

I. INTRODUCING THE TOPIC

A. Building relationships

It is good to be here with you and a tremendous privilege.
Perhaps it is well to share a bit of what we hope to do.
We hope to discuss various kinds of BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS.
I have 10? different lectures I would like to share.
But we all have just come from busy schedules so first we will spend about an hour getting our thoughts together on thinking about relationships.
What does it mean — to build relationships?

Later on we will discuss several variations and details and do some questionnaires.
Then we will close with some practical ideas we all need to learn.
There is a lot of material, more than what you can use. So you do not have to pay attention to every detail.
I'll be sharing many different topics so that everyone can benefit from some of the things.
But no one needs all the things, so just relax and enjoy.

Much has changed over the past two or three decades.
You have changed much and accomplished much.
You are tremendous people, and many of you have accomplished wonderful spiritual things for Christ and His church.

We all have much to thank Jesus for,
and yet for many of us today, as we look back over the last decades, we see the peak of spiritual blessings in our churches around 1999–2000.

/// 0-2 /// Use overhead Chart on statistics

And as we look back we have a twinge of discomfort.
A twinge of nostalgic sadness that the spiritual glow in our churches has been fading for several years.
Some of our churches have even shrunk instead of grown.
A twinge of sad, almost hopeful desire, for that spiritual fervor to return, but a feeling that it might not.
That is what we want to talk about today.

B. Finding and renewing our fervor

There are so many nice things to say to a group like yourselves that I could fill the day with it.
But Scripture warns about being a teacher having itching ears 2 Tim. 4:3.
Just talking about how good we are is not going to help us much to get better.
I am sure most of us would admit to not being perfect and would confess a secret desire to grow personally and become even more beautiful than we are.
So we must look ourselves in the face and admit we are not what we should be -- we need some help.
— We need to make some changes if we are to experience a fresh new growth in our churches and denomination.

Admitting something isn't right, hurts.
— Change is uncomfortable
— Change is hard

Today I do not want to give a high level speech with academic information and a lot of mental knowledge.
My hope is to have a talk that will bring us together on the same page.
I hope we can discover how God is ready to make us into fiery spiritual participants with Him.
I believe God is very interested in the doubling of your church's attendance and for your church to give birth to one daughter church.
I would like to share some simple practical ideas that you may desire to pray about and possibly try out.

In my opinion you conquered the change over from a restrictive regime to freedom.
I congratulate you!!!

But now a whole new world has evolved in the last 10 years that few of us even know about and even fewer can relate too.

There is a new world out there and we need to scramble to learn about it and to keep up with it.
An unprecedented revolution is sweeping the world that will change completely the way we “do church”.

Church ministries and worship services as we know it is a thing of the past.
God himself is ushering in the end times.
While God is doing that, He also is bringing the church back to its initial New Testament beginnings.
Over the centuries the church has become legalistic.
The church has adapted many business principles.
God is bringing the church back to **relationships**.

We have entered a whole new revolution that is sweeping Christianity and will change it forever.
The Muslims are openly preparing *another Jesus* — an antichrist, but I am not talking about the Muslims.

I am talking about the *technical* and *electronic* revolution that is sweeping our churches and we are not even aware of it. Smart Phones have taken en priority in the lives of people.
We are no longer a Baptist denomination
— or rather an isolated Baptist denomination separate from other denominations.
We use charismatic music, listen to Pentecostal messages, read books from other denominations, and have teachers with different doctrines.
Most of it is excellent. But we are no longer isolated Baptists, we have become one segment of the orchestra that plays on God’s platform along with many others.
It is better — much better. It is wonderful and I hope you will shout hoorah, hallelujah will also do and even our Baptist standard “Praise God” is fine.
But it means one very significant thing.

A crucial thing! Our people will no longer be Baptist, just because they are Baptist, or because it is our tradition, or because they grew up being Baptist.
No rather they will choose to be Baptist because they feel we **care** more for them than other denominations in their town.
Being a Baptist in the future will be based upon **how much you care** for other people.

Caring for people means knowing them, deeply — personally--responding to them and their needs.
It means listening and helping rather than just preaching.
With relationships that are built within the church, preaching will be become less and less important.
This is because there will always be a better sermon somewhere on a mobile phone, on the internet.
Music will no longer play a crucial role.
New, fast, loud, modern songs or subdued older hymns will not be a key element in having people come to church on Sundays.
To unbelievers the future of the church, your church, will be determined by **RELATIONSHIPS** — not by preaching as in the past.
To weak believers, without relationships in the church, the church on Sunday morning will become less and less important as people use the internet more and more and do more shift work, their loyalty will be determined by relationships.

But the internet does not bring love, it does not bring relationships.
Only one human can offer a relationship to another human.
Animals can’t satisfy us — things can’t satisfy us.

Very spiritual people can satisfy others if they learn to develop relationships.
God and Jesus stressed relationships more than everything else.

Relationships consist of:

- Proximity -- being together***
- Listening to the other person in depth***
- Meeting that individual person’s need***
- Ministering to others*** — love is giving (doing something for another person)
- Receiving***--accepting help, accepting advice, accepting correction

So I would like to talk and share together about building the following relationships:

1. Building more Intimate Relationships with God,
2. Building New Relationships with Wife & Family,
3. Building Relationships with Young people,
4. Building Relationships with coworkers,
5. Building Relationships with Unbelievers,
6. Building Relationships with Civil leaders,
7. Building Relationships with Missionaries,
8. Building Relationships with Enemies,
9. Becoming an Encourager,
10. Our Responsibilities toward One Another

C. Foundation of Love

Relationships are all built on love.

No love, no relationship.

Little love, little relationship.

Sporadic outbursts of anger, derogatory comments, or complaints, are a breakage of love.

Words like “always” or “never” damage, limit, and destroy love.

Love is not just an emotion, but an attitude that must be desired, learned, practiced, built and kept alive by continual use.

But love is also a discipline!

A discipline that calls for faithfulness even in difficult circumstances.

The use or lack of love infiltrates all of our relationships.

The use or lack of love defines every move and action with another person.

The use or lack of love defines who we are; it makes up the total of our personality

— we are defined as friendly, kind, or harsh, cold, etc.

The use or lack of love is the key factor of how other people relate to us.

The use or lack of love is the key of how other people perceive of us.

The use or lack of love either draws people to us, or repels people from us.

Therefore love is the drawing card to having a growing church and a growing denomination.

The future of our denomination and the future of your church can be summed up in one word: **LOVE**.

Love is an action word; love by its very nature cannot be passive.

LOVE IS ACTION — it is physically expressed, physically practiced.

Love is not something we talk about; love is something we demonstrate. (1 John 3:18)

If there is love, your church will grow. If there is a *lack* of love your church will shrink.

Love is the great foundational indicator of spiritual healthy or unhealthy churches.

Christ therefore put the greatest priority on love.

Love comprises all the fruits of the Spirit.

Love encompasses all the 10 commandments.

Love is the foundation of the greatest sermon in scripture: the Sermon on the Mount — 3 chapters long.

Christ summed it up in a threefold statement as follows:

Love the Lord your God

Love your neighbor

Love your enemy

On these three laws of love hinge our total personal influence and ministry effectiveness.

D. Reality

Let us begin by finding where we are really at!

So, I'll begin with sharing where I am at and we will take it from there.

In my business life or “ministry” I may, according to the Old Testament, be compared to a “priest” or possibly as some say “prophet.”

In the Gospels I might be compared to a Pharisee.

I am only speaking about myself.

I do not want to apply that to you.

But perhaps you might find it interesting and helpful to compare your spiritual profession with those from the Old and New Testament.

Pharisee has a very negative meaning to many of us, but this is incorrect — totally incorrect. Pharisee does not mean hypocrite; it means spiritual leader. I am a spiritual leader. My job is to try to be **good one**. I want to be a GOOD Pharisee, not one of the bad ones.

For just a moment let us take a look at the Pharisees and see if that helps.

1) What was a Pharisee?

- A Pharisee was being a teacher of the Bible (the law).
- A Pharisee was being a church leader (leader of the synagogue).
- A Pharisee was having a doctor's degree in theology (doctor of the law).
- A Pharisee had a very different lifestyle from other people (special clothing or carrying your Bible).
- A Pharisee meant being an official warden of certain spiritual things (traditions, sacraments).
- A Pharisee meant taking care of physical spiritual property (buildings, keeping them sacred).
- A Pharisee had a different time schedule on weekends from those around him.

Item number one to remember is:

Most Pharisees and other spiritual church leaders were **good**, not bad.

There were more good Pharisees than bad ones.

We must not equate being a Pharisee with being bad.

Pharisees were not criminals.

It was the Pharisees — the spiritual leaders that gave the Jewish nation and people their significance.

Without the Pharisees the Jewish nation would have collapsed a long time before Jesus came.

So being a Pharisee does not mean being a bad leader or a bad person.

We will not study this further here, but if you so desire, studying and applying the word "Pharisee" to your own ministry may be a very helpful personal activity.

I recommend it.

So, what does "Pharisee" mean then?

There are other meanings that can be applied, but we will apply the meaning given by Jesus.

Jesus identified them as professionals

Professionals — who had lost their deep spiritual fervency that they had as **young** people.

Professionals — who had lost their deep intimate personal relationship with God.

Professionals — who knew and upheld all the outward services, methods, traditions, etc — and rightly so!

But according to Jesus, Pharisees had lost their humility, their deep personal care for other people, and their relationships with ordinary men and women who were weak or non-believers.

The one glitch that Jesus focused on was that ceremonies, prestige, doing things right (the Baptist way, not like Charismatic) had taken priority.

Relationships had been replaced by a system — a program — an accepted form of doing things on the Sabbath (Sunday morning for us).

Do we have any of that amongst us?

As an illustration I am reminded of one of our village pastors who requested an evangelist to come and hold youth services.

The evangelist was told to reach out to the young people — only do not use loud music.

In another church a deacon grew a beard and the pastor thought that was a sin, forgetting that a hundred years ago all his church founders wore beards.

So I am a Pharisee and I am struggling with being a good one.

Don't throw traditions away! We need traditions!

By far most of our traditions and habits are good

but /// 0-3 /// are we reaching our young people?

Am I growing MEN for Christ?

Am I helping to plant new churches?

Are the churches where I minister growing?

These are the things that many pastors struggle with and that many are trying to balance in their ministry.

2) Let me explain it this way to you:

I am one of the oldest people here — and that means that it is more difficult for me to be unbiased and pure of heart than for you.

The older one is the harder it is to be a good believer.

Since I am older than VN, our former president it is harder for me to be a good Christian than it is for him. Since VN, is older than Slavic Nazarkevich, the main pastor of the L'viv Baptist church it is harder for VN to be a good Jesus follower than for Slavic.

