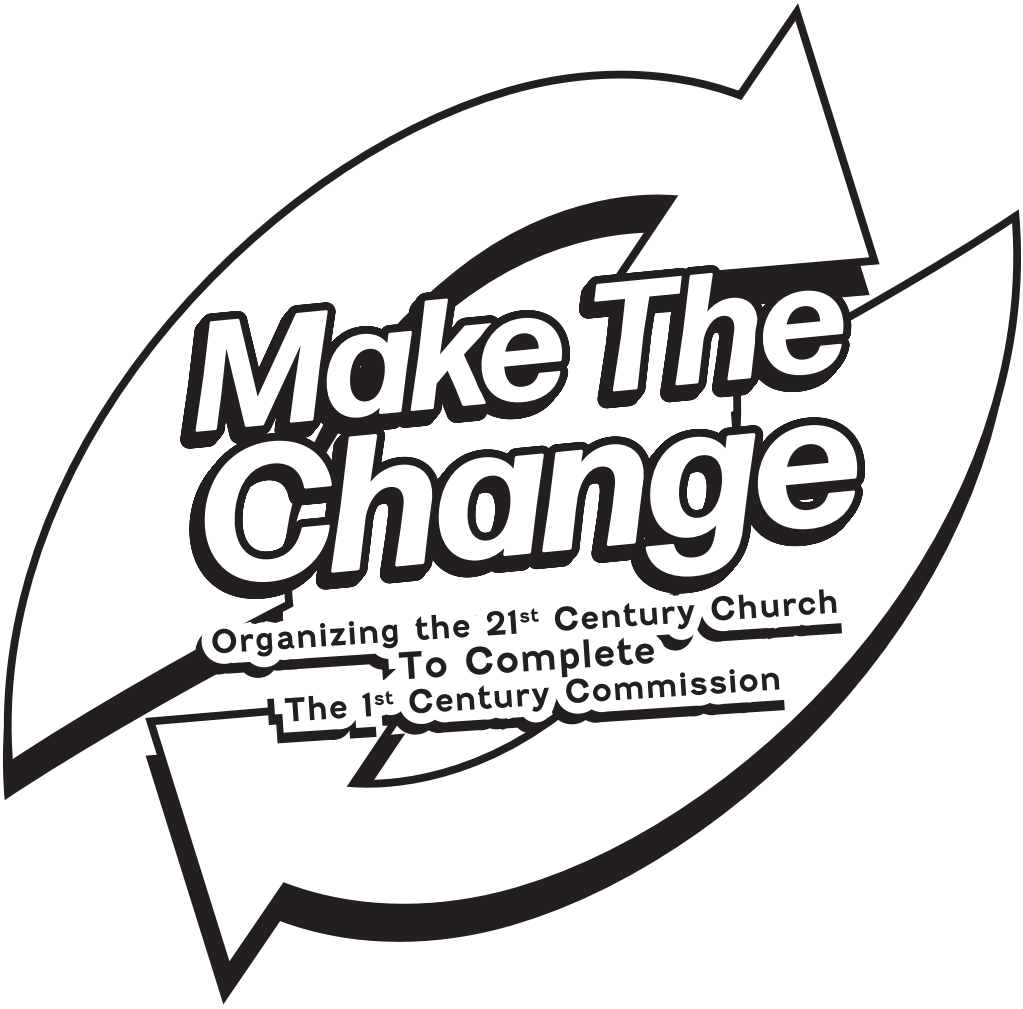


Willie L. Taylor, M. Div, MBA

Why this Template?

Several years ago, I wrote a book titled, *Make the Change…For a Finished Work* (2011). Below are excerpts of forwarded statements from notable church leaders:

"…Willie L. Taylor… surveys the field of management strategies and church growth plans and gives us the best of both and then ties it all together with the counsels of Ellen White.
Voila! An unbeatable formula!"
Charles E. Bradford, President Retired
Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America

"…One of the strengths of Willie Taylor's *Make the Change* is that it focuses on motivating each member to use their gifts for soul-winning and it redirects the attention of the entire church to Christ's mission…."
Mark A. Finley, Assistant to the President
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

"…The serious student of *Make the Change,* whether lay person or clergy, will find an invaluable source for church organization and witness…."
Calvin B. Rock, Past Vice-President
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

