

**THE PRISON EPISTLES:
AN INDEPENDENT STUDY TEXT**

LeRoy R. Bartel

This project was begun in answer to an invitation from Global University, Springfield, Missouri to author a textbook for Berean School of the Bible dealing with those epistles of the New Testament traditionally referred to as the Prison Epistles (Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians). The textbook was to be designed as independent study text. In addition to its use to satisfy the study requirements for ministerial credentials within the Assemblies of God, it was also to be available for translating as a textbook for ministerial training in missiological settings. The text was to consist of thirteen chapters and 39 or 40 “lessons” (or sermonic units).

The textbook has been designed as a “preacher-friendly” commentary. To accomplish this each lesson identifies a transcultural truth. Sermonic points are stated as principles. The development of each point adheres to the following expository preaching pattern:

- Exposition – explanation of the biblical text in terms of the original situation and audience that the biblical writer addressed.
- Application – consideration of analogous situations the modern reader might experience to those within the biblical text.
- Illustration – the attempt to identify an apt illustration that elucidates the point within the biblical text.

The textbook was written to integrate Christian education features within it to assist the student. The textbook targets a series of learning goals or objectives for each lesson.

Additionally, inductive study questions addressing key issues of biblical content and application were developed.

**EMPOWERMENT: IMPLICATIONS OF JESUS' LEADERSHIP
IN LUKE'S GOSPEL FOR THE PASTORAL TEAM AT
FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD IN DES MOINES, IOWA**

John A. Battaglia

This project developed and taught an awareness seminar to train the pastoral team of First Assembly of God in Des Moines, Iowa, toward increasing effectiveness as empowering leaders. The project incorporated a two-part approach, establishing a one-year strategic planning process that culminated with the empowering leadership seminar.

The strategic planning process served as a tool in determining church growth and pastoral team growth obstacles and as an environment for the team to observe empowering leadership behavior. A one-year plan was presented to the congregation at First Assembly's ALIVE vision celebration (annual business meeting). We based our decision to conduct the seminar on our evaluations of three things: 1) congregational and community surveys, 2) historical trends and data about First Assembly, and 3) informal discussion with members of the pastoral and support team. These three sources revealed that our church was ready to become an empowering culture, led by empowering leaders.

The empowering leadership seminar concentrated on improving the participants' knowledge, skill, and attitudes toward an empowering leadership style of ministry. Jesus' model of empowering leadership in the Gospel of Luke was revealed through lecture, peer group interaction, small group exercises, pre- and postsurveys and tests, and an evaluation of the seminar.

After the seminar, the participants' awareness of empowering leadership improved by eleven percent in the performance of the following five, measured behaviors: (1) modeling the way, (2) inspiring a shared vision, (3) challenging the process, (4) enabling others to act, and (5) encouraging the heart. Research of the biblical-theological literature and other

relevant literature in the field of empowerment indicated the need for pastoral leadership to transition to an empowering leadership style of ministry.

**REVITALIZING A SMALL PLATEAUED CHURCH THROUGH
THE *WE BUILD PEOPLE* DISCIPLESHIP MODEL**

William Blair

This project sought to move a small, numerically static church away from its attendance plateau into a position of renewed growth. Until the execution of the purpose-driven, *We Build People* curriculum project, Cornerstone Christian Center of Jamestown, New York, had existed for approximately ten years in an attendance plateau of 45-70 persons. The project used a strategy that included leadership training, communication skills and the educational materials of the *We Build People* curriculum. The specifically stated goals of the project were to increase the numbers of ministry partners and overall attendance in a statistically significant way.

Leadership training involved separate group meetings with church board members held prior to congregational training. Educational meetings centered on the content and purpose of the proposed project. The intended results of this training were to cultivate ownership and momentum for the project.

Intensive advertising and communication using the many avenues available to the church positively prepared the congregation for participation in the program.

The project produced results which exceeded expectations. In a relatively short period of time, the number of ministry partners increased 529%, and attendance at all church programs increased 280%.

