

## Second LCJE CEO Conference in France 2005

By Steve Engstrom, future Director for Caspari Center International

**LCJE CEO Conference  
France  
May 2005**



*Steve Engstrom*

Perhaps since I am a new member of LCJE, Dr. Kai Kjær-Hansen asked me to give my impressions of my first LCJE conference. I was told that the accommodations were unusually extravagant, but they gave me warm first impressions! Our lodging at the medieval Abbey de Bussiere, nestled in the yellow mustard fields of Bourgogne, graced us with a peaceful ambiance. I returned refreshed – and well fed! I hope our capable host, Jean-Paul Rempp, was blessed as much for his hard work.

I have framed our discussions in two categories: the context for Jewish ministry, and the growth of our organizations.

### **The Context for Jewish Evangelism**

Several of our speakers reminded us that Christianity is global, in contrast to the primarily North American and Northern European members seated around our table. Heinrich Pedersen shared his encounters with "Majority Church" Christians in Israel, and their experiences of evangelism. He reminded us that creative opportunities exist to engage global Christians in conversation about

Jewish evangelism. As I reflect that the founding leader of my organization, Prof. Caspari, led his Norwegian countrymen in Jewish ministry when there were virtually no Jews in Norway, I am convinced that sharing our burden for Jewish evangelism with Christians in Africa, Latin America and Asia is important. I hope our membership will eventually reflect the diversity of the global Body of Messiah.

Further, Wes Taber raised insightful questions that emerge when we study Muslim evangelism. Muslim missionaries are deeply engaged in the questions of contextualization, hermeneutics, and culture. Wes asks us to consider the impact of contextualization on discipleship – and discipleship on evangelism. As Wes spoke, I was impressed with how much we can learn in dialogue with workers in other fields.

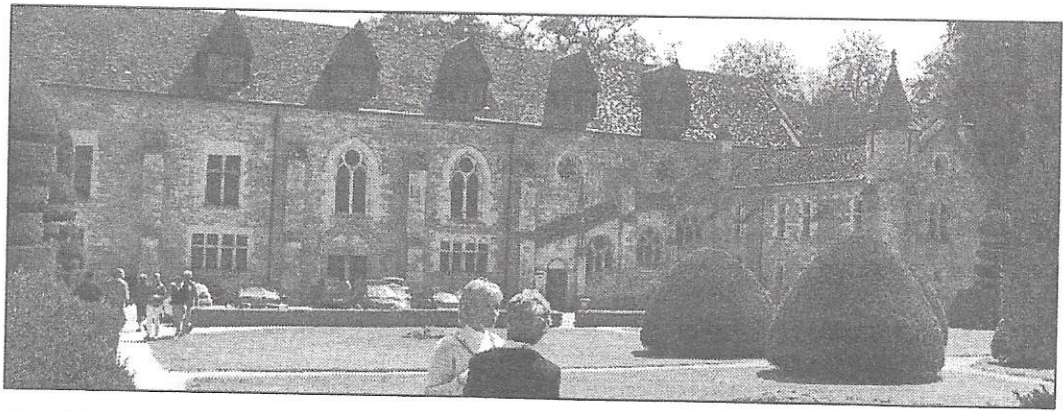
At least two presentations addressed the contemporary Jewish community.

Tuvya Zaretsky and Lawrence Hirsch reflected on intermarriage, Jewish life-cycles and opportunities for evangelism. Tuvya noted the high rate of intermarriage and assimilation in American Jewry, and discussed ways that congregations can serve Jewish-Gentile couples. As it often did, our discussion returned to the distinction between Jewish ethnicity and Jewish religion. Our challenge is to strengthen authentic Jewish identity in appropriate ways.

A second discussion reflected the degree to which we are all affected by circumstances in Israel. As every year passes, the original Zionist visions are challenged and transformed by political and cultural conflicts. Several members pondered whether we could make an unqualified affirmation of Christian Zionism. As Tony Highton shared statistics on the high rates of abortion, domestic violence, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder in Israel, I was again reminded how important it is for us to concentrate our efforts on proclaiming the Gospel and strengthening the resources of the congregations in Israel who are both struggling with these issues themselves, as well as reaching out to their friends and neighbors.

