

# Who is the Christian Leader?

## Introduction

I began a new life. I was married and I had a new ministry, serving the Lord among the nations. Life looked completely different to me. I began to learn how to serve the Lord as a member of a family and also among the entire body of the church community and among those who are think, behave, value and believe different than me and who have common needs spiritually, mentally, socially and physically.

As a whole the bible asserts that God's program is directed me to the bringing into being of community in the highest sense- a reconciled people, living within a renewed creation, and enjoying the presence of their redeemer.

God led me to development of a new model of the relationship between the me as "individual" and his society called "culturalism" or "community" that emphasize the importance of the social unit.

The community of God is crucial to the sustaining of character virtue, and value. The community has common good, because it is central to the message of the bible. And it provides the necessary foundation for involvement in public discourse concerning matters of world view. The community of meaning contributes to the well-being of the broader society.

### 1. A mature leader Understand the needs of the community

Everyone should discover three major needs for community in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**The need in human nature:** Mankind is a society- oriented race, crying out for relationships with others. God, in the beginning, was the one who said, "It was not good for man to be alone" We have need for survival and safety, the need for love and sense of belonging.

It was hard for me when I left my country and moved to the States. Because I cut off every relationship that I made since I was child. I felt lonely, rejected, out of place, lost and anxious about understanding new people and new culture and situation. It became daily life extremely discouraging to me. Looking for someone to talk and comfort me. Searching for a new friendship. As humans we have a great deal in common with each other. We all need to eat, to sleep, to love and be loved.

I praise God for the Holy Spirit that in me, and for His community the church believers that hold my situation and contain all my needs, spiritual and physical. It rendered all my sense of belonging and love.

**The need in society:** The society of the United States is not the same as that in Lebanon. Also the society of the Nineties and 2000's is not the same as that in the Forties and Fifties. Today, as nations, we have begun to lose our ability to communicate effectively with each other. That, in turn, has led to a diminution of our ability to forge meaningful relationships with other people. That's why as a member in the community has to recognize this need and begin to develop a structure that will incorporate opportunities for building and nurturing relationships. Because of the market place of ideas and mixed of culture. Our old culture shapes who we are, what we believe and how we behave.

God's community should open to a new opportunities for the outsiders people that feel a tremendous need for relationship and friendship with God and his community.

God's community should develop an hospitality attitude for each other and for the foreigners.

**3John 1:5-8...Show hospitality, Hebrew 13:1-2 do not forget to entertain strangers. Matthew 10:10 Don't hesitate to accept hospitality. Romans 12:13 Practice hospitality.** They should pursue a ways to help those who have needs in social work, language, medical service, food, homesickness, everyday problem-solving, social relationship with the opposite sex, adjustments and maintain cultural and religious custom and others. If we do, we will win people's heart and we will not hearing them say; I had friends in the world but no freedom, here, in God's community I had much freedom but no friends.

As Christian believers, If we don't know how to solve our differences and break down the barriers and enmity between us, the struggle and confusion will grow. Then, all of us will reach a bad place we cannot go back to the right fellowship. We want to accept and respect each other. If not, we hurt and mistrust each other. We need to look to each other through the eyes of the Lord, and if we don't see the differences as a benefit for us and for our community, we build walls and put distances between each others, and the gab will be more wide. Our relationships as lover human beings will destroy and the image of God again will become possessed.

### **The need in the church**

**God as community:** The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are together in different yet interdependent ways. God the Father is the source of all things and has spiritual authority over all things. When man's sin caused a separation between God and Man, the Father reached out to us by revealing himself to us in the form of man. While the Father sent his Son (Jesus Christ) into the world, the Son allowed His undeserved death to become a sacrifice for our sins. Together they provide a way for man to come back into a personal relationship with God. We talk with the Father in the name of Jesus. As humans, we can best understand and relate to God by looking at God's expression of himself through Jesus.

**Jesus said, John 10:30 I and the Father are one. In John 14:9 if you have seen me you have seen the Father. In John 17:21 when Jesus left the universe to sit at the right hand of God.**

**Jesus depended upon the Holy Spirit to bring us into community with God. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live in our lives John 14:15-17 God in us. Immanuel which mean God is with us. The Holy Spirit provides a channel of communication between Jesus and ourselves John 16:5-16.**

The Holy Spirit communicates the will, the power, and the fellowship of Christ to us. The Father, Son and Spirit work through community and because of the community of the Trinity we don't just know about God, we can commune with God, because God lives in all Christians, communion with God means communion with God's people.

According to the New Testament, the church is also based upon community. Each member in the local church community should agree to enter into a relationship with God and other believers. The small group growth gathering is where you enter the community of God's family. We have a generation of consumer Christians instead of committed disciples. Many hop from church to church never staying long enough to receive full benefit of being planted. Others leave because of lack of relationships. Others are simply surface Christians with little spiritual depth. I believe the small group growth gathering are the way of growing committed disciples and lasting friendships. It will bring unity and power to the Christian community and to the world. We will frighten the devil with actions such as loving one another, caring for one another,

submitting to one another in the fear of Christ, esteeming one another more highly than yourself, praying for one another, encouraging one another, building up one another etc...The Holy Spirit in small group growth gathering uses the members to minister one to the another. We see the practical teaching. People learn while they are ministering. Each member has a responsibility to minister when he sees an opportunity, and has the authority to do so. As community is necessary for life itself, community is necessary for living beings. God created us to live in community with one another. Most neighborhood communities work together to provide things like food, protection, education, water, sewage, and recreation for the members of the community. In order to do this, each person must give up something to be a part of the community. They may have to pay taxes and give up certain individual rights to government authorities, but they agree to do this arrangement to benefit every member of the community.

## **2. A mature leader took Jesus Christ as a center for love and hope.**

***I Lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master. So our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he shows us his mercy...Psalm 123:1-2***

From Jesus I learn that I only come to participate fully in our humanity as we live in fellowship with God, with Christians believers, and with creation around me. Jesus should be the center of the community the same as he was with his community (the nation of Israel) in Exodus when they left Egypt to enter the promise land.

***Revelation 2:2-4 Yet I hold this against you: "You have forsaken your first love"***

The church community's purpose is to reflect God's love to others around her. The love that comes from Jesus to clean his people from inside out. We exist to love one another and to demonstrate Christ. This is the real vision for the God's community today. To keep the first love. Love that accepts others as they are, love to forgive, love to heal the misunderstanding and divisions. Love to restore all the broken relationships. Love can bring victory over our enemies.

***Jesus said by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another John 13:35.*** Love is never manifested by the flesh and prejudice.

