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ABSTRACT

A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR LOCAL CHURCH
ELDERS/LEADERS IN NORTHEAST INDIA

by

Kongyui Awungshi Shimray

Adviser: Nancy Jean Vyhmeister

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS/LEADERS IN
NORTHEAST INDIA

Name of researcher: Kongyui Awungshi Shimray

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, Ed.D.

Date completed: May 2001

Problem

Local church elders and leaders in the Northeast India Union have regularly cared for nurturing and evangelism within the church. They have performed pastoral responsibilities because there are only eighteen paid district pastors in charge of over 130 organized churches and more than 300 companies. However, elders and leaders have no training to perform the task effectively. To enable local church elders and leaders to minister effectively, leadership training is required.

Method

The project considered first the concept of Christ's servant leadership as a basis for the work of elders and local leaders within the church. It also reviewed Christ's method of

training the Twelve as a model of servant leadership. A biblical perspective on the duties and qualifications of elders/leaders and deacons was studied. My past twelve years of experience as a Union Church Ministries Director helped me to ascertain the most needed areas for local leadership training.

A training program was designed for elders/leaders and deacons. Three workshops were developed in detail, with lessons and other instructions. The topics were spiritual formation for elders/leaders, how to conduct Bible studies for nonmembers, and how to preach sermons.

Results

Following the pilot training program, church attendance improved and tithes and offerings increased. Lay participation in evangelism and in nurturing increased. In addition, the morale of congregations was improved.

Conclusions

Local church elders/leaders and deacons appointed to a position may not know how to adequately perform their duties. To equip the local church leaders, the church should schedule, together with the district pastor and local conference, a training program once or twice a year as a continuous educational program for the church.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR LOCAL CHURCH
ELDERS/LEADERS IN NORTHEAST INDIA

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is a growing church. There is vital interest in qualitative and quantitative growth with a view to the progressive fulfillment of the church's commission. From its inception, the SDA Church has labored to fulfill the commission of Jesus Christ: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19, 20).¹ This indicates that the growth is more than just a multiplication of numbers. Hillock points out that "growth will consist not only in numbers but more importantly in personal dimensions, in spiritual values, and in human capacities."² Each local church must then be aware of how to fulfill the commission for "discipling" members, that is, helping them become like Christ.

I believe that the setting for this discipling or educational process is the local church. The local church is where the action of inreach, nurture, and outreach or

¹All Scripture quotations, unless noted otherwise, are from the New International Version.

²Wilfred M. Hillock, *Involved: An Introduction to Church Participation and Management* (Nashville: Southern Publishing, 1977), 129.

evangelism takes place.¹ Thus a major concern of both ministers and laity must be the discovery of how laity can be enlisted and equipped to increase lay participation in every area of church life. This is particularly important in local church leadership, if the church is to be an effective witness and impact today's society. The focus of this project is on equipping lay leaders to assume much larger and more meaningful leadership roles in their local church.

The church has a crucial responsibility to create a nurturing climate, as well as to provide opportunity and the necessary leadership training to enable local church elders/leaders² and deacons to effectively assume pastoral roles in each local church. This is a vital need today, if the SDA Church is to make a lasting impact upon the people in Northeast India.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a training program in pastoral responsibilities, nurturing, and outreach for local church elders/leaders and deacons of the SDA Church in Northeast India. The training programs will be used for elders of organized churches as well as leaders of organized companies. Deacons will be included also, since they are, in effect, church leaders.

¹See Kenneth O. Swanson, "A Training Program for the Elder, Deacon, and Deaconess" (D.Min. Project Report, Andrews University, 1986), 2.

²According to the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, companies have leaders, whereas churches have elders. See *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 15th ed. (Pune, India: Oriental Watchman, 1995), 36.

Justification for the Project

Pastoral responsibilities in Northeast India congregations are being carried out by local church elders and leaders of companies. There are 130 organized churches, 300 companies, and more than 150 isolated members. The total membership of the Union is over 26,500. There are only eighteen district pastors and twenty field evangelists to look after the churches, companies, and isolated members. District pastors cannot visit churches to provide pastoral care as often as they would like because so many churches and companies are under one pastor's care. Thus, the local church elders and company leaders carry out the pastoral responsibilities in their respective churches. These lay leaders need to be trained and equipped to minister more effectively.

Sixty percent of the baptisms in the Northeast India Union are the result of lay pastoral ministries. Lay leaders do their work without depending on financial assistance from the local section or conference. A systematic training program will enable local church elders/leaders and deacons to do their work more effectively.

Limitations of the Project

This project is limited to the training of local church elders/leaders and deacons. Obviously, they are not the only local church leaders. There are others, such as Sabbath school leaders and teachers, personal ministries directors, treasurers, clerks, youth leaders, and deaconesses. All must eventually be trained. The preparation for local church elders/leaders and deacons for ministry is only the beginning of the leadership training needed in the local church.

Furthermore, this project develops only three of the many areas in which local church leaders in Northeast India need training to do their ministry more effectively. Thus, other educational and training events must be planned to assist local church leaders to be better equipped and more effective in ministry.

Description of the Project

The project is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction, includes the purpose of the study, the justification for undertaking it, and the limitations of the project. Chapter 2 deals with the New Testament understanding of leadership based on Christ's selfless model and on leadership in the Acts and Epistles. Chapter 3 describes important concepts on leadership in the New Testament and the writings of Ellen G. White. Chapter 4 reviews current literatures on training programs for local church leaders. Chapter 5 provides the training design and a description of the structure and contents of each of the three workshops that are central to the implementation of the envisioned training program. Chapter 6 includes summary, conclusions, and recommendations. Appendix A contains complete materials to present the workshop. A bibliography of materials used in the study and suggested sources for further study completes the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Ted Engstrom affirms: "New Testament leadership is not flashy public relations and platform personality, but humble service to the group. The work of God is to be carried on by spiritual power, not personal magnetism."¹

A study of leadership in the New Testament church must be considered in two phases. The first centers around the life of Christ and the twelve apostles. The second part grows naturally out of the first phase and has to do with leadership in local churches, as depicted in Acts and Epistles.

Christ's Selfless Servant Model of Leadership

The purpose of this section is to seek to understand Christ's servant model of leadership as well as His teachings on servant leadership.

Christ's Example

Engstrom defines leadership as "what leaders do." He says simply: "leaders lead."² Fred Smith gives a similar definition: "To be a leader is to have somebody follow you. . . .

¹Ted W. Engstrom, *The Making of a Christian Leader* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 41.

²Ibid., 19.

Leader is not a title but a role. You only become a leader by functioning as one.”¹

According to these definitions, Christ was definitely a leader.

Jesus described His role as a leader in John 10.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. . . . I am the gate. . . . The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. (John 10:11, 9, 2-5, 7)

In this passage Jesus shows His attitude as a leader of His sheep. Says Philip Greenslade: “He is the model for the pastoral ministry.”²

The willingness to sacrifice His life for the sheep portrays Christ as the sacrificial servant. This attitude originates with the Father. Jesus points out that He received the command to lay down His life from His father (John 10:18).

Christ is primarily the servant of God, not of the sheep. Likewise, leaders are primarily the servants of God, not of men. Their first duty is to obey the command of God.³ Jesus said to His disciples, “If you obey my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love” (John 15:10).

The example of Christ includes leadership based on love, gentleness, and humility. Also important are His use of authority and His goal orientation.

¹Fred Smith, *Learning to Lead* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1986), 22.

²Philip Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness and Servanthood* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1984), 107.

³Smith, 24.

Leadership Based on Love

Without understanding the love of Jesus as a leader, the study of biblical leadership remains incomplete.¹ Jesus Himself said: "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Commenting on this passage, Greenslade says that this is "a unique redemptive sacrifice."²

The expression of God's love was manifested through Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Christ clearly described His model of leadership: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve. . . . I am among you as one who serves" (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27). He unselfishly gave His life, dying on the cross. R. R. Breitigam says: "The secret of Christ's success as a teacher was his great love for individuals, whoever they were and wherever he found them. It is only in the light of the cross of Calvary that we can understand how high a value he placed on each soul."³

The leader who cares about the spiritual needs of the flock needs to study Christ's method of seeking the lost. Ellen G. White wrote:

The parable of the good shepherd represents the responsibility of every minister and of every Christian who has accepted a position as teacher of the children and youth. The one that has strayed from the fold is not followed with harsh words

¹T. Engstrom, 37.

²Greenslade, 107.

³R. R. Breitigam, *The Teacher Sent from God* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1960), 101.

and a whip but with winning invitations to return. . . . He leaves the rest of the sheep, and his whole energies are taxed to find the one that is lost.¹

The way Christ dealt with erring members is demonstrated in His dealing with Peter (John 21:15-19). Of this Ellen G. White says,

Christ mentioned to Peter only one condition of service. . . . "Lovest thou Me?" This is the essential qualification. Though Peter might possess every other, yet without the love of Christ he could not be a faithful shepherd over the flock of God.