Finally, two presentations addressed Messianic





*The CEO conference was held at Abbaye de La Busière, a former Cistercian abbey close to Dijon, France.*

congregations, their practices, and their role in evangelism. Mitch Glaser expressed his vision to plant Messianic congregations that combine some degree of Jewish religious observance with Christian doctrine and practice. Jim Sibley clarified that we must not speak about Torah observance as a Biblical obligation. Again, the critical issue was how Jewish believers express Jewish identity. Andrew Sparks' presentation raised many questions about how Jewish identity and Torah observance relate to Messianic congregations. We are all aware of the historic tension between missions organizations and Messianic congregations, and I am sure that this dialogue has many more stages before the tension resolves.

#### **Organizational Growth**

Other discussions addressed staff and funding operations, and creative ways to work with churches

to expand staff and resources. Murray Tilles gave an encouraging demonstration of how his ministry works with volunteers from churches in Atlanta to serve more Jewish people. A benefit of this is that Christians in Atlanta have personal, not just financial, investment in Jewish evangelism.

I was especially challenged by Rolf Gunnar Heitmann's appeal for both healthy competition and honest cooperation among Jewish missions. He challenged us to work for the common vision of Jewish evangelism, not just the narrow vision of our organizations' prosperity. I noticed that as missions organizations, few among us represented specific denominations or traditional church structures. And so few of us are required to coordinate our efforts within a larger organizational framework. Most of us organize our efforts under the leadership of boards.

That means that it is really up to us to choose to work with others or ignore them. In some contexts, the harvest field is small and the laborers many. Israel happens to be one of those contexts. The possibility for duplicating services is high, and so is the likelihood that we will step on someone's toes. Whereas there are other locations where the laborers are few. Stephen Pacht mentioned that Paris is understaffed in proportion to the Jewish population there. Therefore the question of competition, and of working together to achieve a fundamental mission is an important one.

#### **Conclusion**

At week's end, the variety of issues and challenges we explored only strengthened our resolve to place evangelism at the front and center of our efforts. It seems like the mission to proclaim the Gospel of God to the Jew first is strongly challenged today from



diverse fronts.

Perhaps in relation to other missionary activity, Jewish missions especially cries out for God's direct intervention. After all, He covered with the veil, and He shall remove it. But I really wonder if while we await God's decisive future acts, Jewish evangelism will

progress through the struggle, cooperation, competition, exploration, affirmation and risk we share with each other.

I am sincerely thankful to be a part of it all. I am grateful for the affirmation I received from everyone as a new member. I am encouraged by the

testimonies of men and women who, year after year, struggle after struggle, victory after victory, remain faithful to the call. I pray that God will give me the strength, wisdom and joy that I witnessed among my brothers and sisters in Yeshua. I will need it.

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## Staff Development: Why Can't We Have the Staff We Want?

By David Brickner, Executive Director of Jews for Jesus

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### Introduction

I have five reasons to suggest and some thoughts on how we can move forward.

We don't have the mission staff we want:

1. Because missions and Jewish missions in particular is inherently difficult and people don't want to do it.

2. Because we aren't intentional enough in our efforts to recruit and develop potential and current staff members.

3. Because our structures are not sufficiently flexible to allow for us to take advantage of changing cultural attitudes and perceptions.

4. Because we haven't sufficiently set our own standards or given an accurate picture of the core responsibilities and competencies required.



*An LCJE CEO meeting consists of a great number of short presentations and much time for interaction. — From left: Tony Higon, Hanspeter Obrist and Jean-Paul Rempp.*

5. Because internecine squabbles and unhealthy competition between various agencies leads to disillusionment and disaffection among those who might otherwise seek to serve.

**1. Because missions and Jewish mission in particular is inherently difficult and people don't**

**want to do it.**

When it comes to recruitment, Jesus tells us, "The harvest truly is plentiful but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." (Mt.9:37-8) Jesus knew what any good recruiter knows. It is a rare thing to find quality people who are



willing to give their lives in service for God. For people in Jewish ministry we know that the response of those we are called to is not likely to be one of overwhelming appreciation. It is difficult to remain visible, vulnerable and available when there is the constant pressure of rejection and disdain from the Jewish community. Likewise Jewish ministry is not seen as a particularly high calling within the church. Many, especially Jewish believers, when challenged about Jewish missions, behave like Jonah when he was called to Nineveh.

