



Mobile Ministry Networking with Local Church Leadership

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Jesus Christ has always been vitally committed to building His church – building and edifying people. Regardless of the stature and gifting of Senior Pastors, none is capable of fully equipping the church for service or ministry without the input and contribution of other ministries.



God has designed the body of Christ to grow and mature as a result of team ministry being equipped and released to function in the realm of their specific calling and gifting. Some of these leaders in the body of Christ are currently involved in “Mobile Ministry.” They may be functioning as “resident” ministry within a local church part of the time, but also serve to help build up and strengthen other local churches. There are also ministers whose total ministry involvement is in what is called *Mobile Ministry*.

God has set in the body of Christ some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers for equipping the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11, 12) It is the distinct heart of God for all five of these equipping ministries to work in harmony so that every local church becomes healthy and strong. This being God’s plan, we must believe Him for godly wisdom in order for all to understand how the “networking” is to occur in a healthy, productive manner.

Historically in the church, *Mobile Ministry* has been a great asset to building the church, yet all too often it has been a great liability. Also, in many cases there have been problems stemming from the misunderstanding or misconduct of pastors. God desires all to be adequately informed – with biblical and practical guidelines; but the most important of all is a true Christ-like character demonstrated in love and integrity.

The Lord is raising up and releasing qualified ministry to “network” (team up) with local church leadership in building up the House of God. The following are some pointers that may be of help in making the “networking” experience profitable and enjoyable for both the resident pastors and the *Mobile Ministers*.

NETWORKING: This term as applied to the body of Christ gives the idea of a coordinated system of people and churches who communicate with one another and work together as a unit or system. In church life it is a matter of leaders prayerfully seeking God for guidance and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead and confirm the what, who, when and how of building the church. This concept should work well within the relationship and structure of MFI, although it can and should at times also work well with other aspects of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11 - 16 (NKJV) ¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of

the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

This passage clearly conveys:

1. Those of the 5-fold ministry are called to equip the saints for service.
2. Bringing all to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to complete maturity which is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ is the primary objective.
3. The body is to “grow up” in all things into Christ, who is the head.
4. The whole body is to be equipped so that every member is healthy and functioning, assuming their share of responsibility.

Mobile Ministry should endeavor to assist and complement the local resident leadership in achieving the above goals and objectives.

Two important words should be considered in the context of “networking” and *Mobile Ministry*: Sending and Inviting.

Being “sent” appears to be more prominent in the New Testament church than being “invited.” However, in light of this, it must be mentioned that there were probably very meaningful relationships that existed as well as varying degrees of apostolic oversight and responsibility.

It should be clearly understood that when apostolic ministry takes initiative, it is to be with newly planted churches who are not yet set in order with local government. Once the church is set in order it is governed by that local government and not by any *Mobile Ministry*.

I believe that God is in the process of raising up qualified *Mobile Ministry*. They are basically “sent out” from their own local church to minister in churches whose pastor and local elders have invited them. This networking usually flows out of a meaningful relationship of mutual respect and trust. When God “sends” a minister into another local church, he or she comes in the name of the Lord and is blessed. **Matthew 21:9b (NKJV)** *‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’* That congregation will also be blessed. Although this verse is a direct reference to Jesus, there is still the application of a biblical principle.

Before opening the church to any *Mobile Ministry* the host pastor must know from where they come or from whom they are sent. Are they recognized and respected in their own church? This appears to be necessary for “receiving” their ministry. When we truly acknowledge and receive a person and his/her ministry, we then help to “release” that ministry so it can function in freedom and greater productivity.

Consider the following Scriptures:

Acts 8:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

Acts 13:3 - 4 (NKJV) ³Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away. ⁴So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

Acts 15:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God.

Matthew 10:40 - 41 (NKJV) ⁴⁰“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. ⁴¹He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.

John 13:20 (NKJV) ²⁰Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”

Acts 15:4 (NKJV) ⁴And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.

Acts 21:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

This “networking” all works on the basis of the direction of the Holy Spirit and the relationship of mutual trust and respect.

In order for the “networking” experience to be most productive, rewarding and enjoyable, the following *Mobile Ministry* factors should be taken into consideration:

I. ABILITY

- A. What is the person’s primary gifting and calling?
- B. What is the person’s level of ability and competency?

- C. Will this particular ministry constructively add to what is already being built?
- D. Resident pastors and other elders need to honestly evaluate where their weaknesses are and bring in ministers who are capable of strengthening those areas.

II. ATTITUDE

John Maxwell says that your attitude determines your altitude.

This category deals with the whole issue of the heart:

- A. Character – honesty, integrity and humility
- B. Motives
- C. Ministerial ethics
- D. Respect
- E. Submission to authority
- F. Financial issues
- G. Confidentiality
- H. Faith

III. ACCESS

God opens doors for ministry.

- A. Should a mobile minister take the initiative in attempting to get meetings?
- B. A person's gift makes room for him/her.
- C. What about verbal or printed recommendations?
- D. How do relationships affect ministry opportunities?
- E. Open doors for ministry opportunities usually come as a result of the following:
 - 1. A good track record
 - 2. Recommendations
 - 3. Positive relationships

4. Ministerial stature or status
- F. Pastors of larger churches need to have a vision for helping the smaller churches to grow and become strong. Be willing to sow your seed of ministry and/or finances into other fields.

IV. ACCREDITATION

A person's accreditation is based on their:

1. Attitude and character
2. Competency
3. Degree of accountability
4. Recommendation

V. ACCOUNTABILITY

True accountability must have sufficient relational substance. Don't buy into the "super spiritual" heresy that submission and accountability is only to Jesus Christ. It sounds spiritual, but is not biblical. In fact, it is so dangerous that many major problems in the body of Christ surface as a result of this unbiblical attitude and concept.