My dear Brothers; *the older we are the more trouble we have to do it right.*

A young new Christian has no experience, only faith; so he prays, then gets an inspiration and says God wants me to do such and such.

Or he makes a mistake and we older ones tend to say “Oh, it’s ok, he is just a new believer but he is on fire that is what is most important.”

When an older believer does something unclean — unchristian, every one is shocked.

It is natural, but is it right?

Moses and David were both older believers and leaders when they made their blunders.

But, yes, we expect fewer mistakes from an older person.

Pastors make mistakes, — the beauty is that some pastors have humility and openly share their mistakes.

For a pastor to share his mistakes and apologize is a mark of true holiness.

The stakes for pure, clean living are much higher for you church leaders than for just ordinary believers.

God Himself said so to King David (2 Sam. 12:14).

You of all people David, my chosen one, my anointed one.

You are the leader of God’s people.

You are their shepherd.

How did you dare to do a thing like that?

Shame on you David (2 Sam. 12:9, 10).

It reminds me of a story about a church elder. A guest speaker was informed by the church secretary that he better preach a good sermon that Sunday because an unbeliever was going to attend. The guest and an elder stood outside the church welcoming the traditional, properly dressed people. Then a somewhat disheveled woman dressed in sloppy clothes came. Obviously she was the unbeliever. The elder stepped forward and said, “Dear miss, this is the house of God and we dress appropriately for God here.” The wounded woman broke out in tears and ran away.

I wonder what Jesus would have done?

Would He have done the same thing as this elder?

3) What would Jesus do in this situation?

What would Jesus do is always a good question to ask, isn’t it?

Also an older believer has more experience; he just about knows for sure what God is going to say or what He wants to do.

So an older believer tends to answer his own prayers, go by experience, use common sense plus he has accumulated a number of false ideas and practices.

This makes many older pastors operate the church similar *to a business*.

This is the very thing that is killing our denomination at this moment.

Two scripture passages come to witness that it is harder to be a good believer when you are older than when you are young.

In John 8:7, 9 we see that Jesus challenged the professional church leaders to take an inward look.

Jesus did not condemn them, **not at all**.

But as they looked inside they discovered that their **true** love for God, for their neighbor, and for their enemies did not measure up to God’s spiritual standards.

They were not even close.

Professionalism was their priority!

In the book of Job we have the story of Job’s 3 trusted old friends telling him that he — in so many words — is actually a fake.

They can only look back at “what always has been, traditions, the rules of the church, their doctrines.”

They are convinced that outward appearance is an accurate measurement of inward spiritual conditions.

But the fourth, youthful Elihu sees some other possibilities.

When God comes on the scene, He exonerates Job, clears Elihu, but expresses the need for the other older 3 friends to be purified because of their shortcomings, which God even calls foolish. Job 42:7, 8.

I am sharing these things because most of you as the superintendents, pastors and elders are both older in physical age as well being older as believers, and also older as professionals in the service of Christ.

The older we become in our marriages, in our relationships with others, the more difficult it usually becomes to change and do some new things.

It is scary to do things we have never done before.

It is scary to admit that we have some false doctrines, like believing that pastors do not sin, or that they are always right.

We all know that such teaching is false teaching. But to admit to others that we are wrong or have made a mistake is not easy, and it usually becomes harder as we get older.

E. We need to rediscover relationships, dependence upon others and what faith (reckless dependence) upon God really is.

I ask your permission and cooperation today to freshly rediscover these precious elements of our Baptist forefathers.

By this little study we hope to help you discover how flexible you are.

What percentage of your church ministry reflects professionalism and how much reflects your personal love as in the "one-another" passages in the New Testament.

We have looked at our professional life, but we also have a private life.

I'll share a few ideas of my private life as example.

My Personal life:

Are people trying to imitate my marriage?

Do I take care that my wife has one day of complete rest every week to honor God?

Have I cultivated in my children the things of the Lord.

Do my children who live at home reflect a reasonably positive lifestyle?

Do I think that some things in my private life should not be known publicly?

Did I help to make my wife a spiritually successful woman that can be measured against Prov. 31?

Do I have habits that do not fit the fruit of the Spirit?

Are my finances clean and pure?

Do I borrow money for less than extreme causes?

/// 0-4 /// As a whole am I a better believer now than 3 years ago?

Has my first love for Jesus been renewed recently?

When and How?

Is there a chance I will finish strong?

My private list can go on and on and on; what is yours?

Let us stop here and do a brief simple personal analysis.

Then we will go on to take a look at our responsibilities to one another.

!!! Do

Answer Questionnaire # 1!!!

Questionnaire # 1 /// 0-5 ///

The Bible teaches us to **"Be above reproach."**

Above reproach obviously does not mean to be perfect.

What does it mean to "be above reproach?" -----

Write down your very first thought that comes to mind about an area where you are you not "above reproach?" -----

Even if you did not write it down, it was still there, right?

— God has spoken to your conscience.

Can you remember as pastor the last time you told your elders that you had made a mistake in church affairs?
Yes ... / ... no ... / ... can't recall? ... (Circle one)

When was the last time you asked your wife for forgiveness? _____ (Fill in approximate date)

I wish I could conquer _____ problem.

(Name item or for privacy write in (I have 1, 2, 3 etc areas.)

I wish to grow in _____ area.

(Name item or for privacy write in (I have 1, 2, 3 etc areas.)

I consider my biggest hurdle to be _____ I need your prayer.

I would like to add the following concern to my analysis -----

PS: If you are perfect please do not participate. Do not fill out the above. This is for imperfect people only.

So if it is still blank congratulate yourself – you are perfect

With this we conclude our presentation about relationships in general.

So now that we have talked about some basic issues I think we are ready to address the relationships in our lives. We will now focus on 7 individual relationships.

II. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD

In our relationship with the Holy Spirit, prayer, Bible reading, and meditation (*intensive listening*) are critical aspects for a pastor.

Most pastors are older men.
Many pastors have begun well.
Now we want to talk about finishing strong.
Finishing **STRONG**!
Finishing **strong** is a major issue.
It is actually much easier to begin well than to **end well**.

Many Christian leaders do **NOT** finish strong

- Saul ended miserably
- David finished weakly
- Solomon finished in pornography and moral corruption.

Haggai teaches that holiness is not easily kept, but it is easily lost. Hag. 2:11-14
Love needs to be kept alive, love must actively be renewed.

/// 1-1 /// What are some of the things you are doing to refresh your first love and fire for Jesus? -----

We'll give you a few suggestions here that have helped hundreds of church leaders,
But your relationship with the Almighty is very personal.

I have practiced many of the suggestions I am sharing today.

1) "*The joy of the Lord is your strength*"

Neh 8: 10 is a primary Bible verse.
I enjoy getting up early to be with Jesus.
A day of prayer is a spiritual privilege!
On a prayer walk I find myself getting so excited I might skip and jump, or shout, or wave my arms.

A day of rest every 7 days is a feast!

Dearest Brothers, you can do any or all of the following suggestions but your spiritual life may still receive little benefit.
What makes it possible to do some of these things, especially spending more time with the Lord, is just **enjoying** His presence.

What we are really talking about in this section is about old men like myself rediscovering their first love for Jesus.

/// 1-2 /// Can you remember the glorious beauty of being saved?

I hope these suggestions will help you to fall in love with Jesus all over again.
May God bless you richly as you try a few of these things at home.

A. Daily one hour in God's Word and prayer

Imitating Jesus

Jesus did this in the **early** morning — He set the example. If you want to be like Jesus make time at sunrise for one hour.
Do you think Jesus woke up in the morning and groaned, "Oh no, I need to get up and spend time with my Father"?
That is not ever the attitude we get from Jesus. Rather if we observe closely, Jesus seemed to delight in being with His Father.
He **WANTED** to be with Him.

He enjoyed the fellowship; He received strength and power; He received confirmation of His task.
For many years our previous leader Slavic Nesteruk, studied God's Word for one hour every morning. He was trying to follow the example of Jesus.
Another Ukrainian leader used to sleep in until he saw Christ's example and wanted to imitate Him.
Now this person rises at 5:30 and his whole life has been revolutionized.

Spending daily one hour with God will set the tone for your whole day.
As you read biographies of great spiritual leaders you will see this as a regular discipline in their lives.
But not one of burden; rather one of joy and refreshment.

/// 1-3 /// How much time do you spend daily in God's Word and prayer? _____ (write in the minutes)

How much time would you like to spend? _____

B. Prayer Walk

Bringing God and sinners together

As believers we love to spend time in the quiet, sacred confines of our church buildings.
But God, Jesus, the apostles, the prophets focused on being among the people and rubbing shoulders with them.
This is where prayer becomes real, on the streets, asking God's victory over the sin in front of us.
Prayer walking has its foundation in the Old Testament when the believers walked around the city of Jericho.
For them it was a real prolonged active participation as an exercise of their faith.
They praised God quietly and loudly, and pulled down evil strongholds that brought complete spiritual victory.

Jack Hyles, once pastor of the largest Baptist church in the USA practiced this.
He needed a large piece of property for a Christian college.
The property was ideal but super expensive.
Once a month he would go at midnight to this property, take off his shoes, walk around the property and claim this property as holy territory for his Lord Jesus.
Pastor Hyles did this monthly for 3 years. Eventually God granted his wish and he was able to buy that land for almost nothing.

In another city a husband/wife team walked around their neighborhood praying for each house and apartment. A few weeks later the Holy Spirit instilled in an unbelieving couple to seek spiritual help. The Holy Spirit helped them to bypass all other churches and led them to attend the exact church where this praying husband & wife team belonged.

How much is prayer walking part of your lifestyle as a Christian leader in your community?
I dedicate my time and efforts usually a few times a year to do a prayer walk around the city where I live.
In the housing section, I may pray over family abuse, good parenting, liquor situations I see, or pray against drug use in derelict districts.
In front of a factory I pray employees will work diligently according to Biblical principles, at another factory I may intercede for the management to seek God's ways of doing things, etc.
I do this because I am an active person and I like to be physically involved in my prayer. Many men in your churches will find it hard to sit still for hours on end praying, but walking and being gripped by the degradation of their community is for many men a very real practical way to have prayer as a spiritual priority.

An extra benefit from prayer walking I have found is that it makes me more conscious and active in prayer at other times, such as on busses, and in the markets, etc.

Have you given thought to combine your worship of God — the idea of:

/// 1-4 ///
Love the Lord your God in a practical time of bringing God and unbelievers together as you walk around a district in your city?