"This book provides enjoyable instructional reading and is highly recommended as preferred reading for all pastors, ministerial students, local church elders and ministry leaders."
Alvin M. Kibble, Vice-President
North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

"We have here more than just a variation on an old theme about church involvement…."
Mervyn A. Warren, Provost and Professor of Preaching
Oakwood University

"Inspiring. At last, a book that not only deals with the what, but the how…."
Dennis Ross, Jr., Ministerial Director/Evangelism Coordinator
Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Over the years, colleagues have asked me to restate the main themes as a template for pastors and local church leaders. Therefore, my attempt here is to deliver an interdependent Bible-based witnessing template to help revive the church by fundamentally transforming the way the members perceive (think), process (develop), and perform (achieve) their evangelism or witnessing goals in an end-time context. It will combine a synergistic approach with a concerted effort to promote an every-member witnessing formula. I hope its use will be helpful for your church.

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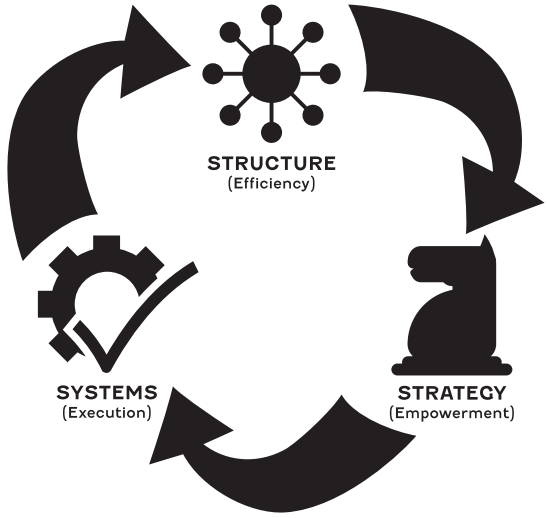
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Introduction

ONE DAY, JESUS convened a "Workers' Meeting" for His disciples in a "five-star" natural setting. *"Near Bethsaida at the northern end of the lake, [it] was a lonely region, now beautiful with the fresh green of spring that offered a welcome retreat to Jesus and His disciples."*[1] It appears there were at least two agenda items. The first was the importance of rest when engaged in the ministry of Christ (Mk. 6:31). The second agenda item may surprise you. It was, however, very significant also: *"They talked together regarding the work of God, and the possibility of bringing greater efficiency to the work."*[2] After that meeting the record states the disciples were *"vitalized by divine power and inspired with hope and courage."*[3]

Have you ever used the word "efficiency" in connection with evangelism planning or church witnessing efforts? Efficiency is a word you will frequently hear when speaking of for-profit organizations. Today, major corporations spend millions of dollars each year to maximize production without increasing expenditure. In other words, they want to be more efficient. Why would Jesus introduce this concept at a meeting with His

1 White, E.G., *Desire of Ages,* 361.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

1st century disciples and what does that say to pastors and local church leaders in the 21st century?

As we near the end of time the challenges for the church will likely become more complex, calling for more mission efficiency. Structures and processes that once worked could now become barriers to Commission success. Consequently, today the church needs to periodically evaluate its mission focus. Otherwise, it will likely suffer from symptoms of inefficiency in its mission workflow. This consistent updating will help establish a necessary philosophy that applies to any mission success. I read a statement printed on a t-shirt someone was wearing in an airport. It said: *"The main thing is to keep the main thing…the main thing."* And "mission" is, simply, the main thing!

Efficiency helps reduce redundancy in the mission effort. Redundancy speaks to that unwarranted, time-consuming attitude or practice of some who fail to plan their work and, consequently, work their plan. They are effectively saying: *"We don't have time to do things right, but do have time to do them over."*

Perhaps one reason Jesus had "efficiency" on that "Workers' Meeting" agenda near Bethsaida is because, like us, He viewed inefficiency and redundancy as indications of:

1. Fragmented work and leaders with little regard for the good of the whole
2. Lack of knowledge of and focus on mission
3. Silo mentality and turf battles
4. Lack of ownership ("It's not my job")
5. Cover-up and blame rather than identifying and solving problems
6. Lack of empowerment
7. Mistrust between members/leaders

So, our goal here is to design a comprehensive 21st century Church Witnessing Structure through which we could best execute the mission Jesus gave to His 1st century disciples. The information in this template will come from the Bible, inspired writings from the Seventh-day Adventist Church, corporate business principles, and personal experience. The entire witnessing design will be organized around three words: efficiency, empowerment, and execution. They will be addressed in three focus areas: structure, strategy, and systems.

