will look at how to assess the needs of a community. The next two lessons will talk determining what resources you have and about setting goals.

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### **Community**

There are many definitions of the word community.

- Some say it is an area of land that is defined by specific borders such as a neighborhood or a city.
- Some say that a community is a population group. These populations can include people from the state of Durango, Mexico, living in Ciudad Juárez or Gypsies wandering throughout all of Mexico.
- The community can be temporary such as people living in a refugee camp.

- The community may be a membership such as those belonging to a church.
- A community may exist inside a larger community. The local church is a community inside a larger community.

In defining what community you are working with, it is important that you do not make it too general. For instance, if your resources are extremely limited (see Lesson 4), then you may restrict your help to the community of the church or to the kilometer surrounding the church, or to contacts you have in the community.

## Needs

Two blind men came to Jesus in *Matthew 20: 29- 34*. They called to him asking for mercy (help). It would seem very obvious what they wanted from Jesus, someone who healed many people wherever he went. However, Jesus turned to them and asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” In the same way, it is important for them to identify their needs so they can recognize them for themselves and be in agreement with others in the community.

Sometimes, the problem is not obvious or there is a secondary problem that you must address first. You often cannot meet the primary need for any number of reasons, but you may help in secondary needs. Using an example of a child in the hospital, we see the primary need is probably for the child to get well. The hospital and medical staff are caring for these. The secondary needs may include finances, time for parents to prepare meals, care for other children in the family while parents are at the hospital, transportation to and from the hospital, emotional needs of family, and many other needs. No one expects you to care for all their needs, and you should not try to do this. But people will respond and appreciate your helping as you are able.

Assessing of the need is often overlooked. That is to say, we know what the need is (e.g., children are often sick during the winter), but we fail to assess what is causing the problem, and how it is best to help the problem. If children are getting sick, the people may ask for a clinic where they can get medicine. This will probably help, but the resources to build, staff, run and maintain a clinic are very high. But a closer look at the problem may show that the classrooms may be poorly insulated and heated, or that the children do not have warm clothing. Another cause may be children who are already sick are sent to school or church and they be passing the illness on to other children. It is almost always easier and less expensive to prevent a problem than to solve it after it has occurred. A much simpler means of helping the problem of sick children may include any of the following steps:

- Insulate the classroom's door and windows and buy a heater for the room.
- Have a clothing drive to provide warmer clothing for the children in the community. Often American churches are glad to help.
- Teach hygiene and the importance of caring for a sick child at home rather than sending them to school or church.

Each of the above steps could help defeat the original problem (i.e., sick children), and often can be done with resources available to the church and community.

Other people may perceive needs differently than us. Although we see a need more important, a group may not receive your help until you meet a “less important” need. Their reasoning of their priorities may not be evident or clear to you. A team of American health people went into a Mexican community to vaccinate the children. The parents asked if they would vaccinate their dogs instead. The health people were angered by their lack of concern for their children. One community leader then explained that the local health clinic already vaccinated the children a month earlier, but there were rabid dogs in the

community and they were afraid that the children would be bitten by a dog and die from rabies. The community knew their greater need even though it was not obvious to the people who came to help.

Most people who came to Jesus came asking for physical healing. Of course healing is important, but I wonder how many had “more important” needs?

In the case of the food coop, it was one project that helped a variety of problems. The problems that were found in the church members included:

- Families had little money available for buying medicine when needed
- Different families could not afford to send their children to school because they needed the money the children could earn.
- The diets of families were very poor.
- When there was lack of money, often families would not eat for a day or so.

With the introduction of a food coop in a church in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, the church families were able to buy food at a cheaper price on a weekly basis therefore saving money to be used for other things (such as helping in the problems listed above). Also, they were able to buy either extra food and/or food of higher protein or nutritional quality for a lower price. One simple ongoing project helped with several problems. The food coop did not solve the entire problem, but it did improve it in a variety of ways.

### **Assessment Process**

The assessment of a problem is very important before you begin a project or ministry. A general assessment of your community is important to have early on in your process of forming a ministry. Then you should do an assessment about the needs as you seek to attack individual problems. Whether

you are seeking to do a general assessment or a smaller assessment, there are three areas you want to assess:

1. List the **strengths** of the community.
2. List the **weaknesses** of the community.
3. List the **problems** of the community.

In assessing each of these areas, be very broad in listing all the strengths and weaknesses even if they do not appear to be directly linked to the project.

Strengths of a community are things that are positive. They can include a good school; churches work together well; good leadership; good weather; low crime rate; etc.

Weaknesses can be positives and negatives. For instance, you may list having only one church in the community as a weakness. Having one church is a good thing, but there is a need for more. Or you may list poor roads in the community as a weakness. These are areas that need improvement.

Problems are areas that need changing. High crime rate is a problem: you want to change this.

Assessment involves a lot of interpersonal relating. There are several steps in assessment. These are:

### **1. Surveying the community**

Surveying can be both *informal* and *formal*. With informal surveying, you might be simply making observations or listening to what people are saying in general conversation. You can introduce questions into the conversation seeking what people think about topics. It is not formal because they are not specific questions that will be asked to others, or the answers are not tabulated with formal results (i.e., 68% said health was the biggest problem, 22% said schooling was the biggest problem, and 10% said that traffic was the worst problem). Informal surveying tends to make peo-

ple less uncomfortable and often opens up more discussion. However, its results are less reliable.

Formal surveying includes a specific list of questions. They can be either “open-ended questions” or “closed-ended questions”. Open-ended questions have no specific answers presented with the questions. Closed-ended questions have specific answers presented with the questions. A “yes” or “no” question or multiple-choice questions are examples.

In asking people questions, try and avoid asking “*YES*” and “*NO*” questions. Do not ask question such as: “Do you think we need a clinic” during this stage of the process. It is too easy to guide the people into answering yes to a question, and it may keep from discovering a good suggestion on how to attack the problem. In place of asking the above question about the clinic, you may ask, “What do you think we can do about the children’s health?” or simply, “What problems do you see in our community?” This allows the people to identify the problems that will help in finding the solutions. Later on in the assessment process, you will be asking these types of questions.

During the survey, you are also observing. For instance, if you are assessing a community, you may be counting how many schools, stores, churches, and other organizations there are in the community. If you are assessing problems of education in the community, you may count how many children are in each classroom, how many miss school each day, observe the discipline in the school, how well lit and how hot each classroom is, and how many children finished their homework. You may simply observe where people tend to congregate in a community and who are the “natural” leaders.

## 2. Listing

In this step of assessment, you are now to collect all the information gathered from your surveying. This is often a difficult process as you try to look at all the information. Try to make a list of the *strengths*, the *weaknesses* and then the *problems* that you found.

## 3. Validating the Lists

Having the above lists are only good if they are correct. Take the list to various people and show them the lists of strengths, weaknesses, and problems. Ask them if they are correct. Ask both leaders and ordinary people of the community. Once you have done this, you will probably have an accurate description of the community.

## 4. Prioritize the Lists

Take your lists now, match strengths and weaknesses to the problems. You may be surprised that you have several areas as strengths that will help solve the problem. You may see a problem of poor reading among the school children, but you also see problems of both parents work and the children are left at home without an adult. But you also see that there is strong leadership in the community, very concerned teachers, and a close-by church. Could the leadership utilize the church to develop a homework club where children can go to the church after school and do homework under the supervision of adults who have been trained by the teachers? Begin looking at this point for possible solutions.

Next, list the problems from most important to least. Graffiti may be a big problem in the community, but maybe the health of the children is more important. You cannot change a whole community at once, so make a list of most important problems and go after them first. Sometimes attacking a simpler and less important problem can encour-

age the community and they will then pursue bigger problems.

In the next lesson, you will begin to link problems with resources that will help you list the order of problems that you desire to improve.

Without a good idea of what their needs are, it is impossible to help people. Having an idea of what they feel are their needs, and an idea of strengths and weaknesses, you will then be able to begin helping in a much more effective ministry.

### **Questions for Review and Discussion**

- 1. Who is ultimately responsible for the needs of the individual and the community?**

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- 2. How would you describe the difference between an “urgent need” and a “non-urgent need”?**

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- 3. How would you describe the difference between an “important need” and a “non-important need”?**

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**4. List some *strengths, weaknesses and problems* in your church:**

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## **Lesson 4: Assessing your resources**

**Objective:** To be able to assess what resources you have available for ministry.

**Key Verse:** "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it?" (*Luke 14: 28*)

In lesson 1, you listed possible ministries you and the church could do to help those around you. Such ministries could include:

- Helping people build or repair their homes
- Taking food to the sick
- Helping with transportation to the hospital, church, etc.

These ministries can be performed occasionally and by one person. However, your church may be at the point where you desire a more organized outreach to help more than one person. Such ministries could include:

- A tutor program to help neighborhood children with their schoolwork.
- Building a playground or plaza.
- Organizing a food coop.
- Sponsoring different skill classes such as home haircutting, home plumbing, insulation around windows and doors during the winter.

Obviously, these projects will take more time, energy, planning, money, and implementing. It is important that you consider what it will take before you start.

In considering each project, you must always consider what resources you have. This includes tasks as small as preparing a meal and it includes planning a ministry in a church. We should use needs to “guide” the ministries, but do not allow them to “domi-

nate” the ministries. We have already learned in *Deuteronomy 15: 11* and *Matthew 26: 11*, that we will always have poor around us. Yet, we are commanded to minister to their needs. In any type of ministry, particularly in small local churches, resources can quickly be spent on helping. Therefore, we must determine how do we spend our resources wisely, efficiently, and with the love of God.

In *Luke 14: 28-33*, Jesus tells two parables. Although the main point that Jesus is making in this passage concerns assessing the cost of being a disciple of Jesus, He also makes a point to discuss assessing the cost of projects. Jesus says that you should not begin building a tower unless you estimate the cost of building it. The costs include more than the money: you must plan on materials, workers, upkeep, and other matters that are involved in building. He gives a second parable about a king does not go into battle without considering if he has the resources to win.

