

# **“Pastoral Training as a Missions Mandate: Part I”**

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Report prepared by Tyler M. Nelson,  
Matthew Dereck, and Jonathan J. Armstrong,  
with the assistance of Jack DePuy

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## **SUMMARY:**

Ramesh Richard, the chair of this conference, opened the discussion with a reminder that there are 2.2 million pastor-leaders across the globe. Of this group, only 5% are formally trained for pastoral ministry (32, 80). He then proposed the question (33): “Why do we consider pastoral training to be a missions mandate?”

Any effective change in the church will be facilitated by the pastoral leaders (33). Pastoral leaders are already present around the world and involved within their local contexts. However, they face many challenges, are undertrained, and might be isolated in their circumstances (32).

Pastoral training is the responsibility of the individual Christian, the church, and educational institutions (37-38, 42, 46, 80). The individual pastor ought to focus on making disciples and teaching the importance of discipleship (37). This not only means emphasizing discipleship in the context of the local church, but also cross-culturally (42). However, many pastors do not teach discipleship because they themselves have not been disciplined. Such a scenario can lead to spiritual stagnation of the individual and of the local church (61). Thus, an effective pastoral training model would include the discipling of the pastors who are to be trained (62).

A central point of discussion in the conference was the nature of the specific role of the pastor. It was agreed that, in general, the pastor is often expected to fulfill roles that would be better fulfilled by members of the congregation (48-49, 51, 55). Thus, pastors ought to be trained to equip members of their congregations to complete tasks such as church-planting and cross-cultural missions (51, 59-60, 69). It was noted that this is the foundation of a healthy church (60). Some participants believe that the narrow focus on pastoral training has led church leaders away from seeking a more holistic incorporation of apostles, prophets, and evangelists (55). It will be important to understand what role pastor-leaders will have among the other ministerial leadership roles listed in Ephesians 4.

In addition, the need for continuity in any given training model was addressed by the members of the conference. Specifically, it was noted that pastors often receive training in the form of workshops on specific topics (i.e., church planting, missions, evangelism; 73). As there is no standard for such workshops, this training is often unrecognized (74). This type of training is then ineffective because the larger framework interrelating these topics is never developed (76-77). Additionally, it was noted that pastoral training must not be limited to teaching specific ministry skills (63). Instead, it will necessarily include basic training in exegesis of Scripture (64). This, then, can act as the metanarrative by which the other elements of pastoral training are tied together (77).

Finally, the health of the local church as a community of believers was considered central to the importance of pastoral training. A well-trained pastor will be able to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (46, 60). Thus, the training of a pastor is not the end goal. Rather, the pastor is trained so he can lead a congregation to fulfill the tasks of the Great Commission (68).

To conclude the dialogue (80), Ramesh provided the following points as a summary of the conference: (I) The goal of missions is cultivating the local church and the task of the local church is furthering missions; (II) Pastoral training needs to be emphasized as a missions mandate within personal, church, and institutional initiatives; (III) The training of pastor-leaders allows for the preserving of the fruits of evangelism, discipleship, and church planting initiatives; (IV) Participants are encouraged to continue engaging in the ongoing discussions about the training of pastor-leaders; (V) Pastoral health effects church health, and church health effects societal health.

## TRANSCRIPT:

[1] **Ramesh Richard:** Perhaps we can just go around a bit introducing ourselves, then we'll have a word of prayer. We'll set the table afterwards. Let me start with Raymond. Let's take a minute each and introduce ourselves.

[2] **Raymond Lombard:** I'm from Cape Town, South Africa, and I am the chairman of the Firewall on the continent of Africa, working in 42 nations, as well as the Global Fire Advance in Tennessee with Ron Hepperly, my American friend. I'm also on the Africa Executive Council of the Church of God. We're honored to be with you today. Thank you so much.

[3] **Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, my brother Raymond. Dr. Henry Tan?

[4] **Henry Tan:** I'm Henry, originally from Malaysia. I live in San Diego. I serve as the President of the International Leadership Consortium of Schools that Campus Crusade has. I operate all this from San Diego.

[5] **Ramesh Richard:** Great. Dr. Ron Anderson?

[6] **Ron Anderson:** I don't know about the *doctor* part, but at least the *Ron Anderson* is correct. I was born and raised in Guatemala. My parents were missionaries with the K'iche' Indians for 40 years. At the age of 23 I came to Spain and have been involved in church planting. I was the European Director for the European Christian Mission for a period of time. Now I'm a part of the Lausanne Movement. I'm the catalyst for church planting for the Lausanne Movement, and still based in Madrid.

[7] **Ramesh Richard:** Fantastic. Thank you, Ron. Dr. Jim Wilson?

[8] **Jim Wilson:** I live in San Jose, Costa Rica. We've been here six-and-a-half years. Part of that I pastored in the States. I've been leading a ministry called EBOC for about 20 years, which is a ministry focused on training and equipping pastors and church leaders throughout Central America. That's where our footprint is now: in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. We do that in conjunction with—in strategic partnerships with—U.S. churches, part of Reach Global, which is the international arm of the Evangelical Free Church of America.