/// 1-5 /// Are you a prayer-walker?
Never yet / Seldom / Occasionally / quite regularly (circle one)

Would you like to venture out and begin this new expression of spiritual fervency?

Yes / No / later (circle one)

For further help special material on this topic may be requested from New Life for Churches. Ask for lecture # Prayer-walking"

C. Day of Prayer

Spending time with Jesus

Recently a church elder questioned, "Praying for one hour? I would not know what to say!"

The fact is that when we are "*in love*" we have a lot to say.

When we are "in love" we want to spend a lot time with our loved one.

In many churches world wide it is a sad fact that church leaders spend only a few minutes a day with their beloved Lord in prayer.

How is that in your church?

How much "extra" time do your elders and church leaders spend in prayer?

What example are you as their pastor?

We as church leaders claim that God has led us, or that we are doing God's will.

On how much deep prayer contact are such statements based?

Jesus said that the mouth speaks of what our inner most thoughts are preoccupied with. Luke 6:45

/// 1-6 /// How much time do you estimate your church members give to prayer, privately, daily? _____

How much time would you like your leaders to spend in prayer regularly? _____

How much time do you personally as pastor spend in active prayer weekly? _____
setting the example?

We are suggesting to add some very specific prolonged times of prayer.

We call that "**A Day of Prayer**".

— This activity consists of finding a quiet spot like Jesus did and spending minimally 6 hours with your Bible, a songbook, a pencil and notebook in prayer and praise.

We suggest that once a quarter, semi-annually, or perhaps even monthly, this may be a tool to help you **FINISH WELL** as a church leader.

Perhaps you are already using this idea to be drawn closer to God?

/// 1-7 /// Yes, I am doing such days with my precious Savior, usually 4, 6, 8 or more hours. (circle one)

No, but I would like to re-awaken my first love and spend more time with Jesus. (circle a word that applies)

Yes, I want to use my notes on "A Day of Prayer" and I commit to begin later this month with a "half day" to begin awaking my spiritual prayer lust. If so boldly circle YES -----

For further help special material on this topic may be requested from New Life for Churches
Ask for lecture "How to have a Day of Prayer."

D. Using a new translation quite regularly

God's personal voice to you.

/// 1-8 /// Perhaps you are already actively involved with a new translation for personal use and growth. If so mark (___ times weekly?)

James tells us to draw close to God and God will draw close to you. Jas. 4:8
Sounds great doesn't it?
But it gets even better!
If we draw close to God, the devil will flee.
I believe that thought makes every believer shout "Hallelujah."
But how do we come close to God?
Moses listened and saw. Elijah heard a whisper. Paul refers to the written Old Testament as our guide.
Jesus spoke and a whole universe was born.
Then Jesus spoke again and your name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
Jesus is called "The Word of God."
The 6 best books of the Bible are: the 4 gospels, Proverbs & Psalms.

Such intimate conversations are extremely private. They are not standard, or tradition, or church methods.
In scripture God called many people; but He did not call any two in the same fashion.
He spoke to each one personally.

Jesus did not use the official language, he used the vulgar, every day street language called Aramaic.
Throughout history the church fathers have attempted to bring God in close communion by using modern translations.
First it was Hebrew, then Greek, then Latin, then Slavic, then German, then English.

Now finally we have the extraordinary blessing of having not one but several modern translations in our own language.
This is a blessing for which numerous translators have given their lives in martyrdom.
There are translations in several languages for which even today translators are shedding their blood.

Are you coming close to God by listening to Him in a still small voice that comes with fresh, new meaning?

/// 1-9 /// Are you as a major executive and representative for Jesus using a *new Translation* quite regularly?

(no /or/ yes, how many times weekly? _____) for personal use and growth?

E. Making Bible reading notes

Writing God's thoughts

Even we as key church leaders, key representatives for God are very fallible.
We pray, we read the Bible, and we received a wonderful precious new insight.
Yet only moments later the insight is lost.
All of us have felt blue, discouraged and wondered why that happened.

One of the most unique things God did with the Jewish nation is to give them His *written* word.
That meant that they had to learn to read and write. A skill that most nations did not have.
A skill that many believers today do not have.
A skill that you as a pastor should practice.
Learning to communicate to your grandchildren, leave accurate instructions for co-workers and provide little notes of blessing to needy church members is a wonderful tool.

God knew that.
So when you open His Word the Bible, He gives you some insights and because you are a pastor God expects you to share that insight with others.

It is a most wonderful thing to daily write one or two lines summarizing what you saw in the Bible. It is a treasure note of God's contact with you.
God is precious, He loves you so much; please write a note for memory sake.
Perhaps future generations will be blessed as they see your notes of praise.

/// 1-10 /// **Yes**, it is my habit to make written notes of my Bible reading — circle YES

I have lived a long time and served Christ with diligence, but I must admit that I did not keep a record of His goodness to me.
I am sorry Jesus.

But it is never too late to start.

/// 1-11 /// Thank you Jesus for giving me new insight and a new chance.

I will begin doing this on _____.

For further help special material on this topic may be requested from New Life for Churches.
Ask for the booklet *Basic Christian Life, Part 1*.

F. Resting 1 day weekly

1) *Becoming holy*

Being Renewed!

God rested on the 7th day... if we don't take a day of rest, our actions say *we think we are better* than God!

I have never met a pastor or elder who did not want to be holy.

We all know and grieve over the trauma of carnal believers.

But not many of us know that God **wants** to make us holy; that God is **waiting** to make us holy.

That God has a **plan** to make us holy.

Many of us think holiness is difficult to acquire; we must do that and must not do something else.

We try and try and try --- and — fail again.

But God said many times in the Bible “*I will make you holy*”. Ex 31:13, Lev. 20:8

Jesus emphasized rest for our souls even amidst busy times.

In this context check out Ex 33: 14, Matt 11:28, Mark 6:31, and Heb 4:1.

So God has a definite desire, God has a definite plan.

___2) *What is the secret so many church leaders have missed?*

God's system for holiness is extremely simple.

God's says “If you give me time, I will give you holiness.”

How much time does God need in order to give us holiness?

He says “tithe” every 7th day and I will make you holy.

We all know about God's money principle of giving 10% FIRST and trust Him with the other 90%.

In the same way God has spoken “give one full day of rest and I will bless you abundantly” with the other 6 days.

All through the Old Testament various sin seems to culminate into a desecration of the Sabbath.

God says the Sabbath (7th day) is a sign that we are believers in the true God, we are the children of God (Ex. 31:12, 13).

The recurring principle is a 7 day principle that is still valid today.

It is not a legalistic event based on the Jewish word “Sabbath”.

It is rather meant to be a reminder that God is first. And to remind us of our limitations. Even Christ would step back from ministry to rest, and God the Father took a day of rest after creating the earth.

By withdrawing from our worldly activities and concerns, we give priority to God and His way of doing things. Jesus seemed to have very meticulously followed this 7th day principle.

A deeper study will reveal that Jesus never worked on the Sabbath.

Jesus did not break any of the 10 commandments. The things Jesus did on the Sabbath seem to fall into 4 categories:

- A silencing of demonic spirits who untimely revealed His Godhead,
- demonstrating examples of mercy,
- illustrations of a principle he was teaching,
- or an exhibition of His Godhead.

There is an overwhelming emphasis on this 7th day principle by which God heaps on blessing after blessing, or devastation after devastation for those who ignore or break this principle.

Seventy years of captivity was the punishment.

The 7th day principle is one of the strongest in Scripture, and it almost seems like God is telling us, "If you give me *one hour* of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual rest and worship I will give you *one hour* of holiness."

If you want 2 hours of holiness, give me 2 hours of separation from your worldly involvements.

Unfortunately I have seen many pastors burn out and emigrate or quit the ministry.

The ones I talked to were good men who shared one problem: being over tired and not having followed God's 7th day principle.

They went into captivity. *How terribly sad!*

Often I have been asked about my spiritual and physical vitality and I have even been asked, "What is your recipe?"

All I can say is that I follow the 7th day principle strongly and after my day of rest God seems to fill me with His vitality and power. For me it has been like Christ said, "I have food that you know not of."

I want to wholeheartedly recommend it to you my dear brothers.

The Bible says that for pastors, Sunday is not a day of rest.

Therefore pastors need to have another day of rest.

God, for optimum performance, simply designed for mankind to have a rest, physically, emotionally and for your souls *every 7th day*.

For your own blessings look up Isa 56:2 and 58:13, 14 and see that by keeping the 7th day holy, God himself will make you holy and spiritually successful.

He will make you like a king riding far above your earthly difficulties.

Brothers, those of you who desire holiness; "You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life."

God wants some of your time for **HIMSELF!!**

I want to ask you, brothers, to "Give your Lord the most precious thing you have. Give Him your time."

G. Listening for the Future

Making less mistakes

Enjoying God creates a desire in us to know *His* direction for our future.

It takes time to become quiet enough so we can hear our heavenly Father's still small voice.

/// 1-12 /// For reflection on the direction my life is taking I have or would like to develop regular special times for listening to God: i.e. 15 minutes a day;

1 hour weekly for spiritual meditation;

One day for reflection monthly.

Yes ... / ... not sure ... / ... feel the need for ... (circle one)

H. Personal Insights

How I am becoming more like God

/// 1-13 /// Other new things I am doing to refresh my relationship with Jesus are:

III. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WIFE & FAMILY

1) Hurts and Pain

There is *so much sadness* in this world.
There is so much sadness *among us*.
Yes even among us Baptist leaders.
One pastor's daughter became a prostitute.
One elder's son died drunk in the army. His other son died a few months later in a drunken motorcycle accident.

/// 3-1 /// **Does it not hurt? It hurts me!**

I wept for this dear father many times.
Another pastor's son died of a drug overdose.
The list --- goes on and on.
We are talking about ourselves here, our own pastor friends and relations.
These are all dear, very dear men of God.
Men who have given their all to serve Jesus Christ. Men who have sacrificed time, money and energy to build the church of God in Ukraine.
Yet they had to suffer so terribly!
Isn't it sad?
I am not accusing, I cannot be angry, I can only be sad, *VERY* sad.
I am broken hearted.

/// 3-2 /// My question is: **"Do we need to pay more personal attention to our wives and families?"**

How is it in your family?

What is your response? -----

/// 3-3 /// Do you need to give more in-depth time to your immediate family? Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

/// 3-4 /// What about that dear wife of yours?

If she would die your life would be changed forever.
Nothing would ever be the same if your beloved wife died.
Just ask those pastor friends who had to go through this tragedy what it is like.

2) Affection is an Action of Love

/// 3-5 /// Is that dear wife of yours, **really dear?**

A wife's greatest need is for security in your relationship, and security is obtained by most women through affection... It is the affection she receives that gives her confidence in your care for her and her wellbeing.

