

Serve/Reach

Part 3 – Lesson 1

Applying Your Gifts and Mentoring

OVERVIEW

This lesson encourages members to solidify their desire and commitment to service by creating a written plan. It discusses the need for spiritual awareness in terms of resistance to our spiritual goals. This lesson also discusses outreach to other believers regarding the exploration of spiritual gifts and the need to encourage and motivate others to live in God's purpose and serve.

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the sacrifices and costs you may encounter while pursuing your service goals
- Define vision, mission, and objectives as they relate to church leadership and your service
- Explain the importance of strategy and tactics when deploying your gift
- Describe the role of pastors
- Describe the Rock Church's approach to serving in ministry

ACTIVITIES

- Prayer
- Initiate the development of a vision, mission, and objective(s) for your Christian service

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.” (Matthew 16:24)

“I urge you...to offer yourself as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1)

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)

COUNTING THE COST

We serve the Lord because we love Him and we want to follow His teachings and example. We serve the Lord because we have compassion for others and follow His command to serve one another. We make a commitment to fulfill God’s purpose for our lives. However, such commitment often comes with a cost. The enemy (Satan) does not want us to fulfill God’s purpose for our lives, and he does not want you influencing others for God’s kingdom.

Serving the Lord means “taking up a cross.” Pursuing spiritual maturity and service for the Lord can lead to the loss of superficial relationships and other things. However, the gain is much greater!

Service may include the sacrifice of resources such as:

1. **Time.** In today’s culture, there are many demands on our time. To be effective in God’s service, we must evaluate how we spend time and sacrifice things that do not bring spiritual value. However, we must not sacrifice things that are most meaningful, such as time with God and family.
2. **Money.** Beyond tithes and offerings, service sometimes calls for the expenditure of money. For example, you may wish to treat someone to lunch in order to have one-on-one time. You may wish to drive to take someone to church or to the hospital. The types and amounts of expenditures depend on your activities. Consider any money spent as an offering to the Lord, which will reap a return for God’s kingdom.

VISION

Churches emanate from people who have a vision and want to fulfill the Great Commission. “Vision” is a picture or dream, the act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to reality. A person who has a vision is known as a “visionary.” When other people believe in and capture the vision of the visionary, the visionary often becomes a leader.

The Rock Church has a stated vision (dream).

Activity**Recognizing the Rock Church Vision (Dream)****10 Minutes**

Read the Rock Church Vision (Dream) and identify its major elements. Identify the visionary.

MISSION

A vision is put into action by way of a mission. A “mission” can be defined as a goal or purpose that is accomplished by strong conviction or calling. “Vision is seeing – “Mission” is doing.

The Rock Church has a mission statement.

Activity**Recognizing the Rock Church Mission Statement****5 Minutes**

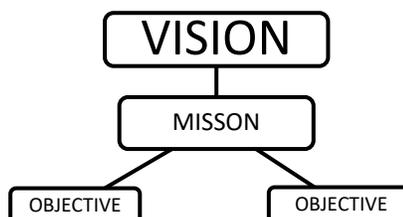
Read the Rock Church Mission Statement and identify its major elements.

OBJECTIVES

Usually, it takes several steps to accomplish a mission. There may be multiple aspects of mission accomplishment that require individual focus and action. These are “objectives.”

In essence, the objectives of the Rock Church are manifested through its many types of ministries and areas of service.

The objective of the Rock Church’s ministry development is to mobilize an army of ministers who are maximizing their unique gifts, hearts, abilities, personality, and experiences in a meaningful place of service.



STRATEGY

Mission accomplishment usually involves a strategy. A “strategy” is a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result. Strategy takes into consideration particular situations at particular times. It is how the church is going to accomplish its mission.

TACTICS

Strategies often involve tactics. “Tactics” are the patterns a person or persons use to maneuver towards their objectives.

When you are equipped and ready to employ your gifts, you may run into resistance. Strategies and tactics (what you are going to do and how you are going to do it), with the leading of the Holy Spirit, is essential to reaching your service goals and those of the church.

THE ROLE OF PASTORS

Everything rises and falls on leadership. No ministry can exceed the commitment of those leading it. The equipping of the members for ministry is the number one priority of the pastoral staff. We encourage growth in commitment to Christ and His Church. The church’s desire is to provide training, encouragement, guidance, feedback and resources to the ministers under its care. The people are the ministers and the pastors are the administrators (Ephesians 4:11-12).