As a member in God's community, my priority is to keep the commands and his commands are: love your God and love your neighbors as yourself. How much is the love of God worth in order to sacrifice for it? The love that is tender-hearted. The love that comes from the Holy Spirit that dwell in our hearts. ***Rom 5:1-8...Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us...But God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.***

Keep the first love always give me more option to love others. And keeping my eyes on him give me hope for the future the same like Jesus' disciples ***in Acts 1:9-10 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going...***

## **3. Mature leader focus on Jesus' life**

As for Jesus, foundational to life in community was life in community with his Father, humbly acting in perfect obedience to the Father's will conscious of living in the presence of his Father. His obedience to the Father's will meant that Jesus also lived in fellowship with others. He was no self-sufficient recluse, no isolated individual.

In his earthly life as well as through his resurrection and exaltation, Jesus brings together the two dimensions of community. The divine life and human life and the heart of both is life in

community. The final affirmation of Jesus' personal unity rests with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of eternal love relationship between the Father and the Son. He brings us as God's community who believe in Jesus Christ to share in that great love relationship as those who are in fellowship with the Father because of the Son. In this manner, the Holy Spirit confirms the unity of Jesus' person.

I feel God's desire to focus on Jesus's life. Jesus' life included both mutuality of friendships and compassionate ministry to the needy. Jesus showed me that community ought to know no boundaries, it reaches from friends to the outcast and hurting, and even encompasses one's enemies. Also I noticed Jesus' life in community included appreciation for nature and fellowship with other creatures, for plants and animals, for the grasses and sparrows. His spiritual life led him to embrace the wilderness and enjoy the beauty of creation and he gave evidence to his identity by calming the sea.

I have come to see that Jesus's leadership was different from the leadership of the world. Jesus was rejected from most of the religious and political leaders and was rejected from his people and disciples. Everyone expected him to rule by power and dominion and fight to release his community from the control of the Roman Empire. Their expectation was completely different. Concerning the leadership, In our community time we think of leaders as dictators. Most communities, kingdoms and governments are concerned with sovereignty, power and domination. These are the attributes of any worldly kingdom that come to mind, or any kind of community in which the leadership views authority as domination. In many places in the gospel, Jesus challenges that attitude and makes it clear that his kingdom has nothing to do with sovereignty, power or dominion. It is just the opposite. Jesus said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world". It has its purposes, structures and a very different spirit and motivation from those of the kingdoms of this world. *Matthew 4:17 Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand.* Jesus Christ came to serve humanity, and he rules his kingdom by love, peace and compassion. He has authority to forgive and heal. His authority is available only to those who believe in Him and are willing to follow his leadership.

#### **4. Mature leader discovering himself in Jesus:**

Throughout my years of ministry and leadership, I have tried to focus first of all on Jesus and how he ministered to others around him. He has always been my ideal. Jesus showed me how to distinguish between the Christian community and all the other communities of the world. I have noticed in my Christian walk that there wasn't a single time when Jesus asked me to do anything before he himself served me, helped and encouraged me to do it. He is characterized in the words: "I came not to be served but to serve." This truth applies not only 2,000 years ago but even until the end of days. Just as Jesus spent his days with his disciples, leading, training and serving them in the community, so is he also with me doing the same things through me. There have been times when I felt that Jesus was absent from my life or not concerned about me. It is terrifying when I come to the point where I feel that I have to quit because I don't have the strength to face the difficulties I am going through in the his community. But Jesus has always been there for me. He wants me to have more faith in Him because He knows that I will stumble and fall without his powerful presence in my life. I can easily get hurt because my life in constantly exposed to all the people in my community. I faces criticism, condemnation, insults, and even lies about my life because not everyone in the congregation shares his views, ideas, or appreciates my ministry style. That's why I needed to be shielded by the Lord all the time and

understand Jesus' life in the community and make him my example. When I started to understand who am I in Christ, not only by saying it but also by experiencing it and believe it. I became more secure and comfort and be able to expose to others. also I am more open and friend to others within the community.

**These are the most encouraging verses to me:**

- I am a new creation in Christ: the old things are passed away, behold all things are become new 2 Cor 5:17
- I am a family member...a child of the Most High God 1John 3:1
- I am a member of God's royal priesthood 1Peter 2:9
- I am the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1Cor 6:19
- I am a joint heir with Christ Rom 8:17
- I am protected by God Psalm 91/ 23I am in Christ and free from condemnation Rom 8:1
- I am secure in Christ and can not be separated from God Rom 8:28-29
- I will delivered from temptation 1Cor 10:13
- I am established, anointed and sealed by God 2 Cor 1:21-22
- I will be with the Lord forever 1 Thess 4:15-18
- I have been given power, love, a sound mind and freedom from fear 2Tim 1:7
- I am being perfected by God Phil 1:6
- I am the salt and light of the world Matt 5:13-16
- I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit John 15:16
- I can approach God with boldness and confidence Eph 3:12 and come before God at any time in prayer Eph 2:18.
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me Phil 4:13
- I have every things in Christ, all the blessings/ Col1 and Eph1:3-14
- I am loved by God John 17:20-26/ I am God's fellow worker. God loves me!

**5. Mature leader discovering other needs**

Your decision to initiate a ministry to internationals in your community is a step of faith that God will richly honor. The scriptures declare that God "*wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth*" and Jesus' commission to his church today is "*go and make disciples of all nations...*". God has more than one way for us to be a missionary and reach out the nations. Biblical missions is not just a matter of geography. Biblical missions is about people, one of God's strategies is to bring the world to His church here at Milwaukee. People who could not be reached at home are far more open and accessible to the gospel while living abroad.

God is bringing the nations to our community in the form of students, business people, researchers, immigrants, refugees, even tourists. What is significant about internationals is that, most are here temporarily and plan to return home. Because of your involvement, they could return at least with a favorable view of Christians, and at most with a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Their impact to their nations could be significant.

Eastbrook Church is given the unique opportunity to display the power of the Gospel to the nations among us. If you want to get involve and you need help, take one of our brochure, "*Eastbrook church nations ministries*" and **begin** now to pray for the Lord to multiply your excitement for cross-cultural friendship or you can pray for one of these ministries and groups involvement.

**Second**, get out from your own boat, walk by faith and getting started with a conversation with a new international friend.

What is friendship? Friendship is an in-depth relationship. Friendship requires meeting the needs of both friends. It is comfortable and relaxed. Build friendship takes time. It is made, not born and it is ultimate. The friendship is with Jesus, and the formula for that relationship is described in warm words in *John 15:12-17*, It's a friendship based on the greatest love of all. If you haven't experienced it-and you should trust me on this, my friend-you don't know what you are missing.