Another example from the Bible a person who used good use of resources is found in Joseph (*Genesis 40- 44*). After Joseph interprets pharaoh’s dreams telling of the seven good years of harvest followed by seven years of famine, he counsels pharaoh to save 20% of the abundant grain for the seven years of famine. Joseph was then put in charge of this project due to his wisdom.

In the same way, we as the body of Christ should consider if we have the resources to accomplish the goals of our ministry.

The ministry that we desire to do must be honoring. In *Colossians 3: 17- 24*, it says that we are to work as if we are working for God. Even though we are giving of ourselves and of our time, we are always to do an excellent job. One church offered to give free haircuts as a means of helping people in a lower economic neighborhood. Two professional hairdressers of the church offered their time. A third woman also offered to cut hair, but she did not have training and had only cut her own children’s hair. It was decided that she would not participate by cutting hair.

There are many types of resources that need to be considered in ministry. As we look at these resources, we will use the example of how Vida Nueva, a church in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, began a food coop in their church.

### **Financial resources**

We tend to focus on the financial resources available. Is there enough money to be able to start and finish a project? Financial resources can include:

- Money from the usual tithes from the members
- Money from special offerings
- Money collected from various churches in the presbytery
- Donations from churches in the United States
- Work projects that generate money from such things as food or crafts that are sold during the project

Money to start the food coop at Vida Nueva came from funding of an American missionary working with Vida Nueva. The containers to store the food, the scale to weigh sugar and beans, the initial inventory of food, and various other needs were bought with this funding. The project became financially independent by adding 5% to the cost of the groceries. Even with this 5% increase, it was still a savings to the participants.

### **Personnel**

We often fail to count the people needed for a project. Do we have enough people to do a project? You will also need to consider whether these people have the experience or qualifications. If you are offering to help build a house for someone, you will need people with experience in construction. If not, the house will fall!

You will want to consider using a few people with only a few hours' commitment verses using only one or two people with a much higher commitment of time.

The food coop needed one person with a car to do the shopping for the food, another two people to separate out the orders and bag the food to be picked up at church the following Sunday, and two people to collect money and give out the food orders.

## **Time**

The people involved will need time to do the project. In considering this area, consider the time that they need for themselves and their family. Remember, they have jobs and other responsibilities. We often need to consider how we want to use our leadership in the church without burning them out.

Is there also time in the church calendar? Does the pastor or other leaders need to be involved?

Not only did each person involved with the food coop need time each week to do their work, but also the church leadership needed to permit time each week after the service for the people to use the coop.

## **Space**

Often a project needs some sort of space such as a meeting place or a storage area. Sometimes tools or equipment are needed.

The food coop needed space (in this case, the church) to store the food bought in bulk and for the groceries that were prepared each week. In addition, containers to keep the food were needed to keep the food fresh and without bugs.

## **Community Resources**

Often there are resources outside of the church in the community you can utilize. Local schools, social organizations, and local government s sometimes have resources available for your use. Using their resources may not detract from the center of the ministry.

In the food coop, the food and other supplies were bought from a local distributing company. A local school provided teachers free of charge for a church that was teaching English.

**Questions for Review and Discussion**

- 1. Is there a ministry project that you and/or your church would like to develop?**

\_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Go through the five steps mentioned above in developing this ministry.**

1. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Resources: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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4. Describe what this ministry will look like in the beginning:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe what it could look like in the future: \_\_\_\_\_

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6. How will you measure or assess your success: \_\_\_\_\_

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**3. Read *Luke 17: 10-19*. Did Jesus have “success” with this ministry to the ten lepers? Why do you think this?**

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**4. Knowing yourself and your church, what do you think is the balance between**

1. A purely spiritual ministry
2. A purely physical ministry
3. An integrated spiritual and physical ministry

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## **Lesson 5: Setting goals for ministry**

**Objective:** To begin to understand how to set goals in our ministry.

**Key Verse:** “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (*John 9:4-5*)

### **Goals**

Often we see needs to be too difficult to solve with our limited resources. For this reason, the goal must be carefully considered. The community may say that they want to eliminate gangs in the neighborhood. They have identified the problem well enough, but the *final* goal of getting rid of the gangs is probably too difficult at this time because of lack of resources, other priorities or any number of reasons. Success should be measured not according to reaching the final goal, but in movement *toward* the goal. Often we need to set smaller goals toward the main goal. A goal that might be set toward the wiping out of gangs in a neighborhood might include starting a youth group in the church that gives both spiritual guidance, and also a place for youth to come and spend constructive time with other youth. This may also help with youth’s need for acceptance by their peers, an area often sought after by gang members.

We see throughout the New Testament that Jesus and his disciples tended to minister to needs of individuals rather than populations. Jesus healed those He met. He fed the five thousand people who came to listen to him that day (not the population of Jerusalem).

In the food coop, we knew that we could not open a store that would provide food for even the whole neighborhood sur-

rounding the church nor did the church desire to do this. However, it could provide for the members of the church. Plus, it could be extended to persons invited by people of the church. A member of the church could invite their neighbor or another family member to partake in the project. The member was able to use a church ministry to minister to his neighbor who benefited directly from the ministry. He was then able to more fully share the whole ministry of the church. The help that each received from the food coop did not totally eliminate their problem of having a lack of money, but it did help in a measurable and meaningful way that the people appreciated and recognized as help that came from a caring church.

## **Getting started**

There are several steps that you want to take before beginning any type of ministry. When starting out, consider starting with small projects. They use fewer resources. As these smaller projects succeed, there will be more interest shown by everyone. This can lead to expanding the project or starting new projects. Remember:

*Small successes will lead to bigger successes.  
Small mistakes can more easily be corrected.*

In starting any ministry, consider these steps:

### **Determine the need**

Do you know what the problem or need is? If you do not, you will not be effective in helping them. Again, you may not know what the main need is, but perhaps you can determine some smaller or secondary needs. Do the people you are seeking to help also identify this as a need?

### **Determine your resources**

Be sure that you have sufficient resources to start, continue and finish the ministry. Consider your finances, space, time and people. Can the resources be replenished?

After you identify the needs and your resources, you are ready to establish the goals of the ministry. To do this, consider the *how*, *who*, *when* and *where* of the ministry. These will help you set your goals.

**1. Decide how you want to help them**

Do you desire to have a spiritual or physical ministry? Will you integrate the two, and to what degree will you integrate them? Jesus did not always preach the gospel to those he healed, but we see that people came and followed him after he helped them. Is the problem a reasonable problem that the church wants to help?

**2. Decide to whom you desire to help**

Do you desire to help people in a specific area or with a specific need? Will the ministry be for the members of the church or for the community as a whole? Do you want to make it available to the whole community, or keep it restricted in size and invite only contacts of the church?

**3. Decide when and for how long you will help**

Often a project or ministry will lend itself more to a particular time than another. If you are having a ministry with clothing, probably the change of seasons will be best for this ministry. If you are having a project related to helping families with heating their homes, then winter-time is probably the only time you need to have the project.

Also decide for how long you intend to have the project. You may desire to begin with a short-term project and then assess whether you want to continue it.

**4. Decide where you will have the ministry**

There is a great deal to consider in deciding where to have a ministry. You may desire to draw attention to the

church as a whole, and therefore have the ministry in the church building. Or, you may desire to have the ministry more in the community. Perhaps there is a stigma for a person to enter a protestant church, and you desire to have the ministry outside of the building and more in the members' homes or community building.

With these questions answered, setting specific, measurable goals will be much easier, and you will have more of an impact with these projects.

Choose a goal that is aimed at the problem and is reachable through the ministry. You can always correct or expand the goal. Is it a goal that the people to whom you are ministering desire?

### **Begin small**

In the beginning, you should plan to minister to a small number of people. Perhaps you may even have the ministry to the members of the church until it is well organized. Then you can open it up to people outside the church.

### **Regularly assess the ministry**

Assessing the ministry on a regular basis will help you to stay focused and to make corrections as needed. If the ministry is not really being used or is no longer needed, then consider changing it or closing it. In the beginning, determine how you will measure the success of the ministry. This measurement may be in number of people that you have shared the gospel with, how many people are participating in the ministry, how much money is being saved per family as a result of the ministry, etc. In other words, the *assessment* should reflect the *goal*.

Joseph (*Genesis 41* and following) demonstrated great planning and helping not only Egypt but also other countries during their greatest need:

1. **Determined the need-** Joseph interpreted the dreams of pharaoh and understood the need that the people would suffer from lack of food.
2. **Determined resources-** He knew that he would have seven years of good harvests and that he would need store houses throughout the land.
3. **Decided on how to help-** Joseph planned to secure food for the land of Egypt.
4. **Who to help-** Joseph's plan was to help the people of Egypt, but then was able to help people outside of Egypt.
5. **Set goals-** He set the goal of collecting one-fifth of the harvest and to store it throughout the country. Then as there was need, he sold it to the people.
6. **Started small-** Although Joseph began "big" with pharaoh; God prepared Joseph through a number of smaller steps.
7. **Regularly assessed-** Joseph was able to determine that there was enough food to sell to other countries and that, as the people were unable to pay for food, he accepted items for payment.

### **Spiritual needs**

Are people's spiritual needs being met, or is the gospel being shared as a result of the ministry? It is not always necessary or feasible to share the gospel at the beginning of the ministry, but one of the results should be a spiritual ministry as well as a physical ministry.

Likewise, it is not always necessary to meet physical needs in spiritual ministry. However, you should plan to deal with people's physical and emotional needs as they come up. You may have an evangelism event planned where the gospel is presented. This is fine, but realize that as people respond and enter your churches, they come with other needs.

