

ASSIMILATION OF NEW MEMBERS  
IN A LARGER URBAN CHURCH

NATIONAL INSTITUTE IN  
CHURCH FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

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## PREFACE

St. Peter's Episcopal Church began as a Mission Church in early 1955. It was located on the outskirts of the city of Jacksonville in a small sanctuary with a handful of local members. It was established as an Episcopal Church in late 1955.

Our current Rector, Father John Bell, was called to serve at St. Peter's in 1964 which had less than 100 communicants, a \$20,000 budget, the same small sanctuary and a trailer that was used for a meeting space. Within five years the church grew, the facilities were expanded to provide more classrooms and the community was gradually changing with better roads and bridges to become a suburban community. They also built a new modern award winning 350 seat sanctuary and had added the first two full time staff members, a Parish Secretary and a Receptionist/Typist/Printer.

I joined the church six years later and became the lay person in charge of worship and later the financial chairman of the twelve man governing board (the Vestry). At this time the budget was about \$225,000, with a membership consisting of about 450 communicants. The staff was the Rector, Parish Secretary, Receptionist, and Bookkeeper/Typist. The Rector was desperately seeking help to accomodate the growth. In 1977-78, we (the Vestry) hired a full time Youth Minister and a full time Parish Visitor. I retired from the Navy in 1979 and joined the staff as Lay Minister for Discipleship plus other duties as assigned.

My entire association with St. Peter's, 10 years as a member and almost 7 years as staff, has been heavily involved with the challenges of church growth and assimilation of a steady in-flow of new members. With a considerable amount of transfers out (for all kinds of reasons, U. S. Navy being the prime one) over the last 6-8 years, we have nonetheless increased the number of communicants by about 50% to over 1250 and about the same for the budget to almost \$700,000. Assimilation has always been a rather large task at St. Peter's due to the high transfer rate and growth.

This thesis is dedicated to the study of the process of assimilation from the experience of living it out and from formal training to deal with it. Most of the comments derived from experience stem from the observation of the profound requirements of growth and the demands growth levies on the leadership of a church; and from the observation of the need to know yourself (as a church) in your ministry, ethos, roots, christology, polity, theology and even myths, to do a good job of attracting, assimilating and developing new members that will be healthy contributors to and disciplers of the church. The comments herein that are derived from training can be mostly attributed to my Rector and friend, Father John Bell, who encouraged me to attend many of the conferences and schools listed in Appendix I; to the influence of Dr. Kennon Callahan and the staff at Candler School of Theology; to Howard Ball of "Churches Alive", Pasadena, California, and to Dr. Roy Oswald and staff of the Alban Institute in Washington, D.C.

My gratitude extends not only to those mentioned but also to the Vestry, lay leaders and staff of St. Peters, that have supported me at every turn; and to the Right Reverend Canon Walter Saffron and Ms. Susie Miller of the Diocese of Florida for their timely review of this thesis.

## INTRODUCTION

A few years ago a review of our church history revealed that visitors, as potential church members, were attracted by a diverse number of seemingly unrelated and variable factors. After a five month study of new member assimilation and incorporation by our ministry staff these factors of attraction to potential new members became more sharply defined and understood. A significant number were closely associated with responsibilities normally assigned to the Church Business Administrator (the Administrator).

One result of our research was the wide range of assimilation procedures that were different and yet seemingly appropriate for the time, throughout change and growth of our church and the surrounding community. In 1965, our church was a 50 member local and almost rural church, run by the Rector and part time volunteers. Today it is a 700 adult member (1250 communicants), urban city-wide church, with a full time staff of 15 members. As we continue to grow we believe we continue to change. What are the changes? How do you determine them? How do they impact the process of attracting, meeting, developing and using new members? And what are the processes of these actions? Even more importantly, who is best fit to accomplish these tasks?

Our research clearly showed a number of different assimilation actions that seemed appropriate for various stages of growth. The two most diverse

assimilation procedures were those required of the pastor of a small church in a rural community as opposed to the procedures and actions required of a larger church in an urban setting. This thesis will address the assimilation of new members from the perspective of a larger church in an urban setting.

Chapter I is an overview of some of the unique qualities that form the character and personality of a church and its ministry. Various approaches are discussed that may be used to identify this character, pointing to the need of a corporate plan to use this information. This plan and some of the ingredients that go into it are examined in Chapter II. A model of assimilation is offered in Chapter III to highlight the progressive steps of the process. Chapter IV will address the people requirements based in part on the Biblical model of the first church in Antioch, and Chapter V will attempt to tie the Church Administrator to the process as he performs in a role as steward and servant.

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Having served 30 years in the Navy as a Line Officer (aviation) with the later years as a Major Weapons Acquisition Manager working with Industry, I know of no similar parallel management concept to that generally represented by churches. Government is geared to deal with the lowest bidder and has taken cognizant actions from research and study to insure performance guarantees are met. I am a plank owner of the Defense Management College that has done considerable research with industry to instill cost, time, and performance trade offs in government contracts. Yet the church, dealing with volunteers that are sometimes far more "trying" than lowest bidders, seldom sets performance parameters and, I'm afraid, too often than not, neglects cost tradeoffs. What are the consequences? I'm not sure I've ever heard of a study to that effect.

Now, having either conducted or supervised the outreach, discipling and newcomer assimilation programs for the last 6 years or so I can see a major obstacle to the study of performance and requirements of the job - that is, time! Most of us on the "firing line" of a larger church operation are too swamped with details to study the very consequences of our actions. Volunteers can eat more time explaining "how" than it would take to do it ourselves. Yet, the very act of training them may be more important than getting the job done. The reason is that we are not only "performers" but

are also "disciplers". And the product of getting things done may be multiplied over and over again if we focus on the "doers" rather than the "doing". I don't think that happens as often as it should in larger churches in a growing mode of operations. (Those have been the focus of my research).

That is why I believe the objective for this research thesis may be beyond the scope of the Thesis Topic. I believe one objective of this endeavor is to force creative thought, to reflect on the whole purpose of the church, and to fit our own little area of responsibility into this purpose with cognizant actions and confidence that it is the best trade off of all those considered.

The second objective, of course, is to set forth the findings and perhaps recommendations to others in the area I have tried to gain insight. In this thesis it is the Assimilation of New Members into a larger urban church. The model offered in Chapter III contains the mechanics of the job listed in 7 steps. I have attempted to assure Chapter I (a Ministry Review) and Chapter II (Corporate Planning) are included by inference if nothing else in Steps 1 and 2. I have also, with equal forethought attempted to highlight the importance of performance (Chapter IV) and in particular the Administrator's role (Chapter V) in the last step of the assimilation model (Enacting - Step 7).

These two broad objectives have already served a purpose in our church. We have decided to take the time and resources to bring in a consultant for an appraisal of our ministry. There are hints of even greater things to come.

## CHAPTER I

### ASSIMILATION OF NEW MEMBERS AND THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

"Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst."<sup>1</sup>  
The church is people, special people, a chosen people, God's people in community, a fraternity of the forgiven, in Christ and with Christ, to worship and serve Him. In Him all things hold together. "He is also head of the body, the church."<sup>2</sup>

The term "church" originated in Greece as "ecclesia" from the words "ek" meaning "out of" and "kaleo" meaning "to call". It was used by city-state leaders and kings to "call out" citizens to discuss matters of their corporate life.<sup>3</sup> The term fits well, maybe even more appropriately, in the calling out of Christians from the world to a new community of togetherness in common spirit regarding matters of their lives, present and future in an eschatological sense.

