

LRRP: INTEGRAL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

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LRRP: Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (“lurp”)

Different does not mean disqualified.

I was recently reminded of the integral part LRRPs played in the Vietnam War. With “integral” I mean to say they were “necessary to the completeness of the whole.”

When I was visiting with some friends outside San José recently, I was told of a dear brother and fellow missionary who had spoken poorly of me before I ever arrived. His comment was, “**Greg likes to work alone**” and the implication of that statement was that **I am not qualified nor am I able to participated in the Mission** that God has given to each member of the Body of Christ (the mission of edification; Eph 4.11-16).

A Lesson in LRRPs

LRRPs penetrated deep into hostile territory for a variety of mission-critical tasks such as gathering intelligence, capturing prisoners, search-and-rescue, and search-and-destroy. As the name suggests, LRRP missions would take a soldier far from base and require him to work alone or in a small tactical team. Because of the nature of LRRP work, it took a special kind of soldier, one who was tough, who had plenty of endurance, and who had the mental hardness required of those who often found themselves alone and deep within the enemy's own territory.

LRRPs were often accused of being loners and of not working well in a team dynamic. This myopic view of the LRRPs reveals an ignorance of how the military functions. Each individual soldier is assigned a task and when he carries out that task, he is helping to accomplish the mission in conjunction with the rest of the soldiers on the team.

Different tasks require different kinds of people.

The task of a LRRP was inherently individualistic. This, however, did not diminish their contribution to the mission. LRRPs were different than most soldiers, but that does not mean that they were disqualified from the mission. Quite the opposite was true! They were mission-critical; they were essential to the mission and played an integral part (a necessary part) in the war in Vietnam.

A Lesson from the LRRPs

Each and every born-again Christian has been created anew in Christ Jesus for a specific set of mission-critical works that God has ordained that he should complete.

Ephesians 2.10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The particular personality, gift cluster, and skill set that a Christian brings to the Mission is a work of the grace of God in him, and each Christian should strive to labor abundantly according to that grace (according to how God has made him in Christ).

1Corinthians 15.10

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

God has placed each and every Christian in the Body as the member that He (God) wants him (the Christian) to be.

1Corinthians 12.18

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

God's grace is manifold ("many folded," multifaceted), and therefore the Body of Christ reflects that in the diversity among the members. No two members are exactly alike and God has designed it that way in order to accomplish a complex and global mission. We should strive to be good stewards of the gifts that God has given to us, and we do that by completing the work He has given to us. In that, the Lord is glorified!

1Peter 4.10-11

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Greg's Gifts & Calling

I am a member of the Body of the Christ. I was born again by the Spirit of God in 1988 when a dear friend, Shane Sanderson, shared the Gospel with me. From the moment of my conversion, the enduring desire of my heart has been to study the Scriptures in order to preach and teach the same to God's people—to feed the sheep and fend off the wolves (Acts 20.28-32). If God, therefore, has gifted me in the area of teaching, it is my responsibility before Him to give myself wholly to that task.

Romans 12.6-8

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us... he that teacheth, [let him wait on / serve in] teaching...

Therefore, as a pastor-teacher, God expects me to perfect the saints through the teaching, preaching, and application of His Scripture (Eph 4.11-12 cf. Col 1.27-28; 2Tim 3.15-4.5). Therefore, the very nature of my calling and gifts as a pastor-teacher requires that I spend extensive time in prayerful study of the Bible.

Acts 6.4

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

1Timothy 4.13, 16

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ... Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

2Timothy 2.15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

I take my calling and my responsibility as a pastor-teacher very seriously because I know that one day I will be held accountable for my actions before the Lord who made me, by His grace, what I am (Jam 3.1; 2Cor 5.10). Also, God clearly states that the best gifts are those of apostle (missionary), prophets (preachers), and teachers; and He exhorts us to “covet earnestly” these gifts (1Cor 12.28, 31). This is precisely the desire of my heart.

Question: Does Greg like to work alone?

Well of course I do! I wake up at 4:00 a.m. every day in order to have time alone with God in the Bible and prayer. Then I dedicate the majority of my workday to the study of Scripture in order to “feed the sheep and fend off the wolves” (teaching and preaching the Word, preparing didactic materials to the same end, etc.). This is my calling, my gift, my responsibility, and my most profound desire and delight.

Question: Does Greg not work well in a team?

Of course I can work in a team! My personality, gift cluster, and skill set might be different from most, but that does not mean that I do not work well with a team, striving toward a common goal.

At Eastside Church I surrounded myself with **a team of leaders** who have strengths where I have weaknesses, and worked together in the Mission: Carlos, Alex, Simón, Ronald, Jorge, Salem, Raul (to name a few).

I labored for years as a **“two-man team” with Will**, hitting the streets to evangelize and then teaching the Bible to small groups in order to disciple those that God

gave us.

I worked as a team with Oscar in the development of several (very popular) web sites: evangelismobiblico.com, discipuladobiblico.com, and fingiendo.com.

I have also worked with Marco Castro and the [Qué dice la Biblia...](http://Que dice la Biblia...) Spanish Bible Institute, teaching the Book of Romans.

I could go on...

Back to the LRRPs



I am much like the LRRPs in that, yes, a lot of my work is done alone. It takes hours upon hours to study and prepare to teach God's Word. Not many in the Body of Christ are called to dedicate themselves to that kind of work, but some are. That, however, does not mean that our task is not "mission-critical," nor does it mean that we do not work well with others in a team. We are all the team! We are the Body of Christ! And each member is called upon to do the work God has designed him to do.

A Plea to the Brethren

To all my beloved brothers in Christ, I would like to say this (and I say it with love and with a desire for Christ to be glorified in and through us): Let's stop speaking poorly of each other simply because we are different. Remember:

Different does not mean disqualified.

God has called us to love one another and part of that love is to suffer long with those whose personality might irritate us, to not be puffed up thinking we are the only personality type that God uses, to bear all things, and to endure all things (1Cor 13).

If you call yourself a Christian, as I do, then you are Christ's disciple, as I am (Acts 11.26). Let's start acting like it so that together (as members of the same team) we can glorify God by finishing the work He has given us to do (John 17.4).

John 13.34-35

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Let's remember, too, that we are all equals; we are all servants of the same Master (there is only one Master, the rest are equally His servants). Each servant has been given by the Master a task to complete (Eph 2.10). It is not becoming of us as servants to exalt ourselves and speak ill of others serving the same Master, but in a different capacity in order to complete a different task.

Romans 14.4

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

To judge a brother who is striving to faithfully serve the Lord is not becoming of those who name the name of Christ.

Romans 14.10

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

My Parting Words

The LRRPs in Vietnam were often accused of being loners and not being "team players." That is a myopic perspective of the mission. LRRPs were an integral part of the mission in the Vietnam War, just as each and every member of the Body of Christ is an integral part in the Great Commission.

Each member is different because each task is unique (Eph 2.10). Each member is integral because each is necessary for the completeness of the whole (without the members there would be no body; 1Cor 12.18). That is the nature of a body: unity in diversity (1Cor 12.19-31).

Our diversity is essential if we hope to fulfill the Mission God has given us to do. So, let's stop the division amongst ourselves over personalities, and let's get busy laboring together as a team for the common goal of edifying the Body of Christ in love, each member doing what God called him and equipped him to do.

Ephesians 4.16

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Categoría: **Ministry**