. . . Without the love of Christ in the heart, the work of the Christian minister is a failure.²

Gentleness and Meekness

The Greek word *praius* and its family denote gentle meekness. They describe true humility which banishes all pride.³ *Praiis* refers to a humble heart, which is also meekness before God, not only before human beings. In Gal 5:23, gentleness is associated with self-control, and called a gift of the Spirit.⁴ Peter says that gentleness is an adornment of the Christian profession (1 Pet 3:4).

Quoting Zech 9:9, Matthew describes the Messiah as "gentle and riding on a donkey" (Matt 21:5). Paul recognized this characteristic of Jesus when he appealed to the Corinthian to listen to him, "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor 10:1). Here

¹Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1943), 198.

²Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 515.

³William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The Daily Study Bible (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 1977-1987), 97.

⁴W. E. Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 401; see also Col 3:12; Eph 4:2.

Paul uses with *praüs* another Greek word, *epieikeia*, "gentleness or meekness." Vine interprets this second word as "sweet reasonableness," "forbearing."¹

Christ used *praüs* in His description of the citizens of His kingdom: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5). He also used the word to describe His own disposition:

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle [*praüs*] and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Matt 11:28-30)

Ellen G. White comments that this text is the deepest invitation of Christ to every human being--to those who are distressed and burdened with care, sorrow, anxieties, and trials--to come to Him, for He carries us upon His heart, because "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa 53:6). Jesus has borne the burden of our guilt. He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of human beings--their temptations, wants, anxieties, and sorrows.² Jesus "has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin" (Heb 4:15).

Ellen G. White goes on to say: "The yoke is an instrument of service--by this illustration Christ teaches us that we are called to service as long as life shall last."³

¹Ibid., 263.

²Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 328-329.

³Ibid., 329.

Matthew Henry says: "It is a yoke that is lined with love--the love of God and the hope of Heaven will make it easy."¹

Another form of the Greek *praüs* is the word used to describe an animal that has been domesticated, trained to obey the word of command, and has learned to accept the control of a master.² In this sense, "meekness" refers to a person who is completely controlled by God, in whose service we find perfect freedom and peace.³

Humility

The next aspect of Jesus' selfless servant model of leadership is humility. The words "humbleness" and "humility" come from the Greek *tapeinos*, primarily signifying "low-lying." The word is used metaphorically, in a good sense in the New Testament, to denote humble mindedness (1 Pet 3:8), lowliness of mind (Col 3:12), and humility of mind (Acts 20:19).⁴

The humbleness of Jesus was not an accident; it was expressed in His incarnation. He gave up His heavenly glory, humbled Himself, and came down to this earth to save mankind. Paul described this in his letter to the Philippians.

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in

¹*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible in One Volume*, ed. Leslie F. Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 1263.

²Barclay, *Matthew*, 97.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Vine, 314.

human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross! (Phil 2:6-8)

Ellen G. White repeated the same thought in different words.

Christ humbled Himself from the highest authority, from the position of one equal with God, to the lowest place, that of a servant. . . . In His lessons of instruction to His disciples Jesus taught them that His kingdom was not a worldly kingdom, where all were striving for the highest position.¹

Jesus' unique love for people and His humility were coupled with patience. He worked very closely with His disciples. He knew their weaknesses, yet He dealt with them gently and with much patience.² Describing His patience, Gangel says:

Patience seems to have been as much a part of the character of our Lord as it is unlike many of us. On numerous occasions during the years of their time together, Jesus found it necessary to exercise the greatest patience with these slow learners who somehow didn't even understand the whole process when they saw the empty tomb and the risen Lord.³

At the last supper Jesus showed His disciples an example of true humility. The Gospel of John tells the story.

When He had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." (John 13:12-15)

Merrill Tenney says that Jesus' action "was a voluntary humiliation that rebuked

¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 3:566.

²Ibid.

³Kenneth O. Gangel, *Lessons in Leadership from the Bible* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 90.

the pride of the disciples.”¹ Ellen G. White comments: “This action opened the eyes of the disciples. Bitter shame and humiliation filled their hearts. They understood the unspoken rebuke and saw themselves in altogether a new light.”²

In washing the disciples’ feet, Jesus gave an example of “the inner attitude of humble and voluntary service for others.”³ Jesus portrayed to the disciples the true nature of Christian living: serving one another in humility and in love.⁴ The whole life of Christ was under the law of service. He ministered to all, regardless of who they were. Jesus the Savior of all came to be the servant of all.⁵

Authority

Jesus’ leadership was authoritative. He came with the authority of God the Father. He said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt 28:18). Because of this, “He taught as one who had authority and not as the teachers of the law” (Matt 7:29). Jesus spoke with divine authority, whereas the Jewish scholars, who were professionally trained in the development, teaching, and application of Old Testament law, spoke with human authority.⁶ Jesus spoke with authority and with authority He cast out

¹Merrill C. Tenney, “The Gospel of John,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 9:135.

²White, *Desire of Ages*, 644.

³Tenney, 9:138.

⁴Ibid.

⁵White, *Desire of Ages*, 651.

⁶“Matthew,” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC)*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1980), 5:362.

devils (Matt 10:1). The Son of Man had authority to forgive sin (Luke 5:24). Speaking of His own life, he said: "I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again" (John 10:18). Finally, Jesus had full authority to judge the world because He was the Son of God (John 5:27). Yet, Jesus chose to dress His authority in love and gentleness.

Goal Orientation

The leadership of Jesus was goal oriented. He knew why He had come to earth and what He had to accomplish. He affirmed: "I have come that they may have life and that they may have it to the full" (John 10:10).

Christ's goal in life is clearly and briefly stated: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). Reinhold Bietz comments: "Everything He did contributed to the achievement of that goal, His exemplary life, His teaching, His preaching, His healing, His death, and His resurrection--all served to save that which was lost."¹ His attitude of attention to His goal is seen in Luke's statement: "As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51).

Besides His goal of saving human beings, Jesus had other goals. He wanted to create unity between God and human beings and among His followers. For this He fervently prayed the night before the crucifixion (John 17).²

According to Perry, another goal of Christ's leadership was "to exhibit to the

¹Reinhold R. Bietz, *Jesus the Leader* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1980), 10.

²White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:236.

entire world the wisdom and grace of God.”¹ This would be done through evangelizing the whole world (Matt 28:19-20).

Christ also proposed that through His training of the disciples as leaders the church should be built up. “I will build my church” (Matt 16:18). The church was to be His building, not man’s. His leaders would serve Him by serving His church and by making His aims their aims.² His disciples would carry out the task, equipping the church until it would come into oneness.³

His Teaching

Jesus was a revolutionary, not in rebellion against authority, but in His teaching on leadership. Normally, the greater or most important person controls others, forcing them to obey commands. Jesus taught otherwise.

Servants First

Jesus taught His disciples that if they wished to be great, they should first be servants: “The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt 23:11-12). The term servant speaks of low prestige, low respect, low honor. But when Jesus used the term, it became a synonym for greatness.⁴ And that was a revolutionary idea.

¹Lloyd Perry, *Getting the Church on Target* (Chicago: Moody, 1977), 32.

²Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness*, 114.

³Ibid.

⁴J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Secunderabad: OM Books, 1999), 21.

In a similar vein, Jesus taught His disciples that they should become as children. Only if they became “least” could they become great (Luke 9:48). For the followers of Jesus, “service alone is the badge of greatness.”¹ Service consists of doing things for others; the greater the service, the greater the honor.

Jesus knew that the idea of leader as “loving servant of all”² would not appeal to most people. But servant leadership is His requirement for those who want to lead in His kingdom. Christ taught this and demonstrated it in His life: “I am among you as He who serves” (Luke 22:27).

Ellen G. White writes: “The whole life of Christ had been a life of unselfish service.”³ Christ said, “I did not come to be served but to serve” (Matt 20:28); this was “the lesson of His every act.”⁴

Jesus established a new model of church leadership. It is a model that teaches believers to think of one another instead of themselves. Anything short of a ministry of care and concern is a denial of the New Testament understanding of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:9).⁵ “The church is painfully in need of leaders” who are “loving servant[s] of all,”⁶ who focus on the service they can render to God and other people, not

¹Barclay, *Matthew*, 232.

²Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 22.

³White, *Desire of Ages*, 642.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Russell Burrill, *The Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart, 1997), 53.

⁶Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 18, 20.

on "coaxing or inducing others to serve" them.¹

Ellen G. White puts it beautifully: "Unless there is practical self-sacrifice for the good of others, in the family circle, in the neighborhood, in the church, and wherever we may be, then whatever our profession, we are not Christians."²

"Not As the Gentiles"

The Twelve were ambitious, each wanting to be the first and greatest among the disciples.

Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:24-27; cf. Matt 20:25-28)

The question of rank and status was considered normal; it played an important role in the life of the Jews, but had no place in Jesus' value system. Instead, the greatest in His kingdom was to serve others.