Learn from scriptures about friendship: *Proverbs 17:9; 18:24; 27:5; 27:17; Jeremiah 33:2-3; Ecclesiastes 4:10; 1Corinthians 13:4-7; James 4:4.*

We are not asking for that deep intimate and ultimate friendship with international, only if you asked for it.

Being able to carry on a comfortable conversation with a social acquaintance is a matter of practice and following certain procedures in communicating. It also works for best friends, too. When you are talking to friends, best buddy, international person (strangers) or social acquaintance. It doesn't really matter who the person is:

- 1- always get the other person's name and always give your name.
- 2- During the conversation, use the other person's name at least once.
- 3- Minimize focus on yourself and keep the conversation on the other person.
- 4- Ask open ended questions that can not be answered with a "yes" or "no" to keep the conversation rolling.

There are other aspects of conversation that are universal. They are

- Smile, smile, smile, then smile some more.
- Be sincere
- Be complimentary
- Don't mumble
- Be enthusiastic and positive

Being able to carry on a comfortable conversation with a social acquaintance is a matter of practice and following these procedures in communicating

No matter how difficult it is for you to carry on a conversation with a social acquaintance now, remember that it does get easier with practice and pray. So do it!

Many people find it difficult to approach a stranger or someone they know very little about and begin getting acquainted process. Everyone has trouble establishing relationships from time to time and that not even the most successful people are successful every time. However, no body is successful unless they try especially you know that God is for your side and he wants you to do it.

## **6. Mature leader has general ideas about other religion (see world religion lesson)**

## **7. Mature leader know how to lead with international people in his group**

20 helpful hints when dealing Internationals in your kinship group

- Be loving
- Have a cheerful spirit/ Smile
- Greet them by their name/ Learn and remember a person's name
- Welcome them while you are standing
- Don't treat them as strangers
- Be hospitable/ Be generous/ Invite them for meals
- Remind yourself of the interest God has for them
- Pay attention for what they are going to share
- Be friendly
- Have a servant heart
- Be compassionate
- Don't talk down to them instead of treating them as equals/ They are very sensitive in this matter
- Build a sense of humor
- Don't put a standard in your mind about internationals
- Be a good listener
- Ask them questions and don't neglect them/ they have a lot to impact
- Have them teach you biblical words in their own language
- Explain to them the American slang whenever used
- Listen to their stories about their family, home and country
- Be flexible especially regarding time

## **8. Mature leader experience culture shock (see culture shock lesson)**

## **9. Mature leader know the structure of community "Small Groups"**

What helped me during the difficult times was the attitude of the mature people around me, in a small community we call it "Home groups". By praying for me and standing beside me, they lifted me up.

I remember my leader telling me once that if you want to help someone with a problem, you have to hold his hand and help him cross it peacefully. In other words, if someone want to cross the river of difficulties, the leader needs to help him by holding his hand to cross, without interfering and trying to control his personal life. .

There is a huge needs around me, How can I meet these needs? How many people can I hold to cross the river a day? Can I hold five together or more? May be I will sunk.

How can I know their needs if I don't have time for everyone? How the earlier church solve this problem?

I believe the small groups is the solution:

I believe that the earlier church should be the example or the basic for every church and family, and community in the world. This is true matter where you are from, the Middle East or Asia,

Africa, Europe or USA or any place in the world. The early church met in a small groups and in large groups, but the small groups were those which were called churches.

***Acts 5:42 Daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.***

***Romans 16:5 Like wise greet, the church that is in their house greet my well beloved Epiphanes, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ.***

***1Corinthians 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and priscilla greet you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house***

***Colossians 4:15 Greet the bretheren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church which is in his house.***

***Eph4:11-16/ James 5:13-19/ John 13:34-35/ Heb 10:24-25***

I was convinced that the church will grow spiritually in home groups, and the people's needs will be met. Jesus gathered the disciples together (leaders) and told them to go to Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. During that time they were of one mind in a community of fellowship and prayer. If we share common goals and submit to others for common good, and spend quality time with one another, then, community and oneness will result. In ***Acts 2:41-47*** we discover that community is expressed through the Home Group of the first century church. In ***Acts 8:1***, the Christians were thrown out of the temple and most of them were dispersed from Jerusalem. The early church growth that turned the known world upside down was an underground movement in the homes of believers. These first century Christians were eating meals and having fellowship from house to house. They were praying to God, praising God, ministering to people needs, and studying the word of God. God's presence was demonstrated through signs and wonders that were taking place. As they were filled by the Holy Spirit, they were speaking the word of God with boldness, reaching others for Christ and bringing them into cell group fellowship of the church. All of this was done in home groups. That year, we defined our church according to their age, language, education, places and culture. I began study about our community and what are the benefits of doing small groups. We felt this was the best way to keep the spirit moving and the church growing.

The group in meetings homes does not need programs. The center of the home group is not the word of God, but the person of God. The meeting is not a Bible study nor a prayer meeting. It is more than this. In small groups, people care for and help one another. Each member is a leader and a servant. The true leader is the Holy Spirit. He is present in the midst of the group and directs the members. This does not mean that the home group leader do not have a plan for the meeting, or material prepared. The most important thing is that the home group leader is flexible and prepared for whatever God wants to do in the group during the meetings. I should remember as a leader that I am a servant who prepare the members to be able to receive from the Holy Spirit and minister. The leader directs the meetings, assuring that it goes well, and that no one dominates or controls it. There are always people who come with their own personal agendas, thinking of themselves, not of the group. The leader is not the one who does the ministry, but the ones who prepares the home group members for the work of the ministry to one another. The leader understands that most personal problems are dealt with in a home group by the members of the group, not just him.

Meeting in home groups is a means of meeting that inner need for friendship and openness that lies within each one of us. Home Groups assimilate new people, accept new people into the

fellowship circle, help new people meet, make friends and find their place in the body. Home Group prevent inactivity thrive and amidst society's chaos. Home groups provide a warm, welcoming environment to those who are living in the chaos of our society. Last, but not least, to accommodate diversity, people are different and have different needs, and with a variety of home groups these diverse needs can be addressed.

## **10. Mature leader know how to Submit**

Other attributes that distinguish the Christians community than nonchristian community is their humility and submission to one another and their leaders.

I saw this in my leaders's life. I learned a lot from them. They were always open to learn from others, even from the ineffective members of the church. They never forced their opinions on others.

