

CASE STUDY INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAT RETREAT

January 2024

Two years ago our case study focused on examining CPM (church-planting movements) and DMM (disciple-making movements). We asked you to listen to and read explanations about these movements by their founders or major practitioners, and we focused special attention on some of their main concepts, such as the “Person of Peace” and “Obedience-Based Discipleship.” In this year’s case study, we want to follow up on the former study by using the book *No Shortcut to Success: A Manifesto for Modern Missions* by Matt Rhodes as the main source of information. You were asked to purchase this book, so you should have continual access to it. Following is the process and sequence for you to follow in preparing for our time at the coming MAT Retreat.

- Listen to this ABWE podcast in which Zane Pratt is interviewed. He is the vice president of Global Training at the IMB (International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention). He is significant because of his role at the IMB and his attitude toward *No Shortcut to Success*. In this podcast, however, he does not reference Rhodes’ book. <https://missionspodcast.com/podcast/zane-pratt-are-explosive-disciple-making-movements-really-healthy/>.
 - Pay special attention to his views on ...
 - Reductionist approach to missions
 - How to develop healthy churches and their importance
 - Formulaic approach to mission strategy and practice
 - Rapid growth of churches
 - Making mission strategy as simple and reproducible as possible
- Learn the basics about Mike Shipman, an IMB missionary who began the *Any 3: Anyone, Anywhere, Any Time* methodology, a newer DMM approach. To do this, read the following quotes from his book *Any 3*. These quotes explain Shipman’s use of Jesus’ dealing with the Samaritan woman at the well as the model for evangelism. This description will familiarize you with his emphasis. The texts in parentheses are given as his evidence that the apostles used this same approach in their evangelism.
 - **Jesus’ pattern** with the woman at the well (also found in Acts) [p. 33]
 1. **Get connected** (Acts 2:14; 3:12)
Give me a drink. (John 4:7)
“Dispels a common myth: that a relationship or friendship has to exist for the witness to succeed.” [p. 27] “Jesus also dispelled another witnessing myth: that it takes time to build the sort of relationship that would allow a person to hear the Gospel. Jesus initiated a conversation with the Samaritan woman

and within minutes (if not seconds) was already into a conversation about spiritual matters.” [p. 27]

2. **Get to God** (Acts 2:15-16; 3:13)

If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you Living Water. (John 4:10)

“Jesus used the analogy of Living Water to raise interest in spiritual matters and left the woman wanting to know more.” [p. 27]

3. **Get to lostness** (Acts 2:23; 2:37; 3:13-14)

Go call your husband and come here. (John 4:16)

“Jesus could have just as easily told the woman to call her friends, but He chose instead to help her see her lost and sinful condition ... Though we often see commonality in our shared interests [with the lost person], our greatest bond is found in the shared problem of sin and its devastating effects in our lives ... *Any-3* is particularly effective with Muslims, because it invites them to admit their own lostness.” [p. 28]

4. **Get to the Gospel** (Acts 2:22-24; 3:13-16)

“After agreeing on the problem of universal and personal sinfulness, Jesus transitioned the conversation to the solution. Where does salvation come from? Jesus answered the question by announcing that He was the Messiah.” (John 4:20-26) [p. 29]

5. **Get to a decision** (Acts 2:28; Acts 3:18-20)

“Jesus invited her to receive His message and arranged follow-up.” [p. 30]

“Had the woman not been open to Jesus’ message, we assume that He would have heeded His own advice to his disciples, ‘Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them.’” (Mark 6:11) However, the woman was very open, and Jesus led her to faith. John’s Gospel tells us that Jesus remained in the area for two days of follow-up.

“Unless a person says that he or she is not interested, you should call for a decision by asking, ‘Do you believe what I’ve told you (the Gospel)?’ This is the only true indicator of their level of openness. Many persons will be interested in Christ the first time they hear the gospel. Perhaps the person has heard the Gospel before, or perhaps God has prepared his heart. The only way to know for sure is to ask.” [p. 30]

“You should try to revisit responsive persons within 48 hours of the initial conversation ‘Go, call your husband and come here’ (John 4:16) is a clear indication that Jesus was attempting to draw a group of people, rather than a single individual to faith.”

You will find a thorough presentation of how to do *Any-3* follow-up in chapter 14: ‘Follow-up for a CPM (church-planting movement).’ If you follow the

suggested pattern in that chapter, you just might find that you've launched a church-planting movement." [p. 31]

- Skim through the table of contents of Rhodes' book and read Mark Dever's endorsement (*Foreword*). Note, Mark Dever's church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.
- Read the review by Zane Pratt and Mark Stevens of Rhodes' *No Shortcut to Success*. As already noted, Pratt is Vice President of IMB Global Training and Mark Stevens is the Director of IMB Field Personnel Orientation.
[View of Book Review. No Shortcut to Success: A Manifesto for Modern Missions | The Great Commission Baptist Journal of Missions \(atla.com\)](#)
- Read the contrasting review of *No Shortcut to Success* on The Gospel Coalition website.
[Review: No Shortcut to Success by Matt Rhodes \(thegospelcoalition.org\)](#)

Clearly, controversy exists about Rhodes' book and the emphasis he gives. Therefore, in our case study we want to answer these questions: Does the IMB (whose official opinion is expressed in Zane Pratt's review) have valid reasons for their position on Rhodes' book? To frame the question another way, how biblical is Rhodes' book and how accurate is his assessment of missionary qualifications and practice?

- To help us answer these questions, first read Rhodes' "milestones," a brief summary of 10 practices that should characterize church-planting efforts. [pp. 176-179]. Do all those non-negotiables apply to you as a missionary or are some unnecessary?
- Then please read Rhodes' chapter 3, "In the Scales of the Scriptures."
- In this chapter, note both pros and cons that Rhodes points out from the writings and practice of Shipman and other proponents of CPM/DMM strategies.
 - ✓ Example of a pro: "CPM-style methods tend to emphasize broad 'proclamation of the gospel,' rather than focusing on a few close friendships. This seems to reflect the New Testament example." [p. 70]
 - ✓ Example of a con: "New believers planting new churches every six to nine months—as CPM-style methods suggest they should—was simply *not* the norm in the early church. Besides, such goals are impossible to sustain for any length of time." [p. 72]