She needs your touch of affection.
She needs your words of affection.
She needs your look of affection.
She needs you to spend quality affectionate time with the children she gave you.
She needs you to complement her affectionately.

Affection is an **Action of Love**... it is the emotion of love acted out.

Let us take a look at some questions:

(Session Leader read the questions to the Brothers and then you click off the video for fifteen minutes so you can guide them through these questions.)
Brothers this is not a break, we will continue immediately to talk about intimate sexual relations.

You are the head of the home, her leader, her protector.
Your wife wants to serve you and make you successful.

/// 3-6 /// Are you giving her careful, accurate instructions, so she can be the very best helpmate God designed her to be? What are you doing that makes Jesus happy? -----

/// 3-7 /// Do you weekly provide one day of rest for her, as the scriptures so strongly teach?
Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

Keeping initial love alive, what fresh short little honeymoon type of activity can you dream up? -----

When could you make that happen? -----

What made you desire to marry her? -----

Take time now to list those good qualities — then add new ones you discovered over the years. -----

Now begin to express and emphasize your gratitude on a regular basis.
Doing acts of kindness — make a list for the coming month of frequent little expressions of affection and appreciation. -----

Think of the sweetness of falling in love.

Would you like to let it happen again?

Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

Once you have established a new intimate union with your wife, then let her guide you to do the same with your children.

Your wife most likely knows better than you.

Be humble, let her guide you into building new personal relationships with all your children, in-laws, and grandchildren.

Follow her advice! Practice! Learn!

Ask! Do! — and then apply all the same things to your young people's group as a whole.

My dear pastor friend — I beg you, build a new family; build a new church based on healthy growing personal relationships.

3) Marital Intimacy

When discussing husband / wife relationships it would be blatantly ignorant or neglectful not to mention sex.

So I want to very briefly touch upon this subject.

The Bible talks so much about sexual relations--both positive and negative.

Constantly the Bible uses sex as an illustration of spiritual love and loyalty or idolatry. God is deeply interested in our most intimate marital relationships.

4) God wants holy marriages.

Marriage is all about being male and female.
We are turning to a pre-fall passage in scripture.

/// 3-8 /// Gen. 2:24, 25. (Put this on screen and have the Brothers read this together orally)
"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.
The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."

The male should become one with a female in mind, in emotion, spiritually and in vision.
God ordained that this be done through sexual oneness in body.
The sex act is intended for all of the above intimacies and blending of 2 beings into one; not *only* a physical act.

The primary purpose of sex is an intimate expression of love so that 2 people become one in all areas of life.
God knew that the blending into one would require many repeat acts of physical sexual unity in order to fulfill a lifetime oneness as He intended. Mal. 2:16B
The secondary purpose of sex is procreation.

Most mature church leaders and pastors are a bit older men, so I want to specifically address these men of God.
The enemy has foisted upon pastors a demonic epidemic in the form of older men of God leaving their wives and having a sexual affair with some young woman.
Some men are involved in pornography, some in emotional intimacies with or about other women.
Many pastors have some sort of sideline sexual interest going on outside of marriage that is defiling them.
In some countries it is devastating the church and it is coming to Ukraine.
I have been told that in certain Baptist circles in Ukraine this has reached epidemic proportions.

5) What has happened?

As we grow older many men have accumulated so much experience that they begin to take sex for granted.
The glamour has long since worn off and it becomes a habit.
Our older bodies have less need and less energy and there is a tendency to use our wives, now past menopause in a demeaning way to quickly fulfill our needs and have it over with.

One Christian lady summed it up this way.
*"About once a month my husband rolls over and without any preparation he basically helps himself.
There is nothing for me! I am left empty, feeling like a used rag."*

Dear Brothers this man is no longer "one flesh with his wife."
What this lady describes we might call something like "the prostitute syndrome."
Prostitutes focus on quick sex acts which leaves men completely unfulfilled and is a vulgar degrading of God's female creation.

God has a completely different and extremely beautiful plan for both men and women.
God's intent is for older men to linger long at their sexual intimate relationships in their marriage.
We might suggest for older pastors and other Christian men to spend an hour in this GOD ASSIGNED activity of becoming one flesh.

Spending a prolonged time simply enjoying her: caressing, massaging, fondling, teasing, tickling, and laughing with the beloved wife of your youth is God's intent for His people (Prov. 5:18). God wants you to enjoy your wife, delight in her (Eccl. 9:9).
Doing so will evoke in your wife a grandiose feeling, of being wanted, having priority, being important to you as the most precious person God the heavenly Father has given to you to care for.
She will experience the delight of being your queen, and as she becomes enthralled with you and responds, your body will be treated as a king.

Such deep prolonged physical and emotional satisfaction will go a long way in thwarting this demonic attack on your life and your church.
May you experience new fresh spiritual exuberance as you drive the sex demon out of your life and make sex a **holy activity** as the Lord intended it.

Further help special material on this topic may be requested from New Life for Churches

Ask for Lecture #FR10 “Husband & Wife Relationships” or #FR2 “How to Love Your Wife”

Now we will talk about

IV. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

1) *The revolution*

There is a revolution sweeping the world – it began with **Smart Phones**.

A whole new world culture is being established.

It has never happened before.

It is the Lord's doing as part of His **end-time program**.

We refer to it as the *electronic* and *communication* revolution.

It is bringing about a change in our young people.

They think different, they dress different, they act different, they **are** different.

Our young people will never worship in our churches again as we worship now.

Your own grandchildren are leaving our churches.

Take a look around Ukraine. Horses have disappeared, replaced by tractors.

The mechanized world is taking over.

People are no longer walking as they used to. Now it is transportation by car, city-bus, or bicycle. Walking is out.

Life is changing before our eyes.

And the **Smart Phone** change is even much more dramatic.

Here is the question we must answer:

What will **I** do to reach **my** grandchildren for Jesus? -----

/// 4-1 /// Do you want your grandchildren saved? -----

Then enter their world.

It is the only way

Then you, the mature ones, the leaders, will have to *minister* to your grandchildren. They are the immature ones.

The world used to belong to the mature and wise, and young people would be trained to enter into it.

The world used to belong to us. No longer — the world now belongs to young people.

Young people, those under 25, rule the world all over and we are now living in **their** world.

Now it is **THEIR** WORLD that we live in, not ours.

Your grandchildren will *not* bend.

/// 4-2 /// **You are the one that must bend!!!**

If you talk to your little granddaughter and refer to that beautiful horse in the pasture, she will be bored quickly and ignore you.

If you ask the little girl to show you her cell phone and let you try it, you will win her admiration.

Fortunately we have 2 scriptural precedents to help us reach out to our grandchildren.

The first is God's personal example.

The first is that God always took the initiative.

It was not our forefathers who changed and took the first move.

God took the first move.

God came to Abraham and others, **God** reached out to form a whole new Jewish nation.

God sent many, many messengers (prophets and others).

Then finally **God** left heaven, changed Himself into the form of a human being and came to help us.

Jesus left all His God stuff in heaven, changed Himself and reached out to minister to us.

If you want your grandchildren to be washed in the blood of Jesus, you, as pastors and church leaders, will have to change your ways of doing things. You will have to change your ways of your regular worship services.

It is not that you are wrong, or that your grandchildren are right.

/// 4-3 /// **Forget about that!!!!**

It has nothing to do with being wrong or right.

The simple truth is that our grandchildren cannot *understand us and our ways* of worshipping.

A 30 year old pastor of a large church here told me, "I can no longer understand or relate to 18 year olds."

Yes it will be hard.

Yes, you will NOT like it.

But it must still be done.

Jesus did not like being a human being.

He said, "How long do I have to put up with you and your evil junk?" Matt 17: 17.

Jesus did not like it, but he did it.

You will not like it either but if you want your own grandchildren to go to heaven you will have to build a whole new set of personal relationships with them.

For me personally it is very hard, and I would completely fail in this area of my life--completely.

Fortunately my dear wife is very aware of it and is constantly pushing me to spend time and build relationships with my grandchildren.

She forces me to adapt and change, and it is good.

It is not easy. I find it hard and repugnant sometimes, but I am doing it.

If you want your grandchildren in heaven with you, you too will have to spend a lot of time with them. The same is true for all your young people, your job is to become a missionary to them just like Jesus became a missionary to us.

(And who knows, along the journey that starts with obediently reaching out, you might just learn to love it along the way and find the beauty in doing things a new way. ☺)

2) The young people will never worship in your church again the way it is now.

Young people are leaving our churches in droves, and it is only beginning.

/// 4-4 /// Here is the problem: use overhead chart

The main congregation of the church consists of those 45 years of age and over.

They are older and comfortable with the way we do things.

These older people are also paying for it and helping to clean, paint and maintain our church buildings.

You **too** are part of this regular congregation.

You think like them and feel like them.

It is very comfortable to minister to your regular congregation.

And there is nothing wrong with what we do. Nothing at all, it is perfectly right.

So *what is wrong?*

/// 4-5 /// use PP on attendance — people dying yearly

Within 10 years time hundreds and hundreds of our Baptist churches will close.

That is pretty bad isn't it?

That is pretty negative! Pretty depressing!!

But there is hope ☺ ---- lots of hope ☺

Let us begin by answering the question

Why are our grandchildren leaving our churches?

3) Because, they are different.

They look at life differently The way they see the world is different, and their *base values* are different than what ours were in the past.

We may compare them to Eskimos, or Chinese.

Our grandchildren are different on the *inside*. **They are not like us.**

They are shaped by smart phones and the internet.

Young people are a new group with many totally new unknown characteristics.

Think for a moment what you would do if you had to take care of two very different groups of people.

Forty Eskimos come and 30 jungle people. How would you minister to 2 such very different groups?

You may not have an answer.

And most certainly you would make many mistakes.

But one thing would probably be certain.

You would not put them together. You would separate them and minister to them in distinctly different ways.

You would put the jungle people in the attic, and the Eskimos in the basement.

Some churches in Ukraine are exactly doing that with their young people.

4) Providing a Worship Service for Youth

Wise pastors provide a second Worship Service specifically for and led by young people.

This way conservative churches can retain their traditional worship service.

There is nothing wrong with that.

Large churches with hundreds of people naturally do not want to lose their congregation.

They want to keep their traditions, their old Baptist way of doing things that is comfortable.

But these visionary church leaders realized something completely different was needed for their young people.

Young people are going to have guitars and loud music. They will use Bibles on phones, they will clap their hands, and they will do many other things that we normally don't approve of in our churches.

Things that we often call charismatic, even though it is false to say so.

(Reading the Bible from a modern version is not charismatic. Including the Holy Spirit in your prayer is not charismatic.)