Assimilation into this "church" or into any body of people is a unique undertaking in itself and even more so considering the ministry. For instance, consider this action word "ministry". It is functionally defined by many churches with the central emphasis derived from the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 28, verses 18 through 20. This "Great Commission" to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that Christ commanded us, is not only a central theme of most church

missions but ironically is sometimes a dividing issue in the "how to" of the command.

Particulars of this dividing issue will be addressed later. It follows then that the uniqueness of assimilation into this ministry logically differs by the respective mission statements or actions of churches in their interpretation of the what, why, and how to perform the duties and functions of the ministers.

One way or another, the assimilation into the church ministry will inevitably take place, be it by design or neglect, to a preferred or questionable likeness. Funk and Wagnalls define this act of assimilation as "to make alike or similar" or "to make into a homogeneous part". For the purposes of this thesis, assimilation into the Ministry of the Church means the ongoing process of influencing the attitudes and actions of people to conform with others in seeking the likeness of Christ as they come together in unity to worship Him and carry out His commandments.

As stated in the foregoing, the definition of "ministry" is often tied to the Great Commission of Matthew. There are, however, many other central themes that may dominate the assignment of priorities in a church, aside from the obvious denominational beliefs. This dominant theme alone, without considering the "how" of getting things done, makes church shopping for the potential new member an art rather than a science. The complexity of the denomination issue is beyond the scope of this thesis and is reviewed with the intention to better understand the Assimilation process. And, since this thesis is undertaken partly in the framework of a Church Business Administrator's contribution, a review of ministry development techniques and approaches might be helpful. For instance, I am at this time involved as an assistant to our Rector in the ministry re-assessment process. We are not

sure we understand our own profile! More on this later.

A very helpful resource for ministry review has been the compilation and editing by Carl S. Dudley, of seventeen contributing theologians and their views on the ministry based on a case study of a church.<sup>4</sup> Dudley identifies the following factors that contribute to the nature of a church or the uniqueness of its quality and character. They are:

Community ties and attitudes.

Denominational family and polity.

History, narrative and tradition.

Size, organization and decision patterns.

Culture, world view and social works.

Tenure and leadership style of the pastor.

Theology, Biblical authority and commitment of members to the mission and ministry of the church.

Dudley states, "The tensions that develop in the congregations from the interaction of these factors form identifiable but elusive character!!"

"Amen"

A periodic assessment of the unique qualities of your church may not only be of great importance of the assimilation process but may reveal surprising profiles and even conflict between institution and environment, between current leadership and historical forces, between stated beliefs and cultural commitments, between internal ministry and public witness and between private experience and corporate conscience.<sup>5</sup> Dealing with the situation is relatively easy compared to the difficulty of finding and understanding the conflict.

Roy Oswald of the Alban Institute seems to be in general agreement with this argument. Oswald, however, carries this statement forward to discuss

church myths. People enjoy talking about the good old days and sometimes this talk is not based on stated norms, therefore the myth is a false one. (The Alban Institute is now completing a study on FALSE MYTHS IN CHURCHES). The point to be made is that if there is a disparity in a myth and a practiced norm, there will be conflict. Conflicts identified can and should be turned into what Oswald calls "value clarification experiences." Even more important, in my estimation, is that an identified conflict can be very useful to the pastor to marry the proclaimed message with the existing life in the parish (and in so doing faithfully believe that the reverse will be accommodated!!) This subject of conflict and the technique of its identification is discussed in detail by Melvin D. Williams in his Anthropological Approach to the study of Conflict of Corporate Church and Spiritual Community.<sup>6</sup>

There are other approaches to identify the unique character of your church, through either a consulting arrangement or by self analysis techniques. I will list a few only to highlight the diversity of the techniques and some identified authors.

A Sociological Approach: generally how a congregation views itself in dominant myths and symbols, and how they relate to the community they live in, and perhaps to the world. (Jackson W. Carrol, Wm. McKinney and Wade Roof.)

A Literary Symbolism Approach: an interpretation of written or verbal symbols that gives life and meaning to a congregation. According to James Hopewell, literary symbolism through narratives can reinforce identities, values, outlooks and goals. Probably an excellent approach to study historical foundations and corporate myths.

Systems Psychology Approach: a broad based analysis from psychoanalytic theory to demographic data. Grubbs Institute has researched this area.

Theological Approach: looking at the documents of the church and the behavior of the people to find the unique operative theology. (There are many consultants that do this - Dudley referenced Joseph C. Hough, Jr.)<sup>7</sup>

Planning and Organizational Approach: This approach is purposely listed last because it seems so terribly fundamental to all others as a starting point. Arn, Callahan, Clay, and Schaller, are just a few that seem to support this fundamental approach, not that they neglect the others. Of the authors I studied thus far, the Alban Institute studies and Carl Dudley seemed to treat all of the above.

Planning is so vital to the church, and to a better understanding of the process of getting people involved and active in the church, that it should be discussed in more detail before getting on with the act of assimilation. Certainly an Administrator of the church should know the plan and what goes into it. It would be particularly helpful to have the Administrator aware of the sensitive relationship between the church goals and attitudes as well as the people being attracted to join and be assimilated.

## CHAPTER II

### CORPORATE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Peters and Waterman in their best seller In Search of Excellence, have much to say about the demise of the rational model of corporate planning.<sup>8</sup> They discovered at least eleven corporate attitudes resulting from planned policies that restrict rather than support success. From their research of successful businesses they found seven principles that were dominant and at least four of them are solid Biblical principles. For instance, the rational model of corporate planning is stated to:

- (1) be narrowly rational and often negative. (They suggest a principle of less judgmental actions for success.)
- (2) be unforgiving in the corporations response to mistakes. (They suggest a principal of forgiveness.)
- (3) Does not celebrate informality. (They suggest more personal relational attitudes are desirable.)
- (4) Denigrates the importance of values. (Their research shows that the top echelon of leadership of successful businesses instill a sense of values in their people!)

When I read this excellent account of business successes throughout the world and noted the emerging techniques and management principles as the above

four, I had a very warm feeling that God must be smiling at our so called "newly found wisdom" - much of which are fundamental Biblical teachings. As food for thought, I wonder, could it be more easily accomplished and less disruption to established norms that we could keep the framework of the rational model and substitute more of these newly discovered principles that have been available to us for almost 2000 years?

Be it the corporate model or some new one, most authors agree that prior to the start of the planning process there should be some overriding mission statement in the broadest umbrella like terminology. Gray and other authors state that this mission statement should grow out of the nature or character of the church. Some of the approaches to determine the unique character of a church were listed in Chapter One. This could be a real dichotomy for the pastor of a newly born congregation as it moves and strives to form identity and develop its own character. Nor is the problem completely solved by time. For with time almost always comes change, and change in the people might mean a change in the nature of the church. Howard Ball, President of "Churches Alive" likes to refer to new members of a church as gifts to the church from the Holy Spirit. Of late, Howard has been adding "and as you unwrap the gift package you find the future of your church!" A tightly wound assimilation process with teaching and preaching may mold each new member into the "model" but quite frankly I've never heard or read of one that tightly structured. Besides, I think if you tried to do this, it would break from too much tension!!! I believe there has to be at least enough slack for give and take with new members. After seven years of observation there seems to be no substitute for time and patience to assimilate them to a comfortable sense of belonging.

The alternative or complimentary course of action would be to review

yourself (your church) occasionally and assess your findings. This is where we are at this time in my church as I mentioned earlier. The discussion of ministry in Chapter I is most appropriate here to develop this understanding of self (as a church). Policy planning by Lyle Schaller in Dudley's book Building Effective Ministry has to be a classic in this regard. Kennon Callahan's Twelve Keys To An Effective Church, is another classic strongly supporting assessing ones's church, planning and creative strategic goals and developing long range objectives.<sup>9</sup> One or more of the other research approaches mentioned in Chapter I might be more suited to your church depending on its structure, values and norms.

