



CHARACTERISTICS OF LPMI

THE PRINCIPLES AND STRUCTURES DESIGNED TO EMPOWER PEOPLE TO SHARE THE TASK OF THE MINISTRY

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I am fully convinced and persuaded by the teachings of the LPMI that, it is the only biblically based institutional structure practically demonstrating the vision Jesus Christ has for the church. When Jesus said in (Matthew 16:18), ***upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades, will not over come it .***

I believed He had this same structure and principle of the LPMI in mind. If you study carefully the life of Jesus, His messages and ministry and compare it with the Vision, structures and principles stated by the founder of the LPMI in the book CAN THE PASTOR DO IT ALONE? There is no doubt in my mind that indeed it is the true model of what Jesus was preaching when He instructed the disciples to reach out to all nations of the world with the good news before the end will come.

In Ghana, most churches over the years have been practicing the CELL GROUP system which is good by all standards; however, it comes to no where near when it is measured with the LPMI strategy. I have had the privilege to study my first book from LPMI, **Can The Pastor Do It Alone?** Written by the founder and president of LPMI, Melvin J. Steinbron, and I have found out that he doesn't just has the key for accomplishing The Great Commission, but indeed he has the Right Key.

The very first thing that LPMI seek to teach is the establishment of the understanding of the fact that they are for all churches. I believed that Jesus Christ Himself never wanted or even interested in denomination of churches. He commissioned every believer to contribute his or her quota for the fulfillment of His vision for reaching out to every nation with the good news of the kingdom of God on earth. In fact, the disciples who were given the mandate to preach the gospel to the world were Lay people but not Clergy. And also they were not belonging to any specific denomination. It is for this very reason that I see LPMI doctrine which cut across denominational lines and seeking to network every church for equipping the lay congregation for the pastoral work in the ministry as laudable biblical method for church growth.

It is important to note that, the Biblical understanding and divine knowledge for the establishment and the growth of effective church is rightly acquired from the principles and structures of LPMI. Indeed it is a true model of exactly what the first church look like which was built by the disciples immediately they received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The believers lived together in the spirit of love, care and unity without no class or differences, the laity and clergy among them. For this reason the

number of the believers always increased day after day as they minister the good news to the people. I can confidently say that this is exactly what will happen if any church accurately implements the principles and programs of the LPMI.

In Ghana as well as many countries all over the world, all kinds of messages are being preached on their pulpits everyday, different doctrines and methods are being introduced in the churches everyday. The aim is to preach the gospel of Jesus. So many people are writing and publishing books and magazines daily, fantastic writings, good doctrines and other good plans, church growth methods and programs all in the attempt to fulfill the great commission. However, none of these churches or writers has discovered the right and excellent system, structure and strategy that can stand the test of time in our quest to reach every nation on the planet with the good news of the kingdom of God on earth, which could be compared with what LPMI has discovered and established.

LPMI is a biblical based method for training believers to become good shepherds and equipping lay people with the needed spiritual and physical skills to offer pastoral love and care to the congregation through prayer, availability, contact and example. That is exactly the knowledge every church should have and understand in order to provide quality and effective leadership and also exhibit the needed Godly Love with skin on to the congregation.

A careful study of the materials of LPMI reveal that, the fundamental biblical principle upon which their structures are based, is Love, Care and Unity which is the core message of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us briefly study the life of Jesus Christ our master mentor and trusted teacher. The message He preached and let us find out if there is something that we can identify to support the argument that LPMI has the perfect strategy for winning the world for Christ. When Jesus was on this planet He knew exactly what He was here for. He was aware of His purpose on earth even at the age 12. He also knew what to do and how to do it in order to accomplish His assignment on earth. He told his parent I must do my father's business at that early age 12. Very clear minded. His life was precise. He never made a mistake, He chose his words accurately at the right place and right time. He understands exactly who he is, the task ahead of him and the perfect way to fulfill the purpose for which He was born. Because He is God you know that?

Jesus never called Himself apostle or a priest even though He is our first apostle and our high priest according to (Hebrew 3:1) because, that was not the personality or the office He needed to achieve the assignment set before him. He didn't say I am a Prophet which of course He was, because of what the Samaritan woman at Jacob well said (John

4:19), for He could not have effectively achieve His goal of winning the whole world if He is a prophet. Neither did He like the name evangelist; notwithstanding the fact that He is the greatest evangelist who ever walked on this planet. The reason had been that He was moving from one place to another, with a large crowd following Him in the region of Judea, Jerusalem, Tyre and Idumea, preaching good news healing the sick and casting out demons. He was not pleased to be called teacher even though in many occasion people call Him rabbi meaning teacher. Example John 3:1 He is indeed the most articulate speaker ever lived on the globe.