- A. Accountability does not mean that a minister is totally cramped by an overpowering authority figure or system – such as the heresy of extreme discipleship.
- B. Accountability does mean that you do not espouse an "independent" attitude and conduct.
- C. Accountability does mean that you clearly see your need to receive valuable input from others with whom you are in committed relationship.
- D. Accountability must be a practical and substantial relationship of identification with a "sending" local church.
- E. Accountability ideally includes a meaningful relationship with at least one spiritual father in the Lord.
- F. Place in big question those who claim an accountability relationship with big names of ministers all over the world, but with whom they have very little or no communication or contact.

VI. AUTHORITY

True authority comes from God Himself. The Apostle Paul made this statement more than once.

- A. Authority is for edification, not destruction.
- B. A biblical principle: God gives authority to those who are under authority.
- C. Authority from God is not demonstrated in taking dominion over people's faith, rather, as being helpers of their joy.
- D. In the context of the "networking" of *Mobile Ministry* with local church leadership, the final authority does not rest with the *Mobile Minister*, but with the local church leadership. *Mobile Ministry* are there to serve, not to take authority over the local church leaders.
- E. Authority of the *Mobile Minister* can be released and function to the degree that the local church pastor and leaders request.

VII. ADAPTABILITY

Mobile Ministers must be willing to bend from their personal preferences in order to flow with the personality and flavor of the house as long as it does not violate clear biblical standards or principles. Areas of the house that may vary from the personal preferences of the *Mobile Minister*:

- A. Styles of worship – go with the flow.
- B. Attire – respect the local standard. It is usually wise to ask in advance regarding their preferences.
- C. Food – if you are on a strict diet or have allergies, discuss the issue in advance; otherwise be willing to eat at least some of what is set before you.
- D. Communion – wine or grape juice? I have seen some refuse to take communion in another church because they served wine instead of grape juice. In most cases it is better to participate with them and gain the benefit of a corporate blessing rather than to refuse and create unnecessary questions. I have also seen some who refuse to take communion because grape juice was served rather than wine. God is more concerned with our attitude of "legalism" which prevents us from entering into a loving relationship with that fellowship of believers than He is with whether or not it is wine or grape juice.
- E. Length of sermon and length of service – if you are a *Mobile Minister* in a church where the pastor and leaders are, for whatever reason, more time conscious than you

are, be willing to surrender your preference of a longer sermon or a longer service. And don't judge the pastor as being unspiritual because he has placed "uncomfortable" time constraints on you.

- F. Discern the general level of sound volume – if the pastor and church tend to be more reserved and conservative than you, remember to be yourself, but God can still anoint your preaching or prophesying without your yelling your lungs out.

VIII. ACCOMMODATIONS

It is interesting to note what is often a difference between 21st Century church leaders of western civilization and the Apostle Paul: He was probably concerned with what the jail was going to be like and we can be more prone to be concerned with whether or not we are going to stay in a 5-star hotel! That is probably an exaggerated statement, but we must check our attitude. We should not come into a local church with selfish demands.

There should be advanced communication with the pastor or an administrative leader regarding accommodations. If the local church leadership are adequately trained in hosting Mobile Ministry, they will do their very best to set you up with comfortable accommodations. In fact, they may ask your preference between a nice, suitable home or a hotel or motel.

If the local church leaders are not properly trained in hosting guest ministry, you may need to bring up the issue by asking questions. Then make some reasonable recommendations based on the resources of that congregation.

IX. AFFECTION

- A. *Mobile Ministers* must have and demonstrate a God-given love for people and a love for the House of God. Possess a motive of "How can I best serve and give of my time, energy and ministry" rather than "How much can I get out of this for myself?" We should also have a strong passion for the presence of God.
- B. We are called to set our affection on things above, not on things of the earth. In this section we will deal with a very spiritual and practical issue called "finances and honorariums."
 - 1. It is biblical for God's people to be generous.
 - 2. It is also a biblical truth that God wants to prosper us for His purposes.
 - 3. "The laborer is worthy of his wages." **1 Tim. 5:17, 18**
 - 4. "But this I say: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." **2 Cor. 9:6**

5. The *Mobile Minister* should remember that God is actually his/her employer. Therefore, faith for sufficient financial return must be put in Him and not the host pastor and church.
6. If those involved in *Mobile Ministry* are responding to the call and direction of the Lord, then God will honor their faith to believe Him to meet their financial needs.
7. In some cases *Mobile Ministers* need additional support in order to meet their financial needs. Through relationships that God provides, those extra needed funds can come through local churches and friends who are led by the Lord to give financial assistance.
8. Some *Mobile Ministers* are called and gifted to provide seminars on various topics. This requires a lot of planning, preparation and time. In many of these cases it is certainly acceptable and appropriate to designate a reasonable registration fee to cover whatever costs are incurred in serving the host church. These details should all be discussed with the pastor or another designated leader from the hosting church before the event is actually confirmed.
9. If a *Mobile Minister* has pure motives before the Lord, and he has adequately communicated so there is a mutual understanding with the local church leadership, he should trust that God is big enough to take care of proper financial remuneration. He should never be given to personally “pumping” the people emotionally and then take his own personal love offering. Too many churches have been exploited by these selfish and wrongly motivated ministers. However, with the pastor’s approval, it would certainly be acceptable for a *Mobile Minister* to receive an offering for a worthy cause or ministry with which he is involved. That would not be for his own personal gain.

CONCLUSION

God has designed His church to depend on Him for the greatest productivity. As we trust Him for His wisdom and enabling power we can enjoy the blessings and benefits of the body of Christ being in full operation.

Hopefully, the content of this lesson will help to guide both hosting pastors and *Mobile Ministers* into a more rewarding experience.