They gave me lots of advice without imposing their ideas on me. They gave me the freedom to choose my own areas of ministry. They accepted my ideas and supported me in my effort to accomplish them. This helped me to learn to trust myself as a leader. It also helped me to follow them in the same way that Joshua followed Moses. I knew that if I wanted God to bless me and my ministry, I had to be submissive first to Him and then to my own leaders. Joshua took the leadership after Moses' death. He encouraged and challenged the people of God to enter the Promised Land and follow God. Joshua was obedient to God's orders and to Moses' direction. He was a servant to Moses and helped in the process of leading the people of God out of Egypt. He stayed with Moses all the way and learned so many things from his leadership. When it came time for Moses to choose a successor, Joshua was the chosen one because of his obedience to Moses throughout all their days in the wilderness. One thing that God asked Joshua to do was to be careful to obey to the letter every law that Moses had presented. God's call for Joshua was really just a continuation of the call of Moses.

Many people in strategic positions cannot take orders from their leaders. I learned something in the army which helped me in my ministry. "Obey, then object." Even if you don't like what the leader asks you to do, you should do it anyway and object later. If God has put you into a certain position, trust that he is going to use you and even change the leader if that's what needs to be done.

I learned that by submitting to my leader, I give glory to God. Never say you have nothing to learn. ***1 Peter 5:5-6 says: "Young man, in the same way, be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's might hand, that he may lift you up in due time."***

The Corinthian church has division because of the leaders and pride and prejudice. I see today many forget their family, community and church because God gave them a privilege to study in the bible college or training school. Or if they agree and go back to their churches instead are being help to their community and practice the humility. They puffed up with the little knowledge that they have in their mind and rebelled and their relationship with others died. I remember after I finished my first degrees. I went back to my family and church I was very proud for what I did. I had never felt pride in my life like these day. I started to tell you don't know anything, I tried to teach them and put myself above.

I heard voices from the devil saying to me: You are better than these people. You are now know more than them. You are leader now, they don't know you much any more.

Your leader doesn't know much. You can argue with him. We are in the same level why should I lesson? I need a new position. They are not recognize you. I have to change the church. These people not spiritual. I need to win souls to God. Let me cut the spiritual things and the controlling over my life and so on...

I think these are signs of the rebellion and un-maturity members of the community

### **11. Mature leader is anointed by the Holy Spirit**

Another aspect that distinguishes the Christian community is the anointing of the Holy Spirit on their life and ministry. God was teaching me how to walk by this anointing. The personality and life of David in the Bible has a special place in my heart, and his life has had a great influence on me. The anointing in David's life allowed him to maintain his relationship with God and with others even his enemies. *In Acts 13:22 it says: "God said about him, 'David, the Son of Jesse, is the kind of person who pleases me most. He does everything I want him to do.'*

David, in his ever-changing life, was a shepherd and a King. He was a poet and a soldier. He was a hero of the people as well as the people's outcast. He was loved by Jonathan and hated by Saul. One day an enemy of the Philistines, he was later a co-soldier fighting for them in the wars. Throughout all these phases, he faced his friends and his enemies. He practiced his strong faith, he fought, and he was very patriotic. He was courageous, brave, just, and merciful.

With all these changes, God was with him the whole time. What helped David to deal with these changes was his love for the Lord and the experience of the anointing of the Holy Spirit on his life. The gift of the Spirit enriched his life. All these things make him my hero of faith. Even though he was not a perfect man, as Jesus was, he played a great role in the history of Christianity. Knowing how much the life of David had influenced my own life, the Lord gave me a dream and spoke to me through David.

I had a dream that I was in a very big, ancient palace, wandering from one large empty room to another, until I reached a room where I saw a very old man sitting on a majestic chair. Ten people were sitting on the floor facing him. When he saw me, he called to me and asked me to sit with the rest of the men. "I am David," he said, and then continued: "Very few leaders will have the chance to sit and listen to my voice and teaching. I want you to be wise and walk by the anointing of the Holy Spirit in your life. Be obedient and faithful to the calling in your life." Then he asked me to come near him, and he blessed me, saying, "I love you. I want you to set me before you as an example." He then recited this verse from *1 Samuel 15:22-23: "Does the Lord really want sacrifices and offerings? No, he doesn't want your sacrifices. He wants you to obey him. Rebelling against God or disobeying him because you are proud is just as bad as worshiping idols or asking them for advice."*

I woke up from the dream feeling happy. During that same year, 1992, God gave us a child and we named him David "The lover one" as a reminder of that anointing in our lives.

The life of the servant is full of problems and crises much more than the life of a "normal" person. Do I have a clear calling and anointing from the Lord? Before Paul and Barnabas started their ministry, they experienced the anointing of the Holy Spirit on their lives. This anointing was evident and obvious to God's community. There are many references in the New Testament that confirm the need for anointing before going into ministry (*Acts 10:38; 1 John 2:20-27; Isaiah 61:1*). This anointing is essential because only an anointed leader can make a difference in the community and this world.

## **12. Mature Leader know how to display responsibilities**

Still another area in which God was training me was to learn how to hand over responsibilities to other godly people in ministry. At that time, I was leading about nine meetings a week-not to mention administration and committee meetings. There was a great need for hours and hours of preparation in order to keep these meetings going. At the time, I was often exhausted and fatigued, and had no time or strength to give to my family. Because I didn't know how to give responsibilities to other leaders, some times because of my mistrust and believe in others that they can do the work, and some times because of my selfish and pride.

The Lord spoke to me and showed me that I had to help key people in the community to take over some of my responsibilities. I felt just like Moses, who got tired because he was doing everything by himself until Jethro suggested that he choose some capable and faithful people to join him in leadership. I felt that I had to do the same, so I prayed that God would show me which people could take on some of my responsibilities while working alongside me. God revealed the people. I contacted them and we planned a meeting to talk and pray before we divided up the responsibilities.

During our meeting, I came to realize how much the pressures of daily life were affecting them. The burdens they carried as a result of the unstable situation in the country were many and strong. They had a passion and enthusiasm for ministry, but felt powerless to do it because of the political and economical strife.

God showed me that before I could give them any additional responsibilities, I had to help them rise above their own difficulties. They needed my help at that time. I had to stand with them and by them so they might receive healing, blessing, and victory over their problems. We decided to meet regularly for prayer. We learned how to place our needs into the hands of the Lord and receive what we needed through his Holy Spirit.

God used me as a "CPR" giver. Revival was needed before service could begin. It was similar to the situation I had to deal with when I was first injured. I remember that before I entered the operating room, a group of nurses were giving me oxygen and trying to keep me alive as they prepared for the operation. It's not very practical to operate on a dead body. God wants to revive us spiritually before we can minister to others.

