

**PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF “SENDING”
FOR MISSIONAL CONGREGATIONS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

‘Knocking on Doors’ in Contemporary Society

INTRODUCTION -----PAGE 2

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF THE “SENDING” APPLICATIONS --- PAGE 3

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES OF “SENDING” APPLICATIONS----PAGE 4

CHRIST’S SENDING DYNAMIC – CHART-----PAGE 10

A FAULTY “THEY WILL COME” STRATEGY FOR MISSION -----PAGE 11

CONCLUSION-----PAGE 12

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF “SENDING”

The *apostolic sending* out, a *sending away* and *being sent ones* together with the corollaries of *leaving and going*, is primarily a mind-set (“*habitus*” not just a “*performance*”) and dynamic resulting in practical actions – dynamics of *sending and going* with ALL sending-acts **RELATIONAL-CENTERED**:

- CHRIST-
 - contact,
 - connection,
 - compassion,
 - care,
 - cultivation,
 - communication,
 - communities of faith and sending,
 - collaboration, and
 - celebration - (The 9 “C’s” in Christ).

THE GREAT SENDING IS THE LENS OR PRISM AND BASIS/CORE/HEART OF ALL MISSION APPLICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES. I.E., All “mission” acts, activities, practices, etc., are aligned to the *Great Sending of God* (The *Mission Dei*).

It is not a “come to us” syndrome (Plan a “program” and they will come syndrome) or even come to the Divine Service. The soil does not come to the sower and seed but the sower with the seed goes to the soil. But the soil can be prepared by creating visibility, awareness, contact, connection, and care. While it may even involve a “coming” to a “church facility,” it must be an *apostolic sending mind-set and dynamic*– “*sent...into the world*” (Jn. 17:18).

The old evangelism culture of physically going out - **canvassing** and “**knocking on the doors**,” house after house, block after block to identify “**prospects**” - can still be carried out but in different “apostolic” ways. An intentional expanding **concentric circle dynamic** always works, always multiplies no matter the culture or the times. It is a sending out from the core center. It also involves a sending-disposition of being **friendly, hospitable, gracious, of recognizing people, expressing gratitude, and being sensitive to the need of having a people-disposition (focus on others) **always and on all occasions** (This is contrary to the start-stop “program” syndrome and focus).**

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS:

- 1.) The apostolic sending [authoritative] of Christ and apostolic participation of the “Baptized,” who have the sent/sending-office of the keys originally/directly (Cf. John 17:18 and John 20:21-23) **and who are the object of *καταρτισμός***. (Cf. Eph. 4:11-12; Mt. 4:21; Gal. 6:1; Heb. 13:21; Lk. 6:40; 1 Cor. 1:10).
- 2.) “**The mutual conversation and consolation of brothers and sisters**” (SA III.4).
- 3.) Christ-Leadership essentials such as self-awareness, generative, transitional (including adaptability), transformative, collaborative, missional.

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

THE SCRIPTURAL CHRIST-SENDING-EXAMPLES (Selected incidences):

- ✓ People in Nazareth (hometown), Galilee, by and on the sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Gennesaret, along the Jordan, in the synagogues, the temple, on the mountainside, in the hills, in the streets and countryside, on the roads, in homes/houses, at meals, at a wedding, at a well, fishing, “the other side of the lake,” in various towns and villages, the grain-fields, solitary places, in a boat, by a pool, Tyre and Sidon, Caesarea Philippi, a mountain, Judea, the other side of the Jordan, Jericho, Bethany, Jerusalem, Mount of Olives, in the Garden, on Mount Calvary, etc.
- ✓ Fishermen and tax collectors, the disciples, the lost sheep of Israel, the Gentiles, the Samaritans, Canaanites, the soldiers, rulers/officials, Pilate and Herod, Scribes and Pharisees (even dining with-Lk. 14), high priests, Sanhedrin, sinners, family and friends, Centurion, crowds, etc.
- ✓ The sick, needy, hungry, hurting and suffering people, **the woman at the well (cf. example of “C’s”)**, demon-possessed man, dead girl, widow’s son, sick woman, Syrian Phoenician woman, deaf and dumb, blind, little children, lepers, paralyzed, etc.