Earthly kings were evaluated by the power they exercised. Their leadership style is described as "exercising lordship." Luke uses the verb *kurieuō*, which appears frequently in the New Testament to describe the authority of God (Rom 14:9). Matt 20:25 and Mark 10:42 use a more emphatic word, *katakurieuō*, to describe Gentile rulers; this word is also used of the control of demons over men (Acts 19:16), or the negative behavior of elders

¹Ibid., 15.

²White, *Desire of Ages*, 642.

with the saints in the church (1 Pet 5:3). This verb is never used positively of Christian leadership. On this text, Matthew Henry commented: "The way to be great and chief is to be humble and serviceable."¹

Desiring to be great is not in itself a sin, but "it is the motivation that determines ambition's character."² The word "ambition" comes from a Latin word meaning "campaigning for promotion."³ The phrase suggests a variety of elements: social visibility and approval, popularity, the exercise of authority over others. Ambitious people want to enjoy the power that comes with money and authority: "Jesus had no time for such ego-driven ambitions," and true spiritual leaders will never "campaign for promotion."⁴ To put it simply, "Christian leadership is not authoritarian control over the minds and behavior of other people."⁵ Ellen G. White says, "There should be no rivalry, no self-seeking, no desire for the highest place."⁶

In conclusion, Christ's leadership originated in heaven and was motivated by the love of God. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son to this world, not to be served but to serve. On earth He set an example of servant leadership. He was gentle, humble, patient, and compassionate.

¹*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, 1307.

²Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 14.

³*Ibid.*, 15.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵T. Engstrom, 40.

⁶White, *Desire of Ages*, 439.

Christ's model of leadership is not found in rank or position but in service. He led and spoke with divine authority, and in all His ministry He had one objective: to redeem sinners. He taught His disciples to follow His model, to serve others first, not to be served, and to rule over the flock of God in gentleness.

Local Church Elders and Leaders in Acts and Epistles

When dealing with the issue of New Testament leadership, we turn to the book of Acts and the Epistles because these writings provide some patterns for church government. They describe church organization and its leadership even though the church was just beginning to take shape. It is clear from the historical record that church leadership was instituted soon after the church was established (Acts 14:22, 23).

Elders played an important role in the council of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 15.¹ Obviously they were influential in the foundation and life of the early church. As the church began to expand, the process of identifying church leadership became more clearly defined. The church developed leaders called elders.²

Paul served the churches according to God's plan for His church, moving from place to place and, as soon as there were believers in the local congregation who were mature enough, appointing elders. Paul and Barnabas went back to the cities where they had previously "won a large number of disciples." They strengthened and encouraged

¹See Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23; 16:4.

²Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 20:17; 21:18; 1 Tim 3; 4:14; Titus 1:5; Jas 5:14; 2 Pet 5:1.

them “to remain true to the faith” and then “appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord in whom they had put their trust” (Acts 14:21-23).

Gene Getz comments that the appointing of elders was consistent with Paul’s usual practice. He commissioned Titus to do the same thing: to strengthen believers, organize churches, and appoint elders in every church (Titus 1:5).¹

The Elder

The New Testament uses three different and, to some extent, interchangeable words to refer to leaders in the early Christian church. The Greek words are *presbyteros*, *episkopos*, and *poimēn*.

Presbyteros

The most common word used for church leaders was *presbyteros*, with the basic meaning of “old.” It refers to a person who has the experience of age.²

¹Gene A. Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 101.

²L. Coenen, “Bishop, Elders,” *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (NIDNTT)*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 1:188; Ralph Earle, “1 & 2 Timothy,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 11:363; John F. MacArthur, *The Master’s Plan for the Church* (Pune: Grace to India, 1999), 18.

The Jewish leaders were called "elders."¹ This made it easy for the Christians to use the same term. Later, when the churches were established in Jerusalem and in other parts of the world, the word was used to refer to the "elders of the church."² The term is used repeatedly in Acts and in the pastoral epistles.

Episkopos

The term *episkopos* comes from the verb *episkopeō*, meaning to oversee, to care for, to have oversight. The root word from which the word overseer is derived denotes the activity of looking at or paying attention to a person or thing.³ This word is usually translated as "bishop" and refers to the administrative aspects of leadership, as well as to the caring aspect.⁴ It appears in Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1, 2; Titus 1:7. The function of oversight appears in 1 Pet 5:1-3.

Many have suggested that the term "bishop" is used to refer to the office and the word "elder" has to do with the person. This may be true, but a more significant explanation has been put forward by Getz, who suggests that Paul used the word "bishop"

¹J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul--The Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Macmillan, 1881), 96.

²Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18. Getz notes that *presbyteros* is most frequently used in reference to elders in the church at Jerusalem, which was made up primarily of Jewish Christians (Getz, 103-105). There are also numerous references to "elders" in Revelation.

³Coenen, 1:188.

⁴Ibid.

more frequently than other New Testament writers to communicate more effectively to the mixture of converted Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament church.¹ Paul used the word "bishop" with references to churches in Philippi (Phil 1:1), Ephesus (1 Tim 3:1-2), and Crete (Titus 1:7). All of these churches had been founded in a pagan world and were composed of both Jew and Gentile converts. Getz continues: "If this be true, it means Paul was again mindful of how important it is to communicate in the language of the people. He wanted to bring both groups together in oneness, to show them there was no barrier or 'dividing wall' but rather 'one new Man'."²

So whether called elders (a term well known to Jews), bishops (a term well known to Greeks), or shepherds, or overseers, the title referred to the same office. The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* suggests that even though Paul used different titles in Timothy and Titus, they referred to the same office and were used interchangeably.³ The matter is not one of title, but that these men were appointed to lead the local church. They were probably New Testament "pastor-teachers" (Eph 4:11, 12).

Poimēn

The word *poimēn* means "shepherd." The *poimēn* was the person who cared for the sheep. This word clearly points to the function of the elder, who cares for the flock,

¹Getz, 104.

²Ibid.

³Earle, 11:363.

seeing that they are protected and nourished.¹ The English “pastor” comes from a Latin word that means “shepherd.”

Peter wrote to the scattered believers in Asia, more specifically, “to the elders among you. . . . Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers” (1 Pet 5:1-5).

The Relationship of the Three Words

Peter uses the Greek word *poimēn*, meaning “shepherd,” to describe the “elder,” emphasizing the idea of caring for or herding.² Putting the three words together, the “elder” is a ruler, superintendent, spiritual guardian, or leader of the people, an older and mature person.³

The evidence indicates that all three terms refer to the same office. The qualifications for a bishop/elder, listed in 1 Tim 3:1-7, and those for an elder in Titus 1:6-9 are unmistakably parallel. In fact in Titus, Paul uses both terms to refer to the same man (1:5, 7).

First Peter 5:1-2 brings all these terms together,

Therefore I exhort the elders [*presbyteros*] among you, as your fellow-elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd [*poimainō*] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight [*episkopeō*] not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God. (1 Pet 5:1-2 NASB)

¹E. Beyreuther, “Shepherd,” *NIDNTT*, 3:564.

²*Ibid.*, 3:564.

³Coenen, 1:190-191.

Acts 20 also uses all three terms interchangeably.¹ In vs. 17 Paul called all the elders (*presbyteros*) of the church to hear his farewell message. In vs. 28 he says, "Be on your guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopos*), to shepherd (*poimainō*) the church of God."

In conclusion, the term elder emphasizes who the person is. Bishop speaks of what he does, and pastor (shepherd) deals with how he ministers. All three terms identify those who feed and lead the church. So whether we call them elders, or bishops or pastors matters not. The most important issue is what these persons are. What characterizes their lives counts more than their title. This is clear from the passages that describe their qualifications and functions.²

Before we discuss the qualifications and functions of the elders, we shall explore the term deacon in the New Testament. This is done because the deacon is also a local church leader.

The Deacon

The word "deacon" (*diakonos*), applied to church officers, appears first in Phil 1:1. It is used four times in 1 Tim 3. The Greek word *diakonos* means "one who serves" or "servant."³ The New Testament uses two other words from the same family to refer to

¹Earle, 11:363; Beyreuther, 3:564; Coenen, 1:190-191.

²Three basic passages make reference to elders, bishops, and pastors: 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-10; 1 Pet 5:1-5. Jas 5:14 also makes reference to the function of elders.

³W. A. Heidel, "Deacon, Deaconess," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, ed. George W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1979), 1:880.

the work of deacons: *diakonia*, "service," and *diakoneō*, "to serve." John MacArthur says, "The Greek words *diakonos*, *diakoneō*, and *diakonia* have just as wide a variety of meanings, but in general they refer to any service that supplies the need of another person."¹

In Acts 6:1-6, the appointment of the Seven is traditionally considered to be the origin of the diaconate. The Seven were selected primarily to serve tables, thus freeing the Twelve for prayer and the ministry (*diakonia*) of the word. However, they were not given the title of deacons.²

Paul called himself a servant (*diakonos*) (1 Cor 3:5; Eph 3:7). Jesus was declared to be a servant (*diakonos*) of the Jews (Rom 15:8). Jesus said, "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27).³ The servant nature of Jesus is illustrated by His washing the disciples' feet (John 13:1-13). The Gospels make it clear that all Christian life is *diakonia*, a participation by grace in the servanthood of the Son of man.⁴

In Rom 16:1, Phoebe is called a *diakonos*. She is also called a "benefactor," suggesting a woman of means. It is evident that she was some kind of church leader. Johnston points out that "the New Testament makes no distinction between deacons and deaconesses." Paul requested that she be given the "same kind of reception, . . . the same kind of support and respect that Paul enjoins for Titus and the other *apostoloi* (Titus in 2

¹MacArthur, 202.

