

## EXTREMADURA PILLARS STRATEGY

### Introduction

The six pillars for developing a strategy to make disciples among the Extremaduran unreached people group in Southwestern Spain are prayer, people (evangelism), planting, partnering with local churches, preparing (leadership development), and parting. As pillars provide the support of a building, these strategic components are fundamental parts of the strategy. Each of these main areas mutually co-exists and constantly interacts with each other. For example, prayer is part of church planting, and believers partner together in evangelism. All of the different areas depend on each other to be a fully integrated strategy. If missionaries and national believers do not practice, they would find it difficult to implement the overall vision effectively. Ultimately, the foundation is God, and his people become the pillars. As believers intentionally seek God's plan for Extremadura and obediently follow his call on their lives, they become actively involved in his strategic divine vision for making disciples among the unreached Extremaduran people group.

### Prayer

Robert Speer deals with the need for prayer saying “the evangelization of the world depends first upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for workers; deeper far than the need for money; deep down at the bottom of our spiritual lives, is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, worldwide prayer.”<sup>1</sup> Any strategy without the spiritual foundation of prayer and communion with God is empty and insignificant. Prayer is the foundation of all missionary work and is a point of unity across denominational lines. Through friendship and prayer, believers can work together to reach whole cities, regions, and countries for Christ.

Ed Silvosio in his book *Prayer Evangelism* shares stories of how to establish lighthouses of prayer through the many neighbors of a city and reach whole cities for Christ.<sup>2</sup> One important part of believers' contact with the lost is found in Luke 10 where Jesus sends out the seventy-two disciples. The disciples went to different houses and spoke a word of peace to the unbelievers, proclaiming the good news. Many believers act as though they are at war with non-believers, and wonder why unbelievers want nothing to do with them. Believers speak peace into the lives of unbelievers through blessings and treating them with respect.

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<sup>1</sup>“Prayer Quotes,” Christian Reformed Church, webpage; available from [http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwm\\_mee\\_prayerqts.cfm](http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwm_mee_prayerqts.cfm); Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

<sup>2</sup>Ed Silvosio, *Prayer Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000).

Prayer is an important element of evangelism as believers pray for miracles that meet the felt needs of unbelievers. Instead of believers just trying to tell unbelievers about the message of salvation, they must experience God's powerful hand in a personal way through prayer. Spiritual warfare and personal and regional strongholds are one of Satan's weapons that keep God's people from reaching the whole city (Ephesians 6:12).<sup>3</sup> Through prayer evangelism believers can play an active role in changing the spiritual climate of a city, town, or region and pray that God would break down the strongholds Satan has on the neighborhoods and communities. Evangelism is more effective when a non-Christian sees the power of God and then acts on that experience. Therefore, the role of intercessors is not to try so much to teach unbelievers into the kingdom, as it is to pray for their spiritual freedom.<sup>4</sup>

David Bryant emphasizes how prayer is action: "Prayer is action. By it we step out in advance of all other results....Praying is an activity upon which all others depend. By prayer we establish a beachhead for the kingdom among peoples where it has never been before. Prayer strikes the winning blow. All other missionary efforts simply gather up the fruits of our praying."<sup>5</sup> God invites his people to pray and spread the Kingdom of God to the unreached peoples of the world. Prayer is the starting, middle, and end point of all missionary activity.

Oswald Chambers quotes John 14:12 where Jesus said that those who follow him will do even greater works than he did: "Prayer does not equip us for greater works—prayer is the greater work. Yet we think of prayer as some commonsense exercise of our higher powers that simply prepares us for God's work."<sup>6</sup> Many times believers get so caught up in activity for God that they neglect communion with God. God acting through prayer is key to bringing in the great harvests of many coming to Christ.

Richard J. Foster calls believers to enter into an authentic love relationship with God through prayer in his book *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*.<sup>7</sup> At the foundation of this relationship are three movements that correspond to seeking transformation, intimacy, and ministry.<sup>8</sup> These movements are Foster's major arguments for how to return to the heart of God through prayer. The movement inward is a prayer to God the Son, appealing to his role as Savior and teacher. The movement upward is a prayer to God the father, which cries out to his role as

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<sup>3</sup>Ed Silvano, *That None Should Perish: How to Reach Entire Cities for Christ Through Prayer Evangelism* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1994), 147.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 147-175.

<sup>5</sup>"Prayer Quotes," Christian Reformed Church, webpage; available from [http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwm\\_mee\\_prayerqts.cfm](http://www.crcna.org/pages/crwm_mee_prayerqts.cfm); Internet; accessed 1 April 2008.

<sup>6</sup>Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 1992), Oct. 17.

<sup>7</sup>Richard J. Foster, *Prayer: Finding The Heart's True Home* (New York: Harper San Francisco, 1992).

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, x.

sovereign King. The movement outward is a prayer to God the Holy Spirit, and how he empowers believers to impact those around them.<sup>9</sup>

Transformation can happen when a person is willing to change. God makes believers a new creation when they do their part through seeking God in solitude and humility. In the quietness of the soul is when a person can hear God's voice, filtering out the noise produced by the opinions of others. Another key factor to being renewed in the love relationship of God is intimacy. Just as intimacy is key to a marriage relationship, it is a foundational aspect in a person's relationship with a holy God. A believer's intimacy with God starts with the prayer of adoration "being the air in which prayer breaths and the sea in which prayers swims."<sup>10</sup> Through prayers of thanksgiving and praise, believers can connect to God and truly experience His grace. Other ways to closely walk with the heavenly Father are through resting in Him, unceasing prayer, meditative prayer, and contemplative prayer. When a person intentionally seeks God and actively reflects on His plans and ways, he or she can know what it means to have genuine intimacy.

The last key factor in prayer is moving outward in ministry through praying for others. Foster shows how the first two movements support the need for the last movement of ministry: "Transformation and intimacy both cry out for ministry. We are led through the furnace of God's purity not just for our own sake but also for the sake of others. We are drawn up into the bosom of God's love not merely to experience acceptance but also so we can give his love to others."<sup>11</sup> Believers have a calling and responsibility to petition God for those who are suffering physically and spiritually and are in need of God's healing. Believers who live within Extremadura as well as in other parts of the world can join together in praying that the Extremaduran people group would be transformed to holiness through a personal relationship with Christ. When pastors, missionaries, and other leaders meet together regularly to pray for Extremadura, they become a more cohesive team. Believers support each other through prayer which becomes a source of comfort in an unreached land.

### **People (Evangelism)**

Extremadurans have historically been slow to respond to the gospel. One of the most effective ways to reach unbelievers in Extremadura is through establishing genuine relationships that lead the lost through a process of knowing God through salvation. Other impersonal means of witnessing, such as tract distribution, street evangelism, and door-to-door visitation, are less effective. Therefore, one of the greatest needs in reaching Extremadura for Christ is for Spanish believers to present the gospel in a culturally appropriate manner that unbelievers can accept.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., xii.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 81.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 168.