THE CHRIST-AUTHORITY *SENDING* OF THE DISCIPLES/APOSTLES

(Selected incidences; Cf. also *sending* in Matthew 10 and Luke 10):

- ✓ The mixed crowd/languages/cultures on Pentecost
- ✓ The people in Jerusalem, the temple, the temple courts, the temple gate, “Solomon’s Colonnade, the Sanhedrin, The chief priest, and elders, etc.
- ✓ House to house (homes), The diaspora, etc.
- ✓ Judea and Samaria, the road to Gaza, in the chariot, Caesarea, road to Damascus, Damascus, Cornelius (A centurion), synagogues, prisons/jails, by the river, theaters, city assemblies, mars hill, ships, etc.
- ✓ Jews and Gentiles, Greeks, and Romans, Ethiopian, rulers/officials, Governors, kings, soldiers/guards, epicurean and stoic philosophers, seaman, etc.
- ✓ The mixed congregation in Antioch, The planting of the congregations in “the ends of the earth,” on the missionary journeys

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES to execute the above “C’s”

(Christ contact, connect, care, communicate, creating community, etc.):

Note: Applications depend upon nature and character of the community, rural, suburb, city, etc.

- Priority of creating and keeping an up-to-date record of names of friends and “prospects” and their addresses, not just creating, and keeping a membership role and records of official acts.
- Intentional gathering of names from congregation members (various occasions)
- “Kingdom Builders” visitations-groups (Cf. Elders/deacons/lay ministers-group and ind. visits)
- Social media
 - Brief, pointed, relevant, relational posts
 - Encouraging congregation members to share the post...thus relational multiplication
 - Note the current epitome of the concentric circle strategy in social media
- Local coffee houses, businesses, eating places, senior citizen centers, boys’ and girls’ clubs, community gathering places.
- Identify and develop relationship with leaders/leadership in the community such as Mayor, City and/or county officials, City Judge, County Judge, other government officials, etc.
- Developing relationship with local schools, teachers, and administration
 - If available qualifications exist, provide mentoring by members or offer other help
- Developing relationship with local law enforcement.
- Developing relationship with local ministerium, individual pastors, etc.
- Strategic and regular use of all local media
 - Newspaper, TV, Radio
- Strategic Direct targeted mailings: “event” follow-up mailing, email (obtain names/addresses)
- Participation in community service organizations, Chamber of Commerce, etc.
- Welcome letter to all newcomers in community
 - Intentional effort to obtain names and addresses of newcomers (new moves)
- Intentional appropriate hand-outs and follow-up of all Services and all congregation events
- A free appreciation dinner for all volunteer firemen (Sheriff’s department, etc.) and family members in the community
 - Invite a reputable guest speaker as a possibility

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

- Follow-up with letter, phone call or visit
- An appreciation dinner for all teachers, staff (home school) and family members in the community
 - Invite a reputable guest speaker (Professional educator) as a possibility
 - Follow-up with letter, phone call or visit
- A free appreciation dinner for all local school sport teams and family members in the community
 - Follow-up with letter, phone call or visit
 - Invite a reputable “professional” athlete to be guest speaker as a possibility
- Conduct a periodic **outdoor** come-as-you-are **Sunday** School - children with parents and Gospel music worship service in the **am** or Sunday night, etc. for the “community”
 - Invitation via all media and direct mailing
 - Personal invitations extended by members of the congregation
 - Invited musical group(s)
 - Follow-up with letter, phone call or visit
- Sponsor a Saturday night country music/Blue grass music/Gospel music jamboree
 - Example: downtown The Grove/Dube store
 - Example: other venue depending on church location and town/suburb/city
 - Invited musical group(s)
 - Follow-up with letter, phone call or visit
- Intentional VBS, Pre-School, S.S., etc.) follow-up by pastor and teachers of attendees and their parents (grandparents)
 - Follow-up phone call or
 - Follow up letter or
 - Follow-up visit
- Intentional follow-up of weddings (especially attendees at rehearsal), baptisms, funerals of attendees and their parents
 - Follow-up phone call or follow up letter or
 - Follow-up visit
- Developing relationships with neighbors
 - Inviting neighbors into home for dinner. Exercising listening and taking opportunity for spiritual conversations.