Schaller basically states the outside third party, consultant type assessment is superior to other styles. He also believes that :

- a. The dynamics of interpersonal and institutional relationships are the most revealing of all factors. This includes being more revealing than denominational affiliations or the place of a congregation on the theological spectrum!
- b. Behavioral settings have a tremendous impact on what does or does not happen in a congregation. Church Administrators particularly need to know this. The organizational structure, the size of the board, the frequency of meetings, the choice of who presides over meetings, and even the nature of the room in which they meet have a great impact on outcome.
- c. Of all the classification data used by the consultant the least helpful according to Schaller is denominational affiliation. The ranking order of the most helpful are: average attendance, pattern and numbers, behavioral ideology, internal dynamics, tenure of members,

contemporary role of the parish, age of the institution and buildings they are in, age of members, community context, the polity, and tenure of the current and past pastors.

- d. A planning model that builds by identifying strengths, resources, and encouragement. Schaller strongly believes mission and ministry planning is by far the most important.
- e. The experience of consulting should also include an exciting self appraisal resulting in the mobilization of leaders to carry on future appraisals.
- f. The consultant should not allow the church to become dependent on him.

By whatever means, be it derived from a consulting study of the church, a self appraisal, or simply a statement by the governing board or rector, a mission statement will provide the direction and focus necessary to plan directed actions, set goals and organize to reach the desired end.

The discipline of developing a plan has many advantages. Some of them are:

- a. Leadership can be developed. Goals can be matched with capabilities.
- b. The number of active people in the church can be increased.
- c. Efficiency is enhanced. Duplication and unwanted redundancy can be avoided. Costs can be counted beforehand.
- d. Tensions are eased. Workers can see the why's of their work tasks.
- e. Enthusiasm is increased.
- f. Coordination is more easily accomplished.

- g. It forces a review of the ministry.
- h. A climate for spiritual growth is more readily achieved.
- i. Alternative courses of action are developed and considered.
- j. Objectives are clearly defined.<sup>10</sup>

The term objective is meant to be an end to which activities and energies are directed. Sometimes they are referred to as goals or aims. They should support the mission statement of the church - sometimes called a statement of purpose. Biblically, the mission statement, if derived appropriately can be likened to the vision in Proverbs 29. Without one the people will perish.

Churches Alive teachings in discipleship contain an interesting graphic of basic ingredients of management. (Koontz and O'Donnel and others refer to these more or less commonly accepted ingredients as Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling). The Churches Alive teaching is illustrated as follows:

#### ILLUSTRATION I

**P O L C = Success**

**P O L C = Success**

**P O L C ≠ Success**

The point being made is that without leadership and control (and the attendant feedback and communication links) the best of planning can be thwarted.

Another interesting outcome of research into this study of Corporate Planning in the church, for me at least, was how often it resulted in goals, objectives, and techniques that influence Church Growth. It is particularly of interest to someone like myself charged with the responsibility of assimilation. Some highlights by successful leaders and noted authors that have been of great value to me are listed with their stated goals and/or principles of Church Growth in Appendix I.

It is just as difficult to separate Corporate Church Planning Considerations from Church Growth as it is to separate assimilation plans and processes from church growth. The common bond seems to be spreading the gospel by bringing in new members and discipling them to do the same. S.E.D.- Growth. To avoid a possible point of confusion the Alban Institute points out there are some denominational programs to revitalize spiritual commitment, fellowship and even witnessing without growth as a goal. These efforts are sometimes called "renewal" programs. Such an undertaking would be enormously beneficial to the general spiritual health of a congregation and I would see them as a forerunner to other actions leading to growth. I see the "growth" issue as a two fold event that should be married together to be whole, both in spiritual maturity and awareness as well as mission consciousness.

Speaking at the 1986 Diocesan Convention, our Bishop, the Right Reverend Frank S. Cerveny, had this to say about mission outreach renewal:

"We clergy and laity of the diocese are doing a

reasonably good job in helping people identify as children of God and heirs of Christ's everlasting kingdom, but we need to nurture that personal relationship. .... We need to do a better job in instructing our people about the body to which they belong because when you have little knowledge of your historical roots then you are left on your own..... and when you are left on your own, confusion abounds and you become prey for every whim and doctrine which blows your way."<sup>11</sup>

This exhortation is taken to heart in the expression of a "model" of assimilation that follows.

## CHAPTER III

### ASSIMILATION ACTIONS

#### (A MODEL)

Dr. Win Arn opens his discussion of "Incorporation" (Assimilation) by stating some "prior considerations". They are:

- a. It is not likely to be an automatic process - even when the visiting potential new members are brought to the church by friends in the church.
- b. It is the responsibility of the church to conduct the assimilation process rather than the potential new member.
- c. Generally the most appropriate helpers to a visitor are friends or relatives of the visitor.
- d. The process requires a high level of effort to succeed; a high priority for the church.
- e. The process does not start with a visitor showing up on church. It started prior to that.

If something started prior to the visitor actually visiting it would be a worthwhile exercise to identify what might be involved. One way would be to look at the characteristics of an assimilated member and indirectly determine what actions took place to develop those characteristics. Before doing that let me first deal with what could be a confusing interpretation of

assimilation and incorporation.

Assimilation has been previously defined as "to make alike" or "to make into a homogeneous part". I'm not sure this process ever ends due to the changing and dynamic nature of both church and men. The other term, incorporation, is defined by Funk and Waynall as "to form into a corporation". Arlin Rothauge, of the National Episcopal Church simply refers to incorporation as the process of joining the church.<sup>12</sup> I agree.

By definition, therefore, I have divided the assimilation process into two parts for the time being. The first part is all the functional ingredients that go into the process of having someone join the church, i.e. the "incorporation" process.

Now let's review what Arn refers to as the characteristics of an Incorporated Member - remembering his use of the term is more akin to the full assimilation process.

- a. He (the assimilated member - includes he or she in this thesis with no bias or preference either way) identifies with the goals of the church.
- b. He is in regular worship attendance.
- c. He feels a sense of spiritual growth.
- d. He has taken all the steps to affiliate with the body.
- e. He has new friends in the church.
- f. He has a task or role appropriate to his spiritual gifts.
- g. He is involved in a fellowship group.
- h. He regularly tithes to the church.
- i. He is participating in the Great Commission.

It kind of reminds me of the song "Who could ask for anything more?"