²Heidel, 1:880.

³J. Stam, "Deacon, Deaconess," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-1980), 2:48, 49.

⁴Ibid.

Cor 8:24; Timothy in 1 Cor 16:10).”¹

Throughout the New Testament, the primary meaning of “deacon” has to do with service and ministry. The deacon’s ministry was closely related to that of the elder of the church and their qualifications were similar, as recorded in 1 Tim 3:2-13.

Qualifications of Elders/Deacons

Anyone who does a biblical study of leadership qualities does well to consider 1 Tim 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-11. These passages present clearly the basic qualifications for church leaders. In these verses Paul focuses on the character of the elders and deacons, rather than on their function. As MacArthur says, “A man is qualified because of what he is not because of what he does.”²

Twenty qualifications are listed in Timothy and Titus for elders. For the deacons, there are eleven qualifications. I have grouped these under three main headings.

Personal Spiritual Foundation

“Spiritual qualifications for leadership are non-negotiable,” according to MacArthur.³ Leaders must have deep and experiential fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3). Ellen G. White says, “You cannot exert an influence that will transform others until your own heart has been humbled and refined and made tender by the grace of

¹Robert M. Johnston, “Shapes of Ministry in the New Testament,” in *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 51.

²MacArthur, 215.

³Ibid.

Christ.”¹ The *SDA Elder's Handbook* puts it this way: “Real power springs from spirituality that comes from a personal encounter with Christ.”²

Once leaders are committed to Christ and living in daily personal encounter with Him, they will experience the life Paul describes as being “above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2) and “blameless” (Titus 1:6). In defining “above reproach,” MacArthur says: “In his individual conduct he must be a leader who cannot be accused of anything sinful.”³ The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* puts it this way: “One against whom it is impossible to bring any charge of wrong doing such as could stand impartial examination.”⁴ To be “blameless,” Paul lists what leaders should not be.

What an Elder/Deacon Should Not Be

Certain negative traits of character prevent leaders from successfully governing the church. They must be “not overbearing, not quick tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain” (Titus 1:7), “not quarrelsome, not a lover of money”; neither should an elder be “a recent convert” (1 Tim 3:3, 6).

He should not be overbearing, since he “is entrusted with God's work.” Getz applies this to one who is stubborn and tries to force his own ideas and opinions on the

¹Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 458.

²*Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, 1994), 37.

³MacArthur, 187.

⁴Earle, 11:364.

people.¹ "Not overbearing" can also be translated as "not self-willed." This excludes having a high opinion of self, self-love, and "making self the center of all."²

An elder must "not be quick tempered" (Titus 1:7). He must be in control of his own spirit. The *Pulpit Commentary* states that an elder is supposed to restrain others from anger, which he cannot do if he is quick-tempered. Like the Chief Shepherd, he must be long-suffering and patient under provocation.³ Strauch points out that one of the attributes of God is slowness to anger (Exod 34:6). Elders should copy this. Otherwise they will destroy the peace and unity of God's people.⁴

An elder should "not be given to drunkenness" (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:8). Here Paul is teaching abstinence from intoxicating drink. This teaching is consistent with the rest of the Bible.⁵

An elder must "not be violent" (Titus 1:7), nor "aggressive," "not one who picks a fight or is physically abusive,"⁶ but gentle (1 Tim 3:3), not quarrelsome or selfish. Elders should be polite in any point of disagreement.

An elder should "not pursue dishonest gain" (Titus 1:7) or be "a lover of money" (1 Tim 3:30). Getz says he should not be "greedy of filthy lucre or fond of sordid gain or

¹Getz, 106.

²*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, 1901.

³A. C. Hervey, "1 Timothy," *The Pulpit Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 21:9.

⁴Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1988), 176.

⁵*SDABC*, 7:299.

⁶MacArthur, 187.

stingy with his material blessings.”¹ Sanders says: “Covetousness and its twin, the love of money, disqualify a person for leadership.”²

The elder must “not be a recent convert” (1 Tim 3:6). Getz believes that he must be a mature believer who can demonstrate the reality of his conversion and the depth of his spirituality.³ Commenting on this passage, Strauch notes: “No matter how spiritual, zealous, knowledgeable, or talented a new convert may be, he is not spiritually mature. Maturity requires time and experience for which there is no substitute.”⁴

The Bible does not stop with the negative qualities of the elders/deacons but proceeds to the positive qualities of elders and deacons.

What an Elder/Deacon Should Be

Family life

An elder should be a husband of one wife. He should also have believing and obedient children. These two aspects of an elder’s family life are so important that Paul notes them both in Titus and Timothy (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim 3:2, 4).

An elder must be “the husband of but one wife” (NIV). The meaning of the phrase is disputed. *The Expositor’s Commentary* states that it means “only one wife at one time and that he must be completely faithful to his wife.”⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary* places the

¹Getz, 106.

²Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 43.

³Getz, 106.

⁴Strauch, 202-203.

⁵Earle, 11:364.

emphasis on an elder not being a polygamist.¹ *The Seventh-day Adventist Commentary* lists the various interpretations: (1) All ministers should be married; (2) polygamy and concubinage are strictly forbidden to ministers; (3) a divorced person should not serve as a minister; and (4) ministers are not to remarry if widowed.²

While each of these positions has its strengths and weaknesses, one thing is clear: "The bishop is to have an untarnished record of marital fidelity, which would serve as a pattern for the flock."³ Three of the above interpretations can be clarified through Scripture.

1. The prohibition of single men serving as elders is refuted by the fact that Paul and Timothy, who were elders (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6), were themselves single (1 Cor 7:7-9).

3. A divorced person being unable to serve as an elder is not justified because the Bible does not insist on the indissolubility of marriage when an unbelieving spouse breaks the relationship (1 Cor 7:15). Divorce is justified if a partner is not faithful (Matt 5:32; 19:9).

4. That ministers should not remarry if widowed is not reasonable, since God permits remarriage after the death of one's spouse (1 Tim 5:9-15; Rom 7:2, 3; 1 Cor 7:39).

Biblical evidence seems to suggest that an elder must be a loyal spouse, preserving

¹Hervey, 21:58.

²*SDABC*, 7:297.

³*Ibid.*

marriage in all its purity. An elder must love, desire, and think only of the spouse that God has given him.

The elder's children should obey him with proper respect. Paul queries: "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family how can he take care of God's church?" (1 Tim 3:5). Ellen G. White advises ministers that their first duty is to their children. They should not become so engrossed with outside duties as to neglect their children's needs.¹ Further, she advises that elders should give considerable time to their children.² She warns that ministers who neglect their duty at home will not bring honor to the church as faithful shepherds of the flock of God in the church.³ Christian leaders must demonstrate the chastity, stability, and sanctity of the Christian home.

Personal qualities

In order to be blameless, the elder should have certain positive characteristics: be hospitable, love good, be self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught (Titus 1:8-9), be temperate, self-controlled, respectable, able to teach, and have a good reputation with outsiders (1 Tim 3:2, 7).

Elders should be hospitable. They will love strangers unselfishly and be willing to

¹Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1915), 204.

²White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:618.

³Ellen G. White, *Pastoral Ministry* (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association, 1995), 89.

share their blessings with others.¹ The elder's home should be open to the poor and needy, and ready to feed the hungry at all times.² An elder's house should be a place where the needs of others are met. Hospitality has nothing to do with impressing people, but much to do with making them feel welcome and wanted.

An elder should be temperate, self-controlled, and disciplined. Getz notes that the self-controlled person "is not in bondage to himself and to the desire of the flesh."³ Commenting on this text, Fernando says that the idea Paul emphasizes here is that of a sound mind or self-mastery, a disciplined state of mind, not impulsive, and not given to extremes. A self-controlled person does not overreact in a crisis.⁴ No leader can win the heart of his followers without self-control and discipline. Strauch says that "temperate" is used metaphorically, referring to mental, behavioral, and spiritual sobriety.⁵

An elder should be upright and holy, which means to be fair and impartial in judgment. Strauch observes that the elder will act according to the principles of divine truth.⁶ Getz comments that the elder is to be sensible, wise, and balanced in judgment.⁷

An elder must be able to teach. The Greek word translated "able to teach"

¹Earle, 11:364.

²Hervey, 21:9.

³Getz, 105.

⁴Ajith Fernando, *Leadership Lifestyle: A Study of 1 Timothy* (Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1988), 58.

⁵Strauch, 195.

⁶Ibid., 178.

⁷Getz, 105.