Recently in our Jews for Jesus Council Meeting a number of our leaders were recounting how God called them into service in Jews for Jesus. One of the constant themes was a genuine and almost visceral initial reluctance to serve. It is good to have people who genuinely count the cost, so we need to be aware that the best potential staff are not going to be the ones who are pounding down our doors.

Notice that Jesus doesn't invite our prayer for people to become saved. He doesn't ask us to beseech the Lord that people will have open hearts to receive the message of the gospel. These factors are assumed by our Lord as already being in place. The real need for which we are exhorted to pray is for more laborers to help in the harvesting. The response to the need Jesus

challenges the disciples to make is to pray. Prayer under girds the work of recruitment as much as any other aspect of spiritual service. This is not only true because God is pleased to hear and answer. It is true because prayer changes the heart and mind of the one praying. Concerted prayer will most importantly sensitize us as servants to this need. It will open our eyes to see individuals who might serve with us. It will sharpen our minds and hearts to be alert to the people and the opportunities God brings us so that we can raise up more laborers. God is already at work bringing people along to serve with us. Time and time again I have seen Him raise up people to fill a need and do so from a very unexpected source. Yet God delights to answer our prayers. He will put feet to those prayers and most often they will be our own feet.

**2. Because we aren't intentional enough in our efforts to recruit and develop potential and current staff members.**

We need to cultivate a vision and a burden for recruitment in ourselves and in the staff that serve with us. We need to develop this burden in our training for new missionaries

**Intentional and holistic.** Don't miss the fact that right after Jesus challenges the disciples to pray for laborers he sends them out to do

some harvesting themselves. I can't help but think that with the Lord's admonition ringing in their ears, the disciples were not only concerned with harvesting. When they went out they were looking for more laborers as well.

That must be the way we respond in our ministry. Harvesting and recruiting can never be an either/or proposition. We do the one while on the way to the other and vice versa. Our best evangelists will most likely be our best recruiters. That is the way it should be. But we tend to compartmentalize our ministries. Now we are doing evangelism; when we get a chance we'll do some recruiting.

Or now we are doing deputation; when we get a chance we'll do some recruiting. This is a prescription for continued failure. Jeanette Windle, who serves with Latin American Mission pointed out in a recent edition of EMQ that "a poll of missionary acquaintances shows that the majority of them first caught a vision of missions through visiting missionary speakers." (EMQ, Vol. 9, No.4, 10/03) We need to recognize for ourselves and train our missionary staff as well to see that recruitment feeds into all areas of our ministry.

**Intentional and inclusive.** In order to bridge the gap that currently exists in the way we conduct our ministry, we need to



reemphasize the importance of developing a broader sphere of potential recruiters through volunteers. Perhaps most of us prefer working with professionals because we can expect more. You have to work a bit more with volunteers. You have to be more patient and do more by way of explanation. Developing volunteers takes extra effort. But nobody is going to be good at recruiting missionaries until they are good at recruiting volunteers. And by investing yourself in the lives of your volunteers, you will produce not only good recruiters of others but the volunteers themselves might be your future missionaries.

**Intentional and insistent.** When you minister to people you should always want to bring them along to the next level of involvement. In your ministry to believers you should encourage them to take the necessary steps to fulfill their spiritual potential, which for some is missionary service. It is always appropriate to ask a believer to pray about whether God would have them serve as a missionary. This is especially true in the case of Jewish believers, where the need to reach their own people is so great and the number of Jewish believers is so small. Susan Perlman told me that as a new believer she attended the ABMJ bible studies in New York for six months without anyone inquiring as to whether she might

consider missionary service down the road. She honestly didn't think she was missionary material and she wouldn't have pursued it if she wasn't nudged to another level of involvement.

**Intentional and personal.** Invite recruitable contacts into your life. Invite them to join you in ministry tasks and bring them into your personal life as well. As in the Biblical example where Jesus invited disciples to the place he was staying, invite potential staff into your home. Make them to be a part of your day-to-day life. Bring them to church meetings. Have them follow you and observe you doing your own ministry. During your time together you may discuss the things of the Lord. In so doing you can be building into your contact the awareness that ministry is not a job but a lifestyle. You are also building a mentor relationship that is necessary for the process of recruitment.