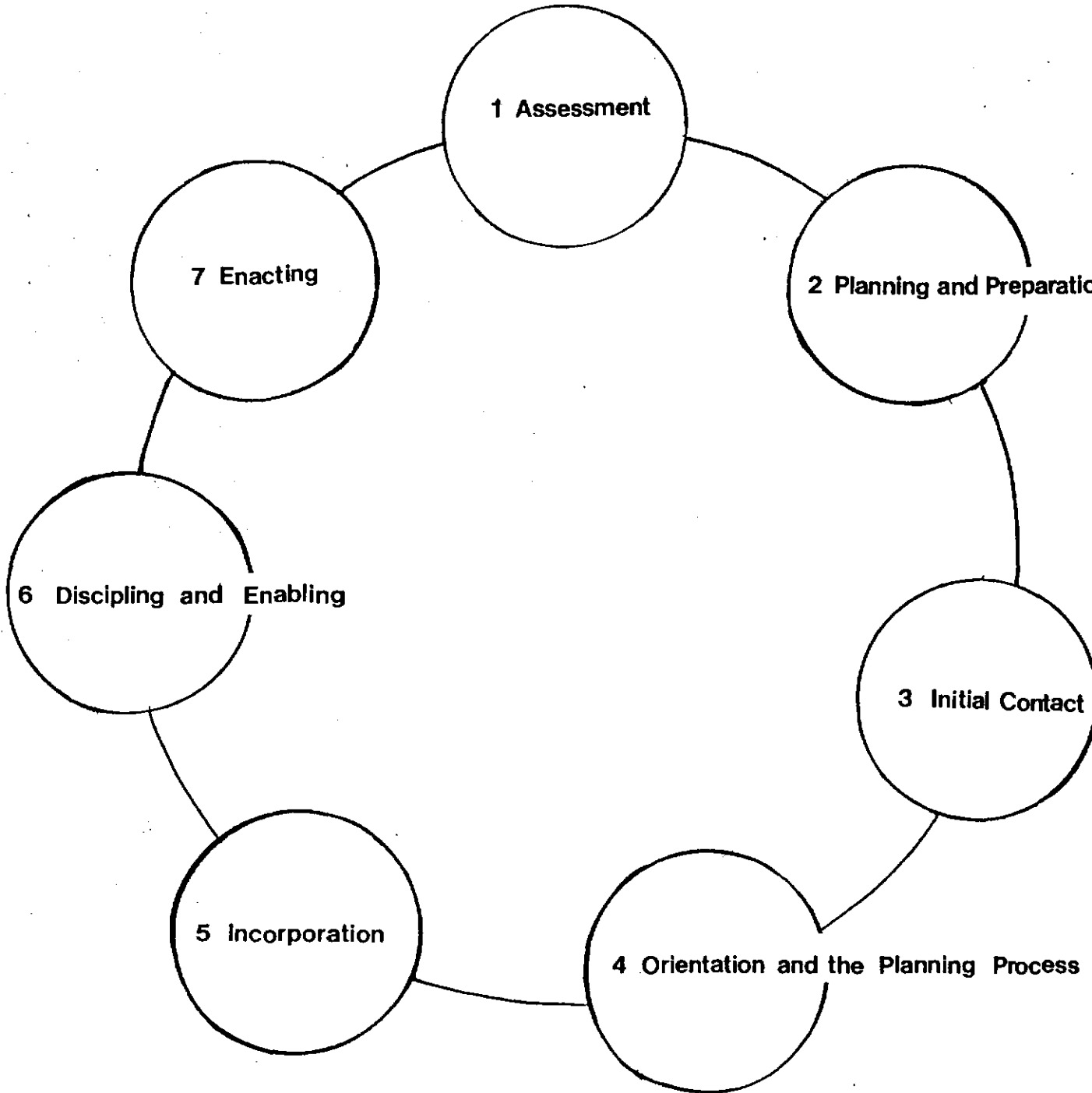
Assuming at this point, that you have reviewed your ministry, mission,

statement, goals, inventoried your dreams and desires, planned and prayed your way to a decision about renewal or growth and are ready to "move out", what helpful model or framework might be offered?

I offer the following as a model that includes steps of the assimilation process. Variances to the model will also be discussed as would seem appropriate. In this model the separate identifiable functions or steps are:

- Step 1. Assessment of the needs.
- Step 2. Planning and Preparation
- Step 3. Initial Contact.
- Step 4. Orientation and the Decision Process.
- Step 5. Incorporation.
- Step 6. Discipling and Enabling.
- Step 7. Enacting.

Illustration II



Step 1. Assessing the existing circumstances includes an analysis of the ministry of the church, where it fits into the world around it, the nature of its standards and values, the perceived theology perspective, as well as the denominational influence and the institutional process of structure, planning, and goal setting that gives life and meaning to the church as an organism. The foundations of this step were hopefully set forth in Chapters I and II.

Step 2. Planning and preparation within the church and the general boundaries of influence by the church. This step is a direct result of the Corporate Planning and Mission Statement or purpose of the church. It includes:

A. INTERNAL ACTIONS:

1. A translation of the general statement of purpose to identifiable tasks and objectives.
2. The order of priority and measurable units of resources.
3. The identification and training of people required for the tasks including both staff and lay volunteers.
4. A best effort estimation of the costs in people, dollars, energies, and time to meet the objective.
5. A value analysis of what else could have been done using cost estimation figures.
6. A decision to act.

B. EXTERNAL ACTIONS

1. The general geographic dimensions to the prime targeted assimilation area (if appropriate).
2. The kinds of people that are most likely to be

attracted to the church.

3. The kinds of people the church would be most likely to serve.
4. The kinds of people that could most likely serve the church.

In this preparation step it would do well to review Schaller's excellent discussion of the "GLUE" that holds people together in a church. Schaller states the following contains essential elements of this binding force:<sup>13</sup>

- a. Nationality and/or ethnics.
- b. Denominational identity.
- c. Unifying tasks.
- d. Kinfolk.
- e. The enemy of exclusion.
- f. Social class.
- g. The current crisis.
- h. Group life and ties.
- i. Community projects.
- j. Theological stance.
- k. The ministry of programs.
- l. Place and building.
- m. Heritage nostalgia.
- n. Growing old together.
- o. The liturgy.
- p. Congregational life style.
- q. Organizational structure.
- r. The choir director.

Appendix II contains 46 categories of people we tend to exclude from our

outreach and assimilation planning. I believe every category should be reviewed (and others as appropriate) to assure that those that are not included are a result of an act of prayerful and thoughtful planning rather than careless omission. The end result of Step 2 should be recorded for impending action tasks and for future review.

Step 3. The Initial Contact. This step may start in many different ways; one is through advertising. Rev. Ernie Nivens, in his "Media" lecture for Church Administrators at the Candler School of Theology, identified the Administrator as the catalyst to make advertising happen.<sup>14</sup> The Administrator and his staff need to be opportunistic as well as programmed to advertise the church in a way that best represents their strengths and vitality as a body of believers. Nivens pointed out the need for good press releases, an understanding of editorial practices and problems, the techniques of targeting an audience of great potential for the church, reviewing the potential of radio and TV, as well as the peculiarities of their use. He was particularly enthusiastic in the success of his own church doing billboard advertising. Niven also recommended a Church Communication Center to tie all advertising together to a common theme. This is an exciting concept deserving of more widespread visibility and practice.

Russ Reid delivered an excellent address in an Advanced Growth Seminar in Pasadena entitled "A strategy for Media and Your Church." His main points were focused on the categories of Public Relations, Publicity and Advertising. He stated that: Public Relations is the act of creating an environment where your message will be heard and understood under favorable conditions; that, Publicity is creating an environment so your message can be accepted under favorable conditions; and that Advertising has to be clear, easy to understand and directed to the needs of people.<sup>15</sup>

I would not only agree but add that it doesn't take place in any one step of the assimilation process. For instance it would be reasonable to place advertising in the preparation step.

Some other elements of the initial contact are what the visitor might see, hear or sense as they approach the Church grounds. Many of these items were addressed at Candler from the Administrator's point of view by Sylvia S. Bardes in her lecture series on Property Management.<sup>16</sup> Visitors do note the condition of church grounds, the state of repair of the physical plant, the church sign, location and use of the logo, and the easy accessibility of getting there. Two particularly important areas for visitors and members alike are parking and nursery availability/desirability.

In Vaughan's study of the world's twenty largest churches, none of those in the United States that I have been able to determine have parking problems that have either not been solved or are in the process of being solved.<sup>17</sup> Yet, in many of our average size churches we often let inconvenience become habit in parking. Before we solved the problem of church parking at our church I have personally seen visitors drive in and, through the frustration of no parking, depart immediately. Bardes, Vaughan, Callahan, Schaller, and almost all authors and students of church growth agree convenient parking is important.