(*didaktikon*) means “skilled in teaching.”¹ Elders must be skilled in teaching, able to communicate the truth of God to others, to help others apply truth to themselves.²

An elder is required to be a lover of what is good--a person who desires to do the will of God in everything (1 Pet 5:2). Barclay comments that an elder must be a “lover of good things, a lover of good people, a lover of good actions. The Christian office-bearer must be a person whose heart answers to the good in whatever person, in whatever place and in whatever action good is to be found.”³ Elders are expected to do good, even when they must deny their own good for the sake of others.

An elder must be respected by the members and outsiders. Strauch observes that an elder must demonstrate orderliness in the whole person and lifestyle.⁴ An elder or deacon must show dignity, live an orderly life, and demonstrate good behavior.

MacArthur observes that an elder must have a good internal character and a good external reputation or testimony.⁵ Hendriksen points out that a leader who has a bad reputation will not help to achieve the purpose of leading sinners to Christ.⁶

¹MacArthur, 224.

²Earle, 11:364.

³William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, The Daily Study Bible, vol. 12 (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 1987), 238.

⁴Strauch, 196.

⁵MacArthur, 232.

⁶William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1957), 128.

The Roles and Tasks of Elders/Leaders

In the New Testament, the office of elder emerged as the highest and most important level of local church leadership.¹ The work of an elder is called “a noble task” (1 Tim 3:1). The Bible does not give a detailed job description for elders. However, putting all the New Testament passages together, we can get a general understanding of the work of local elders.

Administration

Elders carried significant leadership and administrative responsibilities. They were associated with the apostles in the government of the church.²

Elders were appointed in every local church and played an important role in the local church (Acts 14:23; 1 Titus 1:5). They were the overseers of the local church (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5), taking spiritual care of the congregation, exercising rule, and giving instruction.³ In 1 Tim 5:17, elders “direct the affairs of the church”;⁴ the Greek term *proistēmi* used here literally means “to stand first.”

Spiritual Nurturing

Elders were to be shepherds of the flock of God.⁵ They were to guard the people

¹*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 45.

²Acts 11:30; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 20:28; 21:18; 22:5; *SDA Elder's Handbook*, 23.

³1 Tim 3:4-5, 5:13; Titus 1:9; Jas 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1-4; *SDA Elder's Handbook*, 23.

⁴MacArthur, 185.

⁵1 Pet 5:2; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:5.

of God against false teachers (Acts 20:28-30). Scripture never speaks of the flock as belonging to the pastor but as being "the flock of God" (1 Pet 5:2). An elder is caretaker of God's possession.¹

Paul affirms that elders were appointed as shepherds of the flock of God by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). To care for the flock is the paramount task of the elders as portrayed in the Bible. Jesus called Himself the "good Shepherd" in John 10:11, 14. Peter called Him the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet 5:4). What a shepherd does is clear in John 10. He takes care of the needs of the sheep at all times (John 10:3, 4); he knows his sheep by name (vs. 3); when the sheep are in trouble, he does not run away but stays with them and is willing to die for them (vss. 11, 12).

The elders were to take care of the people of God as a shepherd takes care of the sheep. Charles Bigg notes that shepherding souls includes all that Christ does for us. This includes "loving care, feeding, instruction, guidance, government."² A shepherd is responsible for watching over the flock to meet the sheep's needs. Strauch explains: "As God's sheep, people need to be fed God's word, be protected from false teachers, and protected from internal clashes. They need constant encouragement, comfort, guidance, prayer, correction, and a listening ear."³

Just as sheep without a shepherd are helpless and in danger, so the church members without elders/leaders to take care of them are helpless and lost. The elder's

¹MacArthur, 186.

²Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956), 148.

³Strauch, 145.

paramount task is, therefore, to take care of the flock of God, protecting them from danger from within and without (Acts 20:29, 30).

Exhortation

Elders are responsible for preaching and teaching (1 Tim 3:2; 5:17). They are to safeguard the doctrines for the church and proclaim the truth to the congregation (Titus 1:9).

Elders must be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9). The word "exhort" or "encourage" comes from the Greek word *parakaleō*, which literally means "to call near."¹ This refers to calling a person to help. The ministry of exhortation has several elements. It involves persuasion (Acts 14:22, Titus 1:9), pleading (2 Cor 8:17), comfort (1 Thess 2:11), and encouragement (1 Thess 4:1). Elders must also be able to teach, not only doctrine but also exemplary conduct and the skills needed to spread the gospel message (see 2 Tim 2:2).

In summary, elders were appointed in every local church to rule the household of God (1 Tim 3:4, 5; 5:17). They were in charge of the planning, guiding, and training. They were the shepherds of the flock. Today elders are to be guides, watchmen, protectors, providers, and healers. They are to teach, preach, and to protect sound doctrine from perversion and the intrusion of error (Titus 1:9).

The Roles and Tasks of Deacons

The New Testament term deacon (*diakonos*) was used to designate one who

¹MacArthur, 186.

serves. A deacon was by definition a servant.¹

Although the word *diakonos* is used several times with reference to church leadership, the duties of a deacon are not specified. MacArthur concludes that "in the way the words are often used in Acts and the Epistles, a believer in any form of ministry could be called the servant or deacon of Christ."² He also points out that all Christians who serve the Lord are deacons or ministers, if not in an official sense, at least in the general sense of the word.³ Kenneth O. Swanson rightly notes: "Unfortunately the Bible is not as explicit as we might expect when it comes to a practical definition of the role of the deacon."⁴

Acts 6:1-6 reports the choosing of seven men to care for the physical needs of the Greek widows. The apostles laid their hands on the seven and appointed them to this responsibility. This passage, however, does not use the word *diakonos*. The cognate verb *diakoneō* (to serve in vs. 2) is used, as is the noun *diakonia*, referring to the serving of tables (vs. 1), but also of the "ministry of the word" (vs. 4). F. F. Bruce points out that it "might be better to describe the seven as 'almoners'."⁵ While it is true that the seven gave out "alms," their activity was by no means confined to this kind of service.⁶ Stephen, one

¹Ibid., 202.

²Ibid., 203, 204.

³Ibid., 204.

⁴Swanson, 106.

⁵F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 130-131.

⁶Ibid.

of the seven, was a powerful preacher (Acts 8). Philip is called evangelist (Acts 12:8); his preaching and baptizing (Acts 8:12) went beyond what today are considered the duties of a deacon.¹

Elders are mentioned later in the book of Acts, but not deacons. If Acts 6 is indeed the institution of the deacon's office, it seems strange that deacons are never referred to again in Acts.² It is "more likely that the seven were a group of highly qualified spiritual leaders, teachers and honorable men chosen to administer the situation."³

It seems reasonable to conclude that the seven men chosen in Acts 6 were to take care of a short-term ministry to the Hellenistic widows who had been neglected, and that their ministry involved "both spiritual and physical care."⁴ This view is supported by Ellen G. White.

The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole.⁵

The duties and characteristics outlined by Ellen G. White are interesting: (1) oversight of special lines of work, (2) careful consideration to individual needs, (3) consideration of the general financial interests of the church, (4) prudent management, and (5) a

¹Matthew Henry's *Commentary*, 1657.

²MacArthur, 208.

³Ibid., 204.

⁴Ibid., 210.

⁵White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 89.

godly example. The selection of these men, says Ellen G. White, "was in the order of God" and gave good results, as is seen in Acts 6:7.¹

As the result of the delegated leadership the early church grew and matured in the faith. The elders who oversaw the work in the church were assisted by deacons. It is, therefore, suggested that they were more like elders in function than simply deacons as the term is understood today. The qualifications given for them are mostly spiritual, very similar to those for elders.

The Ordination of Elders and Deacons

Ellen G. White comments that ordination in the Bible "was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office."²

MacArthur agrees: "The concept of ordination implies official recognition by the leadership of the church and a public announcement setting men aside for special ministry."³

Considering the role played by the ministry throughout the history of the church, references to ordination are few in the New Testament.⁴ In fact the word "ordination" does not occur, neither does the verb "to ordain." Ordination comes from the Latin

¹Ibid., 89-90.

²Ibid., 162.

³MacArthur, 190.

⁴Russell Staples, "A Theological Understanding of Ordination," in *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 139.

ordinare, meaning “to arrange,” “set in order,” or “regulate.”¹ “Ordain” is used in the KJV, but other versions use a wide range of translations. In Mark 3:13 Jesus “made” the apostles; the KJV translates “ordained,” but the NASB and the NIV read “appointed.” In Luke 6:13, Jesus “chose” and “designated” the apostles. Paul and Barnabas were set apart by having hands laid on them (Acts 13:3). In Acts 14:23 the Greek word translated “ordained” in the KJV is *cheirotoneō*, to “stretch the hand,” as in raising the hand to vote. The NASB and NIV have “appointed.” Where the KJV has Paul “ordained” as a preacher (1 Tim 2:7), the Greek has him “put”; the NIV and NASB translate “appointed.” Finally, in Titus 1:5, Paul asks Titus to “arrange” or “set up” elders in every city.