In order for there to be a lasting impact for Christ in the region, believers must reach other Extremadurans with less external influence from expatriate workers and believers. The Spanish Baptist Union (UEBE) has set a challenging goal of each believer reaching ten of their unbelieving friends with the gospel by the year 2010.<sup>12</sup> For this goal to become accomplished in Extremadura, the believers should examine past strategies for evangelism and apply a relevant approach to reach a post-modern people. A culturally-sensitive evangelistic approach for Extremadura involves bringing unbelievers through the process of evangelism, sowing spiritual seeds, and having genuine friendships.

### **The Process of Evangelism**

God many times brings people through a process of making a decision for Christ. There seems to be an unspoken assumption about the process of evangelism among believers. The believer shares with the non-believer using a specific evangelism tool where at the end of the presentation the non-believer is led in a prayer to accept Christ. This model is many times in connection with meeting a person for the first time on the street, on the bus, in a taxi, or part of an organized evangelistic event. After meeting someone, a believer presents the gospel, and leads them in making a decision for Christ. This certainly does happen and God can work through this type of gospel presentation, but it is not necessarily the norm for the process of becoming a believer.

A person's cultural and spiritual past have much to do with the one time encounter type experiences. In some cultures these encounters would be more likely to happen and have a greater effect on the person's life. Volunteer groups sometimes go to a country for a one or two week mission trip and return to their churches talking about the many professions of faith. The volunteer groups' mission was to lead someone in a prayer to accept Christ. However, when missionaries go back and talk to these same people who supposedly made decisions, they sometimes find out that the unbelievers had little spiritual interest. The person who was led in a decision had told the one-week missionary what they wanted to hear. The reality of evangelism is that it is messy, complicated, and challenging. Making a profession of faith is about completely changing your life from unselfishness, greed, lust, and hate to a life of servitude to a Holy God, which takes time.

Rick Richardson in the book *Reimagining Evangelism* says that believers should be more like spiritual matchmakers or travel guides.<sup>13</sup> He uses the example of how a couple comes together in marriage like how nonbelievers come to know God. The believer's role is to connect the unbeliever to God much like how a matchmaker would connect a man and a woman for marriage. Just as when a person gets married, he or she marries the family of the other person, an unbeliever is brought into the family of God.

Richardson summarizes how marriage can be a helpful analogy of conversion saying: "Marriage is the accumulation of a process that includes friendship, courtship, meeting the

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<sup>12</sup>Castro, Xoán L. "PowerPoint 10 x 2010" (Spain: Unión Evangélica Bautista Española) (internal document), Dec. 2007.

<sup>13</sup>Rick Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism* (Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

family, an engagement, a marriage ceremony and a honeymoon night. . . When we speak about Jesus, we are trying to introduce people to the Person who will become their one and only, the love of their life.”<sup>14</sup> Instead of focusing on a single event in the conversion experience, believers lead nonbelievers on a spiritual journey that connects them to a love relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Even though people are much more than labels and categorizing people as a certain type can be dangerous, it is helpful to have an understanding of where unbelievers are in responding to the gospel. A general guideline is the modified version of the Engle Scale of Evangelism which helps believers understand the process of an unbeliever making a decision to follow Christ: no God framework (-12), experience of emptiness (-11), God framework (-10), vague awareness and belief in God (-9), wondering if God can be known (-8), aware of Jesus (-7), interested in Jesus (-6), experience of Christian love (-5), aware of the basic facts of the gospel (-4), aware of personal need (-3), grasp the implications of the gospel (-2), Challenged to respond personally (-1), and repentance and faith (0).<sup>15</sup>

<b>The Modified Engel Scale<sup>16</sup></b>			
<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>God Is</b>	<b>Man's Task</b>
-12	No God framework	Confirming	Prayer
-11	Experience of emptiness		Presence
-10	God framework	Revealing	
-9	Vague awareness and belief in God		

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Hazelden, “Working with God in Evangelism” The Modified Engel Scale, webpage; available from [http://www.hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art\\_pt068\\_modified\\_engel\\_full.htm](http://www.hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art_pt068_modified_engel_full.htm); Internet; accessed 25 March 2008.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

-8	Wondering if God can be known		Preparation
-7	Aware of Jesus	Guiding	
-6	Interested in Jesus		
-5	Experience of Christian love		Proclamation
-4	Aware of the basic facts of the gospel	Convicting	
-3	Aware of personal need		
-2	Grasp the implications of the gospel		Power
<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>God Is</b>	<b>Man's Task</b>
-1	Challenged to respond personally	Converting	
0	Repentance and faith		
+1	Holy Spirit and baptism	Transforming	Encouragement
+2	Functioning member of local Church	Empowering	
+3	Continuing growth in character, lifestyle and service		
+4	Part of Team Leadership		Support

A further explanation of these basic stages applicable to Spain is people who are spiritually rude, spiritually polite, spiritually confused, spiritually curious, and spiritually

seeking. People who are spiritually rude want little or nothing to do with God, the church, or believers and they will let you know how they feel. They are openly resistant and sometimes aggressive toward Christians trying to show that they are justified with their belief system.

Unbelievers who are spiritually polite will listen to what a believer has to say but have no intention of making a life changing decision. They tell believers what they want to hear, but live their life the way they wish. The spiritually polite unbeliever might even ask questions, but will not tend to listen actively to God's beckon to salvation. The spiritually confused unbeliever is not sure what to believe or believes a little bit of everything. For example, this person might embrace spirituality but reject Christianity, perhaps believing in universalism or have a New Age belief system. The spiritually confused might believe in God, but not understand the implications of being a Christ follower or know the truth through the Scriptures.

The spiritually curious unbeliever will ask more questions and may even investigate the claims of Christianity. However, their interest may be a mere intellectual curiosity instead of being open to commit their whole life to Christ. Unbelievers who are spiritually seeking are people who want to make a life change, but they simply do not know how. They might be asking questions and investigating Christianity like the spiritually curious unbeliever, but the difference is they are willing to be radically transformed by God.

One important thing to keep in mind is that unbelievers can change what God is doing in their lives according to life circumstances and the influence of a Christian friend. While one day unbelievers are spiritually confused, they could change and the next day be spiritually seeking. Believers have to take advantage of those spiritually seeking moments.

## **Sowing Seeds**

Changing a person's life takes much spiritual sowing which Jesus talks about in John 4:37-38. "Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor." Many times the importance of sowing is not emphasized. In farming, sowing is the most important and most difficult part of the whole process. You have to get the ground ready through hours of painful plowing, sow the seeds, water the crop, and then wait. This last step is the hardest sometimes, because believers want so eagerly to see their friend come to Christ. The unbeliever has heard the gospel, seen the example of Christ in believers' lives, knows what they need to do, but still will not make the life changing decision. Before the harvest, farmers have to be sure that the crops are ripened and not rush out and pick that which is not ready. Believers can only know if the fields are white for the harvest if they are in continual fellowship with the Father.