After several prayer meetings, we began to see great and wonderful breakthroughs in their lives. God was delivering them from oppression. Eventually, they were ready, all of them capable, skilled, and qualified to lead.

Once we got to know each other in a personal way, we became very close-intimate enough to bear each other's burdens, confess our sins to one another, admonish and minister to one another with the word of God and prayer.

We learned to focus on the strengths of each person rather than emphasize the weaknesses. We began to go out into the world and let the warmth and glow of the love in our lives overflow into a spontaneous Christian witness that drew people to God's community like hungry children into a candy store.

## **13. Mature Leader effects the outsiders and not effected by them**

What God showed me during my ministry many kind of people into the worldly community. These like Paul said in *Ephesians 2 The unbelievers are lost and without hope in the world.* Seven kinds of people in the worldly community

1- The religious people/ Pilgrimage people

People who are attending churches, Synagogues, Mosques, and temples go for these reasons: A- to break down the guilt feeling and to feel that they are part of the society or a habit. B- Making business contacts. C- Making the spouse happy and social reasons. D- Individual or public invitation. The Bible said these people are blind In *Matthew 13:1-17* *Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand...* They don't understand the secret of the kingdom of God. They are not able to hear the voice of God and the Holy Spirit.

#### 2- Seekers

They are prepared to hear the word of God; it's easy to share with them the truth, and they respond to the gospel. Most of them want to see Jesus.

#### 3- Open to the message, Usually from Christian background

They know a lot about Christ and Christianity, They are attending the church activities and meetings, but always say to you, "It is not the time yet to receive Christ as a savior". They hesitate to make a commitment and the decision to follow Christ.

#### 4- Open to the messenger more than the Holy Spirit

Not prepared for studying the word and facing the challenges. They are very busy with the world. They are open for anything in this world and involved with worldly activity. They cannot change their direction to face the truth. They like to build relationships with the church community and are open to the servants. When you need them, you cannot find them.

#### 5- Distorted or unaware

*2Corinthians 4:3-4* *Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* Most of them are not from Christian religion but from other religions like Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and others.

#### 6- Hostile/ Christ enemies

They don't like the gospel and anything that relates to it. If they know that you are a Christian believer they will try to stop you and prevent your activity. Destroy and remove you from their world. They will become worried and afraid of you.

As a Leader, I know that I need faith to do Christ work. Trust that the word of God and that the Lord will use me *John 114:12-13* *I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*

7- Internationals, immigrants and refugees are open to the gospel, more than the time that they were in their own country. Have lots of need and feel lonely. Need friendship and Jesus.

### **14. Mature leader don't compromise with the devil.**

**Don't give up his faith for good friendship. Has courage and not be diplomatic and worry to offend people**

**"No rest and peace with evil"**

Some people say that since Jesus has defeated the devil, the latter is no longer capable of hurting us if we are followers of Jesus. I believe that the community has to fight his enemy and his plans in order to win. The community has to distinguish between the work of evil and the work of God. When Luna my wife was pregnant with our second child, and by the time she was seven months, she started having problems with her pregnancy and the doctor said that if she does not rest in bed, we lose the baby or the baby will be born premature and because it was so tiny, chances of survival were weak. We knew that it was the time we needed to pray a lot because only God can

help Luna and protect our baby. Despite the difficult time we were passing through, our relationship with God become closer. We spent more time reading the bible. We knew that God want to give us the baby he spoke to us from *Isaiah 66:9-18,21 Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery? Says the Lord. Do I close up the womb when I bring to delivery? Says your God...*

The people who are saying that the devil not a threat for the Community, and we don't have to do any thing with it. I will say:

1- This is based on a lie that the devil is not a real threat for believers, which is just the opposite of what the Bible teaches. The Bible pictures the devil as a killer and father of all liars Jon 8:44 and that he is controlling the worldly kingdoms and their glory Matt 4:8. Jesus describes him in John14:30 as the ruler of this world. He is the accuser Rev. 12:10. The tempter 1Thes3:5, the hindered 1Thes2:18, the god of this age 2Cor4:4, the prince of the power of the air-the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience Eph 2:2. He is the wicked one Matt13:19 and the enemy Matt 13:39. Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light 2Cor11:14

2- This thinking is very cruel and wrong. People who say that are really saying that we are fine and do not care what happens to others. They believed this lie and thus do not go and evangelize others. They are sinning by being selfish and heartless towards the world.

3- They believe that they are not good is resisting evil, so they prefer not to interfere with the devil- Leave him alone. This is wrong because in the Bible it says: ***Resist the devil and he will flee from you James 4:7***

The devil has seven strategies:

1- He always tries to paralyze the power of the Christians against him by separating them from the source of their power-which is prayer and fellowship with other believers. Isolation is a military strategy that is used to prevent the soldiers from getting any aid they need from their leadership. Satan uses this strategy to keep us away from God and his plan. Also Satan very clever in putting us in positions where we can taste authority and power because he knows when we taste these, we will ask for more and we get filled with pride.

2- Satan tries to convince us that we can believe God but we are not obliged to obey Him.

3- Satan tries to convince us that we can obtain happiness by doing whatever makes us happy, even if it is wrong.

4- Satan always tries to put fear in the hearts of the believers.

5- Satan tries to divide the believers by planting among them seeds of disagreement and conflict and dispute and bitterness and mistrust.

6 If the above strategies fail, Satan attacks us directly to prevent us from using our authority against him.

7- Fear from death

Fear and death (separation) is the most weapon of the devil:

Fear is a feeling that drives us away from a certain thing. It is exactly the opposite of the fear of the Lord which drives us close to Him. The fear of the Lord helps us not to sin. It sanctifies us and draws us toward God's love and holiness, especially if it is associated with trust and faith in redemption. Fear is a natural feeling that God has put in us. It naturally expresses the instinct of survival and continuity. But fear will turn into fright if it is not dipped in faith and hope. After Adam and Eve sinned, they ran away and hid. Fear of the future, people, loneliness, darkness, poverty, humiliation, insanity, responsibility, death, losing loved ones, getting old, injustice and others.

The fear of a sinner is much different than the fear of a believer who has experienced the love of the Lord.