In the appointing of the seven (Acts 6) those selected were servants whose task was to free the apostles for spiritual leadership.² While the word ordination is not used, the essentials of ordination are present: the laying on of hands and prayer.³

Paul and Barnabas were ordained by laying of hands on them (Acts 13:23). Later, the council of elders laid their hands upon Timothy (1 Tim 4:14). Jesus had ordained twelve of His disciples: “And laying His hands upon their heads He offered a prayer dedicating them to His sacred work.”⁴ The act of laying on of hands is directly connected with appointment to a church office, to commissioning to a mission and setting apart for

¹Ibid.

²Leon Morris, “Ordination,” *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1980), 1121.

³Ibid.

⁴White, *Desire of Ages*, 296.

ministry.¹ The outward acts are essential in recognition of the ministry of elders in harmony with Scripture.

Ellen G. White affirms that the "Great Head of the Church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives."²

Further, she says, ordination is a public recognition of divine appointment and an "acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office."³

Recognizing the New Testament teaching on ordination of elders and deacons, the SDA Church ordains as a public recognition of: (1) God's call of the individual to a specific ministry; (2) God's enabling the person for this ministry by providing the spiritual gifts needed; and (3) the congregation's recognition and approval of God's call and an expression of its willingness to follow the individual's leadership.⁴

On the basis of Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White,⁵ we summarize:

1. The New Testament church practiced ordination as a form of designation to an appointed ministry.
2. The church as God's representative ordains elders and deacons with full authority to teach the truth and lead in worship.
3. This ordination brings unity of the faith and protects the members from false

¹Staples, 140.

²White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 360.

³Ibid.

⁴*SDA Elder's Handbook*, 41.

⁵J. H. Denis Fortin, "Ordination in the Writings of Ellen G. White," in *Women in Ministry*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 115-129.

teachers.

4. Ordination provides public recognition of the ministry of persons chosen by the Holy Spirit.

5. Ordination is a recognition of God's work, sealed by church authority.

6. Ordination is a symbol of the commission to go and preach to all nations.

Financial Support of Local Church Leaders

There is a cry in some quarters for local church elders to be paid by the church, since they carry pastoral responsibilities and the church administration cannot provide a pastor for each local church. In fact, some churches are paying a stipend to their elders.

In the New Testament church, some elders appear to have been paid by the church for their labor. Paul wrote: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages'" (1 Tim 5:17-18). The word translated "honor" is *timē*, which, as the context shows, refers to financial remuneration.¹ The saying that the workman deserves his pay comes from Jesus (Luke 10:7). Any person who works deserves his or her support, especially the kind of elders who toil in preaching and teaching.

Paul says that he and Barnabas, as God's workers, had a right to have their food and other needs supplied at the church's expense (1 Cor 9:6, 13, 14). Paul here sets forth

¹MacArthur, 193. *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985) on 1 Tim 5:17 endorses financial support to elders.

the principle that Christian workers should be paid for their labors.

Paul makes it clear that it was not because he had no right to be supported, but because he knew that it would be for the spiritual good of the church that he and Barnabas did not enforce this claim.¹ They rather chose to support themselves and not to place the burden of their support on the church (1 Thess 2:9).

Nevertheless, Paul also establishes that such a subsidy is optional. It is a right, not a mandate.² Every elder has the same right; however, elders may choose to support themselves by working outside the church, as did Paul.

Hendriksen comments on Paul's advice to Timothy: "All who rule well, . . . those who devote themselves entirely to church work, . . . entirely to gospel work have a right to wages and their wages should not be withheld."³ If Hendriksen is right, Paul is not saying that all local elders should be supported financially by the congregations. Only those elders or ministers who give themselves entirely to preaching and teaching deserve remuneration from the church.

Each elder is charged with the oversight, care, feeding, protection, and teaching of the flock. They should go about this work "not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and nor for sordid gain, but with eagerness" (1 Pet 5:2 NASB). Subsidy should not be a divisive issue.

¹SDABC, 6:726.

²MacArthur, 193.

³Hendriksen, *Pastoral Epistles*, 182.

Respect Due to Local Leaders

Elders are called and appointed by God, "confirmed by the church leadership and ordained to the task of leadership."¹ To them are committed the responsibilities of shepherding the flock of God and of being examples to the flock, giving the church direction, teaching the people, and leading the congregation.

Elders are worthy of respect. In 1 Thess 5:12, 13, Paul states: "Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord, and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work, live in peace with each other."

Leon Morris points out that "wholehearted support to . . . leaders is expected; otherwise the church cannot be expected to do its work effectively." We are to respect leaders because "the calling is so noble and they are fulfilling the call."²

Church leaders are called and appointed by God. They are "to serve with humility, using the authority of the love of Christ and motivating their followers by the example of a Spirit-filled life."³ They are over the people "in the Lord and must rule the people by Christ's laws."⁴ They also must admonish them, instruct them to do well, and reprove them gently for wrongdoing.

¹MacArthur, 197.

²Leon Morris, *First and Second Thessalonians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 167.

³*SDA Elder's Handbook*, 63.

⁴*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, 1881.

Members must hold their leaders "in esteem beyond all measure."¹ The work of faithful leaders should be held "in the highest regard." The church members should "give whole-hearted support and this in a spirit of love."² We read in the letter to the Hebrews: "Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (Heb 13:7). Vs. 17 adds another dimension of the congregation's duty toward their spiritual leaders: "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Effective leadership in the church demands effective followers. When the church submits to God's pattern for leadership, it will experience His blessings. Our relationship with one another must be "in Christ." When believers are united with Christ, respectful submission to Christian leaders is service to the Lord. At the same time, leaders who are "in Christ" will gently care for the flock and wish for them only the best.

Summary

True leadership is based on Christ's selfless servant model of leadership. His example of leadership is illustrated by the Good Shepherd of John 10. His leadership is based on love, gentle humility, and a clear, goal-oriented purpose.

As the New Testament church began to grow and establish congregations in Asia Minor, local churches were encouraged to appoint elders/bishops and deacons as local

¹Earle, 11:288.

²Ibid.

leaders. These were ordained to care for the local church. These chosen leaders had a good reputation within the church and outside of it. They were above reproach. They managed their family well and thus were able to take care of the church of God as shepherds of the flock of God, not lording it over them but being examples; not under compulsion but voluntarily, according to the will of God.

This is the model of New Testament leadership in the apostolic church. Chapter 3 presents leadership training in the New Testament and the writings of Ellen G. White.

CHAPTER III

LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

AND ELLEN G. WHITE

The purpose of this chapter is to seek to understand the concept of leadership training in the New Testament and the writings of Ellen G. White. This chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part discusses Christ's method of leadership training, mainly with His disciples. The second part deals with the apostle Paul's methods of training workers to strengthen the churches. The last part considers Ellen G. White's concept of training members for leadership in ministry.

Christ's Methods of Leadership Training

The first concern of Christ's ministry on earth was to redeem the human race by giving His life as a ransom for many (1 Tim 2:3-6). The second area of His concern was to select a handful of men, the twelve who would later spread the message of redemption everywhere. Philip Greenslade says: "The training of the twelve was for Jesus a major priority of His work. . . . He speaks as if this was the principal part of His earthly ministry."¹

Seven different factors or qualities of Jesus Christ relate to the training of His

¹Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness*, 111.

disciples. These qualities are centered in Christ Himself and not on His training method. Chandapilla points out that "until the person of Christ is made central to the study of His training of disciples everything is missed."¹

These seven aspects of the Master Trainer are incarnation and identification, selection, concentration, communication, transparency, confidence, and admonition.

Incarnation and Identification

Jesus Christ emerges as the Master Trainer by introducing Himself through the incarnation. By this means, the Son of God "was manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim 3:16 RSV). J. I. Packer says,

The incarnation of the Son of God, then, was not a diminishing of deity, but an acquiring of manhood. . . . The Son in person began to live a fully human life, . . . he took to himself a human soul as well as a human body, i.e., he entered into the experience of human psychical life as well as of human physical life. His manhood was complete, he became 'the *man* Christ Jesus' (1 Tim 2:5).²

In the incarnation the divine met the human and became one. A perfect merger of the spiritual with the physical took place in the incarnation.

The first step in leadership training is for the trainer to build a bridge to the trainee.³ This is what Jesus Christ did in the incarnation. Without this incarnation there could be no close contact between the Master and the disciples. Where there is no close

¹P. T. Chandapilla, *The Master Trainer* (Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh: OM Books, 1998), 111.

²J. I. Packer, "Incarnation," *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1980), 512.

³Chandapilla, 17.

contact between the two, there is no possibility for training to take place.

Jesus Christ's incarnation introduced His identification with humanity. "He was manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim 3:16 RSV), "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3), "and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). He had to be made like His brothers, "tempted in every way just as we are" (Heb 4:15). Therefore, "He is able to help those who are being tempted" (Heb 2:18). He is also able to "make atonement for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17).