In John 4:27-38 the disciples completely missed what God was doing. The Samaritan woman had just told her whole town about how she gave her life to Christ, and the town was coming to see Jesus to hear the message of salvation. The disciples responded by telling Jesus he needed to eat something. Jesus answers by saying in verse 34 "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish the work". While the disciples were worrying about what to eat, Jesus was out in the field bringing in the harvest. Jesus then says in verse 35: "Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." The phrase "four months more and then the harvest" was a proverb that meant

the harvest cannot be rushed.<sup>17</sup> The disciples missed the harvest because they were not totally in tune to what God was doing in their midst. Jesus said to his disciples there is no time to waste. Believers must rush to the fields to bring in the harvest.

While bringing in the harvest is the most exciting time of the planting process, it is not the only necessity. God has also called believers to plow, sow, water, and wait. One of the key factors of sowing spiritual seeds into people's lives is through close genuine friendships. The question becomes how does a believer have these types of relationships. Many Christians have almost exclusively surrounded themselves with friends that are believers. This makes sense as believers have more in common with other believers and can talk with them on a deeper spiritual level. The disadvantage is that they become disconnected with the non-believing world. Some cultures have gone to the extreme where there is little or no contact with lost people at all.

A key principle applicable to the idea of sowing is found in Robert Bauckham's book *Bible and Mission*.<sup>18</sup> When explaining the parable of the seed that grows by itself in Mark 4:26-29, Bauckham makes an insightful observation about how the seed grows. Jewish farmers in first-century Palestine would think less of a cause-effect relationship. For example, the crop grows because the farmer has prepared the field, sown the seed, watered the ground, and protected the crop. Jewish farmers would see the harvest of the crop more as an annual miracle that was a direct act of God's power. In the Old Testament, much of the idolatry is because of the farmers worshiping various gods in order to induce a profitable harvest season.<sup>19</sup>

“From the seed planted in Jesus' ministry to the eschatological harvest, the movement is not humanly calculable or achievable, but the gift of God. The church in its missionary vocation is not so much the agent of the process as the product of the process on the way to its God-given goal.”<sup>20</sup> Many times on the mission field, missionaries try to do all of the right things in order to start a church planting movement, but ultimately the great harvest will come only because of God's miraculous hand intervening. The results are not solely because of a cause-effect relationship of applying all of the right strategies. While missionaries should spend time evaluating the strategies used, they must never forget that ultimately the harvest will come as a direct act of God's generosity.

## **Making Friendships**

The first step in making a friend with a non-believer is finding natural ways to interact in a socially appropriate manner such as playing sports, joining a gym, and participating in a class. Through the hours spent in these activities, believers have numerous opportunities to share what

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<sup>17</sup>*The New International Version Study Bible*, (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1985), 1602. (check to see if ref. is right and add to Bib.)

<sup>18</sup>Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003).

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

God is doing in their lives in a natural way. Going up to a stranger in a park and talking to them about Christ is not the most natural way to interact in the Spanish culture. Going door to door is not the most culturally acceptable way to reach people. While these methods seemed to be more effective over twenty years ago in Spain (and may work in other parts of the world), to reach a more present day postmodern society, believers must get involved in people's lives. One way that can be done is through finding common ground through friendship with a non-believer. Believers can look to their talents, interests, and pastimes. Because believers share that common ground with unbelievers, they can connect in a unique way which bonds them together as friends.

Once believers have made the initial step of making a friend, they must develop a deeper relationship. Friendship involves shared experiences, going through difficult circumstances together, laughing together, unselfish giving, and genuinely caring. If believers can have this type of relationship with a lost person, they will hear the gospel message through their lives and words. What believers breathe is the love of Christ, so anybody in their immediate proximity will see that love in action. They sow spiritual seeds into people's lives through unchanging friendships that show who they are, warts and all. When a non-believer sees believers' struggles and difficulties, the strength of Christ becomes evident in their weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).

### **Genuine Friendships**

Many times believers can come off as fakes, because it seems from the point of view of their lost friends that they are only trying to push their agenda and are not sensitive to them as people. In Turkey, as well as many other countries in the world, the salespeople are very aggressive. In addition, they try to find a common point of interest so that you will be more open to buying something. One of the most frequent things said by Turkish men trying to sell something is to ask where a person is from and then they say their wife or relative is from that area. Believers do this same type of thing in their relationships with their lost friends when they treat people like customers with something to sell instead of going the extra mile to love as Christ loved with genuine compassion for lost souls. Finding a common point of interest is not bad in itself, but it must be genuine.

Believers should act like travel guides rather than salespeople when presenting the gospel.<sup>21</sup> God vendors are only interested in the bottom line and having good statistics at the end of the day while believers who take nonbelievers on a spiritual journey genuinely care. Inviting friends on a spiritual journey is one of the most effective ways of reaching the lost in Extremadura, Spain. The gospel must have a personal and relational base for people in Spain to understand the message and be able to radically change who they are for the cause of Christ.

### **Practical Helps and Spiritual Foundations**

God can use many different ways to open the door to people's hearts to receive the gospel message. One of the keys is not to sling the door open so quickly that believers give unbelievers a bloody nose. Essentially that is what many believers do when they try to go too fast too soon

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<sup>21</sup>Richardson, 15.

in their friend's spiritual journey. In the process of evangelism, believers must wait for an invitation to speak to unbelievers' hearts about God's salvation.

Believers should know what they believe and be ready to be continually challenged, but not debate to the point where the relationship is damaged. Believers should stay true to what they believe, but not spend all of their time arguing. Being sensitive to the Holy Spirit is important as well as knowing when to speak up and when to be silent. Sometimes believers are their own worst enemy in that they taint the gospel message with a desire to win an argument. The friendship with the unbeliever is more important than showing that believers are right.

One key principle in personal evangelism is reaching people at a "critical inflection point" in their lives, identified in *The Art of Personal Evangelism* as DDDIS (Divorce, Death, Divine Encounters, Illness, and Status Change).<sup>22</sup> Missionaries should seek out unbelievers in these stages and take advantage of these critical times to share the gospel message. Many unbelievers who have come to faith over the last seven years in Extremadura, Spain, have done so because of these life circumstances. Another insight from McRaney's book is how "over time the gospel message gets clouded as it passes through cultural filters."<sup>23</sup> Missionaries have to constantly be on alert about what their country's cultural filters are. Some of Spain's cultural filters are Catholicism, secularism, consumerism, pride, postmodernism, and superstition towards evangelicals. Many times missionaries share the gospel message but unbelievers do not fully understand the message because they interpret the words differently than the presenter originally intended to communicate.