The other highlighted area of most significance of both visitors on their first contact as well as members is the nursery. Callahan would probably list this item as a dissatisfier, i.e. the best nursery available will bring you up to a maximum level in relational attitudes to where you can only break even!!! A well designed, maintained, desirable, available, and properly staffed nursery is mandatory!

There are many other initial contact considerations that should be

included. Some of these are:

- a. The greeting.
- b. Usher conduct and training.
- c. Attitudes.
  1. of the people to one another.
  2. of the people toward the pastor.
- d. After church fellowship.
- e. Follow up.

According to Dr. Arn, an average of two of every five first time visitors come back for the second visit. I sincerely believe a program that developed from the above considerations will narrow the focus of energies to significantly improve that ratio. Nonetheless, if we are operating under a mission statement of growth, our concern will be likely centered on decisions to join and will be highly influenced by what transpires during orientation.

Step 4. Orientation. This is one of the most exciting processes of our church. All adult newcomers are asked to join our Newcomers I class and participate in a free flowing give and take stream of communication and teaching.

Church representatives for Newcomers I Class are carefully chosen and trained to be as discerning as they can be for the needs being expressed and yet, be assertive in the fundamental issues of our church ethics and beliefs. Sometimes the theological need is as seemingly simple as an introduction to Christ, sometimes far more complex. There are social belonging needs, financial needs, helps of all sorts and sometimes a simple yet profound need to simply be asked to belong.

On the other hand we try to express not only the church values and practices but what we would hope to be a pattern of life that includes

regular church attendance. After all, if you can't rely on them to be present on Sunday you can't very well express your beliefs. While this expression is taking place we are fully aware that they are looking us over to determine if they are comfortable with our intentions and whether they think we could meet their expectations with what we have to offer. Arn refers to this act as "profiling the newcomer". After almost seven years of either doing or supervising this process, I can add that they "profile" the church too! It's a challenging and yet enjoyable process and it is exciting to be involved with it.

During this step the newcomer is visited by special visitation teams and sponsored by someone trained to help them understand the church. The church sponsor program, visitation evangelism, and newcomer class teachers all function under one director in our church. This facilitates communication flow and the focus of energy and resources.

Arn states that the average number of second time visitors that join the church is 75%. Our experience is that this orientation step may not improve this ratio by a large margin. It is, however, more likely to have a very definite impact on the level of participation by those that go on to a more complete assimilation. The reason is partly due to the structure of the program that allows expectations on both sides to be openly discussed and on the emphasis of the next step, Incorporation.

Step 5. Incorporation. This procedure is purposely highlighted in our church to inculcate a sense of belonging and ownership. It states openly that the decision to join together has been made by both parties, the newcomer and the church, and that Church (as a body of believers) accepts the newcomer into a oneness of purpose. Our rector refers to it as "The Rite of Passage." The procedure we use for adults and their families is to follow a

modified baptismal covenant wherein they: renounce evil and renew their commitment to Christ; renew their belief in God, Christ and the Holy Spirit; agree to continue in the teachings of the gospel and in fellowship and communion; they agree to proclaim the word and example of Christ; love their neighbor as themselves and strive for justice and peace with respect for the dignity of all human beings.

The Rector or presiding official then leads, and the congregation responds, by proclaiming support to the new member in carrying out these vows and welcoming them into the priesthood of believers. (We do baptize infants into Christ sacramentally and by this act they automatically become members.)

There is an interesting comment on a closely related subject to the above by Dr. Arn. He lists the "Confirmation" syndrome as one of seven Growth Restricting Obstacles.<sup>18</sup> He states that when "Confirmation" is used as a Christian indoctrination program it can be mistaken for the zenith of growth. If this happens it can cause a severe decrease in interest and follow on growth in witnessing, disciple-making and behavioral commitment. He reported that one study showed a 70% drop-out when confirmation is used in this sense - especially when parents pushed their children into and through an intensive study for confirmation.

In our model we do have a confirmation program, purely voluntary, and as an adjunct to what has been previously discussed. Interestingly, our Episcopal interpretation and use of Confirmation is structured for just the opposite of what Arn flags as a possible weakness. For those involved, Confirmation is a step of spiritual empowerment and enabling that parallels the next step of this assimilation process.

Step 6. Enabling and Discipling. With the newcomer/visitor now a member, assimilation changes to a more directed format. The goal now is not

to make a decision; it's more aligned to the last part of the baptismal vows wherein the new member would be "enabled" to proclaim the word of God, be an example of Christ, love their neighbor as their self, strive for justice and peace and respect the dignity of man. Most all of these are action oriented.

Our model is based on an open display of each sponsor's intention to grow spiritually with the laying on of hands by the Bishop for an empowering of the Holy Spirit. The candidate reaffirms his renunciation of evil and renews his commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior while the Bishop prays for each person to receive a strengthening by the Holy Spirit, empowerment for His service and for it to sustain him all the days of his life.<sup>19</sup>

The ministry staff and Lay Volunteers are concurrently working with these same people to:

- a. Bring the member into a closer relationship with others and the staff by an expanding network of small group experiences.
- b. Through the personal contacts of the above and by personal discussion and prayer, help identify strengths and weaknesses or needs to focus upon; the strengths for future enactment, and the weaknesses or needs for assistance, correction and/or growth.
- c. Provide growth opportunities to speak, act, teach, sing, preach, or in any other sense, search out, expose and develop special gifts and talents.

Our model for this process is primarily small group oriented but when the newcomer is either not ready for a small group or does not have the time, we must rely on our number one requirement of new members, that is communal worship. Obviously, our model of discipling really starts from the pulpit. We are therefore obligated to provide a wide choice of services to match that

sometimes narrow window of relational opportunity by preaching foundational, soul searching, motivational and growth supporting messages. In addition to three Sunday A. M. services we find a very definite need for a more family oriented, relaxed Sunday evening service. There is also always a mid-week service on Wednesday evening with communion services added frequently.

For the individual that is motivated to do so, and has the time, we suggest they join a small weekly discipling group (our Growth Groups). We follow the "Churches Alive" discipling program in this function. These groups are disciplined by bible study, prayer, fellowship and outreach planning through a carefully supervised leadership system. In addition to the discipling it is an excellent leadership development technique.

For those steeped in the above we offer a multi-levelled Evangelism program based primarily on Dr. James Kennedy's "Evangelism Explosion". Sometimes this visitation program is used to assist new member visitation by slightly modifying the end goals. This year we have added a non-visitation Evangelism study for discerning and developing a style of life that will be evangelical in an unplanned and low keyed setting. We call it Park-Bench Evangelism for a short title.

We offer a special caring program, the "Stephens Ministry", for those willing to work with people in stressful and crisis life situations. It is mostly a listening and supportive kind of one-to-one ministry done in complete confidentiality.

Counseling training is available for the various types of needs. Some require formal training and practice while others require on-the-job experience.

Our choirs are conducted in a small group atmosphere as are our Performing Arts groups.

Teachers are also treated to the same kind of cohesive discipling as the others.

Our intercessory prayer group, perhaps the longest running program at our church, is another discipling effort of great foundational impact to all that we do or try.

More recently we have a renewed interest in a Diet, Devotion and Discipling (3-D) Program that produces some wonderful testimonial results in all three areas.

We have a Praise Group and a Praise Dancing Team that support our worship service when called upon.

All of these are offered, together with some para-church efforts, to help individuals grow in their belief and walk in Christ, and hopefully to develop and multiply for more of the same. In other words to "move out" in reproduction.