[9] **Ramesh Richard:** David Hansen. David, brother?

[10] **David Hansen:** Yep, I spent eleven years in Italy building Evangelical radio stations; 23 years with Back to the Bible, as the Vice President of the International Division; the last ten years with Avant Ministries; a ministry known as Gospel Ministry Union; and retired thirty days ago, so now I'm a full-time grandpa.

[11] **Ramesh Richard:** I heard a great line. It said, "The reason there is a huge dynamic between grandparents and grandchildren is because they have a common enemy." David Deuel. David?

**[12] David Deuel:** Yes. My name is Dave Deuel. I live, presently, in Upstate New York, not near the city, but up in the country. I started out teaching in a university setting, was moving into a regular instructor track and an assistant deanship, and the Lord led me away from that to become a part of a church—well, actually a school plant in Southern California. I went so that I could learn how to start a school—more of a formal structure—and then, after ten years, left and went to Florida, part of another school plant and a church plant. Then I was tasked with an organization called the Master’s Academy International, which is a consortium of theological training schools where there’s no ministry training available. I resigned from that position a year ago. Now I work for the Christian Institute on Disability. It’s a part of Joni and Friends—you might recognize Joni Eareckson Tada’s name. I was running part of the Lausanne Catalyst Group in the Catalyst for Disabilities Concerns, but my role with the Christian Institute on Disability is a Senior Research Fellow of Special Projects.

**[13] Ramesh Richard:** Thanks. Daryl?

**[14] Daryl Kroeker:** Good morning. I’m Daryl Kroeker. I live in the Vancouver, Canada, and have spent 40 years pastoring in Canada, but currently serve as the international director for WorldServe Ministries and the director of WorldServe Bible College. Particularly, our largest teaching program right now is in mainland China where I spend probably about three or four months a year. So, that’s a little bit of who I am.

**[15] Ramesh Richard:** Good to have you here, Ron. Brother, Dr. Brian. Brian, would you please introduce yourself?

**[16] Brian Duggan:** Yes, I’m Brian Duggan with ReachGlobal. I joined ReachGlobal about ten years ago and, as the leader for the international work in Latin America and the Caribbean, I am based in Costa Rica. Earlier this year I took the role of leading the international side of ReachGlobal which is the mission arm of the Evangelical Free Church of America. We have recently moved to the States for our youngest’s last year of school, to get her launched, and then we’re seeking where God would have us be based next. And, we’re considering Spain.

**[17] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, my brother Brian. Dr. Percy Deng?

**[18] Percy Deng:** Hello everyone. I apologize for joining a few minutes late. I guess everyone is kind of introduced. Well, I was born in Taipei, Taiwan. I came to the States. I lived in the States for over thirty years. I went back to my hometown in Taipei, Taiwan, about ten years ago. When I went back I joined one of the largest Mandarin-speaking seminaries in Southeast Asia, China Evangelical Seminary, which was founded 40-some years ago by the great grandson of the great Hudson Taylor. So, that seminary gave me the entry way into a formal theological education. Before that, I was kind of a layperson, kind of a key—I don’t want to say key— no, one of the core workers in a reasonable-sized Chinese church in the North suburb of Chicago. I heard you are going home. I was a non-formal person. I was not a formal person. I had received several kinds of training and was doing that. I was enjoying my life.

**[19]** But, ten years ago I went home. I served three years as a leader of administration for China Evangelical Seminary. Then, a situation happened. God opened the door for me to go into ministry, working with the foremost and not-forgoing in China. That's what I've been working on the last seven years. Practically, I'm going to China every month. So, I'm making a trip to China almost every month. The situation in China is kind of unique. A lot of the formal trainings are not being recognized by the formal work outside of China. So, one of my burdens is how we can organize the formal or non-formal trainings—which, by the way, are very effective in China—but are not being recognized by the outside world. That's been one of my burdens. I'm looking forward to learning from everyone.

**[20] Ramesh Richard:** Amazing cohort. Dr. Kamesh Sankaran. Kamesh, brother?

**[21] Kamesh Sankaran:** Thank you. Kamesh Sankaran. I'm in Spokane, Washington state. I serve as the chair of the board of Partners International. Formerly, I was with CNEC. It's a seventy-five-year-old organization. We equip and connect indigenous ministries and ministry leaders in some of the least-reached nations in West Africa, North Africa, Middle East, Asia, and Southeast Asia. We serve in about 40 nations in these regions. We work with about sixty or seventy indigenous ministries and ministry leaders, coming alongside them and seeing what it is that God has given them a vision for, and what it is that we can come alongside them and empower them to fulfill their God-given vision. So, that's what we do.