So church leaders with a love for their youth and a vision for the future are taking drastic action and starting new services.

A worship service very specifically for young people with the even more specific purpose of attracting unsaved young people.

Such pastors are very wise.

They did not call their new church, "church".

They did not even get another building.

They simply started another service specifically for young people right after lunch on Sunday afternoon.

Praise God for such wise church leaders, they kept the name "Worship Service" for the traditional morning service.

The afternoon event is called the "Youth Service."

In the summer the young people meet in a park or in the woods with their guitars and sing and share testimonies with unbelievers.

Sometimes they meet after the Sunday evening service.

But in fact, in reality, they started a new church.

A special church for their youth, and this is what you should do.

It is my understanding that such youth services usually attract other youth; new youth are being saved regularly and churches begin to grow.

In modern cities today unbelievers sleep in late on Sunday morning. They will not go to church in the morning. But they are free and available after lunch.

God is on the throne in such churches, God is moving in these churches, and why?

Because the pastors obeyed the Bible; they followed scripture in ministering to their young people.

5) Examples from Scripture

Jesus had some difficulties with the older church leaders, but had a perfect solution.

This brings us to example 2 from the Bible. We find it in Matthew chapter 9.

Let us read verses 14–17. (Orally read it as a group together – make sure everyone participates – then repeat.)

Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast. "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

This is not a story, but a discussion.

It is not a discussion about fasting only, but rather about the larger aspect of church traditions.

Jesus did not say that traditions were not good. He did not criticize traditions in any way.

But He did say in verse 15 that there are times to ignore traditions and do something completely new.

Then in verse 16 He said that if you try to put something old and something new together you will **fail**.

As a matter of fact He said you will **ruin** both the old and the new.

Jesus is talking about groups of people here. Groups of people that have different feelings and different ways of doing things.

And what did Jesus say?

What was His advice to us?

He said, "Don't mix up these 2 different groups!!!"

Then in verse 17 Jesus gives us even further insights.

What should we do with this group of Eskimos and jungle people?

6) Jesus said, "Keep them separate"

Put the old group in old familiar containers and put the new group into new containers.

Then He goes on to say "Then both groups will be successful." (for more info see Lecture BC13)

Here is the vision Jesus has for your church.

Jesus knew that many groups of new believers, or young people, or special sub-classes of people such as university students, do not fit into our existing worship services.

Jesus shared the idea with John's disciples that it would be best to care for and nurture such groups separately.

Jesus clearly stated to keep such young believers apart. His vision for us is to start a new church specifically for your young people.

This is a vision Jesus shared with John the Baptist.

The vision of Jesus is to start a new church specifically for your young people.

Jesus also practiced this himself. All of his disciples were young people, some perhaps teenagers.

It was young people who started Pentecost!

7) Look at the beauty Jesus had in mind for you.

/// 4-6 /// US PP On Growing a New Church

Jesus' vision was for each generation is to replenish themselves with new converts. This way, as the older ones move to heaven, the new converts replenish them. Jesus' intent was also to add additional converts so churches would continually expand.

So the exciting idea Jesus had was for our churches to experience growth every 10 years.

New converts come from unbelievers that are turned into believers by your contact with them and your example to them. This needs to be an ongoing oral involvement.

Jesus' intent for your church is to constantly increase.

It can be done!

Jesus DID it!

Churches **are** doing it!

Wow!!! Praise God.

These is hope --- Lots of hope!

Yes, hope even for many dying churches.

Such wise pastors did what Jesus advised; they kept the older people in the regular worship service and created a new youth service.

Brothers, God's answer to the dilemma with our very own grandchildren is to start new churches. Jesus said these young people's services would be wild, and noisy, even charismatic perhaps. Those concepts are included in "the wedding idea" or "the new wine" idea. Weddings are unpredictable and noisy.

New wine bubbles, and is strong.

I don't like it, but that is the way it is, and Jesus said let it be!

Five years from now these same young people will be the parents of small children in your church. Take good care of them.

Jesus also said: don't throw out your old congregation, keep them, minister to them as well.

Do not throw away your old traditions.

We will take some time now to discuss these ideas and write in your very own conclusion.

May God bless you as you apply these ideas in your church — Amen.

/// 4-7 /// My dear friends, do you really want that your grandchildren will not go to hell? -----

What will you do to minister to them? -----

Will you give them freedom to listen to their fast, loud Christian music? -----

Name some of the first steps you will take to build fresh new relationships with your youth. -----

Can you adapt the example of a Sunday afternoon youth service to your situation?
Yes ... / ... no ... / ... other ... / ... later (*Circle one*)

How? -----

8) Good news for older leaders

The Bible has some encouraging instructions for the older spiritual leaders among us.

If you are in the “grandfather” category fill out the following suggestions from Deut. 6:4 about building relationships with your grandchildren, great grandchildren and other youth in your church.

When? _____

Where? _____

What? _____

How? _____

Why? _____

Now in part 4 we talk about

V. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COWORKERS

1) *Interdependency--the Trinity's demonstration*

The 12 "one anothers" in the New Testament are specifically applicable here.

An extra "Opportunity Sheet" is provided for those of you who would like to explore this issue further.

God's design is interdependency.

We see this design in the earth, moon, and sun relationship.

We see this design in the microscopic functions of the cells in our inner bodies.

We often ignore that or take it for granted, but let one tiny body part be ill and our whole body aches.

Interdependency is mysterious.

Only God can bring about a spiritual rebirth, yet God's design is to limit Himself to believers to do the advertising (the preaching) for him.

Purposefully God has limited Himself to work with and through men and women.

He not only made Adam a spiritual being but also created him uniquely to be His overseer of all happenings on earth.

Even more mysterious is God's own nature.

Interdependency is built within God's own nature.

We refer to it as the Trinity.

God is not a dictator God.

He is a relational God.

So we read that within Himself God sought counsel and made decisions mutually.

The resurrection of Christ is stated to be an act of each person of the Trinity.

The outcome is that what God does is "very good" Gen 1: 31.

It is immeasurably better than we can even imagine Eph. 3: 20.

This is the foundational reason why God wants us to be interdependent upon one another.

This is the foundational reason for God's strong antagonism to pride.

Interdependency requires relationships.

The better the relationship the better the interdependency.

The better the interdependency the more beautiful, the more grandiose the result.

A good illustration of this is an orchestra.

Each individual person and each individual instrument must be fine tuned.

Not fine tuned *just for itself* as for a beautiful solo. No even much **more** explicitly, much **deeper** than that.

Beside being fine tuned for personal effectiveness, both the person and the instrument must also be very finely attuned to several other instruments.

This is the kind of interdependence that God desires in church leadership.

This is also the kind of interdependency that is almost unheard of in Ukraine.

Under former governmental and social structures this almost did not exist in our country.

We did not grow up with it, I did not grow up with it.

I was raised to believe that I was important and that I must make things happen.

My background was "I", "I", "I", and "I".

It has taken me a lifetime to learn that inter-dependency is much, much more effective and produces far greater and more beautiful results.

2) *Separation – the Pastor's Trouble Maker*

The great sin--basically the **ONLY** sin--is this separation, the breaking of relationships.

Satan was successful in breaking Adam's relationship with God.

Adam's initial act of independence resulted in running away from God as far as he could.

After sin Adam did not want to be with God. Before he had desired God's fellowship. Not now, no longer.

He wanted to be alone.

Pride says "I", pride separates and makes us loners.

Pride is a lifter up of self and pride is a denouncer of others.
Human pride is based on being derogatory, disparaging, and belittling.
Pride is a major factor in dictatorships.
Pride is one of the ground issues that some people as nations have to struggle with.
Pride expressed as dictatorship is the single major source of weakness in churches.
God hates pride.
God's design is for interdependency.
God very specifically did not give all talents and capabilities to one pastor.
That means no pastor can do a good job alone.
Working alone will always result in neglecting or offending some church member or overlooking an important aspect of church leadership.
God purposefully designed us so that by ourselves we would fail.
God designed team leadership. Eph. 4: 11.
Such a team, functioning in unity and harmony, can activate the whole congregation. 4:12.
When a congregation turns from being spectators into participants the whole church will gloriously reach the complete fullness as intended by Christ. 4:13.

When our children do wrong, they do not want to be with their parents. They want to hide, they want to be alone.
When spouses quarrel and each wants to be right, humility is destroyed and pride is lifted up.
The result is a cooling of their relationship.
Each wants to go their own way.
Men tend to express it by the words, "Leave me alone!!!"

Oh how we ache and suffer when a son or daughter's marriage struggles.

We deeply hurt, because deep within us we sense that peace, unity, deep intimate relationships belong to a good and beautiful marriage.

Yet at the same time we often struggle with relationships ourselves.
Relationships are one of the **neediest** elements in our lives which we need to develop, to grow, to beautify, to make active.
It is a lifetime task.

It is common for pastors to want to be alone.
Relationships with elders are often held to a very minimal, doing business type nature.

Numerous pastors want to keep relationships with their superintendent to a minimum.

Provincial superintendents want to do their own things and only minimally follow guidelines from the president and often only reluctantly participate with the team in the Head Office .
(Just a simple example of that is that many church leaders still don't want to help the Head Office financially! That lack of financial sharing is just one sign that you don't really *care*.
You don't treasure the relationship.
You are not a participant but just a recipient.)

3) Pastors as Flowers in God's garden

My dear Brothers, God wants to change all that. He wants you, me, us, church leaders, Kingdom leaders, spiritual participants with Him to develop relationships.

God wants us to be interdependent *like flowers upon bees* for pollination.
Right now we want to discuss interdependency and relationships.
It is not something one person can tell another how to do it.
It is **too** intimate for that.
Interdependency and relationships is only something we can explore together.
Then later on those of you who want to become more Christ-like in your church management style can begin to practice it at home.

King Saul did not know how to be a good leader. He did not have a group of counselors, a team of advisors.
Saul was a successful ruler, but a dictator-type, and that eventually ruined him.

David developed a group of wise men around him, counselors, advisors, and he also had a team of 30 valiant men who really made things happen.
Doing this made David dependent upon many others.
Ultimately David became known as a man of humility and therefore God raised him up to become the pinnacle of Jewish leadership.

Solomon had such overwhelming wisdom that others simply could not help.
Yet without a team of advisors Solomon not only ruined himself.
He did worse than King Saul because Solomon also caused the ruin of the nation.

The Bible has much to say to spiritual leaders about their need for counselors.
Here are just a few verses from Proverbs for you to begin your own study. Prov. 11: 14, 12: 15, 13:10, 15:22, 20:18.

These verses emphasize the need and safety counselors provide a pastor.