Let's define what we mean by "design." Roger K. Allen says, *"By design we're talking about the integration of people with core business processes,*

technology and systems."[4] He continues, saying, *"A well-designed organization ensures that the form of the organization matches its purpose or strategy, meets the challenges posed by business realities and significantly increases the likelihood that the collective efforts of people will be successful."*[5] This writer believes when Jesus gave the Great Commission, He simultaneously established a well-designed witnessing framework to accomplish it. He also believes that soon Jesus will return and receive followers who continued His mission consistent with that original operational outline albeit in a later generation and through perilous times.

God's Church, His witnessing body—all members with their gifts and talents—is one of His great creations. He presented it as a well-designed organization that structurally and ideally suits its purpose.

This Template is not about change for change's sake. It is about the need for a transformation from an outdated, inefficient witnessing operation to one that will help achieve its goal of completing the Great Commission.

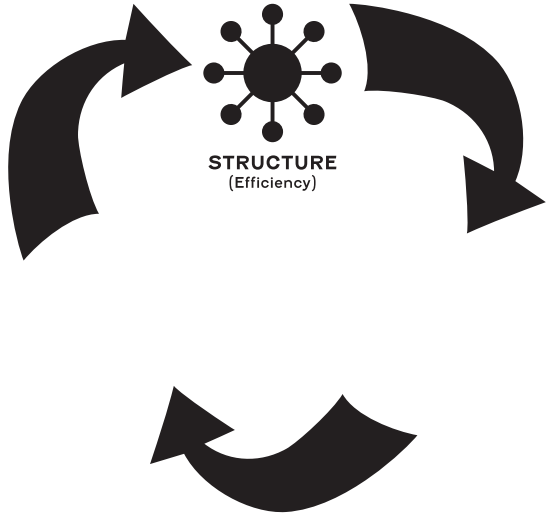
Peter Drucker defined innovation as *"change that creates a new dimension of performance."*[6] Drucker felt the values that produce such change should become embedded in the culture and become the mindset of the organization. Ellen G. White viewed transformation [of character] as change where *"The Spirit of God produces a new life in the soul, bringing the thoughts and desires into obedience to the will of Christ; and the inward man is renewed in the image of God."*[7] This new life in the soul is the change that unifies the church and creates a new dimension of witnessing. The objective of this outpouring is for the twenty-first century Church to one day declare as the Apostle Paul testified about the first-century church at Colossae that the gospel has been preached to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23).

So, the title, *"Make the Change,"* is a deliberate one. The author believes the Church or any organization, frankly, must change or innovate with the times or circumstances to complete its assigned task or mission. At times, that adjustment may necessitate a fundamental change. Some may resist such a dramatic overhaul. They may not even welcome timely modifications. Therefore, as you evaluate the words of *Make the Change,*

4 Allen, Roger K., (2012). *What is Organizational Design?* Retrieved March 13, 2012 from http://www.centerod/2012/02 what-is-organizational-design/.
5 Ibid.
6 The Organization of the Future, Editors: Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, Richard Beckhard, (Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1997), p. 84.
7 White, E. G., Prophets and Kings, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1917), 233.

the Template, I hope they help you to appreciate the words of Benjamin Franklin who said: "*When you're finished changing, you're finished.*"[8]

8 Benjamin Franklin. (n.d.). BrainyQuote.com. Retrieved October 14, 2010, fromBrainyQuote.comWebsite: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/b/benjaminfr151593.html



PART 1
Designing A Church Witnessing Structure

LET US BEGIN

WHERE DOES ONE begin when designing a comprehensive witnessing template? Have you noticed that when you look at a building you can generally tell what the function is; i.e., if it is a church or bank, etc.? You can tell a race car when you see one. Things are generally built or made for what they do. Recall that Roger Allen says above, the design "matches its purpose." That statement also applies to an effective church witnessing structure and it will guide us in our design process.