**DEVELOPING A MODEL OF FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION FOR
LEBANON FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD, LEBANON, MISSOURI**

Joseph C. Campbell

This project developed a model of forgiveness and reconciliation that brought healing to attendees at Lebanon First Assembly of God, Lebanon, Missouri, who had been wrongfully hurt. The model consists of the processes of offering forgiveness, seeking forgiveness, and reconciliation. The phases and details of these processes evolved from biblical-theological and psychological research done on the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation.

This project presented practical ways to progress in three processes of the model of forgiveness and reconciliation. It also gave guidelines for interacting with opponents who do not desire reconciliation. Descriptions of the barriers to offering and seeking forgiveness highlighted the fears commonly associated with these two processes. In addition, the differences between offering forgiveness and activities such as forgoing justice, condoning wrongdoing, and manipulating opponents are outlined.

Exposure to the model of forgiveness and reconciliation came through small group lectures, group interactions, printed materials, and personal assignments. The benefits of offering and seeking forgiveness provided participants with incentives to offer forgiveness to and seek forgiveness from their opponents. Surveys confirmed the effectiveness of the model in helping participants experience progress in offering forgiveness to their opponents. The surveys also provided evidence of the model's success in correcting participants' erroneous views and misconceptions about forgiveness and reconciliation.

**EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS LEADERS FOR THE
ALASKA CONTEXT OF MINISTRY**

Lattis R. Campbell

This project attempted to identify reasons and solutions for the leadership vacuum existing among Alaska Native churches of the Assemblies of God. Traditional approaches to leadership development had not produced sufficient numbers of homegrown leaders for Native churches in Alaska. This project emphasized empowering every church member for active ministry as a means of indigenous leadership development.

Research centered on two areas: (1) a biblical theological foundation for the concept of empowerment and (2) on the synthesis of current organizational empowerment processes with the church's need for indigenous leadership development.

A significant cross-section of church leaders in Alaska was exposed to the research on and potential of empowerment for leadership development through a seminar. Cognitive and attitudinal changes were measured, evaluated, and described.

This project produced a core of influencers in the Alaska District of the Assemblies of God compassionate toward local church empowerment as a means of producing Alaska Native leaders and an increased awareness for instituting empowerment processes in the churches of Alaska.

LEADING PASTORS AND LOCAL CHURCHES IN COMPASSION MINISTRIES

Bob Houlihan

This project is an attempt to help pastors and church leaders in effective compassion outreaches in their communities. The model developed was tested on twenty-six church leaders in West Central Florida.

I assume there is some confusion on the part of church leaders on the topic of how evangelism and social work blend together. The tendency for Christians has been to emphasize one aspect of “word and deed” to the exclusion of the other. In order to establish a rationale for this topic, a biblical basis for a holistic approach to compassion ministries was researched from the Old Testament prophetic literature and the life of Jesus. In addition to this foundation, the importance of the theme of the kingdom of God as it relates to compassion ministries was also developed.

In order to help church leaders build a bridge from their congregations to their local communities, the biblical description of the concept of *shalom* was identified as one of the best methods. Churches and leaders who have successfully traversed the gulf between the Church and the secular world were used as models to guide others in these ministries.

Throughout this paper, both evangelism and compassion ministries have been cited as not only complementary, but also necessary for the Church to fulfill its role in the world.

Qualitative and quantitative approaches were given in the model seminar to test the validity of the assumption and the rationale of the material taught. A survey was given at both the opening and the closing of the sessions. As a group the participants increased their knowledge of the material reviewed by approximately 25 percent.

**A TRAINING COURSE FOR TEACHERS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
IN MESSIANIC CONGREGATIONS IN ISRAEL**

Theresa (Terry) Hughes

This project was designed to produce a teacher-training course that would be an effective instrument for recruiting and training teachers for children and youth in messianic congregations in Israel. To date no teacher-training course exists that is specifically designed for Israel's unique cultural and language (Hebrew) setting. Hence the goal of this project was to produce a training course as a tool to assist Israeli congregations in equipping their teachers for this critical ministry.

To assure greater nationwide suitability for the training course, four congregations were chosen as a sample target group from large urban areas in the northern, central, and southern sections of Israel. Interviews, surveys, and questionnaires from this sample target group provided data to develop a teacher's profile and needs assessment to determine the most needed course objectives, content, and delivery system. The course was designed for the widest possible use; it can be used for independent or group study. Its self-study format provides practice items and immediate feedback for students to check their progress. Each lesson can also stand alone for those leaders who expressed the desire to present their teachers with specific topics at different times.