The need for a close relationship with the potential recruit is described well by Fuller Theological Seminary professor, Eddie Elliston, "The disciple's goals, calling and giftedness, ability or capacity for the task at hand, commitment, level of motivation and character are only a sampling of the issues requiring discernment. To know or discern any one of these issues requires a personal relationship..."

**3. Because our structures are not sufficiently flexible to allow for and take advantage of changing cultural attitudes and perceptions.**

I am not a big believer in all the marketing hype surrounding post-modern categorizing of gen-x, gen-y and millennial subgroups. I think it has been over done and over hyped. But I don't reject the notion altogether that there are some generational differences we would do well to pay attention to. If you haven't done much thinking along these lines I encourage you to visit the website, "postmission.com." It has many helpful articles on the subject. Many observers of post-modernity insist that gen-exers find it difficult to fit into the organizational forms and structures that are the common fare in missions today. They hold suspicion towards hierarchies and shun the kind of organization loyalty most mission CEO's value highly. Instead gen-xers value independence, individuality and interactivity. Technology has afforded them a culture that expects customization and so this generation wants to chart their own unique path. They aren't interested in fitting into the structures we devise for them. At the same time this group values relationship over program so inviting people into a structure that allows for a greater degree of interaction with peers, even if it is programmatic, does make it



more attractive.

No mission program today is more effective in recruiting young people than the somewhat laid back, group oriented approach of the YWAM DTS. We would do well to look for ways to model that kind of short-term approach for greater effectiveness in Jewish missions. Many are too impatient to invest enough time and energy in short term missions, but it is worthwhile for developing people into longer-term staff, kind of like going on dates before getting married. Here is one gen-xer's critique of mission structures today: "Today's world is a temporary place. There is hardly a job that comes with long-term security these days, but mission agencies still talk in terms of long-term and short-term, with short-term as somehow lesser. There is a view that says those interested in mission today are not as committed as previous generations because they will not offer their lives in long-term service. I believe this to be incorrect and see many who are committed to living out one day at a time for God, reflecting the temporariness of life and it's situations. This could actually be seen as a healthier, more honest commitment."

All of this may be true, but it may not be true for long. Research on the generation dubbed the millenials shows a very different mind-set according to the research of

academics Strauss and Howe in their book "Millenials Rising." This group which is set to come of age as recruitable staff from approximately 2007 onward, contrast sharply in their attitudes with those of Gen-xers. While rules, boundaries and organizational structures may be anathema to Gen-xers, Millenials are said to want explicit, clearly defined guidelines as well as strong mentoring relationships. They will likely be more willing to follow the ideas of those in leadership and will welcome established and well-grounded agencies. If this research is to be believed, shifts in recruitment strategy will be somewhat like the weather in San Francisco. If you don't like it, just wait long enough and it will change.

The point here is that change is one of the constants. We should look to develop sensitivity to those changes in our mission structures and short-term opportunities. We want to maintain our principles and the values that make our organizations unique, while seeking to be as flexible and accommodating as we can be to the changing culture and climate of the generations we are seeking to recruit.

Last month the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California Los Angeles released a survey of 112,000 college students.

Among the findings in the study:

- 80% were interested in spirituality
- 79% say they believe in God
- 74% have discussions with friends about the meaning of life
- 69% pray
- 47% consider it important to seek out opportunities to help them grow spiritually
- 26% said they were born again Christians.

These results should be encouraging not only in terms of the fields being white unto harvest, but also in terms of the potential for recruitment.

#### **4. Because we haven't sufficiently set standards or given an accurate picture of the core responsibilities and competencies required.**

One of the problems we have in catering to an increasingly indulgent and self-absorbed world is the temptation to focus more on the value of service for the individual and what benefits we have to give. There may be a tendency to downplay the costs involved in a commitment to missionary service. We need to do a better job of giving full weight to both the price and the privilege of mission service.