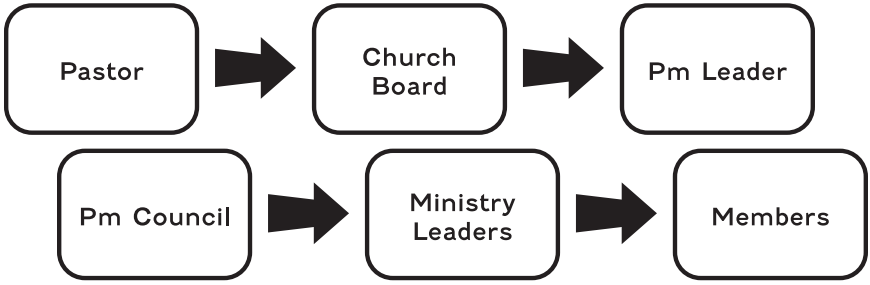
We will design an efficient witnessing structure that could visibly represent the church's mission responsibility. This church witnessing structure will then be offered as a template for today's church witnessing operations. Consider this quote about organization: *"The most influential factor in organizational performance, both for the individual within the organization and the organization as a whole is the underlying structure."*[9] Accordingly, we will start with the structure.

9 *Business: The Ultimate Resource*, 192

After studying the graphs below, follow the instructions to make the appropriate determination.

Which model below represents your church's mission structure?
(Which one of the three comes closest?)

MODEL #1



MODEL #2



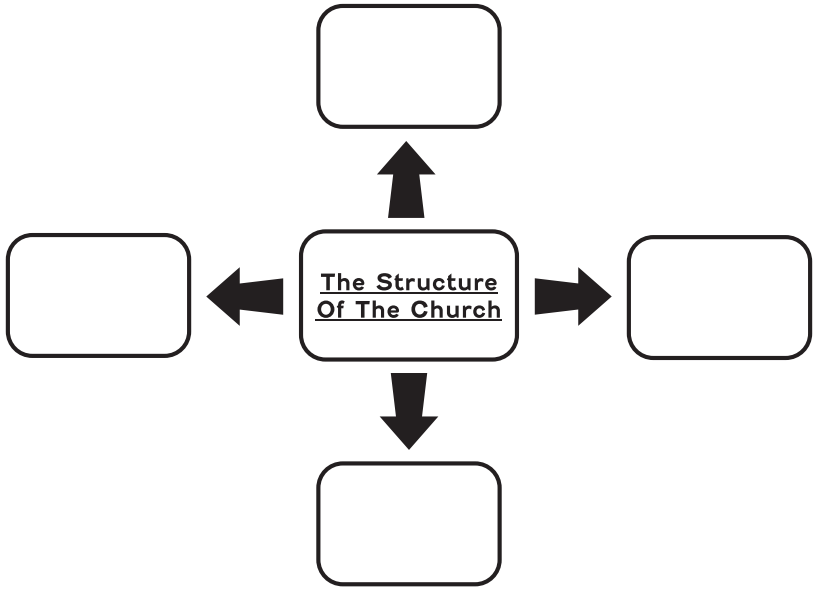
MODEL #3



We will use the following statement from the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* as our 21st century template building material. It says:

"The structure of the church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is vital for the spiritual growth of members and for the fulfillment of the mission of the church. It is the skeleton of the body. And 'the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and up builds itself in love' (Eph. 4:16, RSV). *The most important elements of the local church structure and organization are the church officer roles and the auxiliary organizations or [ministries]."*[10]

The statement above contains words and phrases we have underlined. We will use them to "build" our church witnessing structure. As bricks and mortar represent construction material for a house, these words and phrases represent construction material for our template.



Clearly the subject of this passage is the opening phrase, "The *'structure'* of the church." So, we will begin our template design where structures naturally begin—at the foundation.

Let us continue by adding other phrases of the statement to complete the graphic witnessing template.

10 *SDA Church Manual* (2005), 101.

