



International CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Reaching
The
Nations.

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Birth of MAP

Why MAP?

MAP means **M**inistry **A**pprenticeship **P**ath.

MAP was birth out of the burden and need for a theological education that places priority on the preparation of the person as oppose to preparation for the role.

There are a number of questions the Holy Spirit caused us to revisit and answer. Some of these are, who is a minister? Who can participate fully in theological study and ministry? Do we have leaders or managers? Are we effectively training leaders or producing professionals? What are the goals of our training programs?

One only has to look at our church to see that traditional theological seminaries have maintained a dichotomy between clergy and laity. Martin Luther broke this pattern in the 16th century when he established the universal priesthood of Christians, however, this was only in theory. This dichotomy is seen right across the board from Presbyterians to Charismatics and every denomination in between.

Is this the Bible?

The NT gave no evidence of the dichotomy between clergy and laity. Our pattern of theological training is very much connected with our concept of ministry and ministers. Ephesians 4: 11-16 presents an undeniable and challenging exposition of 'the ministry.' What is clear from this passage is the fact that there are certain ministry gifts (apostles, prophets, pastors, evangelists and teachers) given to the church for the purpose of equipping the saints to do the work of ministry.

Yet, the contemporary practice is one man, the pastor, who is expected to carry out the corporate and shared responsibility of the five ministry graces all put together. Ministry by simple definition is imparting Jesus. Who does the work of ministry? Everyone in the church has been divinely given for a specific purpose to the church and its wider vision. Equipping the saints for the work of ministry causes a dynamics of life flow within and without the body. Who gets equipped? Everyone, regardless of gender, social status and educational background.

Some observations / MAP task:

1. There is a mounting frustration among people who have a sense of calling and do not have a clue what to do with it.

MAP task is to make theological education accessible. Giftedness plus training will facilitate effective ministry. It is also to identify such gifts and place them with mentors.

2. Then there are those who can never reconcile the fact that God has a purpose and calling for them. They have never been valued or validated in this area.

MAP task is to envision by Biblical teaching and practical means of showing God's value for each soul.

3. Some of the churches most capable leaders are not called to be Pastors. Most of these are professional men and women in the social and political and corporate world. These are the cutting edge men and women who need equipping to take the church to the world.

MAP task is to bring the 'seminary' to them using whatever technology at our disposal to work around scheduling challenges.

3. Traditional concepts of pastors and lay leaders are very inadequate.

MAP task is to mobilize and put into action of all sectors of the church.

4. Unlike Jesus' command to make disciples, the church makes dependents. Church has been narrowed down to 'let's meet Sunday morning to have a good time.' Ministry has been narrowed down to professionally trained pastors orchestrating the events of the Sunday service to ensure all are happy.

MAP task is to envision from biblical teaching NT Church leadership pattern and expose students to working models of Ephesians 4:11 – 16. The church that is not a missionary church is a church without a mission. Sunday morning service is the means for the mission Jesus outlined in Matthew 28: 18-20.

6. Some Theologians admits that over the last forty years, the evidence of the lack of fit between the contemporary theological model and the current ministry training needs in churches have been mounting, here and abroad.

MAP task is identifying and equipping of persons to fit the needs; promote plurality of ministry and team ministry.

7. Professionalization of ministry training has produced professional ministers who function more like manager than leaders.

MAP task is to return to Servant leadership, the mandate of the great commission and via the means of implementing Ephesians 4:11-16.

Can it be done?

Dr. R. Kinsler asked the question, “Can the people in our churches really prepare themselves theologically and participate fully in the ministry?”

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The answer is a resounding yes! It is very easy to assimilate into the current church culture and accept that this is the only way of doing things. However, the question remains, are we as a church fulfilling the mandates of the Bible? Are we fulfilling the command of the great commission of Jesus? Do we live in His righteousness to bring His justice to the nations? Whatever is our understanding of ministry and the church will determine how we train our laborers.

Benefits of MAP extension education

(Church-based as oppose to campus-based)

1. Reduced financial burden
2. Early hands-on prepare for real life applications
3. Realistic life-style expectations
4. Service oriented (servant heart leadership style).
5. Understand ministry at an intuitive level
6. Flexible strategizing (Sensitivity to the range of training needed).
7. Dynamic flow of life in church
8. Mentor – Apprentice relationship
9. Witness of the strength of diversity
10. Church sees realization of ministry.
11. Caters for professionals and those with families.

MAP’S Philosophy on Education:

Education is more than learning information. Student’s lives must be filled and shaped by every aspect of the life of Christ. Education has to do with the understanding and skill to face life, overcome challenges and effectively meet the needs of those in your care.

Student should relate their studies to their involvement in ministry. Students are motivated when they can relate their studies with every day life. There is a conscious effort towards spiritual formation (growth in grace with the rest of the community) and Ministry Skills development to the extent of reducing academic stress for the students. There is also emphasis on the awareness and practice of Adult Education Principles.