## Questions for Review and Discussion

1. **Some people feel that setting goals may hinder the Holy Spirit. What do you think?**

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2. **Some cultures do not commonly plan but act more spontaneously. Describe your church and community.**

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3. **Do you have any specific goals for your ministry?**

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## **Lesson 6: Serving those inside the church and outside the church**

**Objective:** To understand the Biblical mandate to help those in the church and outside the church.

**Key Verse:** “And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” (*Galatians 6: 9,10*)

The members of a small mission church (15 adults) are all employed in minimal wage factory jobs. They earn enough for a very basic diet and minimal housing. They do not see themselves as “poor”, but they do have trouble financially if there is any emergencies or unexpected expenses. Each family would like to improve themselves financially, but it is difficult. The church has helped just about every family of the church at one time or other when they had financial problems. It is obvious that the entire tithe from the church could be spent on helping just the members alone. All but one family came to Christ through the ministry of the church during the last two years. The church desires to grow and to share the gospel with the families in the low-income neighborhood surrounding the church. This church faces several tough questions about helping as they use their limited resources:

- Should the church use their limited resources to help only those in the church?
- Should they try to help those in need outside the church? If so, how?
- Who should they help?
- What Biblical basis do they have?
- What is the balance between helping the members and attendees of the church verses those outside the church?

Every Christian, church and Christian organization faces these tough questions, and it is important that we see what the Bible says

about these issues and how to apply these Biblical truths in our church.

### **Caring for those in the church**

Since the formation of the nation of Israel, God has always commanded that all his people be cared for. As we have already seen in *Deuteronomy 15*, God lays out strict guidelines about the financial welfare of his people and the people living within Israel's borders. The main point that God makes is that there should be "no poor living among you" (v. 4). The people should give generously to help their brothers and sisters. The meaning of "poor" used here designates someone needing to beg for basic food.

The apostle John said that just as Christ Jesus laid down his life for us, we should lay down our lives for our brothers in Christ (*1 John 3: 16*). He follows this in the next verse by saying that if anyone has material possessions and his brother is lacking, that he should give from his abundance to help his brother. If the brother does not give, John's judgment of him is so great that he questions if the love of God is in him.

James goes further by saying in *James 1: 27* that the religion that God accepts as pure and faultless includes looking after orphans and widows in their distress. James goes further into helping others in the church in chapter 2. He argues that if you have faith without good deeds, then his faith is useless. This can be applied to the ministry of faith. If we are seeking to have only a spiritual ministry, and we lack good deeds, then the ministry is useless. These good deeds are not necessarily organized ministerial deeds, but also deeds performed in love on a daily basis by each individual. James says that if a brother or sister lacks clothing or food, we should help them (*James 2: 16, 17*).

It should also be noted in *James 2: 18, 19* that good deeds without faith is not enough for God either. Faith (ministry of the word) and good deeds are always to be done together.

### **Caring for those outside of the church**

Just as the Bible is clear about ministering to believers in the local church, it is just as strong about serving those outside the church. There is a higher priority put on caring for the believers. In *Galatians 6: 9, 10*, it says that believers should not grow tired from doing good, and that we should seek opportunities to do good to *all men*: first to the believers, then to those outside the faith.

By doing good, we shall be a light in the spiritual darkness, a light from God in the community (*Matthew 5: 16*). If we do good, we will silent criticisms of non-believers (*1 Peter 2: 15*).

We often can see helping those close to us: neighbors, a family member, friend or ourselves. But we are also to minister to our enemies. By enemy, it can literally be an enemy of our government, a person who dislikes Christians and is aggressive against the church, or simply someone who does not like us or we don't like. In *Luke 6: 35*, it says that we are to love our enemies and to lend (or minister) to them without expecting a return.

Jesus commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves (*Matthew 22: 39*). In loving someone as we would love ourselves, we cannot ignore his or her physical needs, just as we cannot ignore our own. In fact, Jesus says that we should even treat your enemies by being generous with them (*Matthew 5: 40- 48*). Jesus explains that our "neighbor" is anyone in need (*Luke 10: 36, 37*).

### **Examples of those who served others**

We see Jesus ministering to the needs of all those around him. It is described of him that wherever he preached that he always

did good works wherever he went, having compassion on them (*Matthew 4: 23-25; 9: 35; 14: 14, Mark 1: 39; Acts 10: 36-38*).

Tabitha was a believer who was known to always be doing good and helping the poor (*Acts 9: 36*).

It is interesting that when Paul was being sent out as the apostle to the Gentiles, Peter, James and John asked Paul to be sure to remember only one thing: to remember the poor (*Galatians 2: 10*). The apostles could have said a lot of other things as being important, but they said only to remember the poor.

During our missionary work in Peru, we were traveling on horseback with a Quechua Indian named Pedro to visit his distant village in the Andes Mountains. We passed through a small town, and the captain of the military post asked for specific documents. We did not know that we needed them. He was about to put us into jail when he saw Pedro waiting outside. He asked if we were with him, and I explained that we had trained him to be a health promoter. The captain smiled and said if we were with Pedro, we were welcomed anytime. He explained that he was well known throughout the valley as someone who always helped

## **A Balance**

The Christian church and the individual Christian are all called to serve and to minister to the physical needs of the believers in the church and to the non-believers in need. There is a clear mandate to be sure that the believers are cared for first (*Galatians 6: 10*). But we must find where the balance between the two exists.

In part, it depends on the resources of the church. If there are little resources (see Lesson 3), then this will affect the balance. You must decide to what extent you desire to help. Do you desire that each person in your church have at least the minimal necessities and then to help others outside the church, or do

you desire to help them obtain a higher level of help? To help in this decision, it is necessary to know what the needs are in the church and outside the church.

You must determine what the overall goals of the church are at the time. Is the church emphasizing developing the present congregation or is the church trying to reach out more in the community? Is there a group that the church is trying to reach, such as the homeless, the youth, or single mothers? Then more resources should be focused in this area. Has the leadership set any specific standards or goals? In one church, it was decided that no one in the congregation was to go without food. So there was always food available at the church so if a person was having difficulty at the time, a box of food was immediately given to him or her. A church may want to be ready to respond to any emergency or immediate need in the community, so they always have lots of food, clothing and other essentials to deliver to a family whose house has burnt down or to help if there is a death in the community. Another church may want to teach skill classes that can help people in the community.

What is the overall condition of the church? If the members are adequately cared for while members in the community are hungry, then more resources may be given for outreach.

The direction of the church in these types of ministries (really, for all ministries) should be decided by the leaders of the church carefully considering the thoughts, desires, resources and needs of its members. Ministries to the poor and the needy should always be present in every church. Needs change regularly in a church and a community. With changing needs and resources, there will be changing ministries. In one church that had a food coop, the economic level of the church and community improved over a few years. The need for a food coop that provided food for a lower cost than in the stores became less necessary. Eventually the church closed this ministry and put its resources into another ministry of the church.

**Missions**

A church must always look beyond itself and even beyond the community where the church exists. The Great Commission is for the local community and “the furthest parts of the world” (*Acts 1: 8*). The local church is only part of the larger church. We should seek opportunities to serve directly or indirectly in other parts of our city, country and world. Even if it is a small part that you play, it should be introduced at the beginning of the formation of every church.

**Questions for Review and Discussion**

- 1. What is the economic situation of your congregation? (Poor, stable, middle class, mixed, upper class, rich)**

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- 2. What kind of care does your church have organized for members in need? (Deacons Fund, special offerings, Etc.)**

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- 3. Do you know of anyone in the church or outside who needs help?**

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**4. Do you know anyone in the church who would work well with people in need?**

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**5. How is your church involved in outreach in missions outside of your community?**

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## Lesson 7: Spiritual Gifts

**Objectives:** To understand what the spiritual gifts are and how God uses them.

**Key verse:** “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” (*Romans 12:6-8*)

If a father were to ask his son to build some wooden shelves for the garage, would the father not provide the hammer, saw and other tools he would need? Or if a mother were to ask her daughter to cook supper, would the mother not make her pots, pans, stove, food and other needed items available for her? In the same way, if our heavenly father asks, and even commands, us to care for the needs of those around us, would he not also provide the “tools” needed to accomplish his will?

Jesus desires his church to minister to other believers and to those around them. He desires that we minister in word (*Matthew 28: 19, 20*) and in deed (*Galatians 6: 10*).

Each Christian brings a variety of **talents, education, experience** and also **spiritual gifts**.

A **talent** is a God-given ability that can be exercised and developed. All men and women are born with different talents. We all recognize talents such as music, art, teaching and others in many people. These talents are found in Christians and non-Christians. God certainly uses these talents in ministry. A talented surgeon can serve many with his skilled hands. It is true that he has studied for

many years and has had much experience, but a truly talented surgeon would not be able to succeed as well if he did not possess the talent God gave him.

**Education** obviously teaches a person skills and knowledge that they need. If the person possess a talent in this same area, the benefit is even greater. A woman talented in music and singing will enhance her performance of the piano with more studying.

**Experience** also helps develop your talents. Even if a person lacks much talent in an area, he can still improve with practice. With talent and/or education, a person can greatly improve with practice. No matter how talented and educated a singer is, if he does not practice and gain experience, he will never reach the potential he could reach.

**Spiritual gifts** are different from the first three. A spiritual gift is also God-given, like a talent. However, it is given only to Christians and at the time of salvation. Non-Christians are not given a gift. A spiritual gift is a special ability given by God at the time of conversion to be used specifically for ministry. It is a God-given gift that supernaturally enables the believer to serve in a particular type of ministry. People with the gift of evangelism will see a greater number of people come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ than others who are witnessing. Another person gifted in teaching will have his or her students understand the material much easier and to a greater depth than when it is presented by another. In an evangelism course that I was helping to teach, I saw a young man who was mentally very slow and had difficulty expressing himself. However, each person that he witnessed to that weekend came to Christ. While the very fluent and well trained pastor did not see anyone receive Christ. It was clear that this young man had the gift of evangelism. We probably can all think of a teacher who can always communicate spiritual truths from the Bible in a way that we can understand. This person may very well have the gift of teaching. Somehow in God's own way, he "improves" the service for

his own glory through the gifts. It is done in such a way that others see our work and recognizes God's power in it.

Not having a gift does not preclude you from serving in the area.