***1 John 4:17-18 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drive out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. Fear by itself is considered a sin if it was not accompanied by faith in God and depending on his love.***

*How do we treat fear? First by believing in Christ, by being born again and have fellowship with other believers*

The devil is trying to generate his fear to God's community. He is full of fear, and wants to paralyze God's community and stop her from worshiping God and spreading the message of truth

The Bible makes it clear to us "not to be afraid". Around 365 times in the bible, this phrase repeated in many different occasions. This means every day around the year God is saying to us, "Don't be afraid". ***John 14:1-5 Do not let your hearts be troubled neither let your heart be afraid. Trust God, trust and believe in me. In my Fathers house are many rooms if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come back and take you with me, that where I am, there you may be also.***

#### **15. Mature leader know how to intercede on behalf of others**

***Ephesians 3:14-21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...***

I was standing on the roof of a building when I saw my son David crossing the highway. I had a terrible feeling and I wanted to save him. I couldn't because of where I was. I thought about several options to save him from death: I wanted to jump but for sure I would die. I shouted loudly but got no answer. There was no time to go down and run towards him. I was worried and fearful, wondering who was to save my son. I was hoping and praying for Superman or Batman to come and help him. I wished that I could fly. Suddenly I heard a voice; "Elie you are limited and cannot solve you problem. But I am God and I am Spirit and my presence is everywhere in this world. Why aren't you asking me for help?" I woke up from this dream, knelt down on my knees and I started praying and interceding for everyone I love.

I understood my lesson. We have a lot of problems around us. Thousands of people are dying and in danger, sick and in pain ***James 5:13,17-18***. Under the effect of temptations ***Matt.26:41***. Am I willing to pray for these people? God is challenging me to be generated and motivated by his love towards the nations around me because He has mercy and compassion over the nations ***Jonah 3*** (Jonah and Nineveh). There are more than 650 prayers in the Bible not counting the psalms of David. David said: "I am a man of prayer". God is looking for someone to stand in the gab between Him and people ***Isaiah 59:16*** and also like Moses when he interceded to his nation ***Exodus 32:10-11;31-32***. We have everything available to us. We have more than 3000 promises all based on Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus is sitting on the right hand of the Father interceding for us ***Hebrew 7:25/ 1Jonh 1:9, 2:1-2/ Acts4:12/ 1Timothy 2:5***. He gave us the Holy Spirit that intercede for our weaknesses day and night ***Romans 8:14-27***. He commanded us to pray ***Col. 4:2, Ph. 4:6; Rom. 12:12 etc.***

In Acts God's community was under persecution, James was killed, Peter is arrested.

Why was Herod wanting to kill Peter? Because Peter was a threat to his authority, Peter wouldn't stop preaching, Herod hated Christians and Herod wanted to stay on the good side of the Jews

leaders. *V.4 After arresting Peter, Herod put him in prison handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the pass over...* For interceding I noticed 3 things

1. The whole community interceded **Acts 1:4** they all joined together constantly in prayer...**Acts 2:1** ...They were all together in one place. **Acts 4:24-31** When they heard this they raised their voices together in prayer to God...**5:12-14 and 12:2**.
  - 2- They prayed earnestly, persistently and did not give up Luke 18:1-8; Matt 6:5-8
  - 3- They all knew the Father's heart and will **Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the lord's will is**. The Lord's prayer **Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come your will be done**. Discover God's will: **Romans 12:1-2**. Jesus prayed before the cross **Mtt. 26:39...My Father if it is possible may this cup be taken from me yet not as I will, but as you will...**
- I remembered when God spoke to me in very clear voice from heaven and said; Elie I want to pray and stand on behalf of your nation. I learn 2 important things in interceding to my nation: a- God's heart (love) b- God's compassion

The bible teaches about pray:

- 1- Pray with faith: **Matthew 8:13, 9:29. Mark 11:25-26. Hebrew 11:6**
- 2- Pray with attitude of forgiveness **Matthew 6:14-15. James 5:14-16**
- 3- Pray with pure heart **Isaiah 59:1-2. Psalm 66:18**
- 4- Pray with your leader and mature people **James 5:14-15**
- 5- Pray with thanksgiving **Phi 3:6**
- 6- Pray continually **1 The 5:17-18**
- 7- Clear motivation **James 4:1-3**
- 8- Pray with the Holy Spirit, his direction **ph 6:18, Rom 8:26-28, Mtt. 26:41-42**
- 9- Pray with humbleness **2Chronicles 7:14. Luke 18:9-14**
- 10- Pray in the name of Jesus **James 5:13-18. Matt. 28:17-19. Luke 8:44**

## **16. Mature leader is faithful to God**

Another aspect of the spiritual leader is his faithfulness. God gives each of his followers, different gifts, and He expects us to use them for his glory. If I hide these gifts, I am being unfaithful to God and to his people. These gifts are beneficial not only for myself but for others, too.

I remember a time when I had prepared a sermon about faithfulness that I was to preach at a Sunday service. God spoke to me on this subject and the Holy Spirit was leading me to share it with the church. However, as I was getting ready to go to church that Sunday morning, I felt a sudden, strong pain in my stomach. I could not hold myself up, and I fell to the floor. Luna helped me get to the car and she drove me to the emergency room of the nearest hospital. After examining me, they knew the pain was caused by a stone in my bladder. The doctor gave me an injection for the pain, which soothed me after a short time. We went back home.

I felt hesitant to go and preach later that morning, but God reminded me of the message he had given me. I said to Luna, "I want to go". So we prayed and left for church. That Sunday, I was standing behind the pulpit, not seeing clearly because of the injection of the "pain killer", "Avaforton" but no one noticed what happened to me. They all were blessed God used me and blessed us in a way we had never felt before.

As we serve, we should always be expecting Christ's second coming, because when he comes back, he will ask us what we did with the things he gave us. Just as in the parable of the talents, God will ask each of us what and how we used our spiritual gifts.

***Matt.25:14-30 Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!***

As we were expecting our third child, the Lord was speaking to me and teaching me about faithfulness. In year 2001, I was giving bible studies for the internationals about Joseph's life and how he was faithful to God and himself and to his family. It is really touched my life reminded me how much Jesus was faithful to his father and the similarity between Joseph' life and Jesus. We did not know if we had a boy or a girl. Later my wife had a dream in which she saw the baby's face with a light shining on it and heard a voice from behind her saying "This is Joseph". She kept this dream to herself, until we went to the hospital when she needed an ultra sound and we wanted to know the gender of the baby. As we were in the waiting room, my wife shared the dream with me. She said I feel God will give us a boy. I was so happy because I had the same feeling, God is showing and revealing for us as a family his faithfulness to us all the past years. God wants us to have Joseph in our family to remind us for his faithfulness for us specially during the day of difficulties and injustice. The name of Joseph mean Jussive from the verb "Yassap" means "to add" or "may God add more blessings". and the name of Joseph would be a reminder for us in this world that he blessed us but he will never stop blessing us God want to add more blessings. "Amen".