As Ajith Fernando has written, we want missionaries for the right reasons. "In inviting people to join you in your task, use biblical means, not promises of



excitement and fun. Come and see the world, meet wonderful people and all of that. To produce missionaries who know how to suffer, use biblical truth that can sustain them when the going gets tough." The challenge of obedience is a motivation as is the truth of the gospel message itself. You are much better off getting a fewer number of the right people than getting a larger number for the wrong reasons. Identifying potential recruits is initially a process of disqualifying people. We have set certain standards for our staff with regard to character, background and education. The first step in identifying recruitable contacts is to identify those who meet or potentially meet those standards and excluding those who do not. As you track with people it is crucial to keep the process open until they disqualify themselves.

**Christian Testimony:** It may seem unnecessary to state, but the individual must have received Jesus as their Lord and Savior and have evidenced a changed life. Three outward signs of this are:

1. They have confessed Christ openly (i.e., parents, friends, on the job)
2. They have been baptized.
3. They are regular and active in a local evangelical fellowship.

It should be noted that with new believers these

standards need to be upheld and encouraged but might be potential. Don't exclude a new believer unless they evidence an unwillingness to move ahead in these areas.

**Jewish Testimony:** This obviously does not apply to all organizations, but for Jews for Jesus, our missionaries must be Jews or married to Jews. With the enormous increase in intermarriage over the last couple of decades, we have had to become more specific in answering the question, who is a Jew, with respect to those who may serve on our staff. *A Jewish believer is one who has at least one parent who is fully Jewish (i.e. both grandparents on one side).* Anything less than this could only be considered as an exception.

**Other Factors:** A person who has been divorced since being saved would be considered for a full-time missionary position only if he or she has a commitment to remain single. Someone with serious health problems would not be considered for a full time missionary position. Is the person in debt? Financial considerations in taking on people with large families. A person who has served in another Jewish mission and doesn't come with a recommendation from that mission. Then there are age factors to consider. Are they newly married? Is their spouse fully supportive of all

that is involved in the missionary lifestyle? What about tardiness? Tentativeness? People who are difficult to lead? Someone who is unemployed or failing in his or her current career. All of these latter questions need to be dealt with on an individual basis and should be done so carefully.

A sign of a good leader is someone who is easily led. A good salesman responds well to being sold. Do the people you're trying to recruit receive your ministry? Do they recognize and utilize the benefit you are extending? Do they have a good breadth of interests? In school, did they belong to clubs, were they part of a team or were they loners? Have they shown the capacity for long-term commitment? How steady is their job history?

I have developed a lesson for our staff based on the word apostle and used it as an acrostic to highlight some of the qualifications we should alert potential staff to. I am referring here to apostle with a small "a". The "A" in apostle stands for availability. Apostles are ready to go whenever and wherever they are sent. The "P" in apostle stands for proclamation. Paul identifies himself in Romans 1:1 as called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God. People join missions for different reasons but hopefully all are willing to put themselves on the line to make Messiah known. The



"O" in apostle stands for ordination, to which I believe Paul refers when he says, set apart. There are many different views among us as to what ordination may mean, but philosophically we are talking about those who sense a special calling from God to set themselves apart for missionary service. The "S" in apostle stands for skill sets. Part of what enables us to recognize an apostle as such is the combination of natural and God-given gifts, abilities and skills that person will need to serve. Not every apostle is equally gifted. Some are strong in one area and weak in others. When God sets a person apart for service, he furnishes that person with the ability to carry out that ministry, and those gifts, those skills, those abilities become evident in due season. The "T" in apostle stands for testing. We ought to expect testing, not as a means to trip us up, but rather in order to prove and approve apostleship. Allow God to prove and test, develop and demonstrate his calling in your life on a daily basis. We also need to be testers of apostleship in those with whom we serve. The "E" in apostle stands for empowerment. The ministry of the apostle is empowered by the Holy Spirit, and the fruit of that ministry is seen in the empowerment of others in ministry. There is and must be an anointing, an empowerment from on high for the gifts of ministry for the work of the gospel.

A mistake that leaders often make is being too wary or cautious. Never allow yourself to think that a person is "too young in the Lord" to succeed in a given short-term endeavor. "Initial ministry assignment should follow close on the heels of conversion. Faithful obedience in small things contributes both to spiritual and ministry formation", writes Elliston. Don't be afraid to be aggressive in recruiting people, especially if these are individuals in whom you are investing a good deal of yourself. "People may not recognize their own abilities until someone discovers them and gives them opportunities. People emerge in leadership when they know they are wanted", writes Yousef.