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

- Inviting discipleship groups for BBQ/other and inviting neighbors as a part of the "party" so that they meet your Christian friends. No overt evangelization at this point but establishing a place of trust and familiarity.
- Inviting neighbors to participate in community activity as participants with Christians. (e.g. - Join us in mentoring at a neighborhood "School," Join us in helping local constables, etc.) experience of making an impact draws curiosity in "what kind of church is this" that they are doing something for our kids, neighborhood, police, school?
- Sensitivity to and response to "critical juncture" events of neighbors, neighborhood, etc.
- **If there is a contact, ALWAYS connect, ALWAYS care with compassion, ALWAYS cultivate and ALWAYS communicate Christ to/for/of the Christ-comm-unity of faith and sending (a discipleship unity with Christ [come, follow me!] and unity with one another) with collaboration and celebration!**

THE FOLLOWING ARE OTHER "SENDING" (APOSTOLIC) SAMPLE OCCASSIONS, OCCURRENCES OR APPLICATIONS TO GENERATE THINKING

CHRISTIAN LAITY AND CONGREGATIONS SENT INTO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY:

- ✓ VBS that reaches 5-600 kids (and their parents)
- ✓ VBS in the back yards of multiple homes
- ✓ Missional "communities" in the community; neighboring; missional living
- ✓ Community Bible study cell groups in multiple homes
- ✓ Community Summer camps (music, soccer, art, reading program, etc.) that reach children throughout the summer (or after school)
- ✓ Community Trunk or Treat fall festival. Reaches children with the Gospel near Halloween
- ✓ Community Easter Egg Hunt...Easter message given as children are invited for the day and for services
- ✓ "Bethlehem"- setting up the town of Bethlehem in the gym or outdoors...Inviting families of the community to come in and learn about the Christmas story as surrounded by the Christmas town. Animals outside, including a camel, to tell the gospel.
- ✓ Early Learning Center...staff engages children/families at least 7 times a year to share the Gospel.
- ✓ **Discipleship groups**...starting groups that not only come together for encouragement, study, and prayer. But, to be sent out together to impact community, invite non-Christians in, and be living out the Gospel together (Example of "**Kingdom Builders**" in a congregation).
- ✓ ESL classes...reaching non-English speaking people to connect them with Spanish (other) speaking church.

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

- ✓ Spanish (other) Service...Sunday afternoons...reaching the Hispanic (other) community
- ✓ Sponsoring a community health fare
- ✓ Sponsoring an educational fare engaging the local schools and teachers – prayers in the Service for all local teachers and schools; other college campus outreach (ethnic)
- ✓ Sponsor a community 4-H group; sponsor a home-school center for sharing, fellowship, etc.
- ✓ Other:

CHRISTIAN LAITY AND CONGREGATIONS *SENT* INTO THE LARGER COMMUNITY:

- ✓ Planting a missional congregation, a missional school (a community of faith and mission)
- ✓ VBS in the back yards of multiple homes
- ✓ Community Bible study cell groups in multiple homes
- ✓ Missional lay leaders trained for being sent into the “activities” and life of the community and culture
- ✓ Sponsoring an educational fare engaging the local schools and teachers – prayers in the Service for all local teachers and schools; other college campus outreach (ethnic)
- ✓ Summer Advancement Leadership Initiative in public schools
- ✓ Sponsoring a community health fare; other local fairs
- ✓ Hurricane/Tornado repair (help individuals and connect them to faith community)
- ✓ Habitat Homes (service...not as much opportunity for Gospel)
- ✓ Meals on Wheels (bringing help and hope to the elderly)
- ✓ Thrift store (Clothing brought, gathered and sorted) Money raised to help needy...or items given to needy. Members go into the community in need.
- ✓ Other community care and development efforts
- ✓ Assist LINC faith communities to connect to their local community (Apartment ministries and community ministries), Street fairs, community events at church, clean-up of neighborhood and church.
- ✓ Homeless shelter- Congregation keeping homeless for one week as a part of Interfaith Hospitality Network. Four families are taken care of by churches, re-educating, working again, and saving enough money to go back to work. Some connect with churches in the process.
- ✓ Set up and operate a “coffee house”
- ✓ Sponsor a Country music/Gospel jamboree in town square or _____ once a month

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

- ✓ Sponsor a “concert” by musicians from a local college
- ✓ Sponsor a weekly meal for the H.S. Varsity team before the game
- ✓ Other:

CHRISTIAN LAITY AND CONGREGATIONS INCLUDING TEAMS SENT BEYOND ITS OWN SURROUNDING AND LARGER COMMUNITY:

- ✓ IDENTIFY LEAERS/LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOP RELATIONSHIP
- ✓ Prisons – teams going into local prisons from Wednesday to Sunday. A retreat for 60 prisoners (Christians and non-Christians) to share the Gospel and share God’s grace with those who are isolated from the world.
- ✓ Mexico – Work with handicapped poor. As handicapped are placed in chairs...team and local Christians witness to families and individuals. People connected to local churches. Homes are re-fit to be able to handle wheelchairs.
- ✓ Guatemala – Sent to build. Homes built around the churches. Primarily built for members, but drawing non-Christian crowd to come and see. VBS held with kids in local schools and community.
- ✓ Belize – Sent to share and encourage. VBS held annually with community. (160 last year) who show up...Some Christian, many not. Build up image of congregation in working with them. Adding children’s space, worshipping with them, providing community gathering of not only kids, but also “sewing time” for women to gather in church. (20 women this past year, at least 10 that had no church connection. Sent to: Teaching pastors and leaders, training youth leaders, training Christian Counselors, building capacity of ministries to care for themselves (churches and orphanages); Eyeglass clinic to connect community to church and potential medical clinic.
- ✓ Working with Lutherans in Honduras, digging water wells
- ✓ Working with national church in Kenya. Eyeglass clinics to draw un-churched. Lutherans meet with people as they wait in line to receive glasses. Share gospel and invitation to worship.
- ✓ “Loft” ministry in downtown Houston. Reaching to un-churched young adults who would not come to a church...but will meet in apartments around the Bible.

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

THE PRACTICAL “CONTACT...COMMUNITY” (“C’s”) APPLICATIONS IN MISSIONAL PERSPECTIVE:

Being **apostolic** means the continuity of Christ’s and the Church’s **sending...sent** participants representing Christ...to save the people of the whole world...not sent to save human institutions, property, buildings, church signs, Lutheran traditions, ceremonies and rituals, a Lutheran ethos or “arrangements,” but people ...This *Missio Dei* disposition... and practices are to be faithfully evaluated and executed.

