

## **EVERY MEMBER MINISTRY—FOLLOWING JESUS DEMANDS DOING WHAT JESUS CAME TO DO**

**By Bob Young**

The corporate church, its servant-leaders and its members, must heed the call to see the harvest, pray for workers, and be involved in the harvest (Matt. 9:35-38). God's church is called to look outward, allowing God to work through us to reach others with the love and hope of Jesus Christ. This should occur locally through relationships in community and globally in outreach to all corners of the earth ministering Jesus' message and demonstrating the validity and application of the message. Acts 1:8 reflects our mandate, beginning at home and progressing outward to the ends of the earth. The only way to impact the whole world is to get the whole church involved – to see every member as a minister and a missionary.

The vision for every-member ministry that will impact the world through members ministering where God places them is supported by three Bible principles from the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

**First, participating in Jesus' mission is the responsibility and privilege of every member.** "As you are going...." Some would limit this to the apostles, but the early church clearly sought to follow these instructions. We have an example that we should follow. Those who are most blessed face a greater responsibility. Christians who are blessed with amazing resources must consider that one day God will ask, "What did you do with all that talent, network, ability, freedom, all the things that I gave you, your brains, your health? What did you do with that?" We will be held responsible. Christians who are blessed with opportunities will give account for how they seized the opportunity. The Bible clearly reveals God purpose to save the world, and Christians will be held accountable for whether and how they advanced God's purpose.

**Second, Jesus empowered and authorized every member.** Jesus has given us the authority to carry out his mission in the world. We have the authority to preach the gospel. Biblically, the goal of gospel preaching is to establish more churches where believers find hope, direction, fulfillment, power for living, support systems, and meaningful activity. Through the application of the gospel, God has given us the means, message, and ministry to equip servant-leaders, edify believers, and educate disciples resulting in spiritually healthy churches, leaders, and believers. These four goals are essential. Unfortunately, too often in our world churches do not speak to spiritual emptiness, leaders are self-serving, believers start but do not grow, and genuine disciples are rare. Jesus has commissioned us. We must take the task seriously. The result will be healthy churches that are missionary churches capable of self-reproduction. The one with all authority has authorized us to keep going so the chain is unbroken.

**Third, Jesus goes with us.** We are not alone. We are not called to do God's will without help. History is moving toward a climax. History is not circular. It is linear. History is *his* story. God is in control. God created the entire world so human beings would have a place to live. He knew that some would reject him, and he knew that some of them would voluntarily choose to love him and trust him.

Nobody can change God's plan. God calls Christians to be participants in that plan. As you are going.... make, baptize, and teach disciples....and I will be with you always!