While we never want to convey a false impression, we do want people to understand the possibilities for growth and satisfaction in the work that they might enjoy. If you enjoy what you do, people will be drawn to that same work. If you convey an attitude that majors on the difficulties and minors on the blessings, don't expect to be a successful recruiter. At the same time we need to pay attention to the cost of service, not just paint a rosy picture. You can model not only your satisfactions in the work, but how God has grown you and enabled you to meet the challenges Jewish ministry undoubtedly produces.

##### **5. Because internecine squabbles and unhealthy competition between various agencies leads to disillusionment and disaffection from those who might otherwise seek to serve.**

Moishe Rosen often told the leaders in Jews for Jesus, "if you find a better opportunity to serve the Lord than what you have here in Jews for Jesus you should take it." He was never really all that concerned to hear about staff members who were approached by other missions for employment. In fact, on any number of occasions he helped negotiate outplacement for staff members who felt it was time for them to move on. At the same time we have to recognize the natural tendency to be very guarded and territorial when it comes to our personnel. We are tempted to jealousy and unhealthy competition. I say unhealthy because we can't avoid competition. Some of that is healthy. It becomes unhealthy when we feel the need to belittle one another or seek to undermine another group's reputation in the process of our own recruitment efforts.

Maybe this kind of thing never happens with other ministries, but I see it quite a bit myself. For the last 20 years, our recruitment directors have had to ask a potential recruit, "what is the worse thing you have heard about Jews for Jesus?" After some initial reticence, they usually come out with some



kind of criticism, all of which we have heard before. Inevitably someone from another Jewish ministry has lodged the criticism. It may be that this is a common occurrence in missions generally, but somehow I doubt it. What is sad is that this problem has prevented more than a few potential recruits from entering any Jewish mission work. There is an old Yiddish saying, "when the bride can't dance she says the band can't play." The point being that criticism of another ministry is a transparent attempt to make your own organization look better and it rarely helps your cause. I have seen more than a handful of people seeking opportunities in ministry become

disillusioned by the backbiting and choose to look elsewhere.

Maybe we will talk about this this week. It seems to me that an LCJE CEO's meeting is a good place to openly discuss these issues. I have searched my heart and I believe I can genuinely say that I wish all biblically sound Jewish ministries well. I would want to see each of us have good, dedicated, well-trained staff in all of the areas we are working. While the laborers are few, there are certainly enough Jews to go around and probably enough financial resources as well. I recognize the natural tendency to competition and when it comes to quality personnel, there is no doubt

that we will want them for our mission. But I also think we need to recognize that each ministry has a different approach and corporate culture and that some people will fit better into one mission than another. If we genuinely believe that, then maybe we can commit ourselves to praying for laborers, not only for ourselves but for one another and helping each other out whenever possible. LCJE exists to foster networking and inter-agency relationship building and cooperation. Maybe that can happen in the area of recruitment as well.

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## Case Study: Utilizing the Local Church for Jewish Evangelism

By Murray Tilles, Light of Messiah Ministries

**LCJE CEO Conference  
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May 2005**

Jewish evangelism. All of us are involved in reaching Jewish people with the message of Jesus. We all have a burden. We all want to do a better, more effective job. However, in my 21 years of ministry to the Jewish community I have not heard a lot of new ideas, new methods, or new approaches. Mostly what I have heard, seen,

experienced, and done myself is a "variation on a theme". We hear about the new and different broadsides, new and more exciting media productions, new media or advertising campaigns, new messianic congregations. The discussions go on ad nauseam. How Jewish do we need to be? Is the messianic congregation or the Jewish mission the best model? Are we being overt enough? Are we being too aggressive? Is it ok to eat ham and call Him Christ? Are tracts the way to go?

The questions can go on and on.

But are we looking in the right direction? Are we seeing where God is really moving? Do we need to look in different places, think out of our boxes, and even change our paradigms? Are Jewish ministries being as effective as we can be? Can we do a better job and how? These are the questions I believe we need to be asking today.