- We all are expected to share our faith to those around us even if we are not gifted in evangelism.
- We are all teachers to our children even if we are not gifted in teaching.
- We can all help on church clean up days even though we may not have the gift of helps.
- We all have faith even if we do not have the gift of faith.

The results of using the gift can be improved with education, preparation and experience. A man gifted in preaching certainly improves with Biblical training and with experience in the pulpit. The person with the gift of teaching still needs to prepare his lessons.

In whatever area we are called to minister, we should seek to see if we are gifted in the area. By knowing your spiritual gift, God may use this to guide you into the type of ministry you should be doing. For instance, if you know that your gift is in showing mercy to others, you may be drawn to work with visiting the sick in the hospital as opposed to teaching a class. If you do have the gift of teaching, perhaps you would turn down an elder of the church request that you arrange for the cleaning of the church on a weekly basis. Let your main area of ministry (whether it is in the local church or in full time ministry) be in your area. There are people in our churches who are compelled to volunteer for almost every job. The pastor usually loves this type of people, but are these people being used best by spreading their time in many other areas than the area of ministry that they are gifted in?

According to William McRae in *The Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts*, gifts have four characteristics:

1. Every gift involves **ability**. Billy Graham is a great evangelist because he has the gift of evangelism. He also exercises this gift and prepares thoroughly for his campaigns. But

without the gift of evangelism, he would not see the great results that he does.

2. Possessing a spiritual gift **qualifies** the person to use the gift. When we are seeking for people to serve, we should look for people qualified to serve. We should not just look for experience, education, and other qualifications, but we should look to see if the person is qualified by having the spiritual gift.
3. A person gifted in an area will show an abundance of **strength** in the area. A man gifted in mercy will be able to minister in showing mercy in an extraordinary way.
4. Having a gift gives you **responsibility** in using it. This responsibility is two-fold:
  - a. You are held responsible in how you use your gift, and
  - b. You are mandated to use it. If you are gifted to teach, you should teach.

We must not confuse a spiritual gift with a talent. A Christian teacher may be an excellent teacher. The teacher may or may not have the gift of teaching. All Christians should share their faith, but not all have the spiritual gift of evangelism. We should not assume that a person with a certain position (e.g., teacher, administrator, pastor) automatically has that particular spiritual gift. However, we should seek persons with particular gifts to fill positions where their spiritual gifts are needed. It is difficult sometimes for small or new churches to have all the gifts represented in their congregation, but we should encourage them to find their individual gifts, and to develop them. Sometimes people not gifted in an area may need to fill positions. If so, seek people talented, experienced and educated in these areas.

Everyone has different needs and God has gifted the individual believer with special gifts to be able to minister differently in Christ's

name. These gifts, or *spiritual gifts*, are found in four main sections of Scripture where they are described:

1. Romans 12: 4-8
2. 1 Corinthians 12 & 14
3. Ephesians 4: 11-14
4. 1 Peter 4: 10, 11

The Bible goes into detail about the purpose and use of the gifts in *1 Corinthians 12: 7-28*. Again William McRae explains:

- All the gifts come from the Holy Spirit (v. 7)
- All Christians have one or, possibly, more than one gift (vv. 7, 11)
- All the gifts are for the good of all (v. 7)
- All Christians make up one body (vv. 12, 20, 27)
- The Holy Spirit makes one body (v. 13)
- No one has all the gifts, nor does everyone have the same gift (4, 28-31)
- God places the persons with different gifts throughout the body as God desires (v. 18)
- The gifts are used in harmony together and not alone (vv. 20-25)
- All the gifts are necessary for the full functioning of the body (vv. 21, 22)
- We depend on others with their gifts since no one is self-sufficient alone (v. 25)
- Each of us feels the pain and the joy of others in the body (v. 26)
- Some gifts are more important, but all are essential (v. 28)

There is some debate about how many gifts there are. There appears to be six lists of gifts listed in the New Testament. Each list has some from other lists, but no list is identical. This difference in these lists make some speculate that there may be more gifts than the ones listed. Others say that the total of the gifts listed in the six lists are a complete list of all possible gifts.

Some suggest that there are other gifts that are not listed in the Bible. Others argue that these “gifts” are only manifestations of gifts already listed. Some say that there is a gift of *music*: people who are extremely talented musically and it is obvious that God uses their talent in ministry. These people write, perform, and record songs that have ministered to thousands. Others say that they are actually gifted in *teaching* or *exhortation*, and that their gift is simply manifested in their music. They would point out that some people have the gift of *teaching*, and God uses them specifically in teaching *youth*. Their talents, experiences, and education make their gifts more specific.

There is also a great debate among Christians and churches as to whether certain gifts exist in the modern church. These are mostly found among the sign gifts such as speaking in tongues, miracles, and apostleship. These questions are outside our study in this book.

### **The Gifts Unify**

Before we begin studying the individual gifts, we must see that the gifts were given to ***unify*** Christians. Whenever the New Testament talks about the spiritual gifts, it is said that they unify the body. Before the full discussion of the gifts in *Romans 12: 6*, Paul states that the body is made up of individual members with different gifts. However, it is because of this diversity, that the body is made one in Christ. The entire chapter between *1 Corinthians 12* and *14* (chapters dedicated to the teaching of the spiritual gifts) chapter 13 is given to the teaching of love and unity of the body. In *Ephesians 4: 11- 14*, the gifts are used to demonstrate the unity of the body. Peter talks about the love for all believers in *1 Peter 4: 8*, and then uses the spiritual gifts to explain how we can love others.

Since no one has all the gifts, and since all the gifts are needed to be a unified and loving body, each person is commanded to use their gift.

The gifts are not given for personal edification or use, but for serving others. God has made each person incomplete, lacking in areas so they would need the help of others. However, he has given each Christian one (or more) gifts so that the local church can be united and complete, depending on each other for their gifts.

The Bible likens the church as a human body. The body is made up of many parts (hands, eyes, feet, etc.). No one part is complete or independent of the rest of the body. Nor is any part not needed. As we look at the body of Christ with all its parts (people with the different gifts), the body is strongest and most useful when all the parts are present and are functioning well. Each gift adds to the wholeness of the body. The body can minister to itself making it stronger and minister to those outside the body (to non-Christians) helping with them with their needs and adding them to the body. When each person in the body of Christ is exercising their individual gift for the unity of the body, it allows others to concentrate on whatever ministry God is calling them to. When people using their gifts, the pastor does not need to put extra time and energy into running the church office, cleaning the church, running the different ministries of the church, etc.

In *Acts 6*, the apostles quickly found out that a lot of their time was being spent in ministry outside of teaching and ministering the word (their primary responsibilities and gifts), so they had the disciples choose seven men “full of the spirit and wisdom” to minister to the physical needs of the church. There are several key items here:

- The apostles did not see themselves above this type of work
- They saw the importance of their own gifts and the need to minister effectively in these gifts
- They saw the importance of the serving of food and sought to ensure that it would continue
- They sought people who were gifted in the ministry

- They saw the importance of other peoples gifts and the need for them to minister in their gifts
- One ministry should not be sacrificed for another

## The Gifts

There are six basic lists of gifts:

### Rom.12: 6-8

Prophesying  
Ministering  
Teaching  
Exhorting  
Giving  
Ruling  
Showing  
mercy

### Eph. 4: 11

Apostleship  
Prophecy  
Evangelism  
Pastor-  
teacher

### 1 Peter 4: 11

Speaking  
Ministering

### 1Cor.12:6-10

Wisdom  
Knowledge  
Faith  
Healing  
Miracles  
Prophecy  
Discerning of  
spirits  
Speaking in  
tongues  
Interpreting  
of tongues

### 1Cor. 12: 8

Apostleship  
Prophecy  
Teaching  
Miracles  
Healing  
Helping  
Administering  
Tongues

### 1Cor. 12: 29, 30

Apostleship  
Prophecy  
Teaching  
Miracles  
Healing  
Tongues  
Interpretation of  
tongues

Some writers and preachers further classify all the gifts according to their nature even though the Bible does not separate them out in this manner. However, this does help us to understand them a bit better.

The three main categories are:

### **Speaking gifts**

Prophecy	Evangelism
Apostleship	Exhortation
Teaching	Discerning of spirits
Pastor-teacher	

### **Serving Gifts**

Giving	Helping
Administration	Faith
Mercy	

### **Sign Gifts**

Healing	Interpretation of
Miracles	tongues
Tongues	

This system is flawed in that there is overlap of certain gifts in different categories. For instance, is “teaching” a “speaking gift” or a “serving gift”? For this brief study of the gifts, we will study the speaking and serving gifts.

In the following lessons, we will look at the different gifts that are considered *helping gifts* and *speaking gifts*.

**Questions for Reflection and Review**

**1. What is a *spiritual gift*?**

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**2. What is the difference between a spiritual gift and a talent?**

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**3. How are these both needed in the church?**

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**4. List your talents:**

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**5. List your experiences and how God has used you in different ministries:**

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## **Lesson 8: The Serving Gifts**

**Objectives:** To understand the different serving gifts of the spirit and how then can be used in the church.

**Key Verse:** “Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them.” (*Acts 6: 3*)

In the previous lesson, we studied the purposes of the spiritual gifts. Briefly, we saw that they were given to all believers at the time of salvation to serve others. The gift is a supernatural gift and is much more than a talent, experience or something that is simply learned. Each believer has at least one gift and no one has all the gifts. When the gifts are used together in the body of Christ, the gifts unify and strengthen the entire body. We also saw that there were a variety of gifts and that they could loosely be categorized into three main types of gifts:

1. Serving Gifts
2. Speaking Gifts
3. Sign Gifts

### **The Serving Gifts**

Even though all the spiritual gifts are given to serve others, there are several that have been described as the “serving gifts”. These gifts are more often used in serving people with physical and emotional needs. We will look at these gifts here in more detail. However, let us remember that all gifts should be utilized together to minister most effectively as the body of Christ. The gifts refer to as the “Serving Gifts” are:

- Giving
- Administration
- Helping
- Faith
- Mercy

They are called the serving gifts since their direct action of using the gift implies a physical service. For example, we can imagine a person with the gift of *helping* making a meal for a family after a new child is born. Remember, these are *loose* categories. Teaching is a *speaking gift*. The person teaching is also doing a physical ministry (teaching), but since the person is ministering more in word than deed, the gift is considered a speaking gift. Likewise, a person with the gift of *mercy* may deliver comfort by speaking with a person who has lost his father, but we tend to think of giving mercy as a service or action.