Several verses include references to war.

It is well to remember that a pastor's main job is NOT only to preach and **not** only to make sure there is a nice comfy Sunday morning worship service.

As God's leader of the local church a pastor's most important job is to spiritually feed his members Psalm 23; Eph. 4: 13. It is also the pastor's job to protect his members (1 Sam. 17:33-36). The church leadership is to help believers who struggle with false cults, alcohol, drugs, immorality, divorce and so on until they all reach Eph. 4:13-16. So the scriptural suggestions that pastors are to be at war are very applicable Eph. 6:10-18.

4) God's grace, like water, flows to the lowest place.

But there is a difficulty in building such relationships and receiving counsel from others. *The difficulty is the **conflict** between pride and humility.*

In the pastor's relationship with his elders or assistants, or coworkers the conflict between pride and humility plays a major role.

Before we can benefit from our counselors or from advice shared by others we as pastors must commit ourselves first that if at all possible we will set aside our own feelings, set aside our own plans, set aside our own desires. Such an attitude, such a commitment, conditions our hearts and spirits to become receptive to what others have to contribute.

This is the spirit of David in us, the spirit of humility that our Lord loves so much.

This is why Jesus plainly demonstrated His desire for this form of church leadership in John 13: 12-17 and Luke 22: 25, 26.

I am sure that you as a pastor would like to imitate David. You would like to become successful as David, and you would like to have a reputation like David.

5) What needs to be done?

You need to build relationships, close relationships, with your elders or co-pastors.

Close relationships develop trust.

Without trust it is impossible to please and help each other.

Trust, peace, unity are built through **intimate** personal relationships with your church leaders.

Relationships consist of:

Proximity, being together — spending much time together individually and as a group

Listening to the other person with focus — listening to the details, discovering hidden hurts, listening to their advice and suggestions.

Meeting that person's need — ministering to others — meeting a need demonstrates your love, your thoughtfulness, your prayer and concern for him.

Love is giving, love is action, love is doing something for another person **without** them having to ask for it.

Relationships also include:

Receiving — desiring and accepting help from others.

Desiring their suggestions, their wisdom. Accepting even correction.

Being a person of mercy — Being trustworthy with people and relationships, being a safe person--for instance... being a good "confession" taker... responding to a confession of sin, or confronting sin in a gracious Biblical fashion/with love for the person, and not just contempt for the sin...

It is more than simply listening well. It is building trust by showing the person that you will hear their broken hearts in their sin, and be more concerned with healing them than "fixing" their sin.

Being someone that others know they can turn to and will receive love / acceptance / and building up instead of condemnation.

This is probably the most difficult thing for people to do. It's something that a person with the gift of mercy is naturally good at (others struggle).

Broken people confessing their horrible sinful lives need to hear, “***Neither do I condemn you.***”

Some of you have come already a long way along this road.

/// 2-1 /// Make a list of what personal help you have extended to your elders — when? -----

Are you interested, ready and willing to make new efforts to follow advice from your elders rather than doing it all on your own?

Yes ... / ... no ... / ... not yet ... (circle one)

With which elder would you like to begin building a closer personal relationship? _____
(write initials)

Which elder can you assist to be more successful? _____ (write initials)
in what area? _____

How would you go about it? _____

With how many elders do you feel free to share your personal aches and pains so they can pray specifically for you? _____ (write in a number)

How many elders would trust you with their personal money? _____ (write in a number)

My dear Brothers, I wish I could help you specifically with some of these applications.

I can't. I am only a half-baked Ukrainian. I am only a foreign reject.

But there are several good men among you, good pastors who have learned this dependence upon God and their fellow church leaders.

I'll name just one example but there are many. One pastor built a strong church in a small village. This pastor went early in the morning and prayed with his unbelieving neighbors.

That pastor has also developed and trained many men to be coworkers.

He is a pastor who invested himself into men.

It is a church based on men. The men love him and relate to him.

Now he has a church that can be passed on to the next generation.

That pastor is older now, but that pastor is *finishing well*.

I want to introduce you to one of my spiritual heroes — Vasily Romanuk.

Let us clap for that pastor and say thank you to him and to all the other pastors who are doing such an excellent job with their elders.

PRAISE GOD

Let us look at 5

VI. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNBELIEVERS

1) *Growing Men for God*

There are 17 million more women believers than men believers in the USA.
In China it is worse. In Ukraine about 85% are women (in all denominations together).
In most other countries the situation is similar.
Building relationships with unbelieving men is crucial.

___2) *Jesus worked with men.*

Men are the *Missing Ingredient*.

Men Hate Going to Church.

Ask around and you'll find that the majority of men from non-church backgrounds were not saved in a church building but in the out-of-doors. Men do not like to go to church. Men will not come to church!

So we need to focus on men in another way.

Let us look at what Jesus did.

Jesus started out by looking for men **out-of-doors**.

He met men in the wilderness, on the seashore, in financial business offices, and on the farm land.

Jesus made contact with men and got them interested in spending *more time* with Him.

Jesus was able to have men *like* Him and somehow men *wanted to be with* Him.

That is precisely what we need to do.

Like Jesus we need to go to men.

Like Jesus we need to find men **Out-Of-Doors**.

Like Jesus we need to find a hobby or a job part-time that will relate to other men.

Like Jesus we must remember that most men get saved **OUTSIDE** — not inside.

— Men like — fishing, boating, hiking, shashlik.

Like Jesus we should lead small groups of unbelievers.

Jesus led several of them. Let me mention 3 of them.

1. In a rich businessman's home — mafia type.

2. In the home of a false theologian — who did not believe in life after death.

3. In an ordinary workman's home — for friends and neighbors. (see lecture GL8 "*Grow Leaders for God*".)

Jesus did not just give us the Great Commission — "Work with unbelievers and make disciples."

No Jesus actually **demonstrated** it. He did it Himself.

Then when he departed for heaven He said "**DO AS I HAVE DONE.**" **Follow my example!**

Lead Bible studies with groups of unbelievers.

So I am asking you to Do What Jesus Did, Grow Men for God

In Ukraine when we win ladies to Christ the men won't follow.

The men don't come. And most families that do come, drift away.

But when men are won to Christ, women and families usually follow and stay!!!

Percentages of parents and other siblings saved through children who repented is only 3%. When ladies are saved only 17-20% of their husbands and children follow them spiritually;

But when Men are born again 90-93% of their families come to Christ. So let's focus on MEN now. (see brochure EV1 "*New Life for MEN*").

Men will not come to church or to a Bible study unless you personally build a relationship with them in some outdoors activity.

I am looking for men who want to find 3 men and start an Activity -Fellowship.

This can be: Snowmobiling, horse riding, skiing, hiking, mountain climbing, hunting, fishing, boating, + a 1,000 others; soccer and other kinds of sports activities, or working on a project together.

3) *A Fishing Story*

This is the fishing story of Vitaly

Vitaly is a young church planter in an extremely strong Catholic area. Some of the men do not even want to be in the same room with him when he visits. After about 2 years he and his friend got a minibus full of these men to go fishing *with* them while they fished for them. They drove 200 km to a nice river. It rained all day and they caught nothing. Naturally they were discouraged on the way home and had the question. "*God we tried so hard to reach these men. Couldn't you have made a bit better arrangements?*" But when they arrived back in their town and unloaded, the men were excited about the event. The unbelievers said: "This was wonderful. Can we do it again?" They requested to go again another time. No one was saved, but relationships were built.

To them it had been a beautiful time of clean fellowship--something they were not used to, and the door for further ministry was opened, and Jesus was shown powerful and desirable.

But let me explain the blessings that are in store for you.

Big blessings are awaiting pastors who will personally work with MEN.

If a pastor and 2 other close church leaders will personally work with MEN, they can each win 3 MEN to Christ in a year through an outdoor activity.

Three MEN each in one year totals 9.

Nine new MEN believing and being baptized.

Nine MEN added to your church.

And what about next year, and the year after that?

If God gave you as the pastor and 2 other brothers the grace to do this for 3 years a miracle would happen.

4) A Miracle waiting to happen

Look: **/// 6-1 /// Chart on church growth:**

Look at this following example:

3 pastors and elders each leading 3 MEN to Christ. That makes 9.

Then the next year 9 again and the third year 9, that makes 27 new MEN in your church.

MEN have a natural attraction to women and women a natural attraction to men, so later these MEN will bring their wives. That makes 54 new people attending your church, plus children.

Wow, that is a miracle

But I have more.

Notice that we are not asking the church members to participate.

We do not look to any members for help.

We don't even **want** their help!

We only counted 3 church leaders.

We did not ask for much time involvement.

Only **one** evening, two hours or so per week.

It costs almost nothing.

And it can be done anywhere locally, even in the smallest village.

Brothers! Three years from now many of you can almost double the members in your church.

Look at that -- Spiritual success in just 3 short years.

That is God's miracle. God has set an open door before you.

5) Join the miracle

We are looking for commitment — Jesus is not much interested in hearers, He is looking for doers. It will call for a *commitment*. It will call for *caring* about these MEN and their souls. It will call for prayer and intercession for them. And then building the relationships by regular contact.

Now complete the questionnaire and discuss the decisions you have made with your deacons.

Ask for prayer and discuss how you will begin. Then use this slip to share with others.

So now we will pass out a small slip for you to fill out and return.

/// 6-2 /// The slip says:

"YES"... I want to commit myself to leading a Bible study group with unbelievers.

Circle... "YES" ... if this expresses your desire.

"Yes, I want to reach 3 men by personally getting involved with them through an outdoor activity.

I am making a commitment to develop a personal relationship with 3 unbelieving men.

Circle... "YES" ... if this expresses your desire.

State your city or town _____ and Your name _____

For further help special material on this topic may be requested from New Life for Churches. Ask for Lecture #BC6 "Doubling Your Church Attendance"

VII. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT LEADERS

We believers have been pushed into a corner –preferably to be forgotten by society.

A. The Pastor as the Central Community Focus

Now we, the leaders of God, need to bring the church back to become **the central focus** in our communities. The Orthodox church is doing a splendid job of making their church buildings a focus point for public attention. We don't put the focus on buildings, but you are after all God's present day Moseses, Joshuas, Daniels, Elishas, Habakkuks and Zechariahs.

You, yourself, must become a focus person for public attention, public influence for Christ and for the Gospel sake. Building relationships with government leaders is crucial.

Remember the Bible! It says that government officials are God's servants (Rom 13:4). Zechariah shows that in God's sight you, a spiritual leader, and the physical government leader are the same in God's sight. In the Lord's eyes, you are partners together. You are together to bring about a spiritual Ukraine.

