

HEALTHY MISSIONS PARTNERSHIPS



Alec & Belle Waterhouse
LECTURE SERIES

A Missionary's Perspective

Why Do We Partner?

▶ We are the **BODY** of Christ

- ▶ For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

▶ We are called to a Spirit of **UNITY**

- ▶ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the body of peace. *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. Ephesians 4:1-5

▶ We are not meant to do this alone. Jesus gives us the example of going out **TOGETHER**

- ▶ And He called the twelve to *Himself*, and began to send them out two *by* two...Mark 6:7
- ▶ After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Luke 10:1
- ▶ Paul continues this example in the epistles

Shared Vision

- As why we seek partnership, remember WHY we are going
- What is the goal of missions?
- How does our partnership and relationship with fellow believers impact this?



STEP ONE: PRAYER

- ▶ Pray about how God could use your church in a missions partnership.
- ▶ Begin by praying for the nations and specific missionaries.
 - ▶ The IMB has lots of prayer resources available to churches.
www.imb.org/pray
 - ▶ Suggestion: Pray through a different Affinity per month/quarter



STEP TWO: ASSESSING READINESS

- ▶ **ASK if your church is healthy enough to enter into a partnership?**

Are you sharing the Gospel in your own Jerusalem and Judea?

- ▶ **What steps should you take to becoming a healthy church?**

- ▶ Evangelism/discipleship training

- ▶ Church outreach events

- ▶ www.imb.org/training (free resources)

- ▶ **How can you begin developing a missional heart even if you are not ready for a formal partnership?**

Note: Don't wait until you are perfect

- ▶ There is a difference between "not ready" and "room for growth"

Assessing your current relationship status

What does your church do to **give, pray, go**?

How would you define your current relationship to missions?

- We financially support missions.
- We regularly pray for missionaries.
- We go on an annual mission trip.

*****We have a missions partner.*****

All support is valued, but how can we move from support to deeper relationship?

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

STEP 1: PRAYER

STEP 2: ASSESSING READINESS

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

START BY LOOKING WHERE YOU ARE

- Do you have any connections with a “local” missionary
- What people groups are represented in your area? In your church?
- What giftings are represented in your church? Which cultures/locations would be good to partner with those giftings?

Teachers

Doctors, dentists, nurses

Music/theater

Sports

Hawaiian culture

Multi-lingual speakers

ASK FOR HELP: If you do not have a prior relationship with a missionary, reach out to the IMB for a connection.
email: info@imb.org

Defining the source of partnership



Labeling helps dictate behavior

- If we understand our “label” it may help lead to a better understanding of how to effectively partner
- ▶ Who are we partnering with?
- ▶ What is the purpose of our partnership?



Anchored
to a
missionary

Anchored
to a place

There should be overlap between the two, but knowing what kind of partnership you have can help **dictate behavior, inform goals, and determine what needs your church may have.**