**[22] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, my brother Kamesh. Dr. Bob Logan?

**[23] Robert Logan:** Hi. Church planter. Part of the mission organization with CRM for a season. Helped to develop ways of multiplying coaches. Now currently focused, for the last number of years, on making disciples, raising leaders, cultivating missional-type movements that start groups in churches. And I support myself through my coaching and consulting work.

**[24] Ramesh Richard:** Great. Sam Metcalf?

**[25] Sam Metcalf:** Hi, I'm Sam Metcalf. I'm the president of CRM (Church Resource Ministries). I'm in Southern California. I wish I had the nice black backdrop with all the books that Daryl's got there. That's my washing machine, so I'm relegated to the garage this morning. I'm with CRM. I think, maybe, for this conversation it's also probably useful to mention Missional Practice at the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller. But, mostly, my role is overseeing missionaries, as a missions sending agency, all over the world.

**[26] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, my brother, Sam. I think there's one other we need to mention before we go to our host. Dr. Augustine Dorbov. I know your face is not on it, but I don't know if you're on.

**[27] Augustine Dorbov:** I'm Augustine Dorbov from Nigeria. I work for the Christian Missionary Foundation. I served the past twelve years as a writer, but I've been involved in mobilizing, recruiting, training and sending cross-cultural missionaries to different places in Liberia, who

will also be involved in helping to support, train, and empower the church to do plenty of missions in our context.

**[28] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, brother. Then to our host, Matthew and Dr. Jonathan Armstrong. Jonathan is in transit. Matthew, thank you so much for administrating this entire conference call. Jonathan, would you introduce yourself and then lead us in prayer?

**[29] Jonathan Armstrong:** Thank you. My name is Jonathan Armstrong and my thanks are to Matthew Dereck for helping me get everybody together, and to you for coming. It's an honor to be gathering. This conversation will be transcribed and distributed to everybody, so there will be an exact transcript created from this conversation. The words at Bangkok last year, Dr. Ramesh Richard, had a line that said something like, "Some of you will lose your positions or transition to new positions based on what's happening here." And, that was at the Global Proclamation Congress in Bangkok last June in 2016. Those words are still ringing in my ears. That's my story. I'm with Moody Bible Institute, but I'm moving from Spokane, where I was a teacher, to Chicago, where they will create a new Center for Global Theological Education that I will direct. I'm very eager to learn from you as this will be one of many initiatives that's trying to give feet to our work.

**[30] Ramesh Richard:** I wanted to spend fifteen minutes on introductions. I'm glad we didn't have a larger group. Of all the issues this monthly conference call has addressed, this is probably the easiest. We've done things like accreditation issues, and I think each one of you received a transcript from the last conference call. You were probably there on a call when we talked about denominations. Usually it's informal and non-formal and formal. But this is the easiest of all and, if I have time at the end I will introduce myself, but, for the moment, Ramesh.

**[31]** Even these last three weeks, I've been deeply engaged with Matthew 28. In 29 or 30 countries, leaders—pastor-leaders—worked through the text in order to get them to preach in 34 places in 30 countries. Dr. Henry Tan was there as well. And I still am learning to discover new things about Matthew 28, and the two particples which follow "making disciples." It says "baptizing," which assumes evangelism, and "teaching," which tells you there's education. And, we are broadly in the education sector. Many of us are in higher education, and some of us are in Christian higher education. Yesterday I was with Loren Cunningham—some of you know him as the leader of Youth With A Mission. He had a study done of 72 schools in 42 countries which all started with 100% commitment to missions and, at graduation, the worst situation was only 4% of the graduates were committed to missions, and the highest was 25%. So, when we talk about this issue of pastor-training as a missions mandate, we are addressing the vast spectrum of pastor training, theological education, higher education, all as a subset of making disciples.

**[32]** But our focus as a group is, specifically, training, not in a pastoral way, but a training of pastors. We are not talking about general ministry training. We're talking about specific training for pastor-leaders who are under-trained. Cross-culturally, there's 2.2 million, which is five times the number of pastor-leaders currently serving. As you know, in the development of ministry, theologians have had priority all the way from 325 AD. Missiologists and missionaries

from 1910 to 2010, when Cape Town finished up in Edinburgh. Then there's the evangelists who met in, I believe, 1983 and 1987 and so on, in Amsterdam. This is a time when pastor-leaders are already present, they're on site, they're far more relevant—just challenged, undertrained, and in isolated situations.

**[33]** Last month, along with David Deuel, I was at the Lausanne World Charities Movement pursuing breakthrough ideas. I realized that almost any idea which had substance and wings all had to go through pastor-leaders who were already present. Any idea. And so, we are in an important moment, seasonally, I believe, in history with the waves of polycentric missions. These pastor-leaders are already present. So, I would like to open up the question of why we consider pastoral training as a missions mandate. By the word mandate, we are saying every new idea is not an opportunity, and every opportunity is not a mandate. So, we are talking about issues of urgency, compulsion, and propulsion towards pastoral training as a high priority ministry strategy.

