

Six Steps in Raising up Gospel Workers¹



1. Praying

- Matt 9:38 – ask the Lord of the harvest...
- there needs to be constant prayer for this, in church, in small groups, by leaders individually, in meetings
- we should pray for specific people, for specific needs in the harvest field, and for God to lay this as a burden on many hearts

2. Teaching

- there needs to be a constant focus in local church preaching and teaching on God's global gospel plan to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28), to bring blessing to the ends of the earth (Gen 12) and to gather a people from every tribe, nation, language and tongue (Rev 7:9-10).
- in preaching and teaching pastors need to cast a vision of what God is doing and why it matters so much
- the vision needs to include confidence in God's Word as powerful to change lives

¹ This model was initially developed by Murray Capill and draws on ideas presented by Peter Adam and presented at The Gospel Coalition Australia, Victoria, 2018.

3. Training

- pastors and church leaders are called to equip the saints for ministry (Eph 4:11-13)
- it needs to be a normal part of church life to train people for every task they are called to do: Bible reading, leading in prayer, welcoming, leading a small group, sharing their faith, leading worship etc.
- training is the engine that drives gospel ministry and needs to be central to the culture of every church

4. Mentoring

- while we train many, we should mentor a few, as Paul did with Timothy and encourage him to do for others (2 Tim 2:2)
- pastors and other mature disciples ought to intentionally invest in one or two people each year, to help them grow in Christ, learn biblically and theologically, and be better equipped to serve
- we ought particularly to mentor those with promise for future gospel ministry

5. Modelling

- people will aspire to ministry when they see positive models of ministry, even if that model involves enormous sacrifice (cf. Paul writing to Timothy - 1 Tim 4:10-17).
- pastors need to model love, commitment, joy, passion, evangelism, enthusiasm; if they model ministry as a life that makes you weary, cynical and study-bound, few will aspire to it
- to this end pastors need to be encouraged and strengthened so that they are thriving in ministry

6. Empowering

- people will engage in ongoing ministry when they are empowered to do the work of ministry, which will include leading in their ministry roles, learning through correction, and being apprenticed by those in the church.
- the cycle of raising gospel workers is not complete until people actually do the work for which they have been prayed for, taught, trained, mentored, and seen modelled in others. (cf. Paul's words to Timothy in 2 Tim. 4:5)

The Bottom Line

Churches cannot pick and choose among these six tasks. They are all essential and they work as a package. They are not a quick fix. They need to be sustained for years. We need to do all six of them constantly so become a central part of the culture of each church. Then, by God's grace, we may see in the future larger numbers wanting to engage in gospel ministry, some of them vocationally, and some of them in ordained pastoral ministry.