tutorial 9.1

Introduction

This tutorial introduces Module 9 and its presenters. It also recaps the key concepts of the W.I.L.D. framework.

Welcome to Module 9 of the AccessTruth Curriculum. Throughout this module you will be introduced to a number of people working in different parts of the globe. You will hear some of their stories in a range of church planting contexts from around the world. We've put their descriptions into a framework of Word, Identity, Life, and Discipleship, the WILD framework.

But before getting into that, we'd like to introduce Rich Brown. Rich and his wife Karen worked for many years in a previously unreached people group in Indonesia. We invited Rich to have a part in Module 9 based on his experience in church planting:

It's a pleasure to be here. Yeah, we, my family and myself, served among people called the Moi. We lived there in Asia Pacific with them for a good number of years. Before the team moved in to live with them in early 2000, the Moi were pretty much unknown to the world. And they didn't have any Gospel witness. They had never heard of Christ, basically they'd been living the way they have for years, centuries. It was the Lord who brought a team together to share His Word with them because He loved them, even though they didn't yet know Him.

Learning their language and culture took a few years, and eventually we reached the place where we could begin to communicate God's Word to them. And as His Word says it doesn't return void. And we saw that play out in their lives. We had opportunity to see it communicated to them in a way they could understand. We taught them foundationally starting in Genesis and gave them a good concept of who God is. We had to actually come up with a name for the Creator, taking the verb "to create" and making it into a noun. God is the Creator so we talked about the Creator and His great love for them through creation, and how He loved mankind and created this planet for us. And then we introduced the fall, of course, and they identified themselves with Adam in the fall and their need to have a relationship with Him, and they wanted that.

So we saw just a small group initially respond, only eight actually, but we knew that it was just the beginning. And over the years, the Lord provided more opportunities to teach His Word, and more people who have come to know Him, and the church has really grown. And today we have people who are carrying on a lot of the same responsibility that we had. He's allowed us to see disciples made, not of us but of Christ. They love the Lord deeply and are willing to lay their lives down for one another.

It's amazing when you think about it. They were people who were actually incredibly selfish and self-centered, like we all are. Then the Holy Spirit entered into them and now they're walking with the Lord, they are quite selfless, and we've seen them be radically changed. And today they're serving one another and they're reaching out to people who haven't yet heard within their own tribe and now actually in other places as well. So yeah, it's pretty, pretty amazing.

So now we have elders in the church, and they're leading the church, and our coworkers, Steven and Carolyn, are still there finishing up the Bible translation. And we hope to see that done shortly. And myself, we've been able to now move on, and take on more responsibility to help others who are endeavoring to do the same things and I'm a mentor to people groups outside of the Moi area. I'm now helping as a consultant and providing help to others who are looking to the Lord to do the same type of things, working and reaching the unreached people groups.

We've had experience in seeing the Lord do some pretty cool things among the Moi, and we learned a whole lot along the way. I think if we were to do it over again, we would do some things differently for sure. But yeah, it's now an opportunity for us to be able to help others, and maybe they might not make some of the same mistakes. And it's been really neat to be able to visit some of the other ministry contexts, and to be able to speak into some of those things at times, and learn a lot, actually, along the way seeing as these contexts are not all the same. The challenges are not all the same. But a lot of times the principles that we are learning along the way can apply to these different locations and be of help. That's really our hearts' desire as we, my family and myself, are involved in trying to help others do well in the work the Lord has called them to. We'd also like to introduce Paul McIlwain. Paul and his wife Linda worked for eleven years in Papua New Guinea doing pioneering church planting work and Bible translation among a previously unreached people group. They have since been involved in church planting consultancy giving guidance to teams all around the world. They are passionate about seeing churches planted that are well equipped to carry on for future generations:

> We, my wife and I, worked in Papua New Guinea. We went there in the late '80's and we had the opportunity to go into a situation not all that dissimilar from Rich Brown's. I know that the area he was in was very remote and very, very cut off from the outside world. The situation we went into was a mountainous area that was cut off but not quite to the same degree, so that the people we worked with, that we lived among and got to know and really came to appreciate, had had some exposure to, let's say, a form of Christianity and to a church of some kind. But that had been heavily syncretized with their traditional animistic beliefs. And a local cult had existed in that area, a prosperity cult.

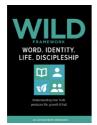
So there was a very confused worldview picture there. Their story, their narrative, was a very confused one with a lot of different influences coming in. So we had the opportunity to go in there and, like Rich Brown and his family, to learn their language and understand their culture to a degree, I guess as much as we were able. We lived in a small community up in the mountains and eventually shared God's Word, His Narrative and we saw a response, a tremendous response.

You feel the privilege of that, of being observers of things that God is doing. And yes, there's hard work involved and application and commitment, but really more and more you have this sense that you're observing, watching the things that God's doing through His Word. And I hope and trust that something that's going to come out through this material, through these resources, is a strong sense of dependence on God.

So we had the opportunity to be involved in a translation project and to see a literacy program developed and eventually to see a number of churches established in that area and then reach out, even cross culturally. Today there are a number of churches existing there. And we continue to go back and visit, but it's been some time.

W.I.L.D.

Now we're going to look at the content of this module to give you an idea of what we're covering. You may have already seen Module 7 of the AccessTruth Curriculum. This module is in some ways based on Module 7 in which we introduce WILD and what we call the WILD framework. It's a way of looking at any context in which truth is being shared through the lenses of Word, Identity, Life, and Discipleship.