### **Gift of Giving**

All believers are commanded to give in a variety of ways.

- We are to give joyfully and not under compulsion (*2 Corinthians 9: 7*).
- We are to give to the support of the church and its ministries (*1 Corinthians 16: 2*).
- We are to give when others lack what we have extra (*Luke 3: 11*).

The person with the gift of giving goes far beyond the expectations that all Christians have. Jesus describes a poor widow in *Mark 12: 42-44*. She gave two small coins to the temple. Jesus said that it was all she owned. He points out that she gave more than all the rest because she gave out of her poverty. A person with the gift of giving is not one who gives large sums of money, but one who gives regularly above what is expected to the work of God. Not only does this person give, but also the person gives sacrificially and joyfully.

I went to visit a man who owned his own company to see if he would be interested in contributing to some mission work. I was quite impressed by how modern and big the company was. It was obvious that the man had done well financially over the years. I was quite taken back when I met the man. He was dressed in very old and obviously re-

paired clothes. After listening to me for a bit, he pledged to give more money than most churches could pledge. I had heard later from other missionaries that this man regularly contributed heavily to missions. It was obvious that he used his financial success not for his own comfort, but in supporting God's work. Another woman, a widow, gave generously and regularly to our missionary support. When I met her in her home, her house was little more than a poorly built shack. Years later, while visiting her in a nursing home, her memory had difficulty remembering her grandchildren's names, but she remembered her missionaries! As Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (*Matthew 6: 21*).

A person with the gift of giving is not restricted only to the giving of money. Such a person can give abundantly in their time, possessions, talents, and in other ways. Often this person not only gives, but also continues to pray for the ministry. Their giving, although it is usually done quietly, is an encouragement to others to trust the Lord with their finances.

A person with this gift could greatly be used in a church by ensuring that the Lord's work would be provided for in special ways such as emergency relief, and developing new ministries.

### **Gift of Administration**

Perhaps of all the gifts, this is the least appreciated! Yet, without people with this gift, many ministries would either be poorly managed, fail, or even not get started.

The people with this gift are usually people who can handle many details and keep them organized with the result being a much more efficient ministry. People with this gift usually make good church secretaries and treasurers. They can organize a church dinner being sure that there are enough

chairs, plates and forks, make sure the food is prepared and delivered, arrange the schedule to allow time for eating, clearing, and fellowship.

Although the “fruit” of this ministry may not always be seen, the result is often great. The result of the church dinner may be resolution of disagreements in the church due to members’ fellowshiping. The preaching of the word and ministering to the body may be greatly improved due to the pastor’s not needing to arrange the many details of a church, leaving him time to minister the word.

Perhaps the greatest administrators of the Bible include:

1. Noah- He was able to build the ark, supply enough food to feed he and his family and thousands of animals for a year, and gather together two of every kind of animals.
2. Joseph- He was able to plan for gathering together enough food from good harvests in Egypt to provide for the whole nation during seven years of famine.

### **Gift of Mercy**

Throughout the history of the church, perhaps the showing of mercy has been the most important means of introducing the gospel to people. From the apostles to the present date, missionaries have ministered to people in physical and emotional needs (showing mercy) while introducing the gospel to people.

Much of the ministry of Jesus is summed up in *Matthew 9:35*:

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”

But showing mercy is not only for the “introduction” of the gospel, but it is to be the center of ministry. When ten lep-

ers came to Jesus asking to be healed, Jesus healed them. It is interesting to read that nine went away and only one returned to him. To this one, Jesus ministered spiritually (*Luke 17: 12-14*). The Bible says in *Hosea 6: 6*, that God desires mercy more than sacrifice. In *Matthew 25: 34-40*, Jesus says those who have showed mercy to the needy did it not only for the person, but did it for Jesus, himself. Throughout the gospels, it says that Jesus had compassion on those he met.

It is clear that God desires that all Christians are to show mercy to those they meet. Yet, God has given the gift of mercy to some. These people can minister in a deeper, more compassionate way than others. They have more strength to minister in these difficult ministries. I am amazed how missionaries working in the poorest inner cities of India and in refugee camps in Africa can minister for so long, keeping the joy of the Lord before them as they minister. But it is more: the people to whom they minister recognize the mercy of God through their actions.

In the local church, the person with the gift of mercy can minister to those who have lost a loved one in death, to those who are sick, to those who are struggling with rebellious children, and in many other ways. This gift is often ministered without saying a word. It is often during these trying times in peoples' lives that they come to Christ or return to the church. Having a loving and concerned person with the gift of mercy is like having Jesus with them during their difficult times.

### **Gift of Helping**

The gift of helping, like the gift of mercy, is another gift that can minister deeply to those in need. This person can see needs that are not necessarily apparent to others and to sift through different needs to find what the person may

need most at the moment. A person with this gift often *seeks out* those who are in need of help.

Helping is not just reserved for crises and emergencies. A person with the gift is often helping on a weekly basis in the church: cleaning, decorating for dinners, putting away Sunday school materials, etc. They are also ministering in the community: taking sick members to their medical appointments, taking people without transportation to church, helping members and neighbors with chores like moving, painting, etc. The person does not need to be a “jack-of-all-trades”, just willing to help when needed.

In *James 1: 27*, it says: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” All Christians are called to help those in need.

### **Gift of Faith**

Certainly, all true believers in Christ have faith for the Bible says that we are saved by grace through faith (*Ephesians 2: 8, 9*). But some are given the gift of faith. This is faith that is strong despite great odds against the faith being true.

During our time as missionaries in Peru, my wife and I knew a missionary couple that worked for over twenty years with the Sharanahua Indians. During this time, only one person came to Christ. They continued translating the New Testament into their language and sharing the gospel. One day, the chief of the village suddenly accepted Christ. Within three months, every adult in the village came to Christ, a church was formed and a missionary went out from their group. These faithful missionaries had the faith that God wanted to work among these people despite many

hardships, little fruit, and needs that they could have served elsewhere if they left.

Paul certainly demonstrated a great deal of faith as he continued to minister in difficult circumstances (2 *Corinthians* 11: 23-27).

A person with the gift of faith may be the person in a church who encourages the others to step out in faith in an area. He or she might be the one that God uses to encourage evangelism and outreach in the local church, or the one to encourage the church to buy more land to build a bigger church.

It is important to discern if a person is simply zealous and aggressive, or whether the person is being lead by the Holy Spirit. Many projects failed in churches due to one person pushing his agenda saying the others should have faith when the “faith” did not come from God.

**Questions for Review and Reflection**

- 1. Explain how people with different gifts can be used together by God in ministry?**

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- 2. Read the account of the Good Samaritan in *Luke 10: 30-37*. Which spiritual gift (or gifts) do you think the Samaritan showed?**

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**3. Read the account of Steven in *Acts 6-9*. What spiritual gift (or gifts) did he demonstrate?**

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**4. Give examples of how people with these gifts can be used in your particular church. Can you identify anyone with any of these gifts?**

**a. Giving** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**b. Administration** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**c. Mercy** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**d. Helping** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**e. Faith** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Lesson 9: Integrating spiritual and physical ministries**

**Objective:** Begin to understand the balance between integrating spiritual and physical ministries.

**Key Verse:** “In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (*James 2: 17*)

We have seen that we are to serve both in word and in deed as part of our Christian life. The life of Jesus, himself, is a model for us. It says in *Matthew 9: 35* that Jesus went around to all the cities and villages teaching, witnessing, and doing good to all. God has even built his church upon this. In *Acts 6*, the apostles saw that some of the physical ministries of the early church were being neglected. Seeing the importance of the ministry of the word, they developed deacons to see to it that the physical needs of the people were not being neglected. They would not sacrifice the importance of either one. God has given each believer one or more spiritual gifts, gifts that when combined would minister to the complete needs of believers.

Both spiritual and physical needs of people are important. We are all born spiritually dead and in complete need of salvation through Jesus (*Ephesians 2: 1-9*). Certainly salvation for a non-believer is the most important thing that we can give him, and salvation comes through the believer witnessing to the non-believer. Nor can we neglect the spiritual teaching to believers.

Paul describes the need for salvation and the responsibility of Christians and the church to preach the word to everyone in *Romans 10:12-15*:

“For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; for "Whoever will call upon the name of the

Lord will be saved." How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!"

However, we have seen that God does not separate out ministering in word and deed. Yes, ministering in word, whether by evangelism, teaching, exhortation, or encouragement, we still need to minister to the person's physical and emotional needs. James exhorts us to minister in word and in deeds saying that one without the other is useless and even dead (*James 2: 17*).

We have seen in Jesus' own life and ministry that he always balanced the two. The early church also had a balance of ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of the church. In fact, it says in *Acts 4: 34- 37* that "there was not a needy person among them", for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sale to the church for distribution among the those who had needs. Again, we see the apostles' charge to Paul to always remember the poor wherever he went (*Galatians 2: 10*). But where is the balance?

The balance I believe lies within:

1. The ***needs*** of both the members of the church and the community
2. The ***resources*** of the church and community
3. The ***goals*** of the church
4. The ***spiritual gifts*** of the members of the church

We have studied in previous lessons about how we assess people's needs, about the resources of the church and community, about the goals of the church, and even about the spiritual gifts. Let us now bring these together.