A field test conducted with teachers and leaders in Israel confirmed that those who took the course gained highly significant assistance for evangelizing and discipling the next generation in Israel as well as practical skills and ideas for presenting dynamic and relevant lessons to their students. The process of working with local congregations from beginning to end to meet their needs was edifying and unifying for the designer and the leaders and teachers who participated. It also created a wider credibility for the course's use and a greater

likelihood for its success. This project provides a model for others designing courses to establish and strengthen God's work worldwide.

EMPOWERED FOR GLOBAL MISSION: A MISSIO-PNEUMATOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF ACTS

Denzil R. Miller

Spiritual power has become a hot topic in contemporary missions research. Paradoxically, the way has been led, not by Pentecostals, but by non-Pentecostal evangelicals. The purpose of this work is to call the Pentecostal church to a fresh understanding of its need for spiritual empowering to accomplish the Great Commission of Christ, and thus bring closure to the missionary enterprise before the soon coming of Christ (Acts 1:8; Matt. 24:14). It was written on commission from the Assemblies of God World Missions, Africa Office, and is to be published as a book by Life Publishers, Springfield, MO, under the title *Empowered for Global Mission: A Missionary Look at the Book of Acts* (working title).

The book is a missio-pneumatological investigation of the New Testament book of Acts. In it the author contends that the biblical experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, an experience separate from and subsequent to the new birth, is an essential prerequisite for missionary work. It is a theological investigation of the subject of Spirit empowerment primarily from a Lukan perspective, although the Pauline perspective is also briefly examined.

The book contends that in Acts 1:8 Luke revealed his purpose in writing Acts to be both *pneumatological* (“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you . . .”), and *missiological* (“ . . . and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth”). Luke then fulfilled his purpose by carefully constructing his book around seven key outpourings of the Spirit, each

of which resulted in powerful Spirit-anointed missionary witness, and each of which contributed to his missio-pneumatological intent in writing the book.

The book further argues that Spirit baptism is a normative experience for all Christians and that contemporary missional ministry is to be done in the power of the Spirit with signs following. The role of spiritual gifts in missions is addressed. Four applications are made to modern missions, including the Spirit in missions, receiving Spirit baptism, ministering Spirit baptism, and ministering spiritual gifts. Evidential tongues is also discussed.

**NEW LIFE CHURCH, SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI:
A CASE STUDY IN POSTMODERN MINISTRY**

Steve Smallwood

New Life Church in Springfield, Missouri has always charted a unique course. Throughout their 19-year history, the church has single-mindedly strived to understand contemporary culture and to fashion ministries that attract unchurched, secular people to the church.

In their desire to reach disconnected people and to remain on the cutting edge of culture, New Life has undergone three distinct philosophical shifts. Beginning in the *traditional evangelical* camp, they transitioned to the *pragmatic evangelical* camp in the mid-1990s as a *seeker model* church. They are currently engaged in the metamorphosis from a seeker church to a *younger evangelical, emerging model* church.

With the winds of postmodernism furiously blowing onto the shores of the American Church, New Life is responding with equal intensity in its efforts to engage culture for the sake of reaching lost people. Often criticized and misunderstood for their unorthodox approaches, they remain tenaciously committed to the task of fashioning ministries that reach unchurched, de-churched, and over-churched people.

Divesting themselves of many of the trappings of the institutional Church, New Life's approach represents a more organic attempt to follow in Jesus' footsteps. Utilizing music, the arts, and images from contemporary and ancient culture, New Life is reaching out to people who have given up on traditional approaches to church. Unimpressed with the mega-church models of ultra-modernity, New Life desires to join people relationally and assist them in becoming apprentices of Jesus.

The focus of this project is to produce a case study of New Life's approach to ministry giving special emphasis to adult discipleship and spiritual formation. Having caught the emerging church wind in their sails, New Life joins the growing group of younger churches that are venturing out into uncharted, postmodern waters. Some perceive these waters to be fraught with perilous dangers to both theology and practice since the waters steer away from routes that are more traditional.