For the purpose of this module, we're focusing on cross-cultural, pioneering church planting settings. In Module 7 we presented the material in a way that shows how these principles relate to any setting, whether that be in a western church setting or elsewhere. Wherever it is, the same principles are relevant because they come out of God's Word.

You can find the framework on the Access Truth website in the electronic version of the WILD outline. We recommend that you download it for reference as you go through this module.

Let's look at what is contained in the framework, starting with the area of Word. Each area includes questions that we can ask about any setting where truth is being shared, but again, in this context we are focusing specifically on crosscultural church planting settings.

WORD

- Are they able to access the Bible in a form that clearly and faithfully communicates God's revelation to them?
- Are they having God's Word presented to them in a way that allows it to enter and engage their hearts at a worldview level?
- Are they learning to give God's Word its proper place and authority?
- Are they growing in their ability to correctly understand God's Word as His complete Narrative, with Jesus Christ as the heart of the story and its interpretive key?
- Are they increasingly able to make use of God's Word as He intends for His children and His Church?

IDENTITY

- Are they increasingly clear about—and able to articulate —their true identity from God's perspective?
- Are they learning to see their story embedded in the larger Narrative of the Church, stretching back to Pentecost and forward to Christ's return?
- Are they growing in their understanding of the bonds that unite them to the global/local Body under Christ as its Head?

- Are they learning to view others according to truth, and rejecting the divisions, biases and tensions that often define the wider society?
- Are they growing in their understanding of how to appropriately represent the Lord in their current spheres of contact and in others He might lead them to be involved in?

LIFE

- Are they experiencing a deepening relationship with Jesus, learning to depend more completely on Him in different areas of their lives, and gradually seeing their values and behavior change as a result?
- Are they gaining clarity about the true purpose for which they exist, and are they increasingly able to identify those things that hinder their life in Christ?
- Are they increasingly able to make good decisions based on their understanding of God's local and global purposes, and to use their time, money and other resources accordingly?
- Are they learning to shape the form of what they do to serve whatever function they are convinced will lead to the fulfillment of God's objectives?
- Are they growing in their commitment to reproducing the life they have in Christ, are they equipped with the resources and skills to do so, and are they prioritizing opportunities where there is real need and hunger?

DISCIPLESHIP

- Are they seeing all other ties, loyalties and commitments being increasingly defined by their primary relationship: disciples of their Master, Jesus Christ.
- Are they being helped to apply the general truth from God's Word to their own specific real-life situations?
- Are they able to access regular, godly input and genuine friendships that intentionally help them along as they follow Jesus in the walk of faith?
- Are they being encouraged to function in the areas in which God has gifted and given them abilities so they can develop in their service to Him and His Body?
- Are they being given access to Bible-based resources that adequately equip them to be involved in the function and outreach of the Body, in local and global contexts?

Building, Body, Bride

In future tutorials we will get into some of the questions above in detail. We'll be hearing from people who talk about complex challenges surrounding these questions and their experience of seeing those challenges play out.

To conclude this particular tutorial, let's think about three primary images for the church that we find in God's Word. As we see God using these images, we are better able to picture the church from God's perspective, and to relate to it as His servants. To help us think this through, let's look at Ephesians 2:20-22:

Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

We are participants in what God wants to do in reaching this world and making disciples of Christ but we need to remember that we're also disciples of Christ ourselves. We're not only part of this building; we're also involved in making other parts of the same building. It's a unique picture. One of the things we see in God's Word is this great care that God has taken with the process of building His temple. This comes out in 1 Corinthians 3:10:

Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful.

That's actually quite an important warning for us. You see the care that God has taken. He's very intentional about how to go about building His church, and He's giving us the privilege to be involved with that. He has planned out how it should be done and He has given us His Word as a guide. So we need to follow that blueprint and not just go about doing things our own way.

We have to take real care to ensure we are engaged on all levels, including our minds. This is important because God is not this detached architect doing this project; He's fully engaged, He's fully committed. We should be too. There's this sense of authority and connection that He has with His church, which comes out in Ephesians 4: 16- 17:

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

The apostle Paul is trying to use these different analogies to help us understand that the church is something that God loves dearly. He wants us to be able to grasp that and so he's using these different pictures. Here he uses the analogy of the body. Each believer is a member of the body—you and I and the rest of the church. We get to participate in seeing this body develop and grow and come to maturity.

There's a sense of partnership that's in this great project that God's involved in. We see a reflection of His authority, and we get to be involved by choice, by commitment. But it's not just detached or theoretical. Christ is emotionally invested in the formation of His church. Ephesians 5:25-26 reflects this picture:

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's Word.

And then in Revelation 19:7, as we look to the fulfillment of all that God is working toward, it shows us a great vision:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.

Our emotions are involved too, aren't they? We've got our intellect and our wills, our commitment and also the love that He gives us for His body, His church. We'll see that reflected in future tutorials as we look at case studies of people who are giving their lives to be involved in the task which Christ Himself, our Master, left to His church, that He loves so much and in which He has invested so much.



- 1. As you listen to the two contexts described in this tutorial, use the following headings to note anything that you think could have been significant barriers to the Gospel.
 - Physical
 - Linguistic
 - Cultural
 - Relational
 - Other challenges related to the country or context



1. Research and in a short paragraph describe 'Animism'. Note down your sources of information. (You will find a 2-part video series about Animism in AccessTruth.com)

- 2. Research and in a short paragraph describe 'Syncretism'. Note down your sources of information.
- 3. Download and read through the WILD outline e-book (found in the files section of this tutorial).