## **The individual Christian and the Body of Christ**

The Bible talks both in terms of individual in Christ and the body of Christ. It puts responsibility on both in service. In *Acts 2: 44- 47*, it says:

All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

These verses give a wonderful balance of the Christian life. It shows how individuals are directly involved in the life of the church and community. Individuals came together to form the local body and each gave their individual possessions for the ministry of all. They celebrated their faith together, they ate together, they opened their homes to others, they helped each other, and their numbers grew every day, meaning they were reaching out to the community. Neither the spiritual needs of either the unsaved outside the church nor the members of the church were neglected. The physical needs of the members were also not neglected.

Jesus demonstrates the importance of the individual ministering in *Matthew 25: 35- 37* when he said that when you minister to someone in Jesus' name, you minister to Jesus, Himself.

The individual cannot say that he is not responsible in serving the needs of others. Jesus illustrates in *Matthew 7: 7 – 12*, how we as individuals should respond to others. He sums it up in verse 12 by saying: "Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." He says that the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as **yourself** (*Mark 12:*

31). He does not differentiate out who should do this, but makes it a command to all Christians.

### **The Body of Christ**

The body is made up of individuals (*Romans 12: 4, 5*). Not only are we to act as individuals, but also we are to act in unison as one body.

Jesus says that he is the light of the world and those who are in Christ have this light inside of them (*John 8: 12*). Being that the light is Jesus, we cannot say that we have a “different light” inside of us compared to another since Jesus is the same (*Hebrews 13: 8*). So the light should shine from each of us in the darkness of the world. Just as one light in the darkness gives off some light, multiple lights in the darkness give off more light. Picture a football stadium at night. One light can give off a little light. But when you combine hundreds of lights working together, the entire stadium and field is illuminated like the noonday sun! Likewise, when the church is working together in harmony, the spiritual light that we give off will illuminate a spiritually dark community.

### **The spiritual gifts working together**

We have already studied that each Christian is given one or more spiritual gifts. This special gift of the Holy Spirit enables us to minister in a supernatural way. No one has all the gifts, and each gift is different. These gifts make us “different” from other believers and enable us to work together in the body of Christ.

Think about you sitting down to eat a meal. Your eyes identify the food and guide your hand to reach out to the food. Your arm then brings the food to your mouth where your teeth chew it and you swallow it. Through your digestive and cardiovascular systems, the nutrition is carried to your brain, heart, muscles, and all parts of your body. Each of these parts of the body is needed for us to feed ourselves.

But for the body to feed itself (in this example), all parts must do its particular job. Yet every cell of the body has common characteristics: they take in nutrition, they grow, and they interrelate with other cells of the body. When each part of the body is working together and according to its design, the entire body benefits.

It is the same with the body of Christ. We each have many common qualities, some of these include:

- We are each saved by grace
- We need fellowship
- We need to grow
- We all can witness in word and deed

Yet we are also different because of the particular gift given us by the spirit and by our experiences, education and talents. When each part of the body of Christ is working in unison and according to the spirit, the ministry of the church will be magnified.

Perhaps your gift is a serving gift such as the gift of helps or mercy. Through your exercising your gift, you can share God's love in a way that people will respond. When an evangelist or teacher is ministering with you, each of your gifts will compliment the other allowing the person you are receiving see the glory of God and will respond by praising our Father in heaven (*Matthew 5: 16*).

Each person in the church should be given opportunity to use his or her gifts within the church.

As you are using the gifts found in the church, seeking to do good, ministering to those in word and spirit, have directed goals, use our resources well, and seek God in all that we do, I believe that a balance that you seek in ministry will be found. Remember, that the balances can change

according needs. No single program or direction can be used in all situations.

**Questions for Review and Discussion**

- 1. Does your church have a good balance between having a spiritual ministry and a physical ministry?**

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- 2. Do the people in your church with different spiritual gifts work well together in ministry?**

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## **Lesson 10: Whom do we help?**

**Objective:** To begin to discern who to help; who not to help; and how to help.

**Key Verse:** “For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” (2 *Thessalonians 3: 10*)

Almost every Christian and church have been asked to help with one these types of situations:

- There is an alcoholic in the family who may either use the money that you are giving, or he will use more of his own money for alcohol, which means less money for the family. By giving, you may directly or indirectly be helping to buy alcohol.
- The person asking is not working, and they probably could work.
- The person asking spends their money on unnecessary things thereby not having money for the necessary things.
- They frequently ask for help.
- They only come to church when they want something.
- They ask other churches making the “rounds” whenever they want something.

So often, a church or individual Christian is asked to help financially. But you wonder whether you should help. The truth of the matter, sometimes you may be trying to help someone, but you may be making his or her situation worse. Sometimes denying the help is appropriate, and sometimes, it is just a matter of changing the type of help.

We should never help out of guilt: whether it is guilt from within us or guilt that the person tries to put on us. It is common today to have people coming to the church and to Chris-

tians demanding that the church help them. We should give not out of condemnation or feelings of guilt, but out of true service to God and with a joyful heart (*2 Corinthians 9: 7*).

The Bible talks about whom to help. Whom not to help will always be an issue. The Bible does give good guidelines. There is always the problem of knowing each person's situation as to whether they deserve help. We will review some of what the Bible says about whom to help.

### **Work**

In 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Paul writes a warning to the Thessalonians church about people who were not working. Since many of the early disciples pulled together resources, some took advantage of this. Without working or contributing, some were coming and taking the food. Paul says that people who do not work should not eat (be given help by the church). Paul writes to Timothy that a person should provide for himself and his family. To not do this (when it is possible) is the same as denying his faith and worse than a non-Christian (1 Timothy 5: 8). This is implied that the person is able to work and to support himself. Of course there are exceptions:

- A person who is physically or mentally incapable of working (either temporarily or permanently) should be considered for help.
- There are times when a person has lost their job and has not begun another. This person may be eligible for temporary help.
- There is no employment available. Economic conditions may limit jobs. Pride should not block a person taking a lower job than he is capable of doing. Christians may sometimes have difficulty finding jobs due to persecution.
- The church may consider helping someone while they are preparing for ministry or work.

The book of *Proverbs* and all of scripture talks about the need to work. It condemns people who refuse to work. It particularly condemns those who steal rather than work. It says in *Ephesians 4: 28*-

*“Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.”*

It is common in many lives, whether working or not, that we have expenses that is more than someone can handle at a particular time. In a mission church in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, every family had at least one person working. However, the salaries were low, and if there were any medical or unusual bills, they often needed help. Each time, they were able to pay back the debt.

### **People with chronic needs**

There are people who will need ongoing help. The Bible speaks about widows and orphans (*James 1: 27*). We need to understand about social systems during the early church. Elderly people, especially widows, were generally cared for by their adult children. In *1 Timothy 5*, Paul talks a lot about caring for widows. We also need to consider single mothers in today's church. Consider whether the woman was abandoned by her husband, whether she left him, is he supporting her, etc. A difficult issue in many churches is whether divorcees can remarry. The Bible is very direct that widows and widowers are free to remarry, and therefore be financially cared for by the new husband. The Bible does talk some about remarriage after divorce. Consider carefully *1 Corinthians 7*. If there is anyone in your church who has left his wife and family, they are bound by God to continue caring for them.

There are people who are chronically sick or injured. Today, we have people living longer and surviving illnesses for many years. Often people with AIDS come to the church for help. Some are Christians and others are coming for help only. Consider your resources and how you should help

## **Alcohol, Drugs, Gambling, and other Vices**

As we have seen, sins of one person affect many others. Perhaps the sin we see hurting the whole family is in the area of vice. One Christian brother in a church gives the testimony that because of his heavy alcohol use before receiving Christ, more than 60% of his income went to buy alcohol. His wife, a mother of six children, had to work two jobs to have money for food. Another Christian sister says her husband spent almost all of his salary on alcohol. Her husband gave her barely enough money to buy food, clothing, and everything needed for the home and their children. She too, had to work leaving her children with others although she desired to be home with them.

The question comes up: if we help provide for this family, the money may go directly toward alcohol, drugs or whatever the problem, or the person may feel less obligation to help his own family since they are getting help from the church. Not to help may mean that the children suffer from neglect. Even if you provide just food (no money that can be used for alcohol), the person may provide less since food is given.

## **Helping those in direct sin**

We have looked at helping a family where a person is using money and resources due to alcohol, drugs, etc. How will you handle a family where the husband is abusive, the parent is neglectful of their children, or living in outright sin? Our helping, or not helping, should reflect God's attributes. For a non-Christian, their knowledge of God may be limited by our testimony. God does hold people accountable. A friend told me of a story about a Christian storeowner. Each day, a child came into his store and steal candy. Although he saw this, he never confronted him. A Christian friend encouraged him to confront the child about his sin since God will hold him accountable. The child may never realize this if Christians do not hold him accountable. Upon this good advice, the storeowner did confront the child and would not allow him to take advantage of him again. Likewise, we need to confront sin. If a person comes to us, we have the responsibility to confront this person's sin and

share the gospel with them whether we decide to help the person or not.

Your helping may very well be the love that will bring them to Jesus. But if you decide that helping will be condoning their sin, you should refrain from helping, or help in a different way. Explain that you are doing this so that they may know what God expects.

A young couple may come asking for help to find a place to live. If you find that they are not married, you may decide not to help them find a place to rent. However, you may decide to give them help with food or offer to house them separately.

### **Organizing the church's helping others**

It is strongly recommended that your church develop a plan and policy on how to handle needs of its members and outside the church. This will help:

1. In making decisions by speeding up the process
2. Make the decisions more fair by having guidelines on using resources
3. Utilize people of the church better

In developing a plan, it is helpful to include a variety of details. These details may include:

1. What budget and resources you will use for helping people with needs.
2. Who shall be responsible in decision making, in giving the help and in follow up. These usually are the deacons and people with the gifts of helping or mercies.
3. What services or helps to use (financial, gifts, loans, etc.).
4. Who will receive help?
5. What priorities you have in who receives help (members, attendees, family members, people in the community, etc.)
6. Extent to which help can be given (one-time help, on-going help, partial help, etc.).
7. How will the gospel be presented?
8. Will you follow up later with the person?

9. Conditions that help is given (must give up alcohol, must return funds later, etc.).
10. How and who will you make the decision (deacon, pastor, committee, etc.).