SERVING IN MINISTRIES

Every member deserves personal assistance in discovering a meaningful place of service. The Rock Church values individuals more than ministry. Those involved in ministry are entitled to competent leadership from the pastor and other leaders.

Your primary ministry commitment should be in the area where you are gifted. Your secondary ministry includes serving in any other area of the church where you are needed.

Every leader is a learner. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading. The Rock Church emphasizes on-the-job training more than pre-service training. We learn best by doing. We delegate to develop people.

We encourage creativity and innovation in ministry. Sometimes mistakes are made; however, there are no “failures” in ministry – only experiments that did not work! A failed project does not mean a failed person. There are no “wrong” people, only “right” people in the wrong ministry.

The Rock Church believes in diversity in ministries. Diversity illustrates the unique giftedness of individuals. Each ministry must fill one or more of the basic purposes of the church – if it does not, the Rock Church does not do it.

Ministries have life-cycles. Once a ministry stops meeting a need, it is discontinued. Most ministries require a one-year commitment; however, the Rock Church allows a person to change ministries gracefully, without guilt. People are not locked in permanently.

Only official ministries of the Rock Church, under pastoral leadership, are given publicity.

Activity

“What if there was a ministry that...”

15 Minutes

Within the church there are many ways to use our gifts and serve others. We are familiar with ministries such as music, prayer team, ushering and greeting, nursery, parking, and many others. However, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, a person may be called to serve in a ministry that has yet to be established. The elements of S.H.A.P.E. could lead you to exploring new and innovative ways to serve. The mission fields are diverse, and you may have a particular field to harvest.

Take a moment and think about the number of people you encounter and interact with each day. Think of innovative ways you can show God’s love and compassion, and lead people to Christ. Think of personal strategies you can employ to make a difference in the lives of others and the community. Consider your heart (passion) and where it can lead. Whether it is a ministry that already exists or one that does not, describe where your heart is calling you.

SUMMARY

Being involved with ministry often affords us the opportunity to bless others and ourselves through the offering of our resources. We all can be a part of achieving the church’s mission when we catch the vision of the visionary and commit ourselves to God’s service.

Serve/Reach

Part 3 – Lesson 2

Continuing the Mission

OVERVIEW

Each Christian should have the desire to reach others for Christ. Jesus has charged us with continuing His mission. We live in a fallen world – a world of pain, confusion, and a myriad of needs. To not engage our families and our community with our testimonies and the love of Christ is to be negligent in our duties.

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the meaning and purpose of the Great Commission
- Describe the cultural demographics of our nation and world
- Identify life events that can make a person more receptive to receiving Christ
- Explain the value of your testimony and how it can play a role in leading non-believers to Christ

“You are to go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere.” (Mark 16:15)

“With my authority, take this message of repentance to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: There is forgiveness of sins for all who turn to me.” (Luke 24:47)

“For I have a great sense of obligation to people in our culture and to people in other cultures...” (Romans 1:14)

“The Good News about God’s kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:14)

“Jesus replied, “Let me assure you that no one has ever given up anything...for love of me and to tell others the Good News, who won’t be given back, a hundred times over...All these will be his here on earth, and in the world to come he shall have eternal life.” (Mark 10:29-30)

THE GREAT COMMISSION

During Christ’s time on earth, Christ gave his disciples a command to make more disciples. Matthew 28: 19-20 is a passage that directly addresses Christ’s expectations regarding his disciples, but also believers:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

In the book of Acts (chapter 1, verse 8), Jesus promised the power of the Holy Spirit when following his command:

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

CULTURAL DEMOGRAPHICS

There are approximately 331 million people in the United States, 39 million people in California, and over 200 thousand people in the Temecula-Murrieta Valley. Our local community is growing in population.

Worldwide, there are over 7 billion people, with about two-thirds of them lost and without Christ. There are over 2 thousand unreached people groups in the world – people who will never hear about Christ unless someone tells them.

Among the most unreached peoples in the world are:

- Asians
- Urban
- Islamic
- Youth

There are also cultural and social trends within the world that will create a changing demographic. According to the Pew Research Center (March 2016), there are 10 demographic trends that are shaping the United States and the world. They include:

1. **Americans are more racially and ethnically diverse than in the past, and the U.S. is projected to be even more diverse in the**

“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;...” (Acts 17:26-27)

coming decades. By the year 2055, the U.S. will not have a single racial or ethnic majority.