One of the best examples of the identification of Christ as the Master Trainer and God-man is mentioned in John 11:17-43. "Jesus wept" (vs. 35) indicates the height and depth of Christ's identification with humanity.¹

Jesus Christ moved among the needy. He "moved into the thick and center of the need itself."² Mike Murdock notes: "Jesus went where people were hurt. He went to the lame, the blind, the poor, the wealthy. He talked to the learned, the ignorant, the hungry, the thirsty."³

"Identification leads to involvement," said Chandapilla. Where there is no identification there is no involvement or the involvement is superficial and the results are ineffective.⁴

¹Ibid., 20.

²Ibid.

³Mike Murdock, *The Leadership Secrets of Jesus* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Honor Books, 1996), 75.

⁴Chandapilla, 23.

Selection

The twelve disciples of Jesus did not belong to the rich and educated. The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* says that they were a poor, illiterate “band of simple Galilean provincials,” unpromising ordinary men.¹ Herbert Locker observed that “to the outward eye it seemed as if the Divine Potter had chosen very common clay indeed out of which to fashion His witnesses and mighty workmen.”² Yet, after a period of training under the Master Trainer, “they were no longer uncouth, uncultured, or unlearned.”³ In fact three of them became writers: Peter, Matthew, and John.

Jesus, the Master leader, was careful in the choice of men who were to work with Him while He was on earth. Later they would be the pillars of the New Testament church.

A description of Jesus’ selection and appointment of His disciples can be composed from the Gospels.

1. Jesus selected the twelve from among His followers.
2. He called whom He wanted (Mark 3:13).
3. He gave specific responsibilities to those He appointed (Matt 4:19; 10:5-8; Mark 3:14).
4. He called them from their secular occupations (Matt 4:18-22; 9:9).
5. He selected the twelve because they responded to spiritual truths (Matt 16:15, 16; John 1:39-49; 6:66-69).

¹*SDABC*, 5:594.

²Herbert Locker, *All the Apostles of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 11.

³*SDABC*, 5:594.

6. He chose the twelve after much prayer (Luke 6:12-16).

Jesus exercised care in His selection. Chandapilla points out that "the selection of the Twelve and their appointment was done only after the first year of His public ministry."¹ Thus, the choice of these twelve men came after "sufficient time was given to watch, observe and wait. . . . He did not select suddenly. He watched them in various circumstances of life, at home, at work, in private relationships, and public behavior."² Finally, Jesus spent in prayer the night before their appointment (Luke 6:12, 13).

The reason for the careful selection was that the disciples "were to be His official ambassadors clothed with authority to represent their sender." The Lord wanted the twelve to be the "nucleus of the new Israel in embryo."³ Robert Guelich said something similar: "They indeed represented the new people of God, the redeemed community of the eschatology. . . . They represented a community of God's redemptive activity on behalf of historical Israel, his covenant people."⁴

Reinhold R. Bietz gives seven characteristics Jesus was looking for in His disciples:

1. They were humble and teachable.
2. They had ability. They were strong, forceful men, eloquent preachers,

¹Chandapilla, 27.

²Ibid., 27, 28.

³Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:642.

⁴Robert A. Guelich, *Mark*, Word Biblical Commentary, 34A (Waco, TX: Word, 1989), 158.

convincing teachers and wise church administrators.

3. They could become cultured and refined. Ellen G. White wrote of the disciples: "Wealth they had but it consisted of mind and soul culture, and this everyone may have who will make God first and last and best in everything."¹

4. They were loyal. Ellen G. White says: "These men were as true as steel to principle. They were men who would not fail nor be discouraged."²

5. They were willing to work.

6. They were men of prayer. "The disciples were men who knew how to speak and pray sincerely, men who could take hold of the might of the strength of Israel."³

7. They loved Jesus.⁴

The calling of the twelve by Jesus was more than a mere selection. It was a key strategic decision. Greenslade says, "By choosing twelve men Jesus was serving notice of his intention to raise up a messianic ministry and leadership among God's people."⁵

Concentration

Concentration is the ability of a leader to be exclusively concerned with a selected group of persons and give complete attention to them until the training is achieved. Chandapilla states clearly that "the quality of concentration, therefore, means the

¹White, *Gospel Workers*, 25.

²Ibid.

³White, *Acts of Apostles*, 594.

⁴Bietz, 32-41.

⁵Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness*, 98.

acceptance and exercise of the principle of limitation.”¹ This is seen in that Jesus made the twelve the center of His concern during His ministry (John 13:1) and treasured them more than His blood relations (Matt 12:46-49).

While Jesus was devoted to His mother (John 19:26, 27), the twelve disciples were in a special sense “members of the family of Jesus.”² Jesus desired the fellowship of His disciples more than they desired His (Luke 22:15, 16). He was with them constantly: in sleep (Luke 8:23), in travel (John 4:3, 4, 8,) at meals (Luke 22:8, 17-20), while resting (Mark 6:31), in prayer (Luke 22:39, 40), and in all aspects of His work (Luke 8:1, 22; John 1: 38, 39). Jesus was with them in public and in private, for example, at the triumphal entry (Luke 19:37) and at Gethsemane (Matt 26:36). He was with them in times of joy (Luke 19:37), fear (John 6:19:20), and helplessness (Mark 9:17-20).

Jesus was with His disciples in different places: in cities and villages (Matt 9:35), in Jerusalem (Luke 18:31), and even beyond Jewish territories (Matt 15:21). Christ spent so much time with His disciples because He wished to impress them with the example of His life. He came to serve and so should they. Engstrom says: “Jesus teaches all leaders for all time that greatness is not found in rank or position but in service. He makes it clear that true leadership is grounded in love which must issue in service.”³

The Gospel of Mark tells us that Jesus “appointed twelve that they might be with him” (Mark 3:14). Jesus lived with His trainee leaders. Greenslade says, “He gave

¹Chandapilla, 31.

²White, *Desire of Ages*, 349.

³T. Engstrom, 37.

himself to them and not merely his principles. He actually spent more time with his disciples than with everybody else in the world put together.”¹

He allowed them to see Him tired, hungry, and homeless, “letting them invade His precious privacy by their eagerness to be with Him. He let them try His patience by their slowness in learning from Him.”²

He showed them how to live. He was a true on-the-job trainer. He demonstrated before He explained. He showed these future leaders what to do and how to do it.

The concentration quality of Jesus was seen in His concern for the twelve. He established an intimacy with them that He did not have with anyone else. Chandapilla writes that Jesus did not have a private life of His own, except in His communion with the Father. “Even in this exercise, the disciples had access.” The twelve were the center of the life of Jesus.³

Communication

Effective communication was at the heart of the Teacher’s ability to produce disciples. Communication is the ability of the leader to impart a message to others in ways that people can easily understand and accept. The importance of communication has been described as follows: “Good communications are the life blood of any enterprise, large or small. Communications are essential to keep an entire organization functioning at

¹Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness*, 111.

²Ibid., 111, 112.

³Chandapilla, 33.

maximum levels and to make the most of our great management resource-- our people."¹

Jesus Christ communicated to the twelve disciples through discourses and in conversations. Jesus used six great discourses in training His disciples.² Ellen G. White says that "the Sermon on the Mount, though given especially to the disciples, was spoken in the hearing of the multitude."³

The discourses of Christ were comprehensive. They included instruction on practical matters (Matt 10:5-11; Luke 19:29-31; 22:7-12) and also on day- to-day life topics, such as professional competition, leadership, and service (Matt 20:21-28; John 13:13-15).

In His discourses, Jesus used allegories and parables (John 15:1; Matt 18:21-35). These were usually based on common experiences of everyday life familiar to His audience and often on incidents that had happened⁴ or could be seen at the time.⁵ The narrative itself was simple so that the audience could understand the spiritual truth conveyed by means of the illustration.

According to the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Jesus used parables for several reasons:

1. They aroused interest, attention, and enquiry.

¹Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, *Management of Organizational Behavior* (New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India, 1996), 327.

²Matt 5:1-7, 29; Matt 10; Matt 13; Matt 18; Matt 23; and Matt 24, 25.

³White, *Desire of Ages*, 298.

⁴Ibid., 499.

⁵Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1941), 34.

2. They imparted unwanted truth without arousing prejudice.
3. They helped Him evade the spies who pursued Him relentlessly.
4. They created lasting impressions in the mind of His hearers.
5. They restored nature as an avenue for knowing God.¹

Jesus communicated through His whole life and person (John 14:9; 1 John 1:1, 3).

More spectacularly, He communicated through signs and miracles (John 2:11). For Christ, communication was not the transfer of information or intellectual propositions, but impartation and reproduction of Himself, whereby His own inner core could become part of His disciples.² Chandapilla says: "His method of teaching was experiential, personalized, applied, informal, elementary and instinctive."³

Transparency

"Transparency"⁴ means that leaders open and expose themselves without any reservation, unveiling their true selves. They leave absolutely nothing covered up in this total transparency.⁵

Self-exposure is not easy; it is a painful process. Yet Jesus Christ did it by taking on Himself sinful flesh and dwelling among us (Rom 8:3; John 1:14). The quality of

¹"Parables and Their Interpretation," *SDABC*, 5:204.