### **Organizing your resources**

As mentioned, make a budget and follow it. A budget gives the freedom to give knowing that the help is already available. It also gives freedom to say no. However, a budget is not to take the place of the Holy Spirit. Seek people with discernment and experience in making decisions. Pray for the decisions that you make, and for the decisions that you *will* make. Pray for the people whom you help.

There may be other resources outside of the church that can help. If a family has lost their belongings in a fire, aside from help that the church may give, there may be a Christian organization or government program to help them get new furniture, school supplies, clothing and even housing. The church's helping these people in this way will still be a light to these people.

### **Questions for Review and Discussion**

1. **Does your church have a written plan and budget to help those in need?**

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2. **How strongly do you feel that the church should stick strongly to this policy?**

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- 3. Can you think of a person or family who abuses the generosity of you or the church? How do you think you should deal with their requests?**

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## **Lesson 11: Models of helping**

**Objective:** Begin to picture ways that your church can help people in the church and in the community.

**Key verse:** “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” (*Colossians 3:17*)

It can be said that there are as many ways of helping as there are needs. In many churches today, when you ask about how to help someone, the average member will say you help by giving money. Giving money for specific needs is a very common way of helping. But we should not see it as the only way. Often the giving of money removes the personal aspect of ministry. The deacon or other leader gives the money needed to pay a bill, buy food, etc., but may miss the opportunity to allow the person to share their deeper needs which include their spiritual and emotional needs. A person who has lost their home, their clothes, pictures, and all they own in a fire needs more than money to start over. They may need someone to listen to their anguish or help them make decisions. Like all resources, money is limited. It is often the first resource to be used up. Let us consider other means of helping.

Before beginning any ministry aimed to help those in need, you need to consider at least these two areas:

1. Is there an *immediate* need for help that needs to be met, or is there time to develop a ministry to help the long-term problem?
2. Will a short-term ministry or long-term ministry be best at this time?

## Mercy vs. Improvement

In considering helping someone, it is key to know if their need is immediate or on going. When a person has an immediate need, this is often referred to as a **mercy need**. If a person has no food, they need to have food today. If a family lost their home in a fire, they would need a place to sleep tonight.

In *Matthew 25: 32-46*, Jesus talks about giving mercy to those who are in need. He mentions people being hungry, thirst, a stranger, naked, sick and in prison. He said those who follow Him will give food, drink, shelter, clothing, care and companionship to these people. In so doing, they do it as if Jesus himself was suffering these problems. Just as the need is immediate, the giving is also immediate.

The giving of mercy is not limited to those who do not have money, housing, etc. A meal prepared for someone who has had a family member die can be given not only because they may physically lack food, but in a sign of love and concern. The need is not hunger, but a feeling of loss, sadness, or other emotional need. A simple meal may bless them more than any other blessing at the time.

A person may have a need that is not an immediate need, but a need just the same. This need may be defined as an **improvement need**. A person may have difficulty managing his money. He is not hungry or lacking anything now, but his need is just the same. Counseling him in how he spends and uses money could be his greatest help. Perhaps a neighbor is building an extra room on his house. He does not need money; he has the bricks he needs. However, he may very well need help in laying the bricks. A church member is bright, but he lacks education or experience in getting a better job. He does not need food, but helping him to get the education or experience will help him greatly.

When someone comes to you with a need, you must decipher if he has an immediate (*mercy*) need or a non-urgent (*developing*) need.

### **Long-term vs. short-term ministries**

Short-term ministries and long-term ministries can have a deep impact on people's lives from a spiritual and physical perspective. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

### **Short-term ministries**

#### **The advantages of a short-term ministry include:**

- Churches with limited resources may be able to succeed better with a limited project.
- Resources are used for a limited time.
- Often uses fewer resources.
- May impact a short-term need.
- People tend to volunteer for short terms.
- A specific goal is set, and often can be reached in a short time.
- Sometimes a short-term project can be continued later without much difficulty.
- Can give great encouragement over a short period of time.
- Sometimes it can lead to a long-term ministry.
- If it fails, you can close the ministry easier than when it has been in existence for a long time.

#### **The disadvantages of short-term ministry includes:**

- May lack the continued contact with those you are trying to help.
- May not have the desired impact because it did not have enough time.
- Too many short-term ministries can interfere with a long-term ministry.
- May only give temporary help to a problem. A short-term medical trip will help those who need help that

day while having a long-term clinic will help for a long time.

- Sometimes they can overlook ministries that are already present in the community.

### **Long-term ministries**

#### **The advantages include:**

- There is a long-term presence in the community.
- An ongoing need may be ministered to longer.
- As the ministry continues, more people will be helped.
- A ministry can become well known, drawing more people to its services.
- Some people prefer to give toward a long-term ministry.
- As a ministry continues, it can be improved and made more efficient.
- People from the church can be brought into the ministry, trained, and continue the ministry.
- Can minister to people over a longer period of time.

#### **The disadvantages of long-term ministry:**

- Often can use a great deal of resources.
- If it is continually growing, it demands more resources.
- Sometimes it is taken for granted.
- People are afraid to change or end the ministry after a period of time.
- Sometimes becomes obsolete.
- Sometimes strong growth can be followed by decrease in use and leave the ministry with more facilities than they can use.

Whenever you consider creating or expanding a ministry, always consider what would be better: a short-term or a long-term ministry. Then consider your resources, your goals, and the expected results of the ministry, the likelihood of success, and the best time to begin the ministry.

## **Financial Help**

Perhaps the first means of helping someone is by giving him or her money. This can help in many ways:

1. They can buy food.
2. They can pay bills.
3. They can buy other things that they may lack (medicine, housing, clothing, etc.).

However, it may not be the best way. A woman in a mission church in Mexico asked if she could have money to buy a second tank of propane gas to heat her house. She reasoned that she never had money to buy a tank of gas when she ran out, but if she had a second tank, she wouldn't be cold. When she was asked what she would do when her second tank of gas ran out, she looked embarrassed and replied, "Borrow money for a third tank?" She did not lack heat at the moment, so her need was not immediate. But with help in how to save money, she could avoid this need in the future.

Money is also what people tend to ask for the most. Consider that money is also the one resource that tends to run out before other resources. Also, once money is given, there is little control over it by the giver. The money may or may not go toward the immediate need. We need to be accountable for our resources.

One church in Virginia uses its financial resources for direct payments. That is, if a person were lacking heat during the winter, the church would go to the gas company and either pay their bill or buy a tank of gas. Groceries, clothing, etc. are bought with the person with a member of the church.

A Mexican pastor approached me saying that a baby of contact of the church had died, and if I could give her mon-

ey. I could imagine the need for money: the medical bills that may be unpaid and the funeral would be expensive. I was very open to helping her, but I wanted the pastor to consider why he was asking for money. When I asked him why we should give her money, he was surprised and replied, “Her baby died! We should give her money.”

Almost any type of physical help we give will have a financial impact. If we give clothing, food, etc., this will save the person money. If we teach a person new skills that they can use, they will either be able to make more money or save more money. Consider what Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:23). It is highly unlikely that you are not going to make anyone rich by helping them, but you may very well make them “richer”, thereby possibly making it more difficult for them to have reliance on God. Consider carefully how you help them, and that you present the gospel when possible.

## **Lending**

Another way to help financially is to lend money. One church saw that some members did not have heaters for their homes. The people were not poor, but the cost of buying a heater was more than they could afford. The church lent money for them to buy heaters. The participants returned the money over a few month period allowing them to make payments (without interest) so it was not as difficult as buying it straight from a store. As the money was returned, more heaters were purchased allowing more people to buy heaters.

“Cottage industries” have become popular. Sometimes just buying a sewing machine, a taco maker or other tool will allow the person to improve his financial situation. As the person prospers, he returns the money to allow others to start businesses.

This can also be true for helping someone with training and education.

### **Material help**

Being able to help a person with their physical needs can mean a great deal. In fact, being able to give them something tangible like clothing or food may mean a great deal more than money. Sometimes it is a great blessing to receive money and have the freedom to choose what to buy. However, I have heard many say that it meant so much more for a person to bring food to their home, or give them clothing for their children. “Anyone can give money”, I heard one mother say, “But she cooked a meal for us and came and ministered to us in a greater way.” A Christian school gathered together 26 boxes of winter coats and clothing for a school in a poor community in northern Mexico when they heard that the school was meeting outside because they did not have a school building. When I brought all these clothes to the school, the principal of the school was overwhelmed. The children wore their “American” clothes with pride, and the community eagerly came to the vacation Bible school we held later that summer.

### **Helping**

A resource that is often overlooked is the use of our time and skills. Each church has a variety of people skilled in many areas. Sometimes the ministry that helps the most is to have one or more people from the church working side by side with them. Often people without specific skills can help.

Groups from American Presbyterian churches have been coming for years to Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and helping to build local schools. In the afternoon, they have vacation Bible school. Flourishing churches developed as a result of

this simple helping. The people responded in love to the gospel due to the generosity of these Americans.

### **Teaching skills**

Often we spend money on things that we could probably do for ourselves if we only knew how. By teaching someone new skills, you can help them in two possible ways:

1. The person saves money by not needing to hire or pay someone to do the work.
2. The person may develop the skills well enough to help others or even to earn money.

In one mission church in Mexico, two mothers were saying that it cost nearly half a day's salary to have their children's hair cut. They were not comfortable enough to cut their children's hair themselves. We were able to hire teachers from a nearby beauty school to give three classes on how to cut children's hair. The church provided equipment of scissors, clippers, and other things needed for cutting hair for the participants to borrow. As a result, each family saved a considerable amount of money each month. Some participants even started cutting neighborhood children's hair. One woman found that she had talent in this area and has been studying to become a full hairdresser. Other churches have brought in plumbers, electricians, seamstresses, and others to teach the members of the church simple skills. They also have invited friends and neighbors to come and participate. As part of the class, someone gives a testimony and a short devotional. One church planter was able to make his first contacts through these classes that lead quickly to a mission church being started.