**[34]** So, I know that most of you are new to the computers. When you speak, would you clearly un-mute and identify yourself. Then feel free to use the chat feature privately as well—publicly if you need to. So, why do you believe that pastoral training is of high priority in the whole world of obedience to the final commission of our Lord Jesus? The mics are open, and all of this will be transcribed and sent to us as well.

**[35] Raymond Lombard:** Dr. Ramesh, can you hear me?

**[36] Ramesh Richard:** Yes, sir. Brother Raymond, go ahead.

**[37] Raymond Lombard:** Yes, there's two things that came to mind. When we do our training—and, I mean, we've been doing our job for 21 years—the question that I always challenge the pastors with is, according to Matthew 28:19, Jesus says “go and make disciples.” My question to them is, “Where are your 12 disciples or 10 disciples?” I'm not talking about church members. I'm not talking about my local church. So, my challenge to them always is in the model of Jesus, and what Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:2, that what you've learned from me. So, my challenge to them always is, “How many disciples do you have that are doing what you are doing, that you have trained and invested yourself in?” It is shocking, sometimes, to discover not one, or one, or two, or three. And then, so I would challenge them, “According to that verse that really touched your heart, that you were speaking about just now, show me your disciples.” So, my question, always, to them is, “Jesus did not say ‘go make converts.’ He said to ‘go and make disciples,’ so where are your disciples? Tell me their names, where they live, and how far are you in your training program with them.”

**[38]** So, from that perspective, I can really find that we can really touch the hearts of pastors, especially in the African context in that continent because that challenges them. They will jump up and say, well they know some men. Now they know how to target. So, from our training perspective, in our non-formal training program that we have, we will first do the question, “Where are your disciples? Show us your disciples.” That has triggered them into a whole new

mode. I said to them, “When I come back in six months, I want to know that you found new disciples, who they are, that you will mentor them, and you will bring them in the three-year training program.”

**[39] Ramesh Richard:** I’m hearing, our brother Raymond, that pastor training as a missions mandate is even a personal strategy, not just organizational, not just institutional. It was even personal.

**[40] Raymond Lombard:** This is how we handle it in Africa.

**[41] Ramesh Richard:** That’s great. Thank you. Who would like to add next?

**[42] David Hansen:** I’ll jump in. This is Dave Hansen. When we had Avant we, wrote down the 13 irrefusables for “What is a church?” or “What must exist in order for a mature church?” We listed the 13th as ‘cross-cultural outreach occurring.’ So, in other words, we’re saying if our missionaries are planting a church and they’re trying to mature the church, it must have cross-culture outreach occurring in order to say that it is a mature church. It is always interesting that when these were written—I was on the board—and missionaries actually pushed back on saying that that was a requirement. But the board and the administration said yes, it was a requirement. If the church is to be a mature church, it must have cross-cultural outreach occurring. Because that is part of a mature church. That means that the leadership of the church must buy into or must believe in world missions and must teach world missions to their congregation, if I can use that term, to their believers at the same time that they're teaching them evangelism, discipleship, and so forth. That’s why I would say it’s absolutely necessary. If you want mature churches, they should be having cross-cultural outreach.

**[43] Ramesh Richard:** And in relationship to pastoral training? Training our pastors?

**[44] David Hansen:** Yes, absolutely, because the pastor is the key. I love George Murray’s statement. It’s basically, “The pastor either locks or unlocks world missions at the local church level.”

**[45] Ramesh Richard:** We’ve heard from brother Raymond that it’s an individual responsibility. I think we’re adding the church responsibility here. Henry Tan, go ahead.

**[46] Henry Tan:** I look at it in terms of, “What’s the perspective we take when we are involved in pastoral training? What does a pastor do?” If a student comes to be trained as a pastor, can we bring him in with a perspective that wherever they are being trained, they are actually missionaries for their particular local? As they are trying to reach out to their local, we equip them to be able to do the job because, as a pastor, they are supposed to be equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, which really involves the church as a training center to equip people so they can actually reach out. Depending on where you are, it’s always cross-cultural, whether you're in the same country or not. And so, I think that the perspective we have when we have people coming for training is very important, because, if people come in to be trained

and say, “Hey, just train me. I’m here for training,” it is a different sense of urgency concerning what this training is all about. If the training is really to be able to capture an area for Christ while they're doing so, we equip them. Then it gives a whole different dynamic to the training process itself. I say the mission mandate is integrally important to pastoral training altogether.

**[47] Ramesh Richard:** Great. I’m hearing for individual, I’m hearing for church, and I’m hearing institutional as well.

**[48] Ron Anderson:** Can I just carry on from what Henry was just saying about equipping the saints? I’d like to just go one step back. I realize that this is a conversation about pastoral training, but I feel it’s from a European standpoint, and from where we are in a post-Christian, postmodern place. Given your comments that you mentioned at the beginning, where Loren Cunningham is seeing how the training is going in producing people in other areas, I think we have overlooked one of the essential parts of Ephesians chapter 4. Why do we put so much emphasis on the pastor as being everything? Why don’t we use the things that God gave us when he gives us his ministries?