Step 7. Enacting and Reproduction. The enabling and discipling programs of step six are keyed to the fundamental ethos of our model. That is - "every member a minister". It's not a universally accepted term outside our church because to most people a minister infers official ordainment. To us the inference is that it is not enough for us to be content with belonging - we must also be enablers. I have been taught to believe all of us have that special personalized gift or talent that is to be used to exercise some unique symbol of Christ that will be received by another in His love. The enactment step is to find that expression or symbol that might "influence the attitudes and actions of people to conform with others in seeking the likeness of Christ in coming together in unity to worship Him and carry out His commandments". (It is obvious from the definition that we are closing the loop on the model to a revisit of Step 1).

There is no doubt in my mind that the enabling preparations and outreach functions of the Great Commission should be planned corporately. However, it is the Directing and Controlling functions of the Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling (POLC) referred to earlier, that have a more direct relation to success. These areas rely on individual performance and this performance must be heavily spiced with "presence" in "being". More than any other way, people bring people to fullness of Christ and to our church. These people are disciples. As Campbell and Reiersen state, some roles of disciples are Bishops, some Elders, and some Deacons but all fall into the category of Steward in the broader sense of serving.<sup>20</sup>

These serving disciples, the representative stewards of faith, that work in an outreach environment are in a broader sense of the term, evangelists. Kennon Callahan, discussing the five m's of mission objectives as mission, management, members, money, and maintenance, states that, as the mission oriented members of a congregation engage themselves in outreach they are "living beyond their preoccupation with themselves". As such he states they develop new levels of church strengths, lift their vision, and vitalize to new levels of living.<sup>21</sup> Callahan relates this act of mission second only to the development of specific concrete missional objectives. He lists this mission as a relational one rather than dynamic and points out by being relational it can be a "satisfying" action. The dynamic actions he states are mostly to correct "dissatisfaction" and are often time consuming. I have participated in all six of Callahan's relational acts he has identified over his twenty-three years of church consulting. I can honestly report they indeed can be "satisfiers". However, of all listed, lay mission visitation seems to be the most energizing, vitalizing and often exciting and uplifting ministry for the church body, mostly, I would presume, due to the dynamics

involved. I therefore suggest that depending on the church situation, and having assured the other five are operational, a visitation program is highly in order. Having tried several, the visitation plan that seems to be evolving as best suited for our church is rapidly becoming quite diverse. It would seem we are shifting from the classical door-to-door gospel presentation approach to one of caring, nurturing, and sincere concern for another's physical, mental, emotional or spiritual well being. It seems to those of us involved at our church, that this form of evangelism is best accomplished from a discipling direction.

However, lest there be a suggestion that Evangelism is the only "way to go" I would refer to Schaller's work in his book, Assimilation of New Members, wherein he points out there are a much greater number of believers than there are church members.<sup>22</sup> Our experience supports this argument in that we find a greater number of people professing Christ as Lord and Saviour than we find "warm seats in the sanctuary" on Sunday morning (and we have a relatively high Sunday attendance). Evangelism for the growth of people in Christ, as well as church growth, is not enough in itself. John Savage supports this view in his book, The Apathetic and Bored Church Member, where his research statistics show, and he states, "Evangelism without follow-up is not really evangelism".<sup>23</sup> Ten years ago, Gary W. Kuhne wrote The Dynamics of Personal Follow-up, which I find to be a work of forward vision. His one-to-one treatment of discipleship as an outreach program strengthens the foregoing arguments that personal involvement has the greatest potential for changing the lives of people to a Christ like conformity. His main theme involves a loving communication of Christian rules and a loving communication of a life in Christ by personal one-to-one relational acts that include:

- a. Developing an atmosphere of loving concern.

- b. Developing a relationship centered on Christ.
- c. Developing a stick-to-it-ness of commitment to one another.
- d. Spend quality time together.
- e. Be interested in more than his spiritual life.
- f. Remember what he tells you.
- g. Be a leader as well as a friend.

I couldn't agree more with this approach, and I find it most appropriate to end the steps of the assimilation process discussion by focusing on people. I often think back on my instruction days in Naval Aviation to the "What, Why and How" so many of us had to faithfully memorize as we demonstrated flight maneuvers to fledgling aviation candidates. The foregoing is much like that. In teaching aviation maneuvers we omitted the Who, Where, and When at that stage of training because those issues would be picked up later when the trainee demonstrated required flying skills, earned his wings and had to put it all together in coordinated operational, and tactical training. Assimilation of new members is very much like the coordinated tactics. The Who does what, where he does it and when does he do it is important. All the above have a common ingredient - The Who. The people. The right kind of people.

## CHAPTER IV

### PEOPLE OF THE RIGHT KIND

#### (MOVERS AND SHAKERS)

Campbell and Reiersen in their theological approach to a discussion of the gift of administration, referred back to one of the first original church administrative acts; the development of the ministry of deacons.<sup>24</sup> This came about from a common knowledge of their purpose, a plan of action, and an order of priorities. Their priorities were: how to serve the needs of these new members (of the first of churches), deal with the complexities of growth, and reach out to the unbelievers.<sup>25</sup> I think it is most significant that their first overt action step was to determine the "WHO" of these tasks. From this grew the term Deacon and the training and/or blessing of them to go forth. We need to think of who will do the assimilation tasks with equal diligence.

Dr. Arn apparently loves to view church growth from a discipling approach. Howard Ball of Churches Alive very definitely follows a discipling approach to provide the enrichment of church life through the selection, training, and qualification of leaders. There are many other examples. Think now about the number of books, articles, seminars or conferences you have recently seen advertised that deal with the selection, character development, and training of those that will accomplish the first steps of

the assimilation process. Who is selected and trained for the initial contact and orientation steps in your church? My guess is we generally screen through a long list of people until we find someone who we feel would fit the tasks and then tell them to get on with it. Yet, the first churches in history gave great consideration to the selection and qualification of these Deacons because they had to "serve the needs, deal with growth and reach out to the unbelievers"!

I would suggest there is a need for a more directed focus on individual performance in this process than meets the eye - one of a servant of mercy (for needs), of a sound appreciation of the character traditions and make up of the church (for growth) and of a sensitive, perceptive, ear to listen, and to have a confident reasoning ability to present scriptures in love (to reach the unbelievers). It requires being open to receive and confident in a sense of "being" in Christ, much like the early Christians must have experienced.

Dr. Win Arn, in his Church Growth Handbook, states there are four stages in preparing a church to emphasize the Great Commission. They are preparation, presence, proclamation and persuasion. Although these stages were used to support Corporate Planning issues discussed in Chapter 2, I find an interesting correlation of them in the application of personal preparation for conducting the Assimilation process. Taken in the generic sense, these stages could reflect what might be termed a deacon's role in Administration.<sup>26</sup> In this sense, the stages of preparation would be altered from what Callahan would refer to as corporate planning to a more personal ministry of serving. Campbell and Reiersen treat this process as an administrative gift most helpful in setting priorities for actions. Moreover, they relate the same need of priorities today with the issues

confronting those involved in the first complexities of growth and reach out to the unbelievers.<sup>27</sup>

Having thus shifted from a corporate view to a more personal view of this process, I would suggest this directed focus on performance is much akin to that of being a disciple. This view is more directed to who you are -- your "being" -- rather than a measure of what is accomplished. I believe this is more in alignment with the Christian training in Antioch.<sup>28</sup> These early disciples knew their goal, discussed plans to proclaim the gospel and trained for a year to do so!! They were trained by the best available - those that were with Christ. I believe they really understood the intrinsic ramifications of "being" and how it relates to the outward projection of Christ in our lives -- what our Pastor refers to as "presence" (in Christ). Persuasion might be listed last in Arn's four steps of preparation but it carries with it powerful evangelical overtones.

