

WT' UP HAS

- Going Deeper -

Spring 2019

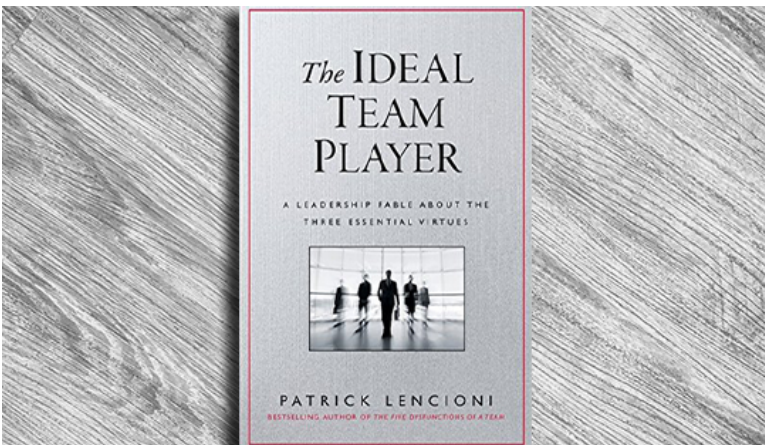
Why *Team* is a **Guiding Principle** for World Team?



2 The Biblical Basis for Team



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In our office here in Le Mesnil-le-Roi (France), there is a plaque which reads:

teamwork *noun.*

The combined action of a group, especially when effective and efficient

Teams is one of our guiding principles (WT Ministry Framework) and which we describe as *a group of individuals united in healthy relationships who work together toward a shared vision. They serve each other, listen to each other, rely on each other's gifts and strengths, and bolster where each is weak. Our teams accomplish more together than the individuals can working alone.* Our very name defines how we live and work.

We are World **Team!**

However, 'team' can be understood and experienced in a variety of ways. To that end, with this issue, we want to dig deeper into what we understand by teams, how to live and work in teams, and the growing multicultural nature of our teams.

We work in teams so as to see the vision fulfilled that God has laid on our hearts of *multiplying disciples and communities of believers among the lost.*

David Riddell
International Director



The Biblical Basis for Teams

There is no direct mention of teamwork in the Bible. Actually most of our understanding of teamwork comes from the business world. It means that different people or groups are working together to accomplish a goal. Normally two or more parties come together with their resources to reach their objectives and share the benefit at the end.

1. The Trinity as Basis for a Team

God himself can be seen as some type of a team because he exists and functions as three persons in a perfect community.

.The Trinity

One of the first examples of teamwork found in the Bible is in the opening chapter of Genesis. There we find the Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, working in concert at creation (Gen 1:1-3). Each member of the Godhead had a position to fill in the creation of the world; each One had a defined job to perform. But the Trinity reflects more than just working together. It also represents a perfect community between the father, the Son and the Spirit. Jesus always testifies the unity between him and the father (Joh 10:30). And because Jesus and the father are one, the disciples also need to be "one" (John 17:11).

Further, man is created in God's image (Gen 1:26-27). "Then God said, Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness." Since we are created in the image of the Triune God, we also need "the other" to be in the perfect image of the creator. Man cannot live alone. God's intention for man was to live in community with him and with other people. We are designed to need God and each

other. Therefore God created Eve. The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Gen.2:18).

. The Body of Christ (1Cor 12:20-25; Eph 4:16)

God wants the oneness of the Trinity to be reflected in the oneness of the disciples. The best image for this is the "Body of Christ". The body of Christ refers first of all to the community of believers, the Church (1Cor 12:17-31). But since mission teams belong to the body of Christ, the description in 1Corinthians is also valid for them. Paul talks in Ephesians 4:12 about different works of service for the body of Christ. Mission teams are being part of the body and their work is for the body of Christ. That means that we are members of the body working with our gifts and talents interdependently to fulfill the great task which God has given to us. The body of Christ and its many different parts which are connected with each other are a good image for mission teams today. As members of Christ's body they live and work together to fulfill Christ's commandment.

"...we also need "the other" to be in the perfect image of the creator"

WHAT IS YOUR TEAM EXPERIENCE?

In March 1989, two weeks before our ceremony, I drove to the jewellers to pick up our wedding rings. The jeweller pulled the rings out of an envelope and handed them to me for inspection. Engraved on the inside of our bands I saw *Eccl 4-12*

It was a Biblical reference to the verse that states "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken"

This verse has been a prayer, a plea, and a promise in our marriage. Our marriage will only succeed because God is the third cord binding together two cords that are often entangled in their own sin, frayed by worry, and splintered when they try to do things on their own.

This cord analogy transfers to teamwork. Teamwork entwines the members gifts allowing the team to be stronger and more productive. Chaffing occurs in teams when our agendas don't align. Teammates often act as mirrors reflecting the idols of our heart. Without our interaction with them we are unable to view our sin and prideful spirit. The best functioning teams have humble members with a willingness to serve the task as well as their teammates.

Jerry and I have seen God work in our marriage and can tell you that He truly has been that third strand binding us together. We've also had the privilege of working on some wonderful teams because our teammates have been humbly seeking and serving God.



CAROLYN - WT France / WT Australia



WT France Team

2. Teams in the Bible

In the Bible we can find many examples of teams or groups of people who live and work together in community.

The Old Testament

Already the Old Testament tells us that living and working in community is better than being alone. Here we can already see a reflection of the Trinity. “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Eccl 4:9-12).