Some myths of communication include: hearing the gospel is equivalent to being reached, preaching is God's ordained means of communication, and that words contain their meanings.<sup>24</sup> Many believers in Extremadura go into the parks and other public places preaching or presenting some type of evangelistic event. Behind many of these events is the assumption that all people need to do is to hear the message. Unbelievers need the proper context to fully understand the gospel message. The best context is through believers living out their faith and then sharing with their friends how God has transformed their lives. "Personal evangelism is much more than just telling. We are to strive to communicate the message effectively. Our role is not completed when we simply deliver the message. We are not the US Postal Service, just delivering the gospel package at the door and leaving the package for the spiritually searching to open on their own."<sup>25</sup> Another thing to consider when sharing the gospel through friendship is using believers' spiritual gifts and talents. God has given spiritual gifts and talents so that they can be used throughout the process of evangelism. For example, if someone has the gift of mercy, he or she can show the love of Christ to others through acts of mercy. If someone has the

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<sup>22</sup>Will McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 37.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 74.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 100.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 103.

gift of teaching, he or she could show the power and grace of God through sound biblical teaching. Not only should our spiritual gifts be used to edify God through the body of Christ, but God can use those same gifts to bring others into the kingdom.

Using talents like music, sports, crafts, and art is not only a natural way to enter into lost people's lives, but it gives believers credibility in the lost world. Unbelievers see that believers are not locked in their rooms doing spiritual things, but are normal people that enjoy life to the fullest. Something else believers can do is share what God is doing in their lives. Believers can talk in a natural way without preaching a sermon that many times does not want to be heard or what is heard goes through a filter that prohibits unbelievers from really understanding the gospel message.

The first and foremost thing believers should do throughout the friendship is pray. Praying specifically for God to act miraculously in someone's life can bring them closer to making a decision to give their life to the Lord. Believers should let their friends know they are praying, and share how they have seen God answer specific requests for them. If unbelievers see that what they thought was coincidence or luck is really the power of God beckoning them to Him, they are one step closer to making a profession of faith. Prayer can take on a pastoral aspect when unbelievers listen in on believers conversations with God. Prayer is of vital importance in breaking through the hardened hearts of a lost world.

The work of the Holy Spirit in both the believer and unbeliever is crucial for the salvation message to be heard. Believers must be open to hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit in how they can have a part in what God is already doing in a non-believer's life. God is already at work in a person's life long before believers start witnessing, and they are but a part of a greater divine plan. Believers also should see the world with spiritual eyes in which they look for opportunities to share and take advantage of divine appointments that God sets up on their behalf. God brings people in believers' lives at certain moments and gives them a word of peace to speak into the lost person's heart. Unfortunately, these moments can pass believers by as they get caught up in the daily routine of life.

Another way to help people desire to open the door to their hurting heart and hear a message of hope is through reaching them where they do not feel so much like an outsider. Traditionally, believers have invited their lost friends to church to hear the gospel message. Instead of attempting to bring a non-Christian into a totally foreign atmosphere, believers should get involved in unbelievers' lives and connect with them where they are comfortable, which might be over a meal, playing sports, going on a picnic, or going hiking. Many times, believers try to bring their lost friends into their Christian community instead of becoming part of their circle of friends and family. Christian circles have become a safe and comfortable place, but unbelievers feel estranged, uncomfortable, and out of place. Believers must strive to create an atmosphere where the friendship can grow, and unbelievers can see the gospel message in believers' lives in places where unbelievers feel comfortable.

Believers must have a healthy balance of the two worlds exemplified through 1 Jn. 2:15-17 and 1 Cor. 9:19-22. John in the first passage talks about how believers are not "to love the world or anything in the world" and Paul in the second passage says "Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible." In order to

maintain a balance between these two worlds believers must act as God's ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20). Ambassadors for Christ know how to function in both worlds and can communicate the gospel message without becoming engulfed in the godlessness around them.

Many times a believer's contact with the lost is like a cookie cutter approach to evangelism which might be through using a certain model or simply saying the same thing to unbelievers. Jesus shared about the mysteries of the Kingdom of God in a dynamic and unique way. Each person is different, and therefore how believers present the gospel to that person should be different. Even though there are common elements to what believers say, they should never compromise the gospel message but strive to be creative and sensitive. One of the most important aspects of a person receiving the gospel message is the friendship itself. The heart of evangelism is loving people into the kingdom through genuine friendships where God's grace is exemplified through believers' lives.

## **Church Planting**

### **Practical Aspects of Church Planting in Extremadura**

Many believers in Spain view church planting negatively because several church plants have come from church splits. When Christian workers arrive in an area seeking to start a church, they are viewed as people who want to take away members from the existing surrounding churches. New church starts must seek to have good relationships with the existing churches and focus on multiplication through unbelievers coming to faith instead of dividing the pre-existing works because of preference or conflict. As the more established churches plant new churches, there should be a sense of interdependence and maintained fellowship in contrast to total independence with little or no relational ties. Just as children leave home to start their own families, churches will also reach the point of independence from the mother church. However, families maintain a strong relational bond even after the children move out, which should also be observed by the new church starts. Churches should have a vision for planting new works and not solely growing their local body of believers.

The region needs different types of churches planted in various strategic areas in order to reach different types of people. Because of the high percentage of Latin Americans in the evangelical churches, some churches should be tailored more to their specific cultural context while others should be more Spanish in their practice and organization. National believers and expatriate workers should closely examine various factors when planting a new church such as economic level, geographical location, ethnicity, age, doctrinal beliefs, and personal preference.

Because the existing churches in Extremadura are small, few have envisioned planting more churches in their own town or city. Most of the churches in Extremadura see the need for starting works in the larger towns and geographical areas with few or no believers. However, many of these mission points are led by expatriate workers, so there is a need for Extremaduran believers to plant culturally relevant and nationally led churches.

Many missionaries have come to Spain and seen little to no fruit after five or six years of evangelism. Some have returned to their home country while others have gone to other mission fields because of their frustration with seeing little fruit. One of the key factors for missionaries lasting for twenty or thirty years in Spain is being able to have a strong support system of

friendships and ministry partners. Missionaries who try to start a church by themselves without the help of national believers typically have a difficult time establishing a work.

An ideal strategy for starting churches in Extremadura is missionaries and national believers partnering together with the support of a local church. If possible, the church plant should start with at least two Spanish families and a missionary family, so there is a proper balance of Spanish believers to expatriate workers. These families would either come from existing churches or be new believers, which is a challenge because of the few believers in the established churches and the slow response to the gospel. Local churches must accept the challenge to become smaller in order to grow the Kingdom of God. As local churches in Extremadura send out workers to unreached areas, their local churches might become smaller numerically in the beginning, but the sacrifice is necessary for the larger impact on the region.