### **Cooperatives**

A cooperative can have many forms. Usually it is when a group (church, organization, neighbors, etc.) organizes for a particular purpose and work together for a goal. We have discussed starting a food coop earlier. The members of a

church developed a system that certain common foods and household items like soap were bought in bulk. This made each item less expensive than when it is bought in the local store. Members of the cooperative were then able to buy these items at a savings. To save money, it was managed by volunteers from the cooperative. In this case, a 5% increase in price was put onto each item so that when the item was bought again in bulk, it would cover the increase in price. In this case, the members put in an order after church on Sunday. During the week, the volunteers would put together the order and have it ready for the following Sunday. It was averaged that each family saved an equivalent of a day's salary each month by using the food cooperative. A church from North Carolina helped buy the initial inventory and the scales and other items needed. With the 5% increase, the food cooperative became financially independent in one month.

Another church in Mexico organized a clothing exchange. Churches from the United States send used children's clothing to the church. Each item was identified as part of the cooperative. Families were invited to borrow clothing for their children. When the child outgrew the clothing, it was returned to the cooperative and the parent could then choose more clothing that fit. In the meantime, there was always another family who needed the clothing the child outgrew.

### **Organizations outside the church**

The church does not always need to carry all of the weight of helping in the community. There may be a variety other organizations, both Christian and secular, that may help. A wise stewardship of church resources should seek outside help. It will still be a witness to people in need to have you help them utilize other resources, and you will be able to help more people.

In Daytona Beach, FL, many of the local churches have pooled together their resources to form a ministry that serves many of the needs of the community. By bringing together their resources, they found that they were much more effective in serving the community.

### **Use of facilities**

Another simple way that a church can minister in the community is by making their facilities available for community use. Church buildings are often unused for several days a week.

In North Carolina, a church opened its doors to have English classes to the people in the community who did not speak English. A local college provided the teachers, the funding, and the materials for the courses. They lacked only a facility to use in the neighborhood. The pastor used the opportunity to open the church to the program and to minister through it. As a result, a Spanish speaking church was founded.

As you see, there are many ways of helping people. Much of the decision-making will be based on your resources and the needs. Often a small or new church will try one model of ministry. Based upon its success, the church may continue to expand, change, or add ministries.

***Small successes will lead to bigger  
successes.  
Small failures can be corrected, learned  
from or forgiven.  
While big failures can prevent future min-  
istry.***

## **Lesson 12: Application**

**Objectives:** To summarize the lessons of this book and to apply them for effective ministry.

**Key Verse:** “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.” (*Philippians 4:9*)

In the previous eleven lessons, we have studied about how to form a ministry to people with physical and emotional needs. These steps that we have studied may seem a little overwhelming at first, but will become easier as time goes on and as you minister to more people.

Let us review each lesson now and see how we can apply them.

### **Lesson 1:** Biblical basis of ministering to physical needs

We saw how God had created man and the whole universe in a perfect way. Man was created in the image of God, and was to live in a perfect society with other men and with God.

However, man sinned, and all mankind would fall under the curse. Along with him, the entire universe fell. As a result, man has always had unmet needs.

We also saw that God is a loving God. Throughout the Bible, God commands us to minister to man’s spiritual and physical needs. We see in the Old Testament, Jesus’ ministry, the early church, and throughout the history of the church that we are to seek out people who need spiritual and physical help.

1. What are some basic (necessary) needs shared by all men?

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2. What are man's spiritual needs?

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3. What is the Christian's and the church's responsibility in helping with others' needs?

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**Lesson 2:** Why are there so many people in need?

We looked at one of the most difficult and oldest questions known to man: why does a loving God allow suffering?

We saw various aspects of God's nature. First, God is **loving** and that he did not intend man to have needs, but he planned from the beginning of time that himself would care for our needs. As part of his loving nature, he did not invent nor introduce evil into the world. Evil came in through man's active rebellion against God (sin). As a result, all of the suffering in the world has resulted from man's sin.

God is also **just** and he cannot ignore man's sin. God says that he must punish all evil. Some of the punishment occurs during this time, some will occur at a later time. God will judge each person at the time of his death. His love for man

has made a means for us to escape the judgment of our sins through the suffering and death of his only son, Jesus.

God also restrains much of the evil of the world. Even the evil that befalls Christians during their life, God promises to remove all suffering from us as we enter his presence for all eternity.

In obedience, love and thanksgiving, Christians are to take the message of God's judgment and forgiveness throughout the world. As we minister spiritually to others, we are also to minister to their physical and emotional needs.

1. Are you angry with God about anything that has occurred in your life? Do you need to confess this anger to him?

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2. Is God responsible for all evil?

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3. Explain how a loving God allows bad things to happen.

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**Lesson 3:** Assessing needs

When seeking to help in the community, it is important to define what is the community. Then, it is important to determine what the needs are in the community. The needs can sometimes not be clear to the persons trying to help. This can be due to the people in the community having a different priority of what their needs are compared to the people desiring to help. We must keep from judging these people. Secondly, the needs may be simpler or more complex than it seems at first. Remember the example of the sick children? Rather than building a clinic, the people needed to help make the classrooms warmer.

To assess the needs of a community, it is important to understand the:

1. **Strengths** of the community
2. **Weaknesses** of the community
3. **Problems** of the community

This assessment involves surveying, listing, validating, and prioritizing the problem lists.

1. How would you define the “community” that your church is reaching? What borders, groups, or area would you use?

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2. List the **strengths**, **weaknesses**, and **problems** of your church and community.

**Strengths**

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**Weaknesses**

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**Problems**

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**Lesson 4: Assessing the resources**

Every community, church, family and person have limited resources. These resources should be understood before attempting

to begin any ministry. A careful accounting of the resources will help guide you into a more effective ministry. Consider the following resources:

- Financial
- Personnel
- Time
- Space
- Community resource

An important lesson to remember is to not allow the needs to overpower the resources of the church or community. Resources should be divided up according to the total needs of the church.

1. List resources that you personally have:

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2. List resources that your church has:

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### **Lesson 5: Setting goals of ministry**

After assessing the needs and resources, specific goals for the ministry can be set. The goals should be specific, reachable, and aimed toward improving the problem. Decide:

- Whom you are desiring to help
- How you will be able to help
- When and for how long you will help
- Where you will have the ministry

Have your goals aimed at the problem. If the overall goal is too big to achieve right now, choose smaller goals that will lead to the overall goal.

Remember, everyone has a spiritual need, and part of the ultimate goal should be geared toward their spiritual needs.

Often, it is good to begin small rather than big.

***Small successes will lead to bigger successes;  
Small mistakes can more easily be corrected.***

List two problems faced by your church or community and list possible goals that could help improve the problems. Remember, the goals need to be reachable and within your resources.

Problem #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Problem #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Lesson 6:** Serving those inside the church and outside the church

God has clearly given Christians and the church the responsibility of caring for the needs of Christians in the church and those in the surrounding community. The Scripture gives a higher emphasis on the needs of those in the church, but does not exclude helping outside the church.

Each church needs to find a balance between helping inside the church and the community.

1. Who seems to have the greater needs: the people in your church or in your community?

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2. What percentage of your church's budget should be allocated for helping people both in the church and in the community?

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3. What percentage of this budget should be given to helping people in the church?

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**Lesson 7:** The Spiritual Gifts

We all have differing talents, education, and experiences that help us in the ministering. We each have been given spiritual gifts that enable us to minister in a much more powerful and effective way. No one has all the gifts, so God requires that his body, the church, work together using

all of our gifts. The gifts should be used together whenever possible.

1. What spiritual gift or gifts do you have?

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2. How are you using your gift or gifts?

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3. Identify gifts that you see in individuals of your church:

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4. How can you encourage them to use their gifts?

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**Lesson 8:** The serving gifts

All the spiritual gifts are used in serving, but certain gifts are more commonly used in ministering to peoples' needs. These are: *giving, administration, mercy, helping, and faith.*

1. How can you see the serving gifts being used for the needs and goals you listed in Lesson 5?

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2. Do you recognize anyone in your church that has any of the “serving gifts”?

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**Lesson 9:** Integrating spiritual and physical ministries

As we have already seen, the individual Christian and church has responsibilities to help individuals in need in their community. There is a balance that needs to be found between ministering to people’s spiritual needs and their physical needs. The church is a spiritual body, but needs to recognize and help whenever possible with other needs found in people to whom they are ministering. In the book of James, there is a strong mandate that spiritual and physical ministering should not be separated. Each person and church needs to assess their *resources*, *goals* and *spiritual gifts* and compare these against the *needs* of those in need.

1. Using the goals that you have already stated in Lesson 5, how do you think that you can minister to the people’s spiritual and physical needs?

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**Lesson 10:** Whom do we help?

Since everyone in anyone church and community has some needs, we must be careful on how we use the resources available. Each church needs to develop a specific plan of whom to help and in what way.

Plus, the Bible teaches that we should not help everyone. The importance of adults who can work are mandated to work and care for their families. Also, certain people would take advantage of help that they would receive and their situation may even worsen. Specific guidelines should be

developed in each church to help church leadership in using the church's resources.

1. Name different that you can help families who have adults who take advantage of those who help (e.g., giving money, food, counseling, etc.):

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2. Is there anyone type of person or family that you feel you should not help (e.g., alcoholic, homosexual, beggars, etc.)? Why do you feel this?

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**Lesson 11:** Models of helping

There are many ways of helping people. The particular needs combined with resources and spiritual gifts of churches will guide you in setting up different ways or models of helping. Each need may need a different model. Try to be creative in deciding and not just the same plan for each person.

1. Describe how *short-term* and *long-term* projects may benefit your church:

Short-term Projects:

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Long-term Projects:

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2. Taking the goals from Lesson 5 and include all that you have learned from the other lessons, describe what type of model may be most helpful.

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3. Take time to pray about how God might use you in ministering to people through your church, and write

down specific ways that you would like to minister to people in the church and in the community.

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