Jesus and the Twelve

The team of the twelve disciples was the first building block for the construction of the church: “He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons” (Mark 3:14). Jesus took them along to live with him in his discipleship school, he ministered to them, he taught them in order to send them into the world and make other disciples. Jesus sent out his twelve disciples two by two as partners (Lk 10:1). And finally the disciples were present as a group (team)

dedicated by Jesus at the birth of the church (Acts 1:15 + 25-26). Jesus knew that they need to be a team in order to encourage each other in difficulties (Luc 10:3), to teach each other, and to do ministry together.

Paul worked in teams

The Antioch church followed the model of working in teams when they sent out Paul and Barnabas as their missionaries (Acts 13:1-3). The apostle Paul maintained this basic principle of partnership and cooperation for the rest of his life, teaming up with people such as

Barnabas & John Mark (Acts: 13:3+13),
 Silas & Judas (15:22),
 Luke, Timothy (Ch 16),
 Priscilla & Aquilla (Ch18),
 Timothy & Erastus (19:22),
 Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25)
 and another large team (Acts 20:4).

Without his teams Paul could not have done the ministry of church planting in all those different areas. Sometimes when he left a new church plant, he would send a co-worker to continue with the group. He used his colleagues to send messages to the young Christians and to minister among them. He trusted them that through the power of the Holy Spirit they would often continue what he had started. For Paul, teamwork was a very fundamental and vital part of his ministry. ▶

WHAT IS YOUR TEAM EXPERIENCE?

Teamwork is defined by the businessdictionary.com as “the process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal.”. Another explanation states that “it is often necessary for colleagues to work well together, trying their best in any circumstance.”

Our circumstances are unique as we work amidst abject poverty, immense suffering, and a plethora of social issues. We are students of what works and doesn't work. We are amateur social scientists. If it were not for the collaboration of the Baka team, we would constantly be charting new courses. Because of team, we can listen to the successes and failures of our colleagues, share our own victories and defeats, and learn from our various experiences.

How is it working? As we look back over the years and remember the lack of desire for God's word, the blank faces of those to whom we desired to minister, and the complete absence of apparent motivation, we can say that we have reason to rejoice. Today we do have leaders who love Jesus among the Baka people. Today we do have faithful disciples who are beginning to disciple others. Today we have committed storytellers that are learning to tell God's story to their neighbors. We can say with confidence that God is at work in our team and in the hearts of our Baka neighbors. There is so much need, but we are grateful that we are doing this work in the community of team. There is much more we desire, but God refreshes us through a common vision, that the Baka will be counted among those around the throne of our Lord Jesus on the day He calls us home.

BARRY - WT Canada

3. What about our teams?

In team training it is important for the new team to talk about the expectations of the individual team members. How do we see our team? Is it just a working relationship, where we work together for a common goal or is it more than this? Has God brought us together to work towards his goals of bringing people to Christ, of discipling, of building communities of believers? As Christians we are also standing in a community relationship. A Christian team is more than just a working relationship. We are a reflection of the Trinity and need to live together in this Christian community and must live out Christian values in our team.

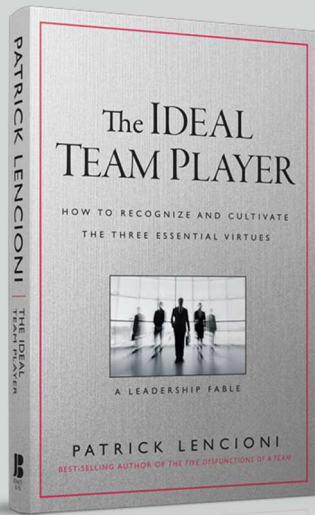
“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil 2:3-4). A Christian team should reflect the Trinity and the body of Christ. The question if there is a biblical base for team needs to be answered with yes. But there is even more than a working relationship in our teams. There is God-like community.

Detlef Gwinner - WT Europe



“...but God refreshes us through a common vision, that the Baka will be counted among those around the throne of our Lord Jesus ...”

- To Go Deeper -



"The Ideal Team Player" by Patrick Lencioni.

Stories are powerful. It has been about 5 months since I read "The Ideal Team Player" and I can still state it's main points. I also read 80% of the book in one sitting. That's because Lencioni builds his material around what he calls "a leadership fable," a fabricated case study illustrating the three essential virtues of an ideal team player. I could give you the points, but I think I'll learn from Lencioni and summarize the story...

Jeff is a leadership consultant looking for something new. He is invited to help his uncle run a small business, and before he knows it, he is in charge and faced with doubling his workforce. With the help of experienced people in his uncle's office, they conclude that they need a second project manager that is: humble, hungry (to get the job done) and (people) smart. As they interview candidates both inside and outside the company we meet some of the candidates. Nancy is humble and hungry (works hard), but ends up offending others around her (not people smart).

Ted is hungry (capable) and smart (likeable enough), but seems to ignore everyone "beneath him" (not humble). Tommy comes off as a nice guy (smart), not too full of himself (humble), but just never quite gets stuff done (not hungry). And then it hits them - there is somebody in the company that has all three traits, and would be up to the challenge. You'll have to read the book to find out who! I'll also leave you to find out what happened to Nancy, Ted and Tommy. I will tell you that some left the company, unable or unwilling to change, while others stayed and were trained to overcome shortcomings.

The final 25% of the book gives fuller definitions, model diagrams, and applications (for hiring, evaluating and training). But what stuck with me was the compelling story. I've already shared it with our field, and we've already seen it help us put words to questions of "Why didn't that work out?". The ideas in the book also guided our discussions with nine appointees that visited us within the last four months. I highly recommend you pick up a copy.

Dan - WT Cameroon

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Your comments, news items and content ideas are always welcome. Write Cindy at: global.coordinator@worldteam.org. Thank you!