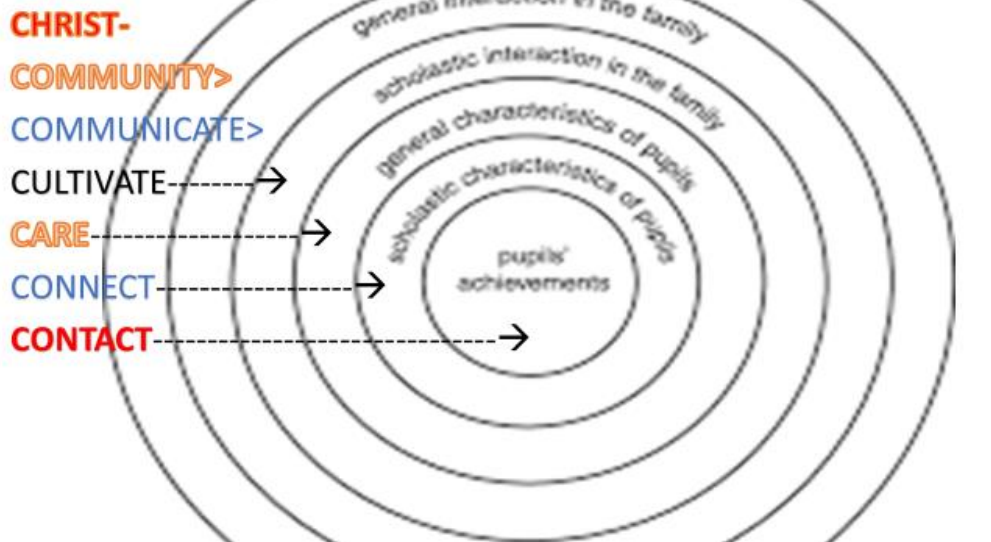
The Book of Acts gives very little or no mention to arrangements such as “place,” “property,” “grounds,” “buildings,” “architecture,” “space,” “technological, musical, and sound instruments” or even “language,” and “time,” except an occasional reference to public places for the proclamation and teaching such as “synagogue,” “beside the river,” “place of prayer,” “house,” “Mars Hill,” “market place,” “prison,” “theater,” and of course the particular city/country. Acts demonstrates the focus on Christ and His Word... people receiving the Gospel message...the mission of converting and transforming souls for eternity with Christ (John 17).

It is all about THE GREAT SENDING, HIS MISSION, HIS CHURCH! (ANTIOCH MODEL FOR FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST’S MISSION)

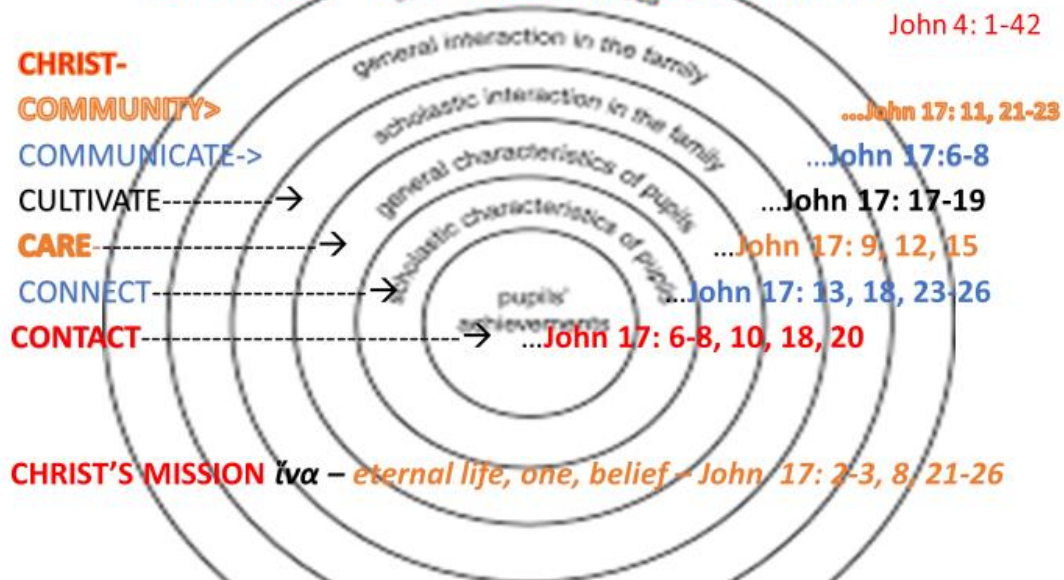
KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

THE CORE CENTER, SENDING OUT ITS RIPPLES/WAVES -

CHRIST-MISSIONAL DYNAMIC



CHRIST-MISSIONAL DYNAMIC



EXECUTING THE GREAT SENDING CONCENTRIC CIRCLE DYNAMIC OF JOHN 17:18; 20: 21-23; and John 4

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

A FAULTY “THEY WILL COME” STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING

“...they will come” is from the quote “If you build it, he will come” and comes from a baseball movie with Kevin Costner in 1989 called “Field of dreams.” It was sort of magical realism about reliving the past and meeting your heroes by building a baseball field and pitch.