## **17. Mature leader know the word of God well**

I learned a lot at the Bible College. I encountered and studied many subjects that I had not thought about before-areas such as Biblical and systematic theology. I learned how to have a good relationship with one another, how the body of Christ should work together, how to have a good family life, and many other issues related to the church, leadership, and missions.

As a leader in this community, I learned about my position in Christ's body and also how to respect other members. I learned how to lead meetings, form committees, and do administrative work. I adopted general purposes for the church. Nevertheless, due to the lack of leaders, my ministry was swamped by the responsibilities of teaching, visiting the infirm, individual follow-up with members, encouraging, praying, counseling, baptizing, dedicating children, representing the church at various meetings and functions, Bible studies and more. In the midst of these responsibilities were the needs of my family.

I also had to focus on my own spiritual growth. Time spent alone, reading the Word of God and receiving from him, were vital to my ministry. I had to attend conferences and take courses outside the country that were especially geared for young leaders in ministry. But nothing can replace your own study of the word of God and meditation in it.

How could I manage all of these components in my life if God didn't sustain and support me? I knew that I could not succeed without the support of the Holy Spirit and its grace in my life. I need the Spirit to remain focused and balanced. He gives me clear vision when I needed to organize church work. He sets aside members of the body to help me do the work of Christ.

The challenge was to put into practical use all the academic training from the Bible college. It was definitely a difficult task. During my training in the army, we were taught how to fight and face our enemies using fake weapons. Even though it was tough training, we often enjoyed ourselves doing it, knowing that the enemy wasn't real. We often fired words instead of

bullets, punctuated with, “Fire, fire, fire”. When we finished training, however, we went out to the real battlefield where the enemy was really firing at us; that changed everything. Everything became painstakingly real. We had real fear—the fear of making mistakes that would cost us our life or the life of a friend or loved one.

This is how I began to view my spiritual life and my practical training in the church. Everything was real, not just some ideas or theories on paper. You experience it as you practice it, and that experience results in joy or sadness, success or failure, gentleness or roughness, love or hate and jealousy, and so on. God was teaching me that both the Biblical training and the practical training are important and that they complement each other. It was just like the life of Moses, which was divided into three parts. For forty years, he was tutored in the house of Pharaoh. The next forty years he spent in the desert, getting experience and training in a pastoral setting, dealing with the hot sun and rebellious sheep. In the last forty years of his life, God used all of the previous eighty years of experience to help him lead his people out of the land of bondage and into the land of freedom.

## **18. Mature leader knows the Basics of Christianity (John Stott)**

### **1- The Right Approach:**

"In the beginning" Before man existed God acted. Before man stirs himself to seek God, God has sought man. In the Bible we do not see man groping after God ; we see God reaching after man. This sovereign, anticipating activity of God is seen in many ways. He has taken the initiative in creation, bringing the universe and its contents into existence: He has taken the initiative in revelation, making known to mankind both his nature and his will.

**God has spoken.** He has taken the initiative to disclose himself. The Christian doctrine of revelation is essentially reasonable. God has unveiled to our minds what would otherwise has been hidden from them. Part of his revelation in nature. This is commonly called God's general revelation (because it is made to all men everywhere) or natural revelation (because it is in nature). It is special revelation because it was made to a special people (Israel) through special messengers (Prophets in the Old Testament and apostles in the New). It is supernatural because it was given through a process commonly called inspiration and it found its chief \_expression in the person and work of Jesus.

**God has acted.** Christianity is a religion of salvation and relationships and there is nothing in the non-Christian religions to compare with this message of a God who loved, and came after, and died for, a world of lost sinners.

### **Man's Response.**

Jesus promised: “Seek and you will find”

We must seek diligently. We must seek humbly. We must seek honestly. We must seek obediently.

No one can pray such a prayer and be disappointed. God is no man's debtor. He honors all earnest search. He rewards all honest seekers.

## **Part One: Christ's Person**

### **2- The Claims of Christ:**

There are two principal reasons why our inquiry into Christianity should begin with the person of Christ. The first is that essentially Christianity in Christ. Second, if Jesus Christ can be shown to have been a uniquely divine person, many other problems begin naturally to be solved.

His self-centered teaching: Jesus was constantly talking about himself. He was the Father's son and He called the kingdom of God my kingdom. Jesus predicted: I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.

His direct claims: Jesus clearly believed himself to be the Messiah the Old Testament predicted. His claim to be the Son of God was more than Messianic; it described the unique and eternal relationship with God which he possessed.

His indirect claims:

The First indirect claim was to forgive sins.

The second indirect claim was to bestow life.

The third indirect claim was to teach the truth and

The fourth indirect claim was to judge the world.

His dramatized claims: It is sufficient to indicate that the value of Christ's miracles lies less in their supernatural character than in their spiritual significance.

### **3- The Character of Christ:**

What Christ himself thought: On one or two occasions Jesus stated directly that he was without sin. He placed himself in a moral category by himself. Jesus believed himself to be sinless, as he believed himself to be the Messiah and the Son of God.

What Christ's friends said: Peter first describes Jesus as a lamb without blemish or spot and then says that he committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. His disciples describe Jesus as one who knew no sin, was holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners and tempted without sinning.

What Christ's enemies conceded: Their first accusation was blasphemy. Jesus had forgiven a man's sins. This was an invasion of divine territory. Next horrified by his evil associations. He fraternized with sinners. He ate with publicans. Third accusation was that his religion was frivolous. He did not fast like the Pharisees. Fourth, they were incensed by his sabbath-breaking. He healed sick people on the sabbath day. Pilate after several cowardly attempts to evade the issue, publicly washed his hands and declared himself innocent of this man's blood. Herod could find no fault in him. Judas the traitor, filled with remorse, returned the thirty pieces of silver to the priests with the words "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood". The penitent thief on the cross rebuked his confederate for his abuse and added, "this man has done nothing wrong". Finally the centurion, having watched Jesus suffer and die, exclaimed "certainly this man was innocent".

### **4- The Resurrection of Christ:**

It is only to be expected that a supernatural person should come to and leave the earth in a supernatural way. His birth was natural, but his conception was supernatural. His death was natural, but his resurrection was supernatural. Jesus himself never predicted his death without adding that he would rise. Of this resurrection Luke says there are many proofs: 1-The body had gone: The tomb was empty First theory that the women went to the wrong tomb. These women were no fools. At least two of them has seen for themselves where Joseph and Nicodemus had laid the body. The second explanation is the swoon theory. Third, the thieves stole the body, and fourth, that the disciples removed the body. These are theories which men have invented to try to explain the emptiness of the tomb and the disappearance of the body. None of them is satisfactory, and for none of them is there any historical evidence. 2- The graveclothes were undisturbed: The position of the clothes and the absence of the body were concurrent witness to

his resurrection. 3- The Lord was seen: It is impossible to dismiss the revelations of the divine Lord as hallucinations of deranged minds. So, if they were neither inventions nor hallucinations, the only alternative left is that they actually happened. 4- The disciples were changed: Like Simon Peter and James.