If a Spanish pastor could be one of the original church planters, then less focus would be on the missionary to be the pastor figure. Ideally, the new church plant would be led by a Spanish pastor from the beginning, but many times it is challenging to find a trained leader willing to take on a new church with little to no funding. Another alternative is to share the responsibility between the church planting team, which creates less dependency on the missionary. The local believers also have a sense of ownership when they are preaching, teaching, leading in music, and being active in evangelism and discipleship. From the beginning missionaries must share about the need for national leadership and how missionaries will not be the permanent pastors. The ideal situation would be for Extremaduran believers to plant churches in their hometowns and cities where they grew up. However, presently there are few Extremaduran believers, because most of the Spanish believers in the churches come from other parts of Spain. Therefore, in the absence of Extremaduran believers the most ideal situation is for Spanish believers to plant churches.

The evangelical churches in Extremadura are international, having believers from Latin America and missionaries from different parts of the world. While these international believers bring experience and encouragement to the small minority of Spanish believers, they also bring their cultural interpretation of Christianity. When planting churches in Extremadura, the church planting team should not turn away the international believers but must seek to make the expression of church more “Extremaduran” so the work will be more indigenous. Believers starting churches in Extremadura should seek to evangelize non-believers, making the work primary about making new disciples and not just receiving previous believers who are incorporated into the church. However, the new church plant needs believers to build a foundation upon and have an established community that unbelievers can join.

Currently the greatest need for church planting in Extremadura is in the larger towns (more than 8,000) and the four largest cities (Badajoz, Cáceres, Mérida, and Plasencia). All of the larger cities already have an evangelical presence, but there are several towns with few or no believers with no evangelical church in the immediate proximity. One possibility of reaching these towns is for churches to adopt a town as a mission point and seek to start a work where few or no believers live. This method has not been that successful in Extremadura because the believers do not actually live in the town. Another method would be for churches to start a work in a town or city where they already have believers who live there, making it easier to have an on-going presence in the community. This approach has been more successful because the church planters are already part of the community, which is important in a rural area.

The university is another strategic place for church planting because students come from all over the region to Badajoz and Cáceres to study and return to their hometowns during their studies and after they finish their degree. Many of the students will study during the week and then go to their hometowns on the weekends which is an open door for them to share the gospel in the many unreached towns in Extremadura. Therefore, the larger cities of Badajoz and Cáceres are strategic areas to reach the whole region because of the already established network of the university. People also work or shop in the larger cities and live in the smaller towns which connects them further to these hub areas. Believers, through evangelism and church planting, can take advantage of these already established networks and reach the towns through people coming to the larger cities. However, a more direct and effective approach involves starting a church in a town where believers live and already have a presence in the community.

One topic of debate in Spain and across the world is the question of what type of church structure is the most appropriate for a certain area, people group, or population segment. In Extremadura each area and target group will necessitate different church planting models. When evaluating church planting models, there are advantages and disadvantages of the church location. Having meetings in a person's home creates a more informal atmosphere and saves on expenses. Most house church structures do not rely on a formally trained pastor which has advantages on being reproducible. However, most Spanish homes are reserved for family members and having a church in a home puts up various cultural barriers.

Having a public place to meet generally makes the service more formal than a house meeting. One disadvantage of having a storefront or some other public setting is the expense. People are more likely to attend an event at a public setting and feel more comfortable to come and observe in contrast to going to an apartment which is more personal and interactive. Another advantage of a public meeting place is having a physical presence in the community and a starting point for conversations and influence. New church plants in Extremadura should strive to have both public and private meeting places and events to be able to connect with unbelievers evangelistically and plant culturally relevant churches.

### **Church Planting Models in Unreached Areas**

Daniel Sinclair deals with important issues relating to church planting models in unreached areas in his book *A Vision of the Possible*.<sup>26</sup> Sinclair outlines the nuts and bolts of ministering cross-culturally in difficult fields and the need for apostolic leaders who take the gospel to the nations. Sinclair writes from five core convictions. First, he believes that the gospel must be taken to all peoples, which should be important to believers until the task is finished. Second, planting churches is a central aspect of reaching the lost world and bringing communities to faith. Third, the most effective means of church planting is done in teams. Fourth, the spiritual harvest will come even to the most difficult of fields, which explains the book's title *A Vision of the Possible*. The last core conviction is that the Bible is at the center of all mission strategies, directing believers in how to carry out the Great Commission.

Sinclair shows how planting churches in teams takes advantage of the vast amount of

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<sup>26</sup> Daniel Sinclair, *A Vision of the Possible* (Waynesboro: Authentic, 2006).

gifts in the body of Christ and also follows the New Testament model of reaching the nations. Pioneer workers have the opportunity to model church as they spread the gospel and plant churches. Leadership and direction are two key aspects of every high functional team. The team can create synergy through studying the Bible, working towards a common vision, and focusing on the ministry God has called a person to do. Two helpful documents Sinclair mentions to keep the team on task are the “Vision and Strategy Paper” and a “Memo of Understanding.” The strategy paper outlines the team's vision of how to plant a church among a particular people group while the memo speaks more to the specifics of team management and field issues.

Moises Mariscal outlines the essential elements of church planting in southern Spain in his Doctor of Ministry project “Analysis of Case Studies of Evangelism and Church Planting in Southern Spain.”<sup>27</sup> The author's main sources for his conclusions are specific case studies in southern Spain, biblical principles, and the experiences of others. Church planting in Spain is a difficult process that requires much perseverance and hard work. Many missionaries and national believers get discouraged because it takes so long to plant a church. The author addresses three main problems when planting a church in southern Spain, which include placing workers in the right target community, finding the best evangelistic method, and partnering together with missionaries and national workers. Mariscal lays a biblical foundation for his strategies and principles as well as uses practical case studies drawn from his experience as a church planter.

Chapter three of his project focuses on matching personnel with a specific community. One key element in placing missionaries in a given area is closely examining their gifts and preferences for either large cities or small towns. Many mission agencies set forth a strategy and fail to match an area with the workers. A couple of factors to consider when placing a missionary in an area is his or her spiritual and educational profiles which should match the needs of a specific area. The author examines the missionary journeys of Paul, emphasizing how God had a planned strategy for world evangelization and that the key to Paul’s understanding and implementing this strategy was the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The strategy for southern Spain includes having a presence in the community, sowing spiritual seeds, being active in the community through service, and impacting an area through small groups and reaching out to the masses.