It is my contention that Jewish ministries today are missing the most important and effective vehicle to



reach our people with the Gospel, the local church. We have a vast resource in the local church that we have never tapped into effectively. We have marketed our ministries, consciously or subconsciously, as "we are the experts". We do the work best. We are the marines. We go in first. We know our people. We are on the frontlines. We are on the cutting edge. Yet, it is not us, but the Gentiles who are reaching our people.

I have often heard it said, "The church isn't doing its job." "If the church was doing its job, then our ministries would not be necessary." "Jewish people don't feel comfortable in the church." And yet, if the statistics are correct, they are doing a better job than we are. And, most Jewish people go to church after they come to the Lord, not messianic congregations. Gentiles do not need Jewish Evangelism Seminars; they are doing a very good job of reaching the Jewish people without us. More Jewish people are coming to the Lord at Willow Creek Church in Chicago and other progressive Bible churches around the country than through all of our ministries. The church isn't doing as bad a job as many people state.

### **So, What Do We Need To Do**

*I believe we need to recognize that the world around us is changing and*

that we may need to change our models of ministry to tap into the way God is moving among our people.

*I believe we need to be intentional.* We may need to change our model of ministry thinking. If Jewish ministries have not been as successful as the local "Gentile" church in reaching Jewish people, then we need to help them do their job. We need to be more intentional in looking for Gentile believers who have Jewish friends. We need to be intentional about seeking out Gentile believers to help them do their job in the most effective way.

In order to accomplish this we must: Build Trust with the local church and Gentile believers.

What should our role be in the process?

1. Encouragers: We need to nudge, push, prod, provoke, and gently encourage our Christian contacts to share their faith...

2. Trainers: They will need help, they will be scared, they will not know it is ok to ask their Jewish friend, "May I pray for you?" or that it really is ok to use the name Jesus.

3. Testimony givers: Many Jewish people just need to hear that it is ok to accept Jesus from another Jewish person who has done it.

Because we, in Light of Messiah Ministries, are changing our ministry model to reach out to the Jewish community through their Gentile friends, we are

visiting with more Jewish people on a regular basis, having more fruitful and effective conversations, less of our time is spent with uninterested Jewish people, less time is spent building a caseload of contacts because our contacts are brought to us, and we are seeing more Jewish people come to the Lord through our efforts. In the past two years we have had 38 Jewish people accept the Lord. Five of those decisions happened through our nursing home ministry, three Jewish people accepted the Lord by calling us on the phone, and 30 decisions came to us through their Gentile friends. God is moving.

### **How Light of Messiah Ministries is doing it... Shalom Baskets**

Our shalom Basket Outreach accomplishes several things

1. Involves the local church and Christians: Christians get excited about building gift baskets for Jewish people for the Jewish New Year.

2. Encourages a Christian to do something proactive for their Jewish friend in a culturally relevant and non-confrontational way: Most Christians are afraid to extend a gesture of friendship to a Jewish person in a culturally relevant way. They do not know what to do or how to do it. Shalom Baskets give them the opportunity to step out in faith. This is the first



step to help them become a more effective witness.

3. Gets us on the doorstep of Jewish people's homes: Though we may not talk to the Jewish person about the Lord and may never meet the Jewish person we are delivering the basket to, we still have the opportunity to pray for them when we go to their home or place of business. This gives us personal contact with Jewish people who have Christian friends who care about them.

4. Builds the relationship between the Gentile and the Jewish person: The Jewish person always calls their Jewish friend to thank them for their kind gift and gesture of friendship. The believer may just say "thank you" or they may use the conversation as an opportunity to talk about deeper spiritual issues. The call may be used to wish the Jewish person a personal holiday wish. Never the less, Shalom Baskets build the relationship between the Christian and their Jewish friend.

5. Gives our ministry the opportunity to build a trusting relationship with Christians who have Jewish friends: In order for our ministry vision to grow, Christians have to trust us to protect their relationship with their Jewish friend and not violate their trust. The more they know they can trust us, the more personal they will become and the more entrance they will give us into their live and the lives of

their Jewish friends.

#### *Building Bridges Seminars*

Building Bridges Seminars are a modification of the traditional Jewish Evangelism Seminar that many ministries have. One of the problems we encountered with Jewish Evangelism Seminars was that the name itself turned people away. Even in the largest churches we had a very minimal turnout. People were afraid and even misunderstood the intent of the seminar. By changing the name to "Building Bridges: Understanding Jewish People" we made the name of the seminar more palatable and have seen an increase in attendance.