Note that you as a pastor are like a burnt stick rescued from the fire. Compare yourself to Joshua in Zech chap. 3. Then compare your government leader to Zerubbabel in chap. 4. You will note that it is spiritual power in the **secular** leader that brings social reform. You the church leader are called by God to bring local and national reform. In-depth prayer for your government colleagues is a crucial beginning.

B. You the Power Bringer

Today we will limit our discussion of relationships to prayer.

How many officials do you know by name? This is so very crucial. Throughout scripture God is concerned with details. Bringing a government leader before the throne of God by name indicates your sincerity, your compassion. Praying by name indicates that you have become involved, you not only have sympathy, but you have empathy. The Government consists of human beings, people just like you. They have feelings, frustrations, make mistakes and so on. They also have wives and children that they love. Family members with hurts and illnesses.

Under past regimes some of us were almost forced perhaps to become critical, and negative but the time has now come to be positive, to remember the words of our Lord Jesus.

/// 7-1 /// The **merciful** are blessed Matt 5: 7
I desire mercy and am calling sinners. Matt 9:13

I desire **mercy**, don't condemn the innocent. Matt 12: 7
Shouldn't you have had **mercy** on your fellow servant. Matt 18:33

Justice, **mercy**, faithfulness are crucial. Matt 23:23
Knowledge of salvation through tender **mercy**. Luke 1:77,78
The one who had **mercy** did it right, go do likewise. Luke 10:36, 37

Time has come to develop a positive loving interest and relationship with our government leaders.

/// 7-2 /// How often do you spend time in prayer for government officials — as suggested by Scripture? _____

How much time do you usually spend weekly; _____ minutes... / ½ hour... / ...hour .../ ...more ...— in prayer for Government leaders? (*circle one*)

Remember the following types of government leaders: good ones, bad ones, evil ones, Christian ones, unbelieving ones. Do some Bible research and find out how to pray for each type.

C. Anointing Government officials with God's power

Perhaps the following may be of help in your merciful praying for God's appointed government leaders. This suggestion follows a weekly plan. I and my family personally used this for nearly 20 years. It has been a blessing to our family members.

- Monday pray for your local government, the leaders of your village or of your city. Who is the mayor of your town? The Bible says we should pray for our government leaders. Learn their names, so you can fulfill this Bible passage. Know the man's family. Perhaps the Lord wants to use you as an instrument of help and healing like Jesus was to the Roman officials and rulers. So before you are going to be able to pray effectively do a bit of homework.
- On Tuesday pray for the provincial leaders or regional leaders. I hope that soon you will know the names of those leaders and what they are doing. What is his responsibility? What is she doing? You should know their names and their jobs. Those are the two minimum things to know in order to pray intelligently. Add family information if possible.
- On Wednesday pray for the national leaders, that is, the president, prime minister and parliament members, their friends and families. Try to obtain a list of all parliament members. Pray for different government departments: education, religion, natural resources, economy, etc.
- On Thursday pray for another country that has a special need. Focus particularly on political happenings. Check the news!
- On Friday you can pray for neighboring countries; White Russia, Russia, Turkey, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland. You do not need to pray for all these countries every Friday. Some Fridays you pray for one or two and another Friday you pray for others.

D. Casting your bread upon many waters

Let us illustrate a few items. In every province there are judges. Many of the judges do not give good judgment because they are not believers and they belong to the system of this world. There are also the highway police; they are part of the federal system. Who prays for the highway police? You as pastor can provide a Godly example for our believers and teach them to pray. Locally you have policemen also. The Bible says you should be praying for them. The Bible says the local government official is the minister of God (Rom 13:4). Does the Bible mean that we should pray for your government leaders except when you live in Ukraine? Why do we have troubles? We are God's leaders. We are the ones to pray and bring about a good land! It is not just the president's fault. If the president does not perform well we should ask ourselves, "Have I prayed for him as I should?" If a government person performs well it is our duty to praise God for it and be thankful.

It is our responsibility because the Bible says we are supposed to pray for our country and government! All over Ukraine in different provinces there are army bases. Are you praying for those soldiers at the army bases?

We the believers are God's instruments to bring righteousness and justice to our country.

There are many more things you can do to develop relationships with government leaders, but perhaps prayer is the very first and the most important.

Good, effective, worthwhile prayer takes a lot of work, but God promises, "If my people pray, I will heal the land." 2 Chron. 7:14

Let's believe that! Hallelujah! Let us believe that! AMEN!

VIII. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MISSIONARIES

Many churches have one or more people of the congregation who serve as missionaries in another, usually distant, place and in a strange language.
Missionaries are people with needs.

A. Missionaries are needy people

Sometimes missionaries serve under mission agencies or do part time work.

Nevertheless it is the local church that should assume responsibility for their long-term welfare.

Missionaries are people to be sent out from your church with care and long-term love.

Here are 11 ideas for you to establish healthy, even if long-distance, relationships with your missionary.

In front of each number mark a “+ ” or a “ — ” sign. Mark a plus if your church is already doing it. Mark a “ — ” if your church is not yet doing it. (You will need to use these signs later on to calculate your effectiveness.)

1. First the Holy Spirit wants you to pray with them, long and hard, before they go.
2. Then comes your part in being a physical instrument of letting the Holy Spirit flow through your arms by laying on holy hands. By the way — are your hands holy?
3. Then comes the missionary's need for assistance with packing up.
 - Their apartment needs to be cleaned.
 - Goods need to be either stored or shipped to a distant destination.
4. Once on the field they need a monthly phone call of encouragement from you their pastor.
 - The phone call should include a short scripture reading, a prayer and questions about health, needs, finances, effectiveness.Be sure you talk to the wife as well, and also any older children.
5. This information then needs to be shared weekly for several weeks with prayer groups and the congregation.
6. And don't forget regular communications... are there those in your church who will commit to being a pen pal?
Who will inform them of births, marriages and deaths in the church, someone who can send a favorite tea the wife can't get there or some such thing... are there kids who would send notes to the missionary kids etc... it is loneliest in my experience for many of the wives.
Wives don't always have the exciting responsibilities and input into the ministry work of their missionary husbands.
One missionary lady was quite blessed. She received a note or a letter or even a care package about once a week while she was in Latvia... it was such a blessing!
The simplest of notes goes a long way!
7. Missionaries are often lonely, isolated people, therefore members of the congregation should be encouraged to visit the missionary annually.
8. Missionary work is hard and often they lack tools or materials.
Lead your church into providing practical help semi-annually.
9. Money is the easiest way to quickly alleviate some pressures.
Be sure your church collects regular offerings for your missionaries.
Be sure to forward it quarterly.
Keep money matters above the board.
Have your missionary report back when funds are received and how much.
Then share that with the congregation.
10. After 3 years, you as the lead pastor should visit the mission field and make practical observations or participate in ministry.
11. For spiritual fruitfulness it is crucial that your missionaries have the opportunities to live by Biblical principles.
Consider the responsibility of your church to provide for them to return home for long-term rest, minimally every 4 years.
Missionary work is so strenuous that many couples burn out and can even fall into sin after 4 years.

B. Action time

Now at the close of this section take time to engage and answer the following questions.

/// 8-1 /// List the number of each item you are already practicing. _____

Now list the numbers of the items that you have not yet participated in. _____

Now list the numbers which you want to add to your church ministry. _____

For each number or new activity you listed, do some research and make a list of ideas as to what you can do.

IX. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ENEMIES

A. You have none – what a privilege

/// 5-1 /// Do you have any? Probably not. The British prime minister is probably not your enemy. The president of the European Union is probably not your enemy.

Let us ask ourselves a few questions closer to home. It might help us.

Before we continue we will now distribute the questionnaires and you can fill them out.

/// 5-2 /// ***Each time write down the first name the Holy Spirit brings to mind.***

/// 5-3 /// Which person or persons on your church leadership team do you find the most difficult to get along with? _____ & _____ (fill in initials)

For which person on the denominational level in the Head Office do you really not care very much? (fill in initials)

With which pastor in your province are you really at odds? _____ (fill in initials)

With which family member do you most easily quarrel? _____ (fill in initials)

Which person in your church would you rather have disappear? _____ (fill in initials)

If such and such a member (fill in initials) _____ emigrated to another country would you be excited?

B. He found an enemy

Once upon a time 2 most unlikely people met. One was a beaten up Jew, the other a good Samaritan. They were not neighbors; they had never met and didn't know each other. Technically they had different skin, different clothes, different lifestyles, a different outlook on life, and different feelings. Yet Jesus called the one who built the relationship "a neighbor." What did he do that was so unique? The first thing this man did was "**he saw a need**." He saw a problem and decided to do something *good* about it. Secondly he "**came close**" — he overcame his reluctance, his feelings and went to be with his enemy. Thirdly he "**spent time**" with his enemy. He gave the most important thing he had in his life, he gave time. Fourthly he "**listened**", or took notice, of the person's need. Fifthly he decided to do something about it, he "**met that need**". That cost money and personal care. Then sixthly he committed himself to "**follow up**" until complete healing took place.

/// 5-4 /// Thank you for listing your enemies above.

Are you happy to have these and other enemies? ... Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

Do you want to continue having these enemies? ... Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

If not, what would you like to do about it? -----

Would you like to become a peacemaker? ... Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one). Matt 5:9

Will you be the initiator? ... Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

If you circled "yes," with whom will you begin to rebuild relationships? _____ (initials of person.)

Would you like to be blessed? Personally blessed? ... Yes ... / ... no ... (circle one).

C. Jesus' desire & recipe

Jesus suggests you — the key person in your church -- become a peacemaker. In Matt 5:9 He promises blessings to those who will take time and effort to make peace in unpleasant situations. Is it easy? No!!! Will it be quick? No!!! See Prov. 18: 19 and 16:12

But the recipe for healing is the same six items Jesus pointed out to us.

1. Become concerned.
2. Go to the unpleasant person — take initiative.
3. Spend time together. (*Have a meal together*)
4. Listen closely, discover why he is that way, what are his hurts, needs.
5. Do something practical, something physical, meet a need. (many times).
6. Stick to it until your repugnant brother becomes a friend — do not give up!

Making peace is one sure way to grow your church. Making peace involves learning to respect other people, lift them up. And to become humble yourself, lower yourself.

God's grace, like water, flows to the lowest place.

People flock to churches that have peace and unity.

Where there is lack of peace and unity, the Holy Spirit leaves.

From my perspective, the lack of real love and therefore peace and unity is the biggest problem in our Baptist churches..

Love your enemies — It's one of Christ's 3 major commandments.

Let us decide to become willing obedient servants and build holy churches here in Ukraine.

Alright, it is time to think about

X. IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FELLOW BELIEVERS

We have attached a privileged project opportunity for you to study.