2. **Asians projected to become the largest immigrant group, surpassing Hispanics.** Asia has replaced Latin America (including Mexico) as the biggest source of new immigrants to the U.S.
3. **America’s demographic changes are shifting the electorate – and American politics.** The 2016 electorate was the most diverse in U.S. history due to strong growth among Hispanic eligible voters, particularly U.S.-born youth. There are also wide gaps opening up between generations on many social and political issues.
4. **Millennials, young adults born after 1980, are the new generation to watch.** They have likely surpassed Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) as the largest U.S. generation and differ significantly from their Millennial adults are non-white, the highest share of any generation.
5. **Women’s role in the labor force and leadership positions has grown dramatically.** The labor force participation rate for American women has risen steadily since the 1960s. In fact, mothers were the sole or primary breadwinner in a record 40% of all households with children in 2011.
6. **The American family is changing. After decades of declining marriage rates, the share of American adults who have never been married is at an historic high.** Two-parent households are on the decline in the U.S., while divorce, remarriage and cohabitation are on the rise. About one-in-six American kids now live in a blended family.
7. **The share of Americans who live in middle-class households is shrinking.** The share of U.S. adults living in middle-income households fell to 50%.
8. **Christians are declining as a share of the U.S. population, and the number of U.S. adults who do not identify with any organized religion has grown.** While the U.S. remains home to more Christians than any other country, the percentage of Americans identifying as Christian dropped from 78% in 2007 to 71% in 2014. By contrast, the religiously unaffiliated have

surged seven percentage points in that time span to make up 23% of U.S. adults last year.

“Jesus said to his followers, “There are many people to harvest but only a few workers to help harvest them.” (Matthew 9:37)

“Anyone who calls on the Lord will be saved. But before people can ask the Lord for help, they must believe in him; and before they can believe in him, they must hear about him; and for them to hear about the Lord, someone must tell them; and before someone can go and tell them, that person must be sent.” (Romans 10:13-15)

9. The world’s religious makeup will look a lot different by 2050.

Over the next few decades, Christians will remain the largest religious group, but Islam will grow faster than any other major religion, mostly because Muslims are younger and have more children than any other religious group globally. By 2050, the number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians.

10. The world is changing. The demographic future for the U.S. and the world looks very different than the recent past. Growth from 1950-2010 was rapid – the global population nearly tripled, and the U.S. population doubled. However, population growth from 2010 to 2050 is projected to be significantly slower and is expected to tilt strongly to the oldest age groups, both globally and in the U.S. Public opinion on whether the growing number of older people is a problem varies dramatically around the world.

Below are more key findings on religion in the U.S. (source: Pew Research, December 2016):

- Almost 8 in 10 people identify with a religion, mostly Christian
- 21 percent have no religious identity, up from 15 percent in 2008
- Over 7 in 10 say religion is losing its influence in society

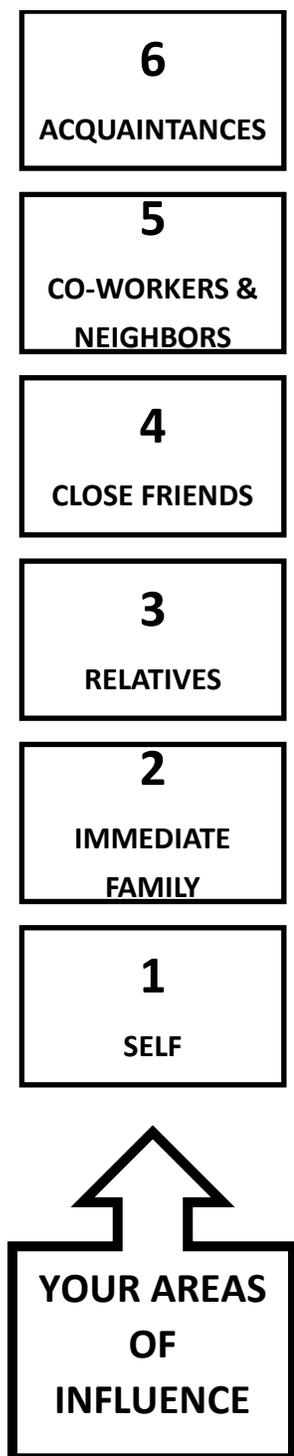
Finally, a sobering statistic. Worldwide, approximately 153,424 people die each day. That is 56 million per year that pass into eternity, either with or without Christ!

Despite these trends, Christianity continues to grow worldwide, surpassing 2 billion Christians. Through foreign missions and the availability of the Bible in almost 3000 languages, Christianity is growing among the continents of the world. The Church is increasingly participating in world mission partnerships as never before.