One might ask how can tasks be done, goals be accomplished and performance be assessed if "being" is important -- especially considering the sinfulness of man. Bonhoeffer, in his classic The Cost of Discipleship, asks several closely related questions.<sup>29</sup> One of which is "How does God create a community of saints out of sinful men and women?" The answer he gives is, in my opinion, the thread running through his entire book and the same thread that ties us to the world we live in today, and to God. That is, the miracle of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Pastor William Yaeger of First Baptist Church, Modesto, California, lists the following characteristics for lay leaders as well as others for his ministerial staff:

- a. Motivated people.
- b. Proven Godliness and spiritual maturity.
- e. Emotional stability.
- d. Gifts and abilities.

After these he lists Faithfulness, Availability, Teachability, Self-motivation, Industry, Innovation, Productivity, Likemindedness, Interaction, Seasoning, Stewardship, Devotion and Camaraderie.<sup>30</sup> These characteristics seem to be excellent screening checks for selection of the assimilation "doers". However, I offer the suggestion that those new member candidates being contacted and/or visited won't "see" most of these qualities. What they probably will see in a conversational one-to-one visit might be more in line with expressed attitudes of love, acceptance and forgiveness.<sup>31</sup> I think this is best expressed by Urban T. Holmes when he likens the process of visitation (Evangelism) to one of a proposition of marriage. An art of beguiling, charming or luring people into a relationship with God and on a pilgrimage with the church to His Kingdom. Holmes says "the people of God are to the world as a lover, not a salesperson."

Whatever approach taken by your church should be a cognizant action to reflect your theological stance and to attract your selected candidates. Few churches like the one I belong to, will attempt to cover all bases. We knowingly try to minister to all and we do suffer a complex and differing nature of consequences.

The sometimes overriding issues of spiritual requirements for the selection of people for a church job may cause a less than credible review of personal performance. That is not meant to be suggested by the previous thrust of the "discipling comments". Hersey and Blanchard treat the subject

of performance from a situational analysis that would be very helpful in the selection of people for any job, particularly those in leadership and in assimilation. This behavioral analysis is unique in that it offers a technique to measure effectiveness of an individual using his personal behavior style in the setting of the behavior of those he is trying to influence. Just knowing these principles would be very helpful to those involved in assimilating a variety of personalities.<sup>32</sup>

Another performance oriented look at the people involved in assimilation is one we use at our church for most of our leaders. It is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) examination to measure behavior responses and determine the particular combination of psychological types that each person exhibits. We find the results of this test is very helpful to either place people in jobs and/or to better understand and almost expect a type response by them on the job. It also helps the individual to know his type so that he may strive to strengthen areas of his make-up that he perhaps didn't know were being neglected. As Myers states "when people use their best processes in an effort to do something well, their skill with those processes increases..... The recognition that one process is more appropriate than another in a given situation is an important milestone in type development. Without that recognition, people have no conscious reason to care, or even notice, which process they are using. When they realize one process works better than another they have the key to more effective use of all their gifts, each in its own field."<sup>33</sup>

I subscribe to this kind of review of ourselves. One that allows us to recognize weaknesses and paths to follow to change and open new avenues to better performance. I subscribe to it also because when used in this context

it fits well with one of my favorite scriptures. "For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one to another. And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given us, let each exercise them accordingly".<sup>34</sup>

## CHAPTER V

### REFLECTIONS ON THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE AS A STEWARD IN THE MINISTRY OF ASSIMILATING NEW MEMBERS

Considerable change has taken place from the early Hebrew use of the term "steward" to the use of the term in our contemporary secular world today. From the early Hebrew usage the word was wrapped in the feeling of serving, but more than that, was also indicative of a serving decision maker who has to give orders and take charge of others.<sup>35</sup> The Administrator in today's church is a servant. He must serve the Pastor, Various Boards, Vestrys, Councils and such. However, the main purpose of his service is to free the Senior Minister, Pastor or Rector of a myriad of often urgent but less important decision-making processes so that the more important issues are addressed by the man at the top. Yet the assurance must be there that the wheel with the overheated bearings will get oiled whether it's squeaking or not!! Stewardship in this sense will serve the church well in its ability to attract new people.

In the assimilation and incorporation of new members the Administrator can be a key figure, especially in his sensitivity to the first contact phase of assimilation. His likely involvement in corporate planning, volunteer selection, training and discipling can help bring forth, develop and expose statements of "being" and "presence" of both the people representing the

church (disciples) and the church appropriately representing the people. In a relational sense of outreach he has responsibilities that include a lot of things visitors (and members) see, hear, and sense when they arrive at the church grounds and enter into the service.

The thread of authority for the Administrator to make decisions often demands a very close relationship with the Senior Pastor or Rector. A relationship that is more of a discipling servant of both his boss and of God. Of his boss because the Administrator must often think like the Pastor to make on the spot decisions. Of God because the Administrator knows the goal of his church and his pastor is for all to be in and of Christ. He will be "noticed" by the ubiquitous and inquisitive nature of newcomers and his expressed attitudes of "love, acceptance, and forgiveness" will be influential in their decision to return.

Douglas John Hall states that stewardship is not the gaining of influence or power nor even the winning of souls, but the care and nurture of life. He goes on to describe these issues as "the husbanding of good" and "the midwifery of truth".<sup>36</sup> In this sometimes hazy matrix of requirements placed on the Administrator, one issue stands clear, in my opinion. The issue is that the Administrator must be himself a discipler. He will influence people and he will be in the mind of many of the visitors and members of the church a model of the ETHOS of the church. John Naisbitt would probably describe this up front role for the Administrator as a model of decentralized, participating democracy.<sup>37</sup> I certainly believe so and find it comforting to see the world around us even considering the kind of leadership that grows out of a stewardship role as a discipler. I believe the early Christians of Antioch applied this principle and I believe it is valid today.

This ever present awareness of God in our lives is most needed by the

Administrator as he "maintains or creates integrity through the facilitation process."<sup>38</sup> As Bishop Colaw stated, the Administrator can indeed be at times, Priest or Prophet in his actions. Why? Because he is sometimes the last order of defense to prevent what Bishop Colaw describes as "The Corruption of Powerlessness". In yet another function I don't believe there is a more fitting example of the need of Old Testament stewardship than by the Administrator as he helps work through the sometimes complex financial and spiritual decisions of managing the business of the church.<sup>39</sup>

The Administrator perhaps above all others on the church staff needs to "guard against modeling after a God they have invented" and "be conformed to the image of the Suffering Servant who was obedient to the death on the cross". Or in Bonhoeffer's Biblical interpretation, "Transform in the form of Christ which seeks to be manifested in us."<sup>40</sup> We need to know others preceding us have struggled to be transformed and did well. For instance Churchill is often quoted as saying "I'm always ready to learn but I don't always like to be taught." Churchill, nonetheless, was taught and taught well by his willingness to submit to reason even in stress.

I think we have been given, and will be given, direction to focus our energies through the work of God if we are open and willing to submit and receive it. A start might be "Be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."<sup>41</sup>

APPENDIX I  
CHURCH GROWTH SOURCES

A. Dr. C. Peter Wagner (Fuller Theological Seminary) - Three ingredients of growth:<sup>42</sup>

1. A dedicated pastor who will lead his church into growth.
  - a. By hard work.
  - b. By a willingness to share leadership.
  - c. By a willingness to have members whom they cannot personally pastor.
2. A congregation motivated for growth and willing to pay the price.
  - a. By following growth leaders.
  - b. By paying the bills.
  - c. By readjustments to their fellowship pattern.
3. A Church which understands where it is and where it wants to go.
  - a. By self analysis techniques.
  - b. By denominational assistance.
  - c. By outside help. (third party consultants and/or diagnostic clinics).