You can practice your own interpretation of the 12 “one-anothers” in the New Testament.

Two of these one-another concepts, “encourage one another” and “admonish one another”, deserve close examination since they are both crucial in our development as spiritual leaders and difficult to implement in a godly and effective way.

In closing our session on ***Relationships with fellow believers*** we want provide some practical help in these areas.

A. Encouragement

One benefit of being in the family of God is the mutual encouragement that believers can give to one another. Not only is encouragement a privilege, it is required of each believer as he obeys God and lives out his faith in Christ.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25.

- **Question 1:** What three things are we told to do on the basis of our redemption in Christ and the resultant access to God?

.....
.....
.....

Far from being an isolated element of ministry reserved for pastors, encouragement is the duty and privilege of every believer.

But pastors should set the example.

Because the Spirit of God lives in us and because we all have a personal knowledge of God and His Word, we all possess the potential for effective ministry toward our fellow believers.

But, while the church can be a rich reservoir of spiritual strength, unfortunately often conflict and division are more characteristic than healing, encouragement, and security.

How, then, can we become encouragers?

B. Becoming an encourager

Talking about encouragement is easy; becoming an encourager is more difficult. Basically a commitment to, and development of, a few specific skills are what is necessary to become an effective encourager.

Becoming an encourager begins with a very specific kind of commitment.

—AN ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO THE GOOD OF OTHERS.

It must be our desire to see the needs of others met even if ours go unmet.

Without this basic perspective we will almost always let our own selfish desires and needs get in the way of effective ministry to others.

This may seem like an unrealistic goal, because if we put the needs of others first *all the time* then our own spiritual lives will become weak. However, we are not saying that we put our ministry to others ahead of our own spiritual development.

On the contrary, the encourager must maintain a vital relationship with God.

What we are saying is that *in our relationships with others we seek to meet their needs rather than expecting them to meet ours.*

To keep perspective on this issue we need to distinguish between “desires” and “goals.”

Our **GOAL** is to meet the needs of others.

It may be our **desire** that they meet some need of ours, but, if this ever becomes **our goal** in a relationship, then we can no longer adequately meet the needs of the other person.

For example, when a father comes home from a very busy day at work, what he wants to do most is have a few moments of peace and quiet to relax.

But, when he walks through the door, he has a little boy who has been waiting expectantly for him to come home.

Now he can do one of two things.

On the one hand, if he is more concerned about his own needs being met, he can ask the boy not to bother him for a few minutes while he relaxes; or he can ask his wife to occupy him for a while (which she has been doing all day—now she needs a break!), so that he can have his desired tranquility.

In so doing he has made the meeting of his needs his goal.

On the other hand, if his goal is to meet the needs of his family, then, while he may **desire** to get his peace and quiet, he is willing to lay aside his needs and give his son the attention that he needs and wants.

By doing this he has become an encourager to his family. Beginning with a commitment to the needs of others, we must also develop certain skills.

1) The first of these is to **become a GOOD LISTENER.**

We have all gone through the frustration of trying to explain our feelings or opinions only to receive a response from the listener revealing that they have totally missed our point. Nothing is quite as useless and irritating as hastily given advice that reflects little understanding of a problem.

Not only does failure to listen lead to poor understanding, it also gives the impression that we are *uninterested* in the other person's problems.

Being good listeners, with good eye contact, we communicate to people that we think that what they say is important and that their problems are of concern to us. Attentive listening demonstrates sensitivity to the needs of others.

When people perceive that we care enough to listen, they are much more likely to open up to us. Being thought of as unspiritual, bad experiences in the past, and a number of other things keep people from coming out of the shells in which they hide.

Patient listening goes a long way toward helping people drop their masks.

Good listening is more than just hearing words however.

It is also being aware of the non-verbal ways people communicate.

Careful attention to others allows us to “hear” what their drooping shoulders, sad eyes, and hurt faces are saying to us.

All of this increases the sensitivity to the real needs of people.

2) The second skill is to **SPEAK words of ENCOURAGEMENT.**

Not only do we need to learn how to listen, but we must also learn how to *speak words of encouragement.*

Words are powerful and have the ability to destroy, build up, or do relatively little, depending on how well they are chosen.

The Bible has much to say about the power of words.

- **Question 2** For discussion; Look up the following verses from the book of Proverbs that illustrate this point. For each reference write a brief statement on the power of words. And then discuss it

a. Proverbs 12:25 _____

- b. Proverbs 15:1 _____
- c. Proverbs 15: 2 _____
- d. Proverbs 15:4 _____
- e. Proverbs 16:24 _____
- f. Proverbs 18:21 _____
- g. Proverbs 25:11 _____
- h. Proverbs 25:23 _____

The importance of our words cannot be overestimated.
But what are we to say?

3) Thirdly, the encourager needs to learn how to ask *GOOD QUESTIONS*.

Thoughtful questions can be the key to people letting us minister to them.
Questions should reflect care and concern as we seek to let them know that in us they have one who welcomes opportunities to listen.

4) Fourthly, we also must learn how to *EXPRESS OUR EXPERIENCE* of Christ and our knowledge of the Word in an encouraging way.

In doing this, two extremes should be avoided.
The first is the temptation to quote Scripture verses in the face of any problem.
Reactions against this sort of input are not because people do not want to hear what the Word of God says about their problems but rather against the insensitivity that accompanies these thoughtless quotations.

The other extreme is failure to offer spiritual insight because we feel we do not know enough.
One does not have to have a seminary degree to know enough Bible to help someone.
This fear is often based on the wrong assumption the idea that we have to “solve” the problem.
In reality, our thoughtful concern and personal care are in themselves powerful instruments of encouragement, even if we say little of a “spiritual” nature or cannot provide the “answer” to the problem. Our lack of Biblical knowledge should not keep us from helping others but rather should motivate us to deeper study.

5) The fifth and final skill will enhance our ability to encourage others.

This is the ability to discern and do helpful deeds.

We can encourage a lonely brother with a visit, a burdened friend by sharing some of his burdens, an overworked and tired colleague by either helping where appropriate or with a phone call or letter of appreciation and thanks.

Thoughtful deeds can be powerful tools of encouragement.

Pause for a minute to consider what we have said about encouragement.

► **Question 3** If we are to be a real encouragement to others what five areas do we need to be developing? Listen well, speak wisely, ask good questions, express personal experiences, do good deeds –

/// 9-1 /// INTERACT!!! Add your own additional thoughts and comments to the above.

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Practical Opportunity 1



Practical Opportunity 1

At home evaluate your own skill as an encourager in light of the above thoughts. Record in your notebook some thoughts for each area.

May you and your church find a new fullness in Christ as you apply some of these truths over the next 3 months.

/// 9-2 /// Building relationships is God's way!

Building relationships is Christ's example!

Building relationships is your spiritual invitation!

Building relationships is what heaven is made of!

Let us practice building relationships here on earth!

Praise God. Amen and Amen.
Do I hear some amens? HALLELUJAH.

(Answer to question # 1. : According to Hebrews we are (1) to come before God with the assurance of His acceptance, (2) to cling steadfastly to the hope of eternal life, and (3) to give serious thought to how we can encourage other believers to grow in love and obedience.)

XI. OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO ONE ANOTHER

The New Testament writers gave many instructions to believers concerning how they were to minister to each other. One term in particular was used to convey this special relationship: "one another." Dr. Gene Getz, in his books ***Sharpening the Focus of the Church*** and ***Building Up One Another***, (see NLC course #??) has pointed out that, if all the uses of this special term are studied and categorized, they can be grouped into twelve actions that believers are to perform for one another. These twelve actions are seen by Getz as the outworking of the greatest "one another" exhortation—loving one another. In order for you to get an overview of these "one anothers", the following exercise has been provided:

Practical opportunity -1

At home research the different categories of "one anothers". Using the list below, in your notebook set up a half page or perhaps a whole page for each of the concepts. Look up the references provided, and write a brief summary of your understanding of the concept. Then, for each one write down one example of how you might apply this exhortation in your own church setting.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Members of one another | Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 |
| 2. Be devoted to one another | Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3-4 |
| 3. Honor one another | Romans 12:10; John 13:12-15 |
| 4. Be of the same mind with one another | Romans 15:5; Acts 4:32 |
| 5. Accept one another | Romans 15:7; James 2:1 |
| 6. Admonish one another | Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 4:14 |
| 7. Greet one another | Romans 16:3-16; 1 Peter 5:14 |
| 8. Serve one another | Galatians 5:13-15; Matthew 20:25-28 |
| 9. Bear one another's burdens | Galatians 6:2 (<i>Note the context here is in relation to restoring a brother who has fallen into sin.</i>) |
| 10. Show forbearance to one another | Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13 |
| 11. Be subject to one another | Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3-4 |
| 12. Encourage one another | 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24-25 |

This survey should give you at least an introduction to the scope of the responsibilities that we as Christians have toward each other. Every one of us has fallen short in one area or another, maybe even in most of them! The emphasis is often on what I **get** from others, not what I am **giving**. We have a plague, a disease among believers, of self-centeredness. The world says, "What's in it for me?" And we see this attitude exhibited in believers who go from church to church trying to find the one that will best meet "their" needs, with no thought of being committed to a family in which there is a constant giving as well as receiving.

We can spend a lot of time on the topic of godliness and developing our Christian character. Some of the main character traits which should be evident and developing in our lives are: love, humility, contentment, thankfulness, joy, holiness, self-control, faithfulness, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, meekness. Of these traits nine of them are listed as the fruit of the Spirit. Obviously the test of how we are maturing spiritually is measured in practical terms by how we are relating to our fellow believers. Let's close by thinking about how our personal holiness affects our ability to have proper fellowship in the body of Christ.

Practical Opportunity 2

At home reflect on how our Christian development affects our responsibility to one another. Turn in your notes again to the "one another" actions. For each one list which one of the 13 character trait(s) from the above list would improve your ability to perform better in that area. As you examine this evaluate how your further development in those areas would bring deeper fellowship and unity.

Denominational Implementation

Practical Opportunity 3

Over the next year focus with your church leaders on **one** of the 8 *Relationship Building Projects* each month until all are covered. At the beginning of each month you should take one of the *Relationship Building Projects* and repeat orally or in printed form that section of this lecture with all leaders in your church. Do this in a group format. Write out some discussion questions and spend a whole evening discussing that subject. Come to a conclusion and follow up with a practical activity in the church during the next 2 weeks. During the final week of

the month do a short analysis with your leaders. (Spent about 30 minutes). Next month repeat with another *Relationship Building Project* until all are covered.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by New Life for Churches. You have the privilege upon completion of your practical assignment to use this lecture with others.