Overall, the harvest is great. However, the problem is the shortage of harvesters!

AREAS OF INFLUENCE

We are a community of people and we have the ability to influence others. There are several groups of people we encounter every day. The diagram to the left depicts our areas of influence.



SEEDING FERTILE GROUND

Every person goes through trials and tribulations. The human condition is one that suffers from the consequences of original sin that started in the Garden of Eden. In addition to joy and happiness, we experience pain and sorrow, whether a believer or non-believer.

We experience events in our lives that create stress at various levels. The Holmes Stress Scale is a tool that measures different levels of stress according to event.

HOLMES STRESS SCALE	
LIFE EVENT	STRESS LEVEL (Points)
Death of a spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marriage/Separation	65
Jail Term	63
Death of a close family member	63
Personal injury or major illness	53
Getting married	50
Fired from work	47
Marriage reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Major change in health of family member	44
Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39
Gaining a new family member	39
Major change at work	39
Major change in financial status	38
Death of a close friend	37
Son or daughter leaving home	29
Trouble with in-laws	29
Wife begins or stops work	26
Trouble with boss	23
Change in residence	20

Events such as those mentioned in the Holmes Stress Scale are common, and may make people receptive to the gospel of Christ. These events present opportunities to be agents of love and compassion, which can lead to a life-changing event for others, for the better.

MOVING FROM COMPLACENCY AND COMFORT TO SACRIFICE AND SERVICE

*"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot."
(Revelations 3:15)*

For most Christians, the church is a refuge from the challenges of the world, and encouragement from other believers brings us comfort. We enjoy fellowship every week. However, if we are not careful, we can neglect a world in need, as we concentrate on our own needs. We can become complacent and comfortable, not offering ourselves as a living sacrifice in the service for the Lord.

MEASURING THE ELEMENTS OF YOUR SERVICE

Throughout the Serve/Reach Track, you have learned:

"For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required;... (Luke 12:48)

- That God has a purpose for your life
- That God has bestowed spiritual gift or gifts upon you
- How to discover your gifts
- The importance of spiritual maturity and the development of your gifts and talents
- That you are responsible to God for applying your gifts
- That God has called you to serve others and help fulfill the Great Commission

With the knowledge you have attained in this class, where do you consider yourself to be in regard to serving God's Kingdom? The following scale is a tool you can use as a thought primer. The scale measures the percentage of time during the course of a week you serve in a ministry, the percentage of time you engage your talent or talents, and the percentage of heart (passion) you have for serving. These are represented by the categories of Time, Talent, and Heart at the bottom of the scale. There is a column in each category for your current status, designated with word "Current" and a column for where you would like to be, designated by the word "Desire."

Determine a percentage for each category (Time, Talent, and Heart) and place an "X" in the applicable column. Note that the purpose of this scale is to help you consider where you are regarding your desire to serve. There is no perfect percentage. This is your personal activity and will not be shared with others, unless you want to share.

SERVICE MEASUREMENT

Percent (%)	CURRENT	DESIRE	CURRENT	DESIRE	CURRENT	DESIRE
100						
90						
80						
70						
60						
50						
40						
30						
20						
10						
0	TIME		TALENT		HEART	

“They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.” (1 Peter 4:5)

Activity

Service Measurement Summary

10 Minutes

After completing the service measurement chart, take a few moments to reflect on your current status (where you are regarding the application of your gifts) and where you desire to be.

Afterwards, in the space below, write a brief summary of your desired state of service and some steps you can take to get there.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.” (1 Peter 3:15-16)

THE VALUE OF YOUR TESTIMONY

The story of a believer’s conversion to Christ is often the most effective way to reach a non-believer for Christ. Many people in our families and communities may not enter a church building to hear the gospel, but you can take the gospel to them, anytime and anywhere. The power of a personal testimony should not be underestimated.

Your personal testimony has characteristics that makes it valuable to you and others, because:

1. It is unique. There is no other like it.
2. It is personal and easy to understand.
3. You are the authority and it’s difficult to argue against it.
4. People love to hear personal stories and they remember it.
5. People can relate to it. It builds a relational bridge.
6. In our post-modern world, it may be your most effective witness.

SUMMARY

We all have a role in fulfilling the Great Commission. We just have to be obedient to the Lord’s command. Our opportunities for services are just as diverse as our demographics. We must not be complacent in reaching out to those in need – inside or outside the church.