B. Dr. Donald A. McGavran (Fuller School of World Missions) - Five reasons why some American churches are growing: <sup>43</sup>

1. They believe God wants the Church to grow; by prayer for, vision of, preaching and teaching growth.
2. They intend to grow; and will not be content without growth.
3. They recognize social realities; in order to match their growth actions to realities.
4. They create multitudes of substructures of belonging; with particular attention to the newcomers.
5. Growing denominations plant multitudes of new churches; with a strong emphasis on homogeneity.

E. Dr. Win Arn (President Institute of American Church Growth) - Seven Characteristics of Growing Church: <sup>44</sup>

1. A strong commitment to worship; with praise and prayer.
2. A strong commitment to outreach; local as well as world.
3. A strong commitment to edification of the saints; II Tim 2:2 (multiplication).
4. A strong commitment to people; physical social and spiritual needs.
5. A strong commitment to growth as a goal.
6. A strong commitment to the possibility of change.

7. A strong commitment to sacrifice and faithfulness.

D. Leon Kilbreth (Leading Sunday School Evangelist among Southern Baptist - 1979-80) - Three categories for strategy of planning growth:<sup>45</sup>

1. An appealing pulpit

a. Not an appeasing pulpit.

b. A nerve and feeding center - for feeding, inspiring, motivating, instructing, correcting, challenging, loving and holding up a vision.

c. An attracting pulpit.

2. An aggressive outreach considering:

a. Locating, assigning, visiting, cultivating, bringing, teaching, winning and developing every prospect.

b. Developing Overcomers - 20% turnover to keep this difficult task alive.

c. Marketing.

d. Advertising

e. Exuding enthusiasm.

f. Praying.

3. An attractive teaching ministry:

a. That draws in and holds teachers.

b. Diversifying and creating newness.

c. Select, elect, train, and motivate Holy Spirit filled Bible teachers.

E. Dr. James Kennedy (Pastor Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and Originator of Evangelism International III) - A Classic example of focusing

on strengths - i.e. Evangelism:<sup>46</sup>

1. Examine the Biblical principles.
  - a. Get involved as a leader.
  - b. Focus on training leaders.
2. Review the history of your strengths and failures.
  - a. Multiply your strengths.
3. Motivate the Christians from the pulpit first.
4. Recruit the workers from personal contacts.
5. Train.
  - a. By class.
  - b. By homework.
  - c. By on the job practice under supervision.
6. Present the Gospel.
7. Provide a Follow Up
  - a. To preserve the fruit.
  - b. To develop new Christian.
  - c. Multiply.

F. Dr. Kennon Callahan (Pastor, Theologian, and Long Range Planning Consultant) - Outlines what a Church must do to achieve excellence:<sup>47</sup>

1. By developing a realistic assessment of its present standing and stature in relation to other congregations.
2. By making fundamental decisions as to the direction for the future.
3. By the study of strengths in relation to the control characteristics of successful churches.

4. By developing strategic objectives that will advance long range effectiveness in mission.
- G. Lyle E. Schaller (Author and Parish Consultant with the Yokefellow Institute) - Stresses the demand of creativity and insight in the process of recruiting and assimilating new members:<sup>48</sup>
1. By discussing the glue that hold congregations together and the exclusionary nature of:
    - a. How the church organizes individuals.
    - b. By the nature of the people, the history and by schedule and program.
    - c. By the skills, procedures, techniques and practices a congregation develops.
  2. By suggesting a broad based, active and international assimilation system to prevent the above exclusion.
- H. Dr. Robert H. Schuller (Founding Pastor of Garden Grove Community Church, The Crystal Cathedral, and host of "The Hour of Power") - Strong supporter of "Possibility Thinking":<sup>49</sup>
1. By believing that success can come to you as you plan with the prayer of surrender and will often manifest itself in dreams that seem impossible.
  2. By using God's people to unlock the impossible nature of the dream by repetition and consistency in discussing the dream.
  3. That it all must be done in God's timing.
- I. Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho (Pastor of largest church in the world, The

Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea - membership 1985 over 500,000) - Believes in a special dynamic dimension of prayer that supports and sometimes results in visualization and dreams of successes. His church growth philosophy is generally based on: <sup>50</sup>

1. Prayer and dreams.
2. Developing and discipling leaders.
3. Small Group participation in cells that divide and multiply.

J. Dean Urban T. Holmes (School of Theology, University of the South) - Himself being an Anglican expression of the theology of mission: <sup>51</sup>

1. By the rediscovery of the ministry of mission and all that it implies in evangelism and renewal. Heavily involved in the Anglican order of authority in Scripture, Tradition and Reason. His book, Turning To Christ provides an interesting balance of thought in the meditation and study of assimilation from an Anglican viewpoint.

K. Participation in conferences by the following institutes and organizations were most helpful in this research:

1. American Institute of Church Growth - Dr. Arn Jacksonville, Florida and Orlando, Florida
2. Institute of Christian Imperatives - Dr. Yaeger for Pastors and Lay Leaders - Modesto, California.
3. Churches Alive - Howard Ball, President  
By consultation. They advised our church leaders in

the development of our small group discipling program  
Conferences in North Carolina, Jacksonville, Florida,  
Texas, England, Scotland.

4. EE International III - Dr. James Kennedy  
Certified at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church.  
Several Conferences since our church uses this as our  
fundamental Evangelism program. We are now experimenting  
with a lifestyle non-visitation program.
5. U. S. National Church Growth Association - Dr. Cho  
Washington, D.C. 1983 and 1985 Conferences.
6. Alban Institute - Dr. Roy Oswald.  
Washington, D.C., An Excellent Conference on assimilation  
of new members.
7. Candler School of Theology - Dean Gerald Lord (Program  
Director) and Rev. Dan Dunn (Coordinator) of National  
Institute in Church Finance and Administration, Emory  
University. Atlanta, Georgia. June 1985 and April 1985.  
The best!
8. Institute of Basic Youth Conflicts - Bill Gothard (Pastor  
Leader) Conference particularly beneficial.

**APPENDIX II**

**EXCLUSION CATEGORIES<sup>52</sup>**

**Non-English Speaking People**

**Black Americans**

**American Indians**

**Puerto Ricans**

**People who Cannot Climb Stairs**

**The Deaf and Those with Hearing Disabilities**

**Koreans**

**Filipinos**

**Chinese**

**The Visually Handicapped**

**The Mentally Retarded or Mentally Ill**

**Mexican Americans**

**Persons in Wheelchairs**

**Women Who Were Widowed Before Coming to Our Church**

**Childless Couples**

**Single Parents**

**Unmarried Couples Living Together**

**Those Who Would Not be Comfortable with Our Order of Worship**

**Alcoholics**

**Non-Christians**

**The Extremely Shy or Timid Persons**

**People Who Feel They Cannot Dress Suitable for Our Church**

**Single Adults, Especially Single Male Adults**

**People Whose Eyes are Sensitive to Glare**

**Parents Seeking a Church That Has Sunday School for Young Children at  
the Same Hour as Worship for Adults**

**Post-High-School-Age Youth**

**Teen-agers**

**Divorced Persons**

**Persons Who are Divorced and Remarried**

**Those Opposed to Ordination of Women**

**Those Favoring Ordination of Women**

**Those Who Work on Sunday Morning**

**Radical Dissenters**

**The Very Wealthy**

**Homosexuals**

**Anyone Who is Very Nervous in Crowds (Agoraphobia)**

**Anyone Who Feels "Lost" in a Large and Complex Building**

**Illiterates**

**Hippies**

**"Jesus Freaks"**

**The Very Poor**

## FOOTNOTES

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- 2 Colossians 1:17-18 (N.A.S.)
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