Mariscal has helpful insights into personnel and community selection.<sup>28</sup> Many times personnel are selected for a specific geographical area even before they arrive to Spain, which does not give field personnel time to assess the missionaries’ gifts and see where they best fit. New IMB missionaries coming to Extremadura have a year of language learning and adaptation in the city of Cáceres before deciding what specific town or city they will be placed. This will help the new missionary and the team leader to match talents, gifts, and personality to a specific geographical location. Some missionaries prefer small towns over large cities and can do a more

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<sup>27</sup> Moises Mariscal, *Analysis of Case Studies of Evangelism and Church Planting in Southern Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dallas Theological Seminary, 1994).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-50.

effective job in these areas. Others work better in more metropolitan areas because of past experience, personal preference, or their specific job description.

Another important insight applicable to church planting in Extremadura is found in chapter four where Mariscal discusses how some denominational based churches in Spain are isolated and stagnant.<sup>29</sup> These groups struggle because instead of focusing on evangelism, they are too busy trying to keep their members from going to other groups. Many of the churches in Extremadura worry too much about losing their members instead of building the Kingdom of God. One believer leaving one church and going to another church causes much division, which creates rivalry and jealousy among churches. In order to be an effective church planter in Spain, missionaries must have a kingdom mentality and not a territorial mentality, where they treat members like livestock that they will not allow to be stolen away by predators. Other churches are not competition but friends and fellow prayer warriors that help build the Kingdom of God.

### **Partnering with National Churches**

As national believers and missionaries are grafted together like the individual strands of a rope, they both become stronger and can make a greater impact for God's kingdom. Individually, the two groups can do many good things, but together, as they build off of each other's strengths, they can achieve greater things obtaining synergy. Research and practical experience are two crucial factors in better understanding the issues of national church/missions relationships. Through analyzing and evaluating key partnership concepts, missionaries and national believers can apply practical principles to a particular ministry setting. Two key resources on missionaries partnering with national believers in Western Europe are the Doctor of Ministry project titled "National Church/Missions Relationships: A Model for Spain" by Natanael Frugoni Romero who is a Spanish pastor in Málaga, Spain<sup>30</sup> and the Doctor of Philosophy dissertation "Franco-American Mission Partnerships: Phenomenological Study of Partnering American Missionaries and Local Christians in France" by Howard Owens who was a missionary in France for eleven years.<sup>31</sup>

### **The Need for Partnership**

The relationship between missionaries and national workers in Extremadura, Spain has been positive for many years. David Rogers, who worked in Extremadura for over ten years, set the groundwork and established a healthy partnership between International Mission Board missionaries and local national churches. He intentionally matched new missionaries with local believers to help in their cultural orientation as well as to begin forming the relationship for a future ministry together.

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 51-84.

<sup>30</sup> Natanael Frugoni Romero, "National Church/Missions Relationships: A Model for Spain" (D.Min. diss., Columbia International University, Columbia, SC), 1995.

<sup>31</sup> Howard D. Owens, "Franco-American Mission Partnerships: A Phenomenological Study of Partnering American Missionaries and Local Christians in France" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA), 2005.

After David moved to Madrid, the vision of partnering together continued, and there is a close relationship between the national believers and International Mission Board personnel. Currently, the missionaries Chris and Cathie Smith are partnering together with the Badajoz Baptist Church to start a work in Cáceres, Spain. The Smiths first lived in Badajoz for over five years and established solid personal friendships with many of the believers in the church. In fact, the pastor of the church has become one of the main advocates for planting churches throughout the region of Extremadura. Therefore, any strategy will be in light of the relationship that is already established and will work towards becoming better connected to and knowing more about how to work together effectively.

### **Practical Aspects of Partnering with National Churches**

Because of the good relationship already established in Extremadura between the existing churches, believers can work together at different levels of partnership. All of the believers should be united in friendship and prayer regardless of their particular denomination. However, church planting might be more challenging because of doctrine, worship styles, and traditions. Unity can be preserved without losing the diversity of the believers represented which allows for various expressions of church. Some churches might be able to help with the legal aspects of starting a new work while others would help by sending some of their members to a service once a month to encourage the new church start.

One issue that should be discussed before missionaries and a local church work together is the authority structure of the relationship. Both parties have to be in agreement as to who would have the last word if the two groups do not agree on a specific issue. In the context of Extremadura, Spain, the answer will depend on the specific situation at hand as well as which national believers and missionaries are involved. If a new missionary is connected to a local church and is seeking to learn about how a Spanish church functions, he or she should most likely yield to the experience of the seasoned pastor. However, if local believers are supporting a mission project or specific ministry designed by missionaries, then the believers should yield to the missionary vision. Some of the factors involved in deciding who ultimately has the last word would be the experience of the parties involved, the missionary's time on the field, and whether the activity is more church based or mission based.

Carefully choosing which national believers and missionaries work together is another issue that directly relates to the strategy for working with national churches. While partnerships between national believers and missionaries have the potential of producing synergy, a mismatched relationship could have catastrophic results providing a rift between the two entities, which could endanger future relationships. Therefore, one essential element of partnering together is having an initial trial time where the national believers can get to know the missionaries and vice versa, to assess if the two units would be a good ministry match. Missionaries and national believers must strategically choose their partnerships according to team members' personality, spiritual gifts, and ministry vision. Being able to match missionaries with national believers is more of an art than a science. Though national believers and expatriate workers should follow certain principles, ultimately both parties must trust the Holy Spirit's guidance to have a positive match.

Two factors essential to a healthy partnership are friendships and prayer. Even if the missionary does not intend to have a close ministerial relationship with the national believer, he or she should get to know national believers on a personal level in order to limit future misunderstandings. Unfortunately, the source of much disagreement and dissention between missionaries and national believers is ignorance. Both parties have their preconceptions and stereotypes of the other without getting to know the other person and earnestly praying that God will bless them. When missionaries and national believers put aside their preconceptions and honestly seek to understand the other party's perspective, genuine friendship can occur and the ministry possibilities are endless. Prayer binds the friendship together making it possible to continue the relationship even when disagreements occur.

Wolfgang Simpson, at a house church conference in Spain, said that the key to impacting the nation for Christ was to find national workers who were on fire for God and pour gasoline on them. An effective strategy for evangelism and church planting in Extremadura is finding committed believers who want to reach the region and invest in their lives so they might be better ministers. The missionary's role is not so much to do the work, but to help national believers reach their own people. Of course, missionaries must model what they teach and be front liners in accomplishing the vision they set forth, but they should never lose their perspective on that they are outsiders and in some respects, they will always be outsiders.

Some other practical ways that missionaries can partner with national believers in church planting include special events, believers going to the services of a new church plant, and prayer support. In Cáceres, the Smiths partner with a Spanish couple whom they trained while attending the Badajoz Baptist Church. One of the factors that influenced the couple's decision to move to Cáceres was the good relationship already established with the Smiths. The Badajoz Baptist Church, which is about an hour away from Cáceres, made the new church plant an official mission point. Various believers in Badajoz have participated in special events in Cáceres and prayed for the new work to flourish.