It is interesting to note that, Jesus Christ who is the embodiment of the five-fold ministry never choose to be identify by any of the four offices listed above. Is amazing isn't it? I strongly believed Jesus Christ who is all knowing God; definitely know that the characteristics of those offices will not perfectly fit into the personality suitable for the fulfillment of His intended purpose on this planet. Out of the five offices in the ministry of the church, it was only one of them which He personally said He is. Christ said, ***I am a good shepherd (pastor) a good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep(John10:11)*** and that is the only vehicle which has the required wheels to drive the gospel to every nation on earth. He was aware of that.

Can I suggest to you, that good apostles don't lay their lives down for the congregation of the churches they established? A good prophet will not lay his life down for the people who always receive prophesy from them. Again good evangelist will not lay his life down for the crowd that followed him. In much the same way, good teacher will not lay his life down for the audience. It is only a good shepherd (pastor) who lays his life down for his sheep.

It is against this background, that I consider the principle of LPMI as the right institution or system which has the requisite structures and programs to accomplish the great commission can be found. LPMI teaching is based on the fundamental principle of Love Care and Unity and is poised to create conducive atmosphere which help people in other churches to grow and develop attitude of love, care and unity among the congregation. It is important to note that, care is rooted in the attitude of love which also produces unity. These cardinal principles are the keys for effective Christian living and the foundation for the establishment of a Christian community. LPMI ideas are exactly the prototype of a just society God always wanted to build right from the beginning of creation in the Garden of Eden. And still, that is what God want to have, Jesus came to die and share His blood for mankind so that this purpose of God could be fulfilled on this planet.

Let us, once again consider something God said during creation and see if it can be link to LPMI principles. "***God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and increase in***

number; fill the earth and subdue it". The first part of(Genesis1:28). Can you see LPMI system and structures in this statement from God? Can you see it? Look at it very carefully can you see LPMI in there? Can you see love; can you see care and can you see unity in these words from God? I hope you do. For this reason, I consider LPMI principles and concepts as worthy to die for. **That is why Jesus Christ said *paraphrase*" I am a good LPMI, the good LPMI lays down their lives for the world"**

You will agree with me that, the mission of the church is to win the world for Christ but not any particular denomination. You will also not deny the fact that God never wanted the church to split into denominations. Right from the beginning He wanted a unify people who stay together as a community. Therefore, if LPMI vision is to build love, care and unity among congregation with the aim at linking it to all churches in the world then it is the move in the right direction. I can imagine God saying, yes finally, I have got a group of people who are building the Kingdom of heaven on earth.

God ultimate goal is to rule the whole world through the hearts of His sons called men. This is exactly His motivation for creating Adam and Eve and putting them in the Garden of Eden and it is still his purpose for the planet. This could be achieved when everyone on the planet and the churches embraced the principle of LPMI to spread the gospel of the kingdom of God on earth. Over the years the church has designed various method of communicating the good news to the dying world. It is important to note that this can not be achieved effectively through the media, Television, Electronic, Radio and the Print media. There is no doubt about the fact that, the media has contributed immensely in our quest to preaching the message of the good news to all nations. What have been achieved through the media so far is to enable many people all over the world to hear the gospel at the same time. But they have done practically nothing to motivate the hearers to put them into practice what they are hearing everyday through the media.

God desire is not for people to just listen to the word but not practice it. The media help to create a situation where, we are producing more hearers but few doers. Jesus said, ***everyone who hear these words of my and put them in to practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house in the sand.*** Can I suggest to you again that, it is only **Good News with skin on**, which is the right vehicle that can drive the message of the kingdom to all nations of the world, but not through the media. In other words, wise builders are those who can effectively carry the goodnews to all nations as stated in the great commission and not foolish builders. LPMI is the only structures designed to equip the people in the church with the requisite skills necessary to produce wise builder with the right spirit and knowledge and attitude to help in fulfilling the great commission.

Lay Pastor Ministry (Ghana) remain committed to the Biblical principle and standards of LPMI and are therefore pursuing serious contacts with churches leaders in the country to bring into practice lay people providing pastoral care for the flocks. In my quest of touching base many believers in the country with this biblical based principles and concepts of LPMI, I have started publishing articles about LPMI weekly in one of the biggest selling news paper in Ghana "*Graphic Adsempa*" so that the reading public and Christian will quickly understand and appreciate the concepts and principles of laypeople assuming leadership responsibility in church by providing Gods love and care with skin on to the congregation.