This “magical realism” is reflected in a trending mission strategy that has the effect of discarding the old Scriptural missional strategy with “we don’t do it that way anymore” coupled with a lot of “fluff” and “talking a good line” but with no recognition, understanding and application of the Christ-sending authority and truth.

The new “magical realism” “come to us” strategy:

- If you establish any location, “they will come”
- If you establish the property, “they will come”
- If you establish “cleaned-up” property, “they will come”
- If you establish a building and facilities, “they will come”
- If you establish a music director/leader, “they will come”
- If you establish a web site, “they will come”
- If you establish a church sign, “they will come”
- If you establish a property master plan with a trail on the property, “they will come”
- If you establish technology, “they will come”
- If you establish “streaming,” online “they will come”
- If you establish and develop constitution and governing documents, “they will come”
- If you establish a name, “they will come”
- If you establish neighborhood soup suppers, “they will come”
- If you establish and develop *neighboring*, “they will come”
- If you establish ample funding sources, “they will come”
- If you establish any traditional, new and/or different arrangements, “they will come”
- If you establish pure Lutheran worship liturgy and practices, “they will come”
- **If you practice the “Divine Service” faithfully, they will come**
- If you establish the above unilaterally without Scriptural engagement of others (priesthood of believers, “congregation” engaged) at every level, “they will come”

THE GREAT SENDING STRATEGY:

- A sending-planting that reflects a sending, leaving & going immersion missiology/theology
- A sending-planting by being apostolic sent ones, sent/going to PEOPLE according to the Gospel
- A sending-planting by full engagement of the sending and sent people at every juncture

KNOCKING ON DOORS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

- A sending-planting by deliberate, intentional, and active finding, seeking and identifying de-churched, disconnected, lost PEOPLE based on Christ's mission, His grace and love
- A sending-planting by converting and transforming PEOPLE to and in Christ through the Holy Spirit, Who calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies by the Gospel
- A sending-planting by people-community immersion as Christ was sent into the world (Jn. 17:18; 20:21-23)
- A sending-planting by targeted, engaging use of people-community media, venues, and culture
- A sending-planting by communicating the Gospel and saving faith to people-priority
- A sending-planting of the ***one holy, catholic apostolic Church*** (instead of an institutional church)
- A sending-planting in, with, and under the Christ-Apostolic Authority
The Christ-Apostolic Authority in, with, and under all "mission" activities and practices

A "build and they will come" planting strategy displaces apostolic sending, evangelical and evangelistic authority of Jesus!

God's strategy is The Great Sending instead of "we don't do it that way (sending) anymore." "If they are among the 'saved' they will come no matter what"

A "They will come" ("come to Him") syndrome is contrary to the theology of "sending," of "grace," and the "call" and is more akin to "predestination."

CONCLUSION

John 17:18 *As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.* **John 20:21-23** *Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

The Great Sending, God's Heart for the World Beating Through You lays out the Gospel truth that the *Missio Dei* (God's great sending of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the believers) is the lens and prism for interpreting, understanding, and applying Scripture and all its articles of faith. The Christian nature, life, and All Christian teachings, practices, and activities have their source, nature, identity in and are described by the *Missio Dei*.

"*I am that I am*" is the Sending God (*Missio Dei*). A Sent one in God's image is "I am that I am."

All activities of any "knocking on doors-sending" flows from the Heart of "I am that I am" – Just as the "I am that I am" sent Christ, Christ sends us with His Sent-Holy Spirit to send away sin!

The Great sending, "I Am that I Am's" Heart for the World Beating Through You.