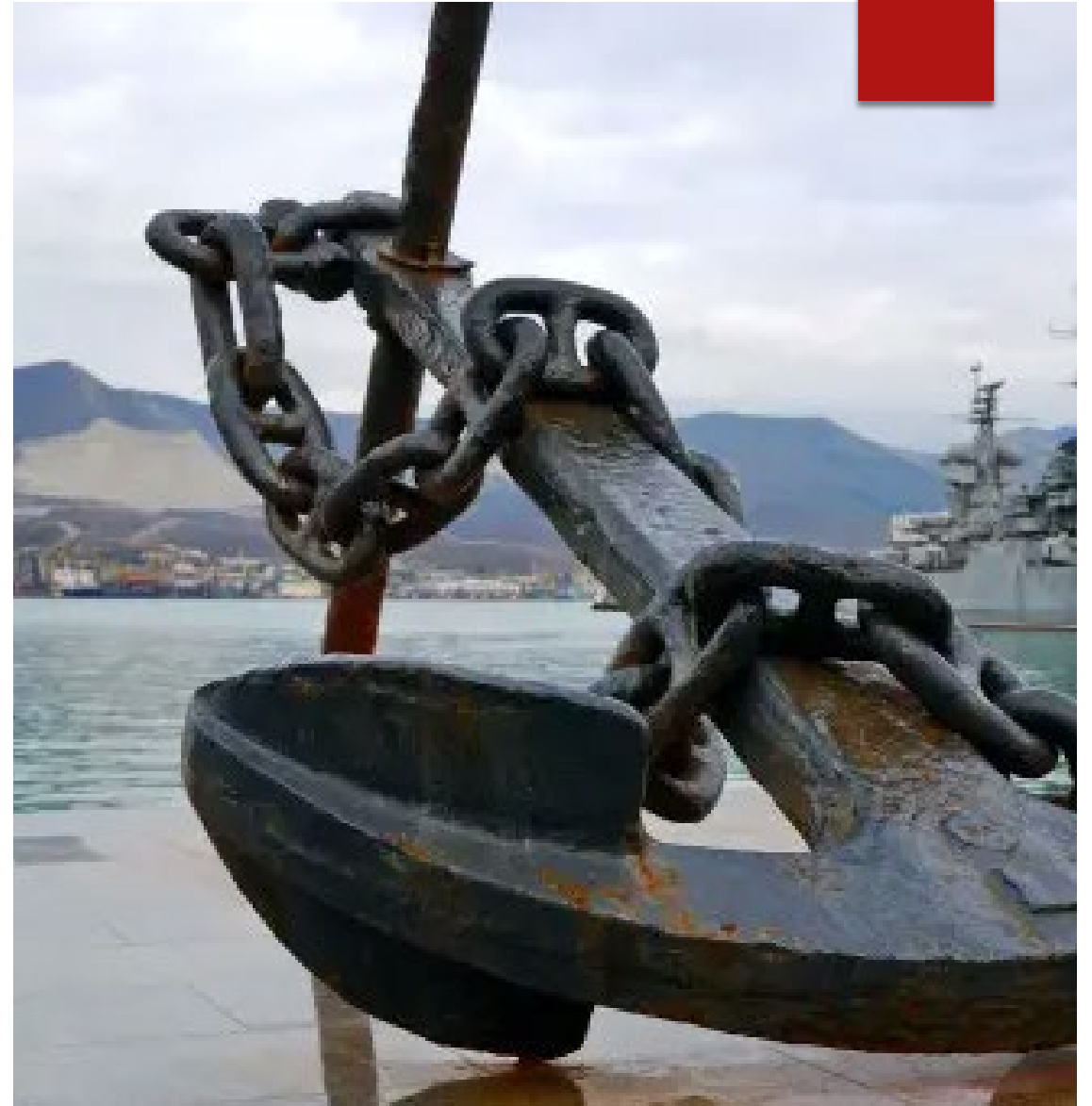
Anchored to a Missionary

This kind of partnership 'moves' and is dependent upon the missionary

- ▶ Location to location
- ▶ In different seasons or 'stages' of ministry
- ▶ stopping altogether..."we used to go to [blank] but the missionary came back to the States

Includes learning about the place missionary serves & ways to be involved

- ▶ Understanding their city, people, place helps you better support and love the people you are working with
- ▶ Moves you more and more towards your own love for the city/place



Partnership Anchored to a Place



This Partnership is to a specific location or local church regardless of missionary presence

- ▶ This partnership is best when God lays a burden for a specific place or people group on your church
- ▶ Sometimes due to a missionary leaving the field after a church is very connected
- ▶ Sometimes due to specific cultural connection or capability beyond the norms

Anchored to a place (cont.)

- **If anchored to a place, please talk to the local church or missions organizations to see if there are others working there. Learn how to cooperate even if you will not partner.**
- **Loving and ministering in the place will require learning and loving the missionaries serving there as well.**
 - ▶ Don't make the mistake of seeing the missionaries call there as adversarial or working against your role there. Instead embrace how these are connected
 - ▶ Trust them and listen to their advice. You may ultimately disagree but hear them out and try to understand the heart and reasoning for their advice.
 - ▶ You don't know what you don't know- even when working with your "own" people group. Time moves quickly and every city and place is unique and evolving.

On a short term trip, remember that the long term missionaries will be there to follow up or clean up.

- ▶ Since they are often 'doing the dishes', it's appropriate for them to dictate how big of a mess you make in the kitchen
- ▶ Often short term teams are limited in their strategic ministry due to language, length of time, etc.
 - ▶ If you don't see the strategic purpose in the task you've been asked to do, **ask**. But ask with a learning spirit and servant heart
 - ▶ Conflict sometimes arises when churches don't feel valued or underutilized



STEP 4: Outline Expectations



STEP 1: PRAYER

STEP 2: ASSESSING READINESS

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

STEP 4: OUTLINE EXPECTATIONS

Knowing what foods are healthy and unhealthy is not enough. We often need to follow a plan to eat healthy. In the same way, we often 'know' healthy steps for a good partnership, but we lack the planning and follow through.

Developing a plan for a good missions partnership includes:

- Goal setting
- Defining responsibilities & roles
- Set time frame for partnership

Action steps to support your missionary

In a healthy partnership with a missionary, the Church is a “support role” to the missionary

- ▶ Some churches LOVE partnering and loving on missionaries because it’s a very tangible display of their relationship.