**[49]** And so, we look for other people, not just the pastoral heart, but we look for the evangelists, the prophetic person, we look for the one who is going to be sent. You see, I think, so often we’re putting weight on the pastor—he will never be a church planter, he will never be a missionary, and yet we are giving him a guilt trip time and time again. We’re trying to train him to do something that God didn’t ask him to do. We’re not allowing the people that God has equipped within the church. I’m just saying, the pastoral training there, if we’re just thinking generically, pastorally, as all five ministries, then I say, “That’s great.” So, I’m thinking that that needs to be wrestled with if we’re really going to go to the next level.

**[50] Ramesh Richard:** Yes, and that would be one of the areas and philosophies of ministry that pastors need to be trained to think in, in the way that you've just described, brother Ron. Otherwise, they’re just thinking by a single person, individually, inside, that is the one who has to do everything. You're right, pastors are not church planters. The other way as well, church planters want to keep on church planting more congregations—they don’t want to hang around and continue to nurture the fruit that has been planted.

**[51] Sam Metcalf:** Can I weigh in there? I think Ron hit on something very important. I’d probably challenge the basic assumption that was laid out at the beginning, that pastoral training should be a high priority in this particular arena. I think that’s gotten us way off track for years. I mean, if I took Ephesians 2:20 literally, it’s not the pastors. Pastors will teach them how to identify and cooperate with people that are apostolic, people that are evangelistically oriented, and people that are prophetic. Most pastors are intimidated by those folks. They have no clue how to even operate with them. There’s a wonderful new book on this. I don’t know if any of you have seen it—Alan Hirsch’s brand-new volume, *5Q*. It’s really excellent. It’s one of the best things out, I think, in the past several years. It really gets to the heart of this issue—the basic fallacy in the assumptions that everything rises and falls on pastors’ pastoral duty. So, I couldn’t agree with you more on that point, Ron.

**[52] Ramesh Richard:** Yes, and we've tried not to use the word pastors. We try to use the term pastor-leaders for that reason. It allows both specificity and also the scope of what both you men are saying. So, you will hardly hear me use the word pastor for that very reason and misconceptions. But pastor-leaders can facilitate the exact things that you are saying. They need to be trained to think and believe and live in the way that you just addressed. Pastor-leaders seem to have the scope with the training needs but also the philosophies of the ministry that you are mentioning. But if you talk just pastors—the word pastors itself comes with a huge package, depending on denomination and location—that might prevent what we want to do. These are shepherds with shepherding responsibilities, regardless of size, and yet their responsibility is serving as leaders in their congregations.

**[53] Robert Logan:** I think that the question that needs to be addressed, however, is: what is the relationship of what you call the pastor-leader to the Ephesians 4 set of gifts? I think that's a core question. I think that's a major assumption that needs to be dealt with to be able to make this conversation move forward well.

**[54] Ramesh Richard:** Would you rehearse that comment again, brother Bob?

**[55] Robert Logan:** You're focused largely on pastor-leaders, and I think that core question that is being raised by Ron and Sam—and I would concur—is: what is the relationship of what you call a pastor-leader to the leaders that are mentioned in Ephesians 4, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers? If the focus is on those who are in local congregations who primarily hold those pastor-teacher kind of roles, then are they the ones that are responsible to facilitate the mission that goes out or not? I think the issue of what the relationship is of pastor-leaders to the Ephesians 4 mix is an important question to address. And so, I would concur with the two previous brothers who had been sharing.

**[56] Ramesh Richard:** Also, its relationship to Ephesians 2:20.

**[57] Robert Logan:** Of course.

**[58] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, my brothers. Who is next? The training of pastors is a high priority in this.

**[59] David Hansen:** When I thought about this question that was sent out months ago, the realities are that we're talking about the sending of missionaries, which happens through the local church. So, when I think about the question of training pastors, I didn't think about training them to be missionaries as much as them having that heart. They need to demonstrate what the qualities are. They need to be able to help their people grow in what is needed to be a missionary, which is what we're talking about: sending people out of the Body to be missionaries. If that pastor doesn't have that at his heart, how is he going to help people within his body, who God might be calling and he is confirming, to go? When I think about the topic of training pastors from the missions standpoint, I'm thinking about not for them to go as much as for them to be able to help train people within their body to go.

**[60] Jim Wilson:** I agree with that. It seems to me that we've got, maybe, hermeneutical or theological and strategic questions to answer. On the hermeneutical side, it's: who is the audience of Matthew 28? Is that representative of the church, or is that individual, or is it both? And then the theological side: if it is God's purpose to use the church, local or universal, as the primary agency to advance the gospel. Strategically, it seems to me like, regardless of what we call the leaders who direct the local churches—pastors or pastor-leaders, and certainly in Latin America, there is an individual at the front of this church who is leading that church—an ill-equipped or under-equipped pastor is not going to produce a healthy church or a church that is aware of their global responsibilities. So, I think it's absolutely critical that pastors, strategically, are the ones that receive training so that the church can be healthy, so that the church can be in the world doing what Christ has mandated us to do. It seems to me that it's strategically an important component—not just important, but essential.