In addition to changing the name of the seminar we have made it our intent to not only teach on the Jewish roots of our faith, but to also meet Gentiles who have Jewish friend in order for us to follow up with them. Attendance at our Building Bridges Seminar means an invitation to start or join a Jewish Ministry Team at the church, get involved in prayer walking with our ministry, and getting involved in helping with our Shalom Basket outreach. So in addition to building bridges between the Gentile and their Jewish friend we are building bridges between the Gentile and our ministry.

#### *Jewish Ministry Teams*

We are developing the

concept of the Jewish Ministry Team in local churches to give us entrance into local churches on a more regular basis. A Jewish Ministry Team serves two main purposes:

1. Pray for our ministry and for the Jewish community. Have prayer in the church for Jewish people and Jewish friends of congregants.

2. Seek out people in the church with Jewish friends, give them encouragement, appropriate literature, and point them to our ministry for assistance.

#### *Outline for Jewish Ministry Team Meeting*

Place an announcement in bulletin and from the pulpit that there is a Jewish ministry team forming. "We will be praying for our Jewish friends and for the Jewish community. If you have a Jewish friend and need encouragement, literature to help you understand them, or just want to pray, please join us. You do not have to come to our ministry team meeting to let us know you have a Jewish friend so we can help you. You may contact.....at....."

Announce all meetings and make sure the JMT is known in the church.

Have special times of prayer and even special events for the Jewish holidays... apples and honey in the foyer for Rosh Hashanah? A Passover table set up in the foyer for Passover and the Feast of



### Unleavened Bread?

Jewish Ministry Teams in local churches give our ministry a presence in the church on a regular basis. It lets people in the church know that we are here to help them if they have a Jewish friend or family member. Jewish Ministry teams serve as our liason into the local church. I am hopeful that as our teams expand in Atlanta that we will be able to bring this idea to other churches that we partner with in the southeast.

We are now working with five of the larger churches in Atlanta to begin Jewish Ministry Teams.

### *Prayer Walks*

This month we began quarterly prayer walks in the Jewish areas around Atlanta. Prayer walking the Jewish neighborhoods of Atlanta is getting more Gentile believers involved with our ministry in a very non-threatening way.

Using the North American Mission Board literature as a model we have begun

### *College Campus Ministries*

We are in the process of redefining how we do ministry on local college campuses. Rather than beginning our ministry by distributing literature and meeting people on the street

we are intentionally embracing the Christian students on campus in order to reach their Jewish friends. Once the relationship has been established we have been able to meet with more Jewish students alongside of their friends.

Emory University - Case Study:

Reach Gentile Christians to meet their Jewish friends. Build trust. Have office hours on campus. No literature distribution. Relationship building.

The end result: Decisions and Discipleship

Because we are working in and through the local church, discipleship of new Jewish believers becomes an easier process. The majority of Jewish people we pray with to accept the Lord have their Gentile friend with them during the seeking and decision making stage of their journey. Their Gentile believing friend is actively involved in and interested in the growth of their Jewish friend's spiritual life. Usually the Jewish person begins to attend church with their Gentile friend and gets grounded in a local church in that way. We only need to do minimal follow up, which we do. But the bulk of the responsibility for the discipleship of the new Jewish believer is left in the hands of their Gentile friend

and the local church. We help by making ourselves available to do the baptism, and answer questions regarding growth and discipleship from a Jewish perspective. We also help the Jewish person speak to their Jewish family members and process the uniquely Jewish problems associated with accepting Jesus and being raised in a Jewish home.

Because of the change in the focus of our efforts we are experiencing less opposition...we are flying under the Jewish community's radar...and more fruit for the Kingdom.

What I have shared with you today is not just a change in what we are doing, but a change in the way that we are thinking. It is not just a change in methodology, but a change in the philosophy of how we approach Jewish evangelism. It is a change in how we are intentionally trying to reach our Jewish people. With God's help and with the help of our Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ we will see a greater expansion of the kingdom among the Jewish community in Atlanta and the southeast.

I hope that these ideas have been helpful and challenging to you all.

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