Example ways to encourage missionary

- ▶ Cards
- ▶ Regular and specific prayer
- ▶ Care Packages
- ▶ Short messages
- ▶ Books
- ▶ Include them in your fellowship



Reciprocal Partnership



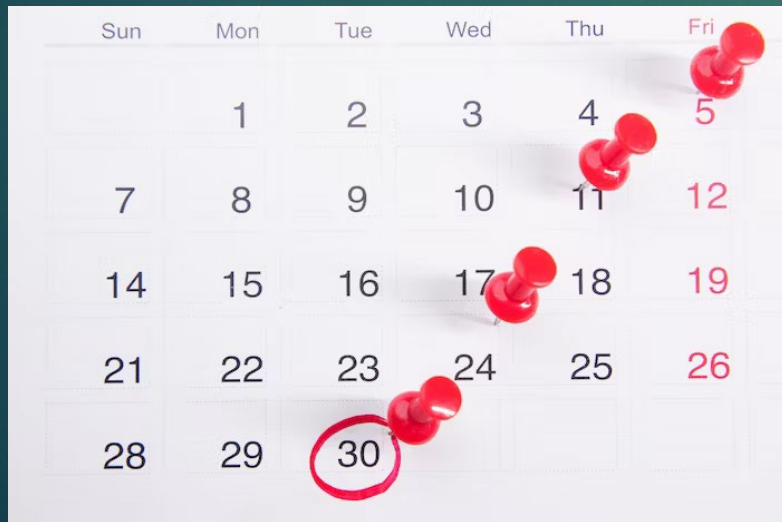
- ▶ A healthy partnership is a two-way street. Both sides of the relationship should be giving and benefiting.
 - Have you defined the ways your church can grow through the partnership
 - Set the steps to achieve that?
 - Remember that this will change over time. Give time for new missionaries time to learn, and allow the same for your church.

Growth begins with lots of church wide education on culture, and ministry needs

- ▶ Celebrate cultural holidays as a church
- ▶ Missions conferences
- ▶ Children's mission education
- ▶ Cultural pot luck, meals, or festivities
- ▶ Family study units
- ▶ Begin ministry with that people group in your city



STEP 5: Establish Responsibilities



STEP 1: PRAYER

STEP 2: ASSESSING READINESS

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

STEP 4: OUTLINE EXPECTATIONS

STEP 5: Establish Responsibilities

- Point person for contact with missionary or church
- Point person for educating and including the church on missions partnership, fundraising, prayer advocate
- As a team set goals (goals for giving, goals for contact, schedule for prayer, ect)
 - Important to have a point person, but relationship can't solely be taken on by one person in the church
 - Remember only a small portion of your church will likely 'GO' so give opportunities for all to partner and serve according to their gifts (Ephesians 4:11-12)
 - Include the church as a whole, from the smallest children to elderly adults

Responsibility of Missionary Communication

Ways for your missionary to partner with you begin with good communication

- ▶ Set clear expectations for how often you would like to communicate, or ways that you hope they will partner with your church.
 - ❖ Newsletters
 - ❖ Video messages/ Zoom chats
 - ❖ Social Media updates
 - ❖ Specific ministry needs

STEP 6: Execute the Plan

STEP 1: PRAYER

STEP 2: ASSESSING READINESS

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

STEP 4: OUTLINE EXPECTATIONS

STEP 5: ESTABLISH RESPONSIBILITIES

STEP 6: EXECUTE THE PLAN

STEP 7: EVALUATE

STEP 1: PRAYER

STEP 2: ASSESSING READINESS

STEP 3: FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

STEP 4: OUTLINE EXPECTATIONS

STEP 5: ESTABLISH RESPONSIBILITIES

STEP 6: EXECUTE THE PLAN

STEP 7: EVALUATE

Regularly debrief and evaluate what is working/not working well and adjust.

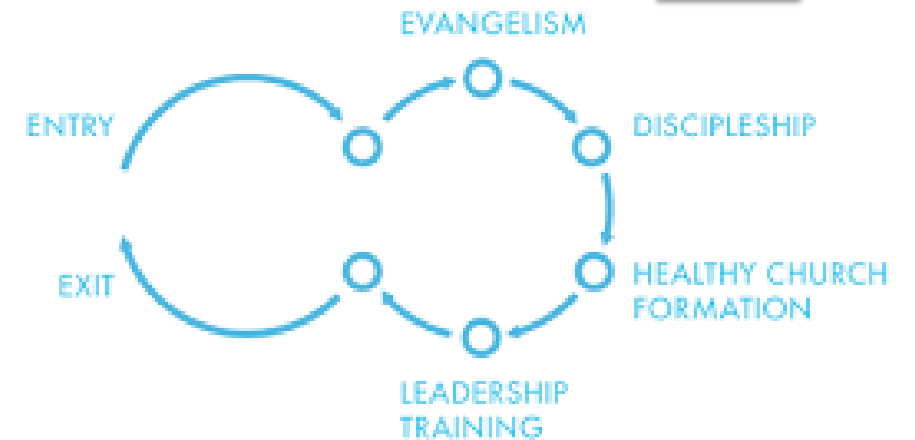
Troubleshoot Problems

Check in (don't check out and move on) when expectations aren't met.

Remember grace in love when communicating the problem.

- ▶ Sometimes newsletters aren't sent because of periods of discouragement (feeling like nothing new or exciting to report)
- ▶ Feelings like no one reads updates or cares
 - ▶ Exp: Mailchimp reporting stats on who opens newsletters
- ▶ Other tasks taking a priority

THE MISSIONARY TASK



**REACHING
THE NATIONS,
TOGETHER.**



**INTERNATIONAL
MISSION BOARD**