**[61] David Deuel:** Ramesh, it's Dave. This came up in our leadership development session in Wittenberg, what Jim was just referring to. A number of people there identified the problem. It sounds simple until you think about the implications of it. Many pastors were never disciplined so they don't teach discipling. They teach around it. They talk about spiritual growth through preaching and Sunday school classes. Purposeful discipleship was something they missed, whether they left the university and went to the seminary, or something of that nature. When you think about it enough, if that is a missing component in each pastor's toolbox, regardless of where in the world, they weren't disciplined so they don't necessarily see the value of discipling. The long-term effect on the church—and I think this was Jim's point—is that you have a church that isn't growing spiritually. It's preached to and probably taught, in some respects, but it doesn't have the strength of a church that emphasizes and benefits from discipleship.

**[62] Henry Tan:** I would agree with that. I think that every student that goes through a school or a training needs to be disciplined. I agree. Pastors don't talk about discipleship and don't do it, so the church members think, "You're just talking. Show us!" As we look at that, if a student who goes to seminary is being disciplined by the professors in the context of ministry, now we have something different because we're giving them an idea of what this is all about, in the context of ministry. Now that takes time and effort, and becomes a real challenge and tension for us as we begin to develop these guys. The question I have is: why don't we do it when we see that this is the real problem that most pastors have? How can we talk to them about teaching the church members to be missionaries when they have no ideas what missionaries are all about? All that's been there is talk about what it means to be a so-called pastor. How can we give them that which is necessary to fulfill the mandate what God has given us? If we don't put this all together, then I think they're missing quite a lot.

**[63] Daryl Kroeker:** Let me jump in here. My experience is quite different across North Africa among Arabic brothers who come to faith, and in China, where I spend a lot of time. The issue is not about discipleship; it's about the basic understanding of the Scriptures. One of the problems we find is that a lot of people come and go and do ministry skill discipleship training, but there are very few who sit down and actually walk through the text of Scripture so that those already in pastor-leadership, ministry leadership, church planting, and local church

workers, really understand the text of Scripture. To me, that is one of the biggest issues. I've worked with people who have taken all kinds of training seminars, especially in China, who have learned how to do things but could not tell you the complete stories of the Scriptures.

**[64]** So, I think that part of the issue is not just teaching them how to be a good leader, missionary developer, or discipler. The issue we're finding and are trying to address is basic biblical ignorance—knowing how to handle the Scripture text properly so that they can exegete the text in the context that God has given them in the ministry and carry the church in their context forward with a solid biblical foundation as opposed to our exported discipleship models. Those are some of the things I wrestle with.

**[65] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, Daryl. I think an entire curriculum is actually emerging—a basic curriculum is emerging in terms of non-formal delivery of pastoral training.

**[66] Kamesh Sankaran:** The central point in the mission's mandate is around the local church, both at home and on the field. The work of God in building his kingdom happens at the center of the local church. Therefore, I don't see how we could ever get past pastoral training if you're serious about missions. I want to build on that. It's both at home and on the field. A lot of the conversation has been around how pastoral training locally is essential for missions. That's true, but I also want us to look at how pastoral training on the field is also essential for us to actually be true to God's call on us. This is something that the apostle Paul talks about in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3—building things that will last until the day of testing. If we aren't building things that will last, we need to work on equipping pastor-leaders or else we're not going to build things that last, either at home or on the field.

**[67] Ramesh Richard:** So, the priority of the local church might be the centrality of the local church.

**[68] Ronald Anderson:** Can I add one thing about the centrality of the church? I think one of the things we're seeing in western Europe is the fact that the hierarchical form of the church took over the leadership of the church. I think another thing we in western society have put on a huge emphasis on is the individual training of people. We train one disciple here. We send them to workshops and we send them to seminaries. They're individually trained, and therefore, they are shining for Jesus individually. That's not really what the gospel is about, is it? It's about community. It's about learning to walk in unity and to unleash the laity. It's being able to understand how I fit with one another. Therefore, I think the church is absolutely essential to the whole thing. If we have all the different ministries represented around the table, we will have a mission vision. We will have a prophetic vision. We will have a pastoral vision. We will have a teaching vision. But, we have to center that teaching, and teach people how to view each other and the gifts that God has given, and train all of those aspects for mission.

**[69] Ramesh Richard:** I'm glad that you added those last two words. The community-congregational calling is just as important as the individual-apostolic calling.