## **Part Two: Man's Need**

### **5- The Fact and Nature of Sin**

The universality of sin: The biblical writers are quite clear that sin is universal. The Bible describes sin as transgression. One word makes sin the trespass of a boundary. Another reveals it as lawlessness, and another as an act which violates justice. 'Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin', says James. 'Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness' says John.

But whatever our law is, we have not succeeded in observing it. We all stand self-condemned. If we take the 10 commandments as our standard, we can clearly see how easily we fall far short of it.

Nothing can convince us of our sinfulness like the lofty, righteous law of God.

### **6- The Consequences of Sin**

Sin's evil consequences can be best understood when its effects are seen upon God, upon ourselves and upon our fellow men.

a- Alienation from God: Our sin blot out God's face from us as effectively as the clouds do the sun. b- Bondage to self: sin brings us into captivity. We are in bondage to sin. It is no use giving us rules of conduct, we cannot keep them. We need a savior. c- Conflict with others: God's order is that we put Him first, others next, self last. Sin is the reversal of this order. It is to put ourselves first, our neighbor next and God somewhere in the background.

This exposure of our sin is to convince us of our need of Jesus Christ, and to prepare us for an understanding and an acceptance of what he offers.

## **Part Three: Christ's Work**

### **7- The Death of Christ**

Since sin has three principal consequences, salvation includes man's liberation from them all. Through Jesus Christ the savior we can be brought out of exile and reconciled to God; we can be born again; receive a new nature and be set free from our moral bondage; and we can have the old discords replaced by a fellowship of love.

We must consider the Centrality of the cross: When Jesus came, he knew himself to be a son of destiny. He recognized that the Scriptures were bearing witness to Him and that it was in Him that their expectation was to be fulfilled.

The supreme importance of the cross which the Old Testament foretold and Jesus taught is fully recognized by the New Testament authors. And what the Bible teaches about the centrality of the cross, the Christian church has recognized.

The meaning of the cross :

1-Christ died as our example. The cross bids us accept injury, love our enemies and leave the outcome to God. We need more than an example . We need a savior. An example can stir our imagination, kindle our idealism and strengthen our resolve, but it cannot cleanse the defilement of our past sins, bring peace to our troubled conscience or reconcile us to God. 2-Christ died as our sin bearer. He suffered for our sins and He did it 'once for all', decisively, so that what He did cannot be repeated or improved upon or even supplemented.

### **8- The Salvation of Christ**

We owe our forgiveness and reconciliation chiefly to the death of Christ, but it is by His Spirit that we can be set free from ourselves and in his church that we can be united in a fellowship of love.

## **Part Four: Man's Response**

### **9- Counting the Cost**

We may believe in the deity and the salvation of Christ, and acknowledge ourselves to be sinners in need of his salvation; but this does not make us Christians. We have to make personal response to Jesus Christ, committing ourselves unreservedly to him as our Savior and Lord.

#### The call to follow Christ:

First there must be a renunciation of sin.

Second, there must be a renunciation of self, that is to deny ourselves and take up the cross, to lose our life.

The call to confess Christ: We are commanded not only to follow Christ privately, but to confess him publicly. But the Christian's open confession does not end with his baptism. He must be willing for his family and friends to know he is a Christian, especially at first by the life he leads.

Incentives: The incentives for Christian commitment are for our own sake and for the sake of others. But the greatest incentive of all is for Christ's sake, "whoever loses his life for my sake... will save it".

### **10- Reaching a Decision**

Whatever our parentage and upbringing, every responsible adult is obliged to make up his own mind for or against Christ. We cannot remain neutral. Nor can we drift into Christianity. Nor can anybody else settle the matter for us. We must decide for ourselves.

He is the risen Christ. Jesus Christ says he is standing knocking at the door of our lives. Why does Jesus Christ want to come in? Because he wants to be our saviour and our Lord. If we receive him, he will be able to apply to us personally all the benefits of his death. He died to be our saviour and Jesus Christ will also enter as our Lord and Master.

Next we must open the door. To open the door to Jesus Christ is a pictorial way of describing an act of faith in him as our saviour, and act of submission to him as our Lord. It is a definite act, It is an individual act. It is a unique act. It is a deliberate act. It is an urgent act. And it is an indispensable act.

### **11- Being a Christian**

Becoming a Christian is one thing; being a Christian is another. You took a simple step; you invited Christ to come as your Saviour and Lord. At that moment a miracle took place. He gave you a new life. You were born again. You became a child of God and so entered his family.

Christian privilege: An intimate relationship. An assured relationship. The way to be sure is not just to feel sure. First, God promises in his written word to give eternal life to those who receive Christ. Second, God speaks to our hearts and third, the same Spirit who bears witness to our sonship in Scripture and experience completes his testimony in our character.

A secure relationship: When we sin, we do not forfeit our relationship to him as children, though our relationship with him is spoiled until we confess and forsake our sin. As soon as we confess our sins he is faithful and just.

Christian responsibilities: The great privilege of the child of God is relationship; his great responsibility is growth. There are two main spheres in which the Christian is meant to grow. The first is in understanding and the second in holiness.

There are three main secrets of spiritual development. They are also the chief responsibilities of the child of God. He wants his children to grow up to know him more and intimately.

Generations of Christians have discovered that the principal way to do so is to wait upon him every day in a time of Bible reading and prayer. Because through scripture God speaks to us while through prayer we speak to him. God is our Father. Be natural, confident and bold. He is interested in all the details of your life.

Our duty to the church: One of the commonest names for Christians in the New Testament is 'brethren'. To be a member of the universal church is not enough; We must belong to some local branch of it. Baptism is the way of entry into the visible Christian society.

Our duty to the World: Every Christian should be deeply concerned about all his fellow men. And it is part of his Christian vocation to serve them in whatever way he can. There is another responsibility which Christians have towards the world, as the bible describes those outside Christ and his church: evangelism. To evangelize means literally to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. This is the life of discipleship to which Jesus Christ calls us. He died and rose again that we might have newness of life. He has given us his Spirit so that we can live out this life in the world.