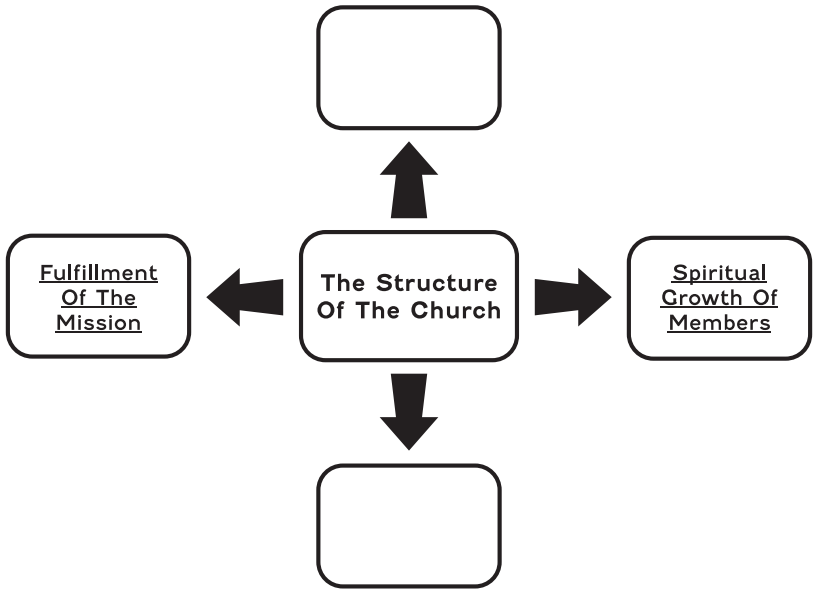
"The structure of the church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is vital for the spiritual growth of members and for the fulfillment of the mission of the church.

These two requirements are stated as essential goals of the structure of the church. We will appropriately add them to the graph.

"The structure of the church…is vital for the:

1. ***Spiritual growth of members** and … the*
2. ***Fulfillment of the mission** of the church."*

In my community I watched the construction of many homes that were built after mine. The construction process was always the same: clear the lot, lay the plumbing, pour the foundation, build the walls, install the roof system, install the electrical system, install the windows, install the heating/AC unit, complete the landscaping, etc. In mission-centered witnessing it is understandable that members' gift-sets are as different as community needs. However, a winning structure for witnessing should have some foundational and structural similarities everywhere the end-time gospel is preached.

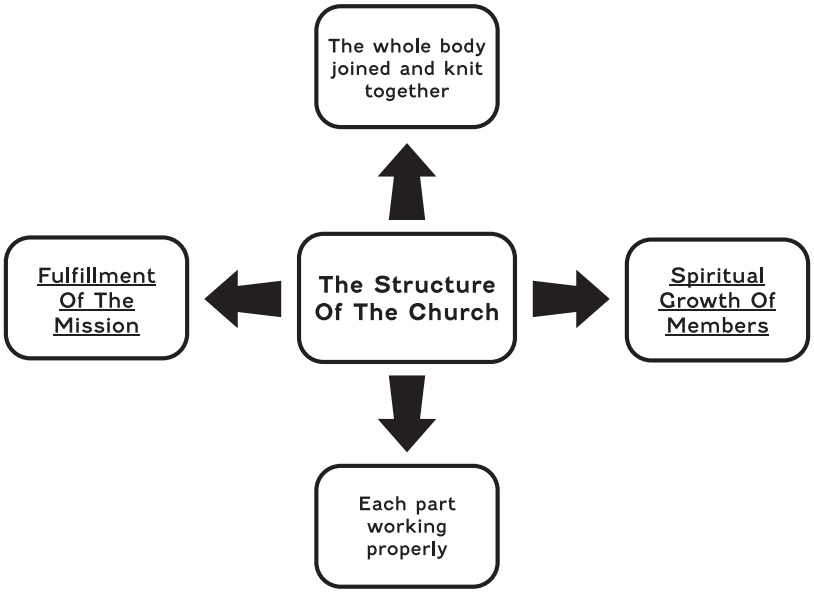


Notice that these two very important imperatives will establish a structural framework for the church witnessing template. They each center on church growth. *"Fulfilling the mission"* will answer the call to

"go" and "baptize." This addresses the "numerical growth" requirement. Secondly, these "baptized members" must experience *"spiritual growth"* as they move toward *"a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph. 4: 11-13).

Let's continue.

"The structure of the church...is vital for the spiritual growth of members and for the fulfillment of the mission...And 'the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and up builds itself in love" (Eph. 4:16, RSV).