**[70] Brian Duggan:** I tend to lean more towards the pragmatic. When I look at the Great Commission, especially “teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you,” from a pragmatic standpoint, that implies all the church, and all the gifting in the church from the Ephesians implications of the community. Equipping has to be part of that. Where there is not equipping, there is not unleashing. We can call it pastoral training, or leadership training. The fact is that God has gifted every Christ-follower to carry out mission. From a pragmatic standpoint, the more we can multiply people who are equipped to equip others, we are more able to fulfill the call of the Great Commission, which is to disciple all nations. It’s a huge task. Equipping individually can be part of it, particularly when it comes to discipleship.

**[71]** I think when Jesus said, “teaching them all to obey what I commanded you,” that’s more than just teaching what Jesus commanded, but living it, walking it, talking through the implications of it. All the parts of discipleship that contribute towards people obeying—not just knowing but obeying. When we look at the mandate, and we talk about equipping pastor-leaders, that is a key thing that we need to do. We also need to recognize that discipleship, as it’s been said on this call already, discipleship has to be done in tandem with it so it can be imitated and multiplied.

**[72] Ramesh Richard:** Good. Thank you, Brian. Percy, brother, I think you were next.

**[73] Percy Deng:** Yes, thank you, Ramesh. I think, for the pastor-leader training, no one is disagreeing that it is very important. But, what is the minimum requirement? I work in China. China is a big place. In the past, we do not get enough resources from outside people who come in. It’s always bits and pieces. People come in to train pastors how to do evangelism, how to do church planting, how to do this. Sometimes a pastor-leader may receive duplicate training because we just do not have a complete curriculum. If we have something like that, figure it out. Then, I understand most of the non-formals, we do special fields. How can we add all this up to be a complete training for the pastors? That may be helpful.

**[74]** Another thing is, you know, Ramesh, as you said, the church grows fast. We just cannot keep up by turning out qualified pastors. And yet, we don’t recognize each other’s training. How can we recognize each other’s training so we can collaborate in a big way? I’ve been in a formal world, so I understand, you know, we always have high barriers for people to come in. We need to lower that. I don’t mean “lower” in the sense of lowering the quality, but we need to lower the barrier, especially for the basic training. It doesn’t need to be that high intellectual level. It needs to be very practical in these matters. In China, it’s very unfortunate. Many of the seminaries that I work with, when they go outside of China, whatever they learned in 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, or even a master’s degree, is not being recognized. It’s just very disappointing. It’s something that we need to address.

**[75] Ramesh Richard:** Yes, brother. I think your heart is there and many of us would share the same need of a mechanism, a structure of understanding so that there would be some degree of commonality. We are thinking about and working toward it, some of which has already been done with the needs of resurgence. I see Dr. Tom Steffen here, and he’s amazing at

summarizing stuff. Tom, I don't know if you wanted to disclose your face or if you want to keep it hidden, but we'd love to have you say anything.

**[76] Tom Steffen:** Thank you. I think, in the West, we're so good at being pragmatist; we just piece everything—cut, cut, cut—piece it all together. So, it's the New Testament, not the Old Testament, it's not the Bible, the God story. Even in the discipleship thing, we do evangelism but it's totally separate from discipleship. And, how do we get that metanarrative understood? I think that came up here somewhere before. I think that's one of the major things that's missing in our whole training program.

**[77]** For many of the people around the world, they like to hear it from whole part to whole. From the West, we love our parts, so we give them the parts and they don't know then how to fit it into the whole. So, they're dropping these clothes all over because they don't have a clothesline, whether it's linear or whether it's cyclical. It's not there. They just drop all these clothes because they don't know what to do with them. So, it goes back, even, to pedagogy, and, preference there is, you know, pedagogical preference as well. This all comes into play here. But this whole thing of pragmatism—we are specialists at it. We've got to get beyond that if we're ever going to make good disciples. It's going to start with that metanarrative of, "Can they grasp that," because that becomes the heart-hermeneutic for interpreting everything else that will follow when they get it.

**[78] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, Tom, my brother. He addressed this too, a bit, at the GPro Congress for Pastoral Trainers. I think there are different levels at which we are engaging today in the matter of pastoral training—the training of pastors and pastor-leaders—in the whole missions mandate that we have received from our Savior. I think we have had a biblical conversation about the entire story—I think the metanarrative is a better word. In many cultures, the word story is seen as fiction. Then, the curriculum seems to be emerging as far as touch-points—a philosophy of ministry that engages the whole congregation and reaches the whole congregation—into what I'm going to summarize as the goal of missions being the local church, and the task of the local church being missions. But, the pastor-leaders give shepherding guidance in this whole initiative.

**[79]** Strategically speaking, I heard personal initiatives, church initiatives, and institutional initiatives that need to emphasize pastoral training as a missions mandate, as part of the whole structure of fulfilling the final commission. I know that we enter into communities and cultures through social and compassion ministries, but if we don't enter in the name of Jesus, it becomes another NGO. So, we have evangelism and discipleship initiatives, but beyond evangelism and discipleship we have church planting. We heard a good case for church planting and church planters, but then, beyond church planting is what? We're saying the training of pastor-leaders allows for the preserving of the fruit of all that is happening.

**[80]** This is a major moment for the training of pastor-leaders. We have 2.2 million of them with only 5% trained for pastoral ministry, and somehow in God's economy the local church seems to be his priority and the central feature. Pastor-leaders, whether they're the single pastor or as

a team, are both nurturing and equipping but also sending people out. This is a huge moment for the training of pastor-leaders. I would like to ask for your ongoing participation in these conversations. These are part of a larger set. I would also like your input into what could be a structure, just a mechanism, where the formal training world has its own structures in order to give its accreditation, where a non-formal delivery of training of pastor-leaders can also be acknowledged and emphasized. I seek your help in that, and you will be hearing from us, perhaps in the next two months. Finally, as a result of the GPro Congress, we have a four-year follow up process going on in multiplying the training of pastor-leaders all across the world. I would like to invite you to go to [gproconnect.com](http://gproconnect.com) where there's a massive amount of those relationships and resources specifically focused on pastoral trainers and pastoral training. If you would be part of that stream, I think you would add terrific value because of your experience and expertise, both from a knowledge base and the skill base that you have. I want to thank you for joining. Jonathan, what is our next step in this conversation? What do you have planned?

**[81] Jonathan Armstrong:** Thank you. On October 14 of this year, we're gathering a group of pastoral trainers together. Let me just read to you the title of that discussion—those are all available at the same page that you accessed this conversation through. The title will be "Creating Synergy Between Church Planting and Pastoral Training Initiatives," and Fregy John from India has recently agreed to chair that discussion. We'll be gathering a group of about twelve panel members and then transcribing and redistributing that conversation as well.

**[82]** At this stage, the task of training two million pastors around the world is such an enormous task. Our strategy in facilitating these calls is to gather groups together. So, we have gathered groups of accreditors. This was a group dedicated to the missions world. We'll be reaching out to denominational leaders and church planters. At this stage, we're just trying to get various groups to map out the conversation by group, and then we'll try to figure out some sort of strategy to wisely integrate those different conversations together as we try to take on this enormous task of pastoral training worldwide.

**[83] Ramesh Richard:** Thank you, Jonathan. Pastoral health effects church health, and church health effects societal health. I want to thank you for the privilege of time. On a Saturday at 9:30 AM, here we are. The Lord bless each one of you. I want to finish with Jeremiah 3:15 where Yahweh promises the gift of shepherds who will be shepherds after his own heart to feed God's people with knowledge of understanding, over against the false shepherds and the fake shepherds of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Many blessings in all your ministries, and I trust we can keep in conversation throughout our life together.

## **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Ramesh Richard (Chair)**, Founder and President of RREACH; Professor of Global Theological Engagement and Pastoral Ministries, Dallas Theological Seminary (USA)

**Ron Anderson**, Senior Associate for church planting at the Lausanne Movement (USA)

**Jonathan J. Armstrong**, Associate Professor of Bible and Theology at Moody Bible Institute – Spokane; President of Aqueduct Project (USA)

**Al Bridges**, Missionary and former CEO of Biblical Education by Extension (USA)

**Percy Deng**, Regional director at Overseas Council (Taiwan)

**Matthew Dereck**, Student at Moody Bible Institute – Spokane (USA)

**David Deuel**, Senior Research Fellow of Special Projects at the Christian Institute on Disability; Academic Dean Emeritus of The Master's Academy International (USA)

**Augustine Dorbov**, Former National Director of Christian Missionary Foundation (Liberia)

**Brian Duggan**, International leader for Latin America and the Caribbean division of ReachGlobal (Costa Rica)

**John Bright Gazi**, Program Coordinator for Bangladesh Mission (Bangladesh)

**David Hansen**, Former board member for Avant Ministries; Former Vice President of Back to the Bible's international division; Former missions elder at Lincoln Berean church (USA)

**Daryl Kroeker**, International Director of WorldServe; Director of WorldServe Bible College (Canada)

**Robert Logan**, Former Vice President for New Church Development with Resource Ministries; President of Strategic Ministries Inc.; Founder and Executive Director of CoachNet (USA)

**Raymond Lombard**, Chairman of the Africa Firewall Evangelism and Church Planting project; Africa Executive Council of the Church of God (South Africa)

**Sam Metcalf**, President of Christian Resource Ministries; Coordinator for CoNext (USA)

**Kamesh Sankaran**, Professor at Whitworth University (USA)

**Tom Steffen**, Former Executive Vice President of the Evangelical Missiological Society; Missionary with New Tribes Mission; Professor Emeritus of Intercultural Studies in the School of Intercultural Studies at Biola University (USA)

**Henry Tan**, Former President of ISOT-Asia; Former National Director of PCCC; President of the International Leadership Consortium of Crusade Schools and Universities; Certified coach of the International Coach Federation (USA)

**Jim Wilson**, Missionary with ReachGlobal; Founder and Director of IBAC (Costa Rica)