²Chandapilla, 40, 41.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, 45.

⁵Robert E. Logan, *Beyond Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1989), 38, 39.

transparency is true of God Himself. "God is light and in Him there is no darkness" (1 John 1:5).

In the transfiguration, Jesus unveiled Himself before the disciples (Matt 16:13-15, 17:1, 2). There He revealed the glory of the Son of God. Commenting on this event, Ellen G. White wrote: "The burden of His prayer is that they [disciples] may be given a manifestation of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, that His kingdom may be revealed to human eyes and that His disciples may be strengthened to behold it."¹

The faith of the disciples in Jesus as the Son of God was strengthened by this revelation. Many years later Peter boldly testified the reason of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:16-18).

Jesus was comprehensive and complete in the way He disclosed Himself to the twelve. He revealed the secret of His power and greatness (John 6:11; 11:41). He unveiled the purpose of His life (John 4:31-38; Luke 19:10). He laid open His plan of action (Matt 16:21).

He showed Himself to the disciples at the lowest point of His human existence (Matt 26:38, 40). Jesus was not afraid to show His feelings, sympathy, and compassion at the time of His struggle with the powers of darkness. He pleaded with His disciples "to stay awake" with Him in such an hour (Matt 26:38, NRSV).

Jesus unveiled Himself in a progressive way, as His disciples were able to understand His purpose and ministry. There was nothing that He did not expose which was essential for their good. He kept on revealing Himself to them irrespective of the

¹White, *Desire of Ages*, 420, 421.

differences in their abilities to apprehend. He did this of His own accord, intentionally and purposefully. He finally revealed Himself as "the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). "Christ is the way from earth to heaven. By His humanity He touches this earth, and by His divinity He touches heaven. He is the ladder connecting earth and heaven."¹

Confidence

Jesus, the Master Trainer, created full confidence in Himself by putting Himself fully at their disposal of the trainees and placing His confidence in them. As a result, there was total confidence between leader and trainees. This confidence can be built up only when leaders make themselves available to their trainees and identify with them in various circumstances. Gangel writes that "the most significant factor in human relations is genuine interpersonal understanding."²

Jesus defended His disciples when they were attacked (Matt 12:1-8). He showed thoughtful concern for their physical needs and hopeful confidence in their future spiritual maturity.³ Jesus took pains both to protect the twelve and to help them in the difficulties of life. Commenting on Mark 4:37-40, Barclay affirmed that "to voyage with Jesus was to voyage in peace even in a storm."⁴

Jesus showed His confidence in the disciples by giving them important

¹SDABC, 5:1035.

²Kenneth O. Gangel, *Building Leaders for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 298.

³LeRoy Eims, *Be the Leader You Were Meant to Be* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1981), 40, 41.

⁴William Barclay, *The Gospel of Mark*, The Daily Study Bible (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 1975-1989), 116.

responsibilities and the authority to fulfill them (Matt 10:1-10; 28:18-20). They were to preach the message of salvation, cast out demons, heal, and restore life (Matt 10:7, 8).¹ He always had an optimistic attitude about the Twelve. He refused to be overtaken by hopelessness concerning them.² While Jesus foresaw what could happen to them, He did not take away their responsibilities or opportunities to make choices. He warned them of dangers or problems and instructed them how to face those eventualities.

Admonition

All leaders find circumstances when they must administer reproof. The apostle Paul told Timothy to correct, rebuke, and encourage "with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Tim 4:2).

In leadership, rebuking and reproof are never popular, for they make people uncomfortable. However, every phase of the leader's task, whether reproof, rebuking, or admonishing, should be done with grace, patience, and compassion as Jesus did.³

Jesus corrected the Twelve when they made mistakes, in order to help them.⁴ Of His corrections, Ellen G. White says,

Christ sometimes reproved with severity, and in some cases it may be necessary for us to do so, but we should consider that while Christ knew the exact condition of the ones He rebuked, and just the amount of reproof they could

¹William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According Mark*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), 123.

²Greenslade, *Leadership Greatness*, 112.

³SDABC, 6:347.

⁴Matt 14:31; 16:23, 24; Luke 9:51-56; Matt 20:20-23; John 13:12-20; Luke 22:24-27, 46.

bear. . . . He also knew just how to pity the erring, comfort the unfortunate, and encourage the weak.¹

Jesus evaluated the Twelve on an individual basis (Matt 16:18, 23) and also as a group (Matt 17:19, 20; 13:10-18). His evaluations were not made in public but alone with those involved or with the Twelve (Matt 16:22, 23; 17:19).

In the process of appreciation and evaluation, Jesus "used group dynamics as well as personal counsel."² He was neither authoritarian nor dictatorial toward His trainees. All through the training period He appreciated them, evaluated, corrected, rebuked, and exhorted them. He was consistent, constant, and impartial. Through His love and authority, He earned the right to be their Master, Teacher, and Lord.

Delegation

Delegation is the transfer of work from one person to another. Kenneth Gangel rightly observed that delegation is the key to survival.³ A leader who can successfully delegate the task to the right person is saved many frustrations. Ted Engstrom says: "If the leader does not delegate, he will be constantly enmeshed in a morass of secondary detail that may tear him down and prohibit him from functioning in his primary responsibilities."⁴

Someone has well said that "a man's value to his organization is measured not by

¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 4:66.

²Chandapilla, 72.

³Gangel, *Building Leaders*, 341.

⁴T. Engstrom, 160.

what he has on his desk but what passes over it.”¹ This is another way of indicating how important delegating is. Gangel says: “On the firing line, delegation comes as close to being indispensable as any leadership characteristic can be.”² Engstrom says that “no executive just grows--he delegates himself into growth.”³

While Jesus was busy teaching, preaching, healing, and training, He delegated certain responsibilities to His disciples. He asked them to feed the five thousand, an assignment that was beyond their ability (Matt 14:16, 17). His assignments included preaching, teaching, and healing (Matt 10:5-8).

In Mark 14:12-16, Jesus delegated two of His disciples to go into the city of Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover. He gave specific instructions on where to go and what to do. The disciples accepted and carried out the instructions. Bietz points out that, “whenever Christ delegated responsibilities, He was quite specific in His instructions. Before He sent out His disciples He gave them detailed instructions.”⁴

One of the most comprehensive and far-reaching programs of delegation ever embarked on by any leader is recorded in Matt 28:19, 20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (NASB).

Christ not only delegated responsibility and authority but He also asked for

¹Ibid.

²Gangel, *Building Leaders*, 341.

³T. Engstrom, 160.

⁴Bietz, 27.

accountability. This is clearly stated in the parable of the talents recorded in Matt 25:14-30.

The Master Trainer gave to each of His disciples a practical assignment with a definite purpose. He promised them "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20 NASB). His leadership training for the twelve disciples came to an end with the reassuring and empowering words of Him who came to earth to be "God with us" (Matt 1:21).

Summary

Jesus disclosed Himself to the twelve. He was not afraid to show His feelings, or sympathy and compassion toward them in time of struggle with difficulties.

Jesus exemplified a new leadership style in the way He organized and trained His disciples for the ministry. Jesus was a people leader. He identified with His team members and shared His total life with them.

Jesus offered the best to His followers and in turn expected the best service from them. He believed in them. He drew them to Himself because He took a personal interest in them. He associated with the joy, happiness, and problems of their daily lives. They longed to be in His company, for He made it evident that He found pleasure in being with them.¹

The training of the twelve was for Jesus a major priority of His work. He showed them how to live. His was true on-the-job training. He demonstrated before He

¹Robert H. Pierson, *So You Want to Be a Leader?* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1966), 37.

explained. As a teacher He clearly showed them how to do it. He involved them in ministry. He delegated to them His authority. He checked on their progress.

The next section deals with the apostle Paul's methods of leadership training for strengthening the church. The study will include the individuals he trained and the methods he used.

Paul's Leadership Training

Paul's Associates

From the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles we know that Paul did not usually work alone but had a team of co-workers. More than one hundred names are associated with the apostle. Bengt Holmberg has placed thirty-six of them in one or more of nine categories, designated as "brother, apostle, minister, co-servant, companion, laborer, co-prisoner, co-worker, fellow soldier."¹ Twelve of these people stand in a long-term relationship with the apostle and nine of them were closely associated with Paul until the end of his life. They are Mark, Titus, Timothy, Luke, Priscilla and Aquila, Erastus, Tychicus, Trophimus, and Epaphras. Besides these, other co-workers were closely associated with Paul at some time in his ministry, even though they had their own independent ministry apart from Paul. These were men like Barnabas, Silvanus (Silas), and Apollos.

Many of those listed above were never called disciples of Paul. They were co-workers and therefore cannot be compared with the disciples of Jesus, the Master Trainer.

¹Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 57.

Paul had a staff of associates who lived, traveled, and worked with him. The relationship between Paul and his helpers was deeply personal. Paul often used the father-son analogy, and the words "faithful, trusted, beloved," and "brother" when he speaks of his co-workers.