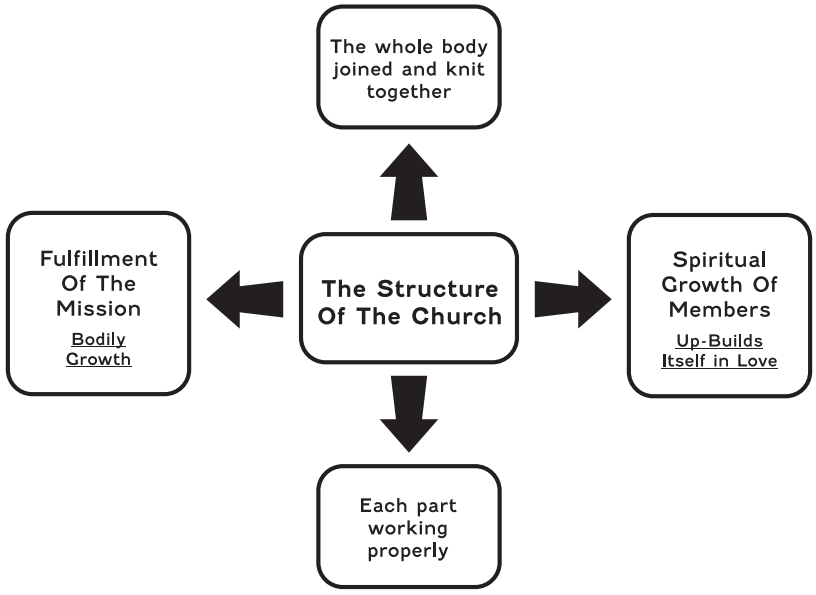
The above two phrases constantly remind the entire membership of the mandate for unity, harmony, and oneness as the church's mission is addressed.

The next phrases add further clarity to the template. You might say, it puts more meat on the bones. We will add them also.

"It (the structure of the church) is the skeleton of the body...when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth, and up builds itself in love."

(Record your notes and ideas on the occasional dedicated lines)

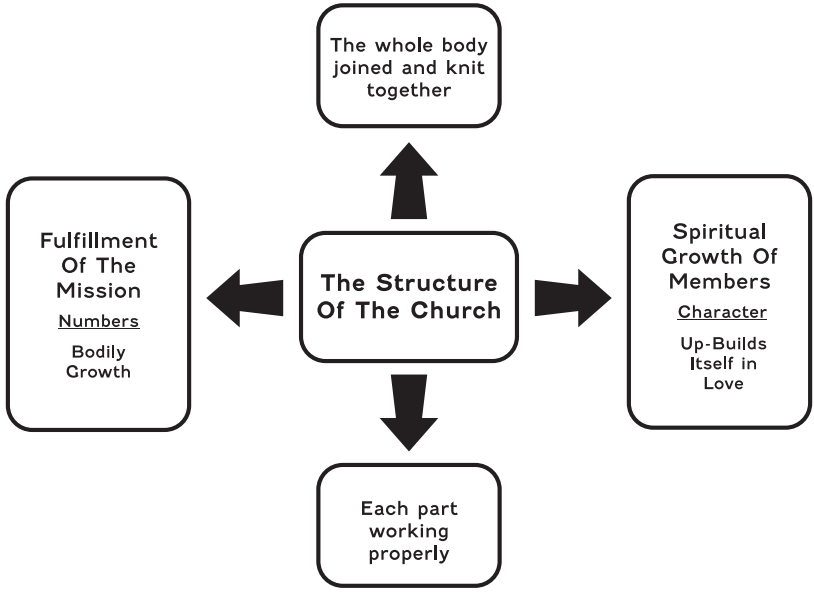
NOTES



Have you noticed that the "Structure Statement" includes words or phrases that identify the work of the Church? Also notice that the Church's overall witnessing operation can be divided into two categories. Clearly the functions addressed in these two categories (later called "Pillars") largely represent the reason for the existence of the Church.

Let's add another quote. This one is not found in the "Structure Statement." Nevertheless, it helps explain the duty of the church and helps to validate the use of these two witnessing categories.

"*The church is to be built up in both character and numbers.*"[11] Into which category or Pillar would you place the word, "character" or the word, "numbers?"



"Numbers" fits well emphasizing the church's "bodily growth." And "character" naturally fits with "spiritual growth."