This project provides an overview of New Life's attempt to come to terms with the impact of postmodernity on ministry. For the leaders of New Life it will supply an outsider's historical view of the congregation. For interested readers, it will offer categories and descriptions to assist them in their attempts at negotiating the seismic shifts that are shaking the foundations of the American Church. For all, it will present a challenge to lead the Church out into the uncharted waters with the confident certainty that Jesus is still the master of the seas.

**ESTABLISHING A DOCTORAL GRADUATE PROFILE TO ASSIST THE
AFRICAN ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN DEVELOPING THE NATURE AND
STRUCTURE FOR AN AFRICAN DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

James Thacker

The Church in Africa is growing at a phenomenal rate. Capable and qualified leaders are needed to address the challenges that are presented by this numerical increase. There is a consensus among the African Church leaders that doctoral-level training is needed to assist them in meeting their increasing leadership requirements. However, few viable options for doctoral education exist in Africa. As a result of this, national Churches and ministers have sought educational solutions through various approaches to doctoral studies which have inadvertently contributed to a loss of leadership for the African Church. The leaders of the Church in Africa recognize the educational problems that have contributed to their leadership deficit and want to address these training issues by establishing their own doctoral program on the continent.

The purpose of this project was to assist the leadership of the Assemblies of God in Africa through determining general implications for the development of the nature and structure for an African doctoral program by establishing an African doctoral graduate profile. The profile was ascertained by collecting and assessing data from Africa's key church leaders through conducting an African Doctoral Graduate Outcomes Profiling Survey. From the survey questionnaire, quantifiable data was established and an African doctoral graduate profile was assessed.

The profile revealed that the African Church leadership is primarily concerned with sending M.A. and B.A. Bible school administrators, instructors, and national board of education directors for doctoral-level studies in order to enhance and develop further their leadership abilities and training qualifications. The African Church wants their doctoral

students to concentrate their studies in the areas of leadership, biblical and hermeneutical studies, missions, and education. Upon completion of their doctoral coursework, these level-five leaders will be utilized to help establish and improve the quality of the higher-level training ministries in the Church, while assisting in continental and national Church research and writing as needed.

Through utilizing an outcomes-based approach to program design, the information and insights gained from this profile will enable African Church leaders to establish a doctoral program that is intentionally designed to be relevant to the specific needs of their ministry and cultural contexts. The implications of the profile were offered as recommendations to the African Assemblies of God Alliance and the Assemblies of God World Missions, which is represented by its training arm in Africa, Africa Theological Training Service, for the development and founding of an African doctoral program.

TRAINING CARE FACILITATORS TO NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MISSIONARIES

Faye Tidwell

The purpose of this project is to develop a training seminar for a standard of best practice for member care. This process utilizes a community-building network among members (missionaries), enabling them successfully to care for one another.

After thirty-five years of missionary experience, cross-cultural research, and crisis counseling, the author has determined that there is a need in Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) for a trained care facilitator in each designated area of the mission field. The trained facilitator would promote healthy relational attitudes, proper self-care, and spiritual growth among the area's missionaries.

The project design incorporates a word study of the New Testament use of "one another" passages. The research includes the role of encouragement and examines the biblical-theological foundation of community. Study and research of these community models indicates the need for a contextualized best practice approach. This approach will create an effective system to care for "one another" in missions.

The model of training utilizes the scriptural reference of Barnabas, who provided both nurture and support to the Apostle Paul. In a similar manner, modern-day missionaries often need someone to "come alongside" them for emotional guidance and affirmation. The best practice training also incorporates an extensive review of literature, which includes topics such as: personality theories and behaviors, individual growth and development, communication skills and styles, motivational and coaching principles, life adjustments, and learning styles.

In July 2004, the author facilitated an introductory training seminar to one hundred AGWM leaders. In November, 2004, fifteen individuals attended a training workshop for care facilitators. The project design involved the administration of a pretest and posttest instrument. The evaluative data determined the effectiveness of the seminar in raising the need, awareness, and skills training for care facilitators. The results of a post seminar evaluation and a completed posttest revealed that the participants benefited from the principles taught during the sessions.