One key to maintaining this healthy partnership was the time spent at the local church before deciding to move to Cáceres to plant a church locally. The Smiths were working to plant churches throughout the region through a local ministry of students when they lived in Badajoz, but also had the opportunity to establish a close relationship with the pastor and other believers. Another important factor in this partnership was having an ongoing, open communication with the pastor of the church in Badajoz about the progress and challenges of the church plant.

Currently the Spanish Baptist Convention has missionaries in Africa and raises a great deal of support for short-term mission projects in Spain. Having Spanish believers who are full-time ministers working in pioneer fields in evangelism and church planting would be strategic not only in Extremadura but all across Spain. Those church planters could later become the pastors of the churches or move on to plant other churches. The ideal situation would be for Spanish church planters to work alongside expatriate missionaries to plant a church.

Another key principle for missionaries and national believers to be able to partner together in Extremadura is a missionary's attitude. Through Romero's extensive research and questionnaires concerning the qualities that nationals require of a missionary, he concluded that attitude was one of the most important areas. He makes this conclusion from the answers on the questionnaires he sent out to national believers:

It must be pointed out that over 50% of the required qualities have to do with the missionary's attitude towards his assigned ministry and towards those who work with him. . . I believe I am interpreting these results correctly when I state that the national worker demands what he most finds lacking. This is not, as we have seen, the missionary's spiritual or educational level, but rather attitudes which seemed to dominate the existing work and personal relationships. Let us make it clear that these demands are not a reflection of a purely Spanish problem, but are an echo of a latent dilemma in any context where missionaries are present.<sup>32</sup>

One important role of missionaries is that of a servant. Missionaries must enter the country with a servant's heart and a learning spirit, and through their humility they will be able to make a wider impact for Christ. As new missionaries come to Extremadura, they must not come with the attitude that they are going to teach the national believers how to do things, but should be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2) and a servant leader following Jesus' example. When missionaries have the right attitude, national believers will be more open to hear what missionaries have to say and follow their example. Missionaries will also have the opportunity to learn a great deal from national believers.

When missionaries are teachable and open to change, they can better contextualize the gospel message and Christian life to fit the Spanish culture as opposed to replicating their host country's expression of Christianity. Owens included some of the comments by national believers about the importance of American missionaries having the right attitude saying:

A church leader commented to the researcher, "The Americans come to teach these little French a thing or two." The researcher listened as a local Christian said, "The missionaries came with a vision built upon methods used in Asia. Their way of importing them into France or even into Paris, in my opinion, was inappropriate, culturally inappropriate. That was certain." Another local Christian commented, "The missionary acts like we have never done this type of ministry before." The missionaries do arrive in Paris having earned a level of expertise which could benefit the local Christians. The local Christians only wish that the missionaries show some humility by taking the French context seriously and by respecting the expertise of the local Christians."<sup>33</sup>

A missionary's attitude is especially important in partnering relationships in Extremadura, but is also a key in establishing significant working relationships across Spain and Western Europe.

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<sup>32</sup> Romero, 100.

<sup>33</sup> Owens, 138.

Another important factor of having effective relationships in Extremadura is partnering with other like-minded missionaries through specific projects, friendship, prayer, and encouragement. Meeting with other missionaries outside of one's organization helps facilitate mutual member care, which is essential to surviving on the mission field. Missionaries can meet together informally and talk about their victories and discouragements. As they pray for each other and participate in various projects, they can obtain a better understanding of how to reach the region as well as provide crucial friendship needs.

A national pastor in Extremadura has said that, in general, the churches would participate with the missionaries in direct proportion to time spent with national believers. While missionaries should not devote all of their time building up the local church, they should be intentional about being present for key church activities. Spending time with national believers is especially important soon after a new missionary arrives on the field.

Through this initial investment, missionaries will later collect big dividends that will help their mission efforts flourish because they have support from local believers. Therefore, leadership in mission-sending agencies should strategically match new missionaries with national pastors in the area where they will serve. If the missionaries are not connected to the national pastors when they first arrive, it would be difficult if not impossible to have an effective partnership in the future. When missionaries initially have a servant's heart and display a learner's attitude, they will gain a voice in the local church and be able to partner with national believers in evangelism and church planting.

The ideal time for missionaries to make the connection with national pastors and a local church would be during their first year on the field while they are learning language and culture. Part of their training would include learning about the Spanish Christian culture. New missionaries would not take on any official responsibility in the church such as being a Sunday School teacher, a youth leader, or a deacon, but they would have the opportunity to observe, learn and participate in various church activities. Having this initial time with Spanish believers will help the new missionaries to properly contextualize their future church planting efforts. If the missionaries are more short-term, this model could be adjusted according to how much time is spent on the field. In addition to new missionaries being linked to a specific church for orientation, it would be beneficial for them to visit different evangelical churches in the area in order to get to know other local believers and better assess what type of church needs to be planted in their specific area.

Twisting the individual strands of a rope together is hard work, requiring both endurance and patience. The strong rope of partnerships among national believers and missionaries becomes frayed by misguided preconceptions, prideful attitudes, a lack of prayer, and not having genuine friendships. Both missionaries and nationals must hear Jesus' words continually echo in their minds when he prayed for all believers:

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I am in them and you are in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (Jn. 17:20-23)

National churches and missionaries in Extremadura must seek unity through partnering together in evangelism and church planting, with the ultimate goal that unbelievers may experience God's everlasting love. God longs for all of his workers to be faithful servants who daily die to themselves and work together as a team to bring the nations to salvation. When the international body of Christ comes together in humility to further expand God's kingdom, many unbelievers will experience the treasures of God's grace and mercy. Missionaries and national workers in Extremadura and all across Spain need each other to fulfill the great commission and carry out God's calling on their lives to impact a dying nation that desperately needs Christ.

### **Preparing (Leadership Development)**

One aspect that is not currently listed as a pillar of the Iberian strategy model is leadership development. Even though leadership development has always been part of the Extremadura ministry plan, it has never been listed as a separate pillar. Since the two concepts of leadership development (preparing) and parting are related, both areas are together in the Extremadura ministry plan attached as Appendix One. Preparing leaders for the ministry is a key aspect of creating less dependency on the outside influence of expatriate workers.

An essential element for nationals planting churches is developing Extremaduran leaders. Some churches train leaders through local discipleship, but for the most part little is being done to train national pastors and other Christian workers on a regional level. If believers are interested in receiving more formal ministry training, they have to study in a major city like Seville, Madrid, or Barcelona. Each existing church and the new churches need national believers to lead works with less external influence from expatriate workers. Both national Christian leaders and expatriate workers should work together toward the end goal of having Extremaduran believers leading local works and planting churches throughout the region.

The lasting legacy of missionaries is not solely what they have done, but what they have inspired others to do. As expatriate workers serve as catalysts, God can turn a spark into a blazing fire of salvation. The best investment missionaries can make is in the lives of future leaders who can impact nationals in a more indigenous, culturally appropriate way.

Traditionally in Spain, leadership development has been done in a centralized manner where a student goes to a seminary for three or four years. Some of the larger cities have seminaries and offer a well-balanced curriculum of practical and theological training. However, when someone from Extremadura leaves the area for training for an extended amount of time, they often do not return. The students stay in the larger cities that have larger churches which are able to offer them a more stable position and salary. While the seminary trained professional minister has its place and is needed in Spain, Christian leaders in Extremadura should explore other models such as on-the-job training.

An on-the-job leadership training model keeps potential leaders in the area while they practice ministry. One possibility is having a seminary adopt a decentralized method where they offer an adapted training to be done in the field of ministry instead of on the seminary campus. Professors could come to Extremadura as well as offer video classes and independent studies. The training would be similar to what is already established on the main campus, but it would be available for students all across the region of Extremadura.

Another possibility would be to take advantage of the personnel resources already present in the evangelical churches throughout Extremadura. Many of the missionaries, pastors, and leaders have valuable experience and training and could teach potential leaders by pooling their resources. Formal classes could be done on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis and could be combined with the students doing independent studies that would complement class time. Classes could also be presented as a two-week module where different professors could teach on a variety of subjects.

In tandem with the formal classes should be some type of practical training where experienced ministers can mentor younger ministers. While the new leaders are realizing some type of ministry, they would have someone they can go to and dialog with about the practical aspects of ministry. Through students having mentors, formal classroom training complements practical ministry experience. As there is a balance between the two aspects, students can receive a holistic training that will help them achieve excellence in ministry.

Veteran pastors and Christian leaders can help students problem solve, come up with ideas, fine-tune their ministry skills, and aid in their biblical and theological understanding and practice. David Garrison gives a good example of using mentors for leadership development: “One of the more ingenious and effective leadership training methods is the cascading model. Widely used in India, this model allows training to multiply out without reliance on formal institutions by using cascading tiers of mentors who convey biblical training from level to level.”<sup>34</sup> Some of the benefits of the cascading model are exponential multiplication of training, being able to be transmitted with or without written materials, being interpersonal and relational, and being reinforced by the life example of the mentors and students.<sup>35</sup>

Another example of a non-seminary mentor approach is George Patterson’s “Mentor and Multiply” method.<sup>36</sup> He connects students with mentors who are qualified in specific areas of ministry as well as offers a wide variety of materials. The website is the connecting point which helps students find the right mentor for their specific ministry needs.

Churches in Spain should not adhere to the belief that the only person who can effectively lead the local church is a professionally trained pastor. Lay workers should see themselves as essential ministers in the local church. God can transform society as all believers become ministers in their immediate sphere of influence. The separation between clergy and lay workers is evident and should change in order to see a greater impact from lay leaders.

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<sup>34</sup>Garrison, 234.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 235.

<sup>36</sup>George Patterson, “Mentor and Multiply” Tools to Multiply Flocks and Train their Leaders, webpage; available from <http://www.mentorandmultiply.com/>; Internet; accessed 10 July 2008.

Ed Silvosio recognizes the challenges of the separation of clergy and laity:

Today the greatest implementation challenge we face is the integration of the vertical and horizontal aspects of ministry. The first step to overcoming this challenge is the coining of more adequate terminology. In the past we have called pastors “clergy” and church members “laity.” In the new paradigm, I refer to them as “pulpit ministers” and “marketplace ministers.” Both are ministers with identical callings, but with spheres of influence and expertise that are very distinct and at the same time strategically complementary.<sup>37</sup>

Silvosio goes on to say that pulpit ministers generally focus more on the vertical dimension of life while the marketplace ministers have more influence and relationships in the workplace. Both ministers are necessary for the local church, and the marketplace minister should be recognized just as much as the pulpit minister. In pioneer areas like Extremadura it is necessary, many times, for the marketplace minister to also serve as the pulpit minister. All varieties of ministers should be recognized and celebrated, which opens up a larger leadership pool to draw from when planting new churches.

### **Parting**

Missionaries must have an exit strategy so that local believers do not become dependent on them to continue the work of the ministry. Leadership development is closely related to the parting pillar because as national believers take on responsibility locally, missionaries are free to go to other pioneer areas. From the time that indigenous leadership is recognized in each church planting location in Extremadura, missionaries should strive to take an auxiliary or support role from the beginning, rather than a direct leadership or pastoral role, encouraging local believers to be actively involved in church planting. If national believers can lead from the beginning, the transition time when missionaries go to a different area will be easier. Instead of missionaries handing off leadership responsibilities after many years of ministry, national leaders should be leading the work from the beginning. Therefore, missionaries in Extremadura should seek to transition to more of a support role while they are training local national leaders.

### **Other Areas Worth Further Exploration**

The “Extremadura Pillars Strategy” does not address all of the issues for developing a strategy for making disciples among the Extremaduran unreached people group in Southwestern Spain. For example, one area worth further exploration is the role of born-again believers present in the Catholic Church and how they could have an impact on Extremadura. If a revival were to take place in the Catholic Church and Catholic believers were to effectively evangelize Extremadurans, many disciples would be made throughout the region. Some Catholic churches in Galicia are using the Alpha course which is a small group evangelistic study. Courses like these have the potential to reach many with the gospel within a Catholic context. Some priests are open to evangelical expressions of Christianity and are active in evangelism and discipleship. The evangelical church is considered a sect by many and the Catholic Church may have the

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<sup>37</sup>Silvosio, *Transformation*, 66.

opportunity for many to become believers where the evangelical church is more limited because of cultural basis.

Another area worth further exploration is the use of short-term and long-term volunteers from other parts of Spain and other countries. Because Extremadura is such a pioneer field, other believers from outside the region can play an active part of making disciples through short-term trips, on-going prayer, and long-term partnerships. As believers who live outside of Extremadura connect with Extremadurans through sports, clubs, and cultural exchanges, they can share the gospel and help believers who live in the region make a wider impact. Spaniards from other regions could come on short-term trips or make long-term commitments to live and work in Extremadura and make disciples in the many towns and cities with little evangelical witness. Extremadura needs Spanish church planters to come to the region and work with the national believers and expatriate workers.

Another area worth further study is how to impact the Extremaduran people group through the many Extremadurans who have moved to different areas across Spain but still have ties to their native homeland. Even when Extremadurans leave the area in search for work or for other reasons, they remain Extremadurans and have influence within their hometowns. If many disciples were made among these Extremadurans who live outside of the region, there would be a prominent missionary force of believers who could connect to the nonbelievers and share the gospel effectively with less cultural barriers.