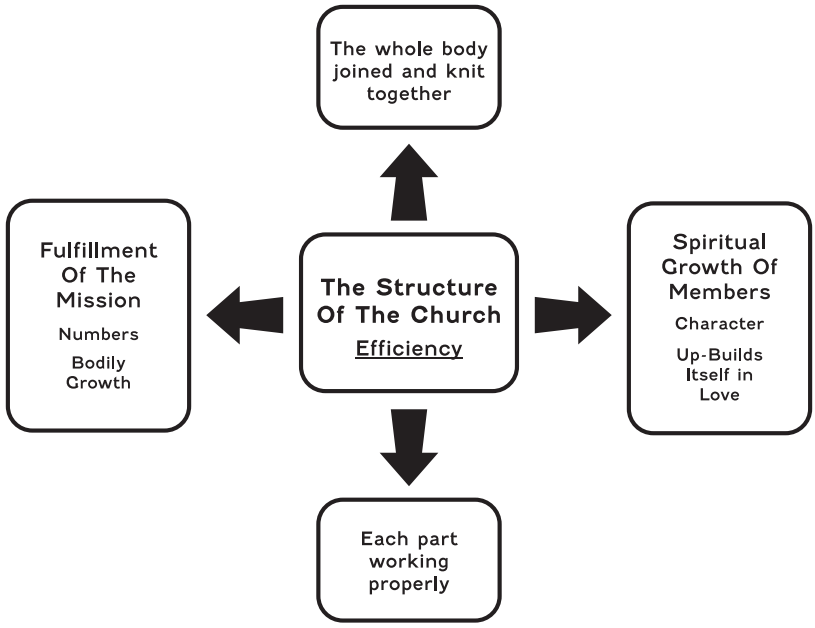
Let's continue with another quote.

"The Holy Spirit is greatly needed…It is the source of which we must look for efficiency in the restoration of the moral image of God in man."[12]

We noted earlier that Jesus mentioned the importance of "efficiency" at that "Workers' Meeting" He convened for His disciples. Now we can see how it must be highlighted as a necessary feature in the design of the 21st century witnessing template. It is captured in the phrase, *"Each part is working properly."*

11 *SDA Bible Commentary* on Eph. 4: 13, 6: 1024.
12 White, E.G., *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 526.

We will place "efficiency" in the template as a fundamental directive.



Now, we will address the "mission."

Determining The Mission

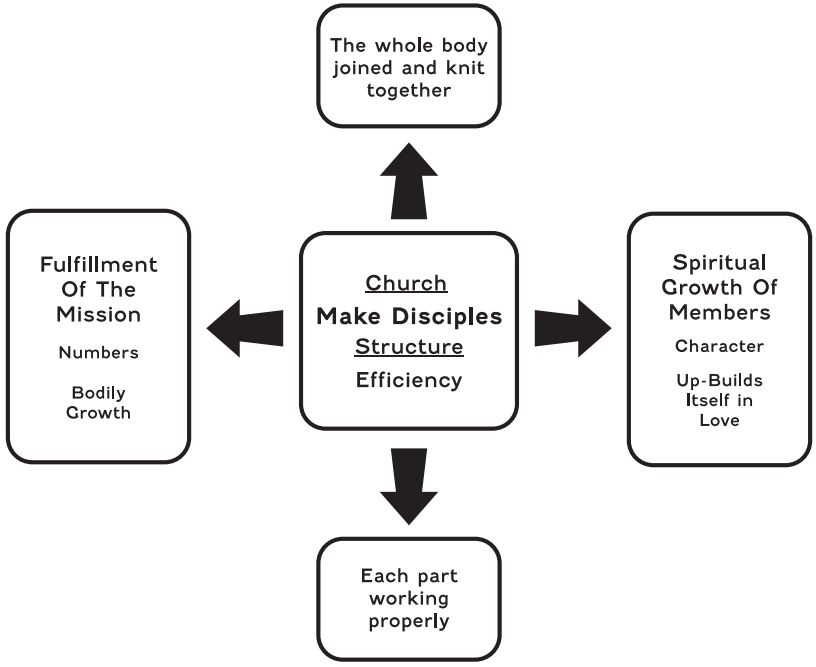
We will consult the Bible to see if we could discover a "text-message" that would be suitable for a mission statement for our witnessing template. Matthew 28:19-20 (RSV) gives us direction. It reads: *"Go ye and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

We will use *"Make Disciples"* from this familiar verse as the central purpose for the existence of this witnessing organization we call the "Church." The Church's mission is now, therefore, determined. Let's appropriately add it to our graph.

IMPORTANCE OF A MISSION STATEMENT

The importance of having a mission statement is clear. Each church should take the necessary time to create its mission statement. It helps the church in the following ways:

1. It clarifies your overall direction. Knowing where you are going keeps you from going where you do not want to go. The mission statement can also help save time and money.
2. It attracts mission-oriented followers. Some people simply will not participate if you can't show them where they are going.
3. It keeps conflict to a minimum. Limiting various kinds of operational disagreements is an important key to mission progress.
4. It generates excitement. When everybody understands their role and how they fit in the church's overall witnessing plan you can anticipate positive participation from the team.



With the acknowledged mission, [to] "*Make Disciples,*" in place we will consult the Bible again in an effort at further development of the template. Let's read the King James Version of Matthew 28:19-20:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world."

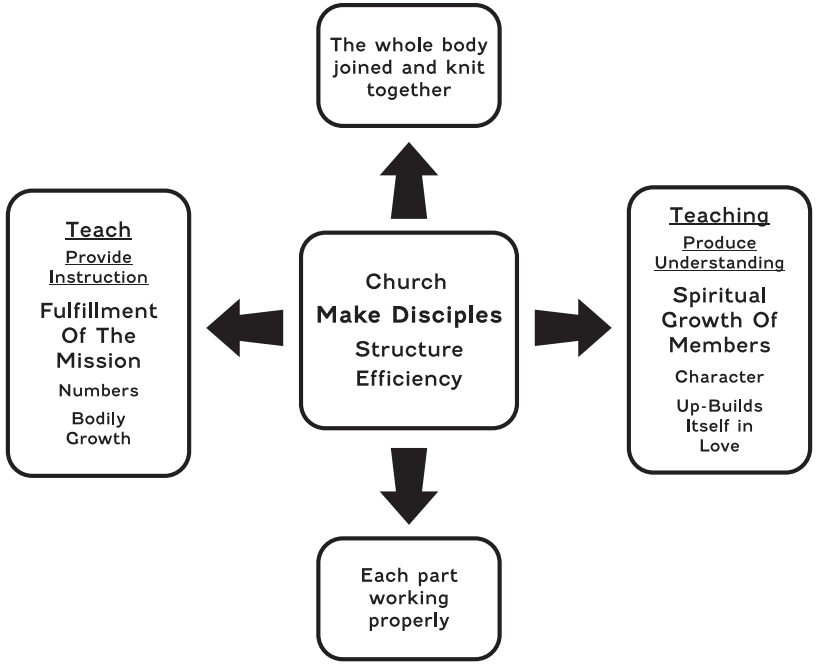
Look closely at the Master's instructive and carefully chosen words in Matthew 28:19-20. The Greek for *"Teach"* in the phrase *"...Go ye therefore and TEACH (Matheteuo) all nations...."* means *"To make a disciple; instruct."*[13] We're using the word, *Matheteuo,* based solely on its definition.

"Teaching," in the phrase, *"...TEACHING (Didasko) them to observe all things..."* means *"To provide information in a manner intended to produce understanding."*[14]

The template proposes that the mission [to] "Make Disciples" in the Great Commission does not stop with *"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* It continues with, *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...."* The goal is discipleship! This means we must "produce understanding." These new believers will continue their "spiritual growth" as they follow the "instruction" they have come to believe.

Now we will place these two words we use to help define *evangelism or witnessing* on the graph based simply on their meaning. Understandably, the entire church is obligated, in some way, to "teach," i.e., "instruct" or "provide" instruction in a process that leads a person to baptism. The church must also be involved in "teaching," i.e., "provide information" with the intent to *"produce understanding."* Both definitions help identify the church's mission. Later you will see how each member, based on his or her spiritual gift, can be appropriately placed in service under one witnessing category (Pillar) or the other.

13 Strong, James, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* on Matthew 28: 20, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).
14 Ibid.



Notice how we apply these words as we continue to design our church witnessing structure. Again, observe how well they fit into one of the witnessing categories.

Matthew 28:19-20, (NLT), adds both support and clarity for our template design of two church witnessing categories. This verse reads: *"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

As stated above, "instruct" or *provide instruction* in this template is teaching that leads people through to baptism. This Template sees this "instruction" as primarily a "Proclamation" or announcement function. After the initial instruction process has resulted in baptism, the church is still obligated to "produce understanding." This "teaching" we see as primarily an Edification or nurturing function. It continues well beyond baptism.

Listen to comments from another version on Matthew 28:19-20:

"The Commission goes beyond evangelism; it is not enough to simply make converts and let them fend for themselves. They must be taught to obey the commandments of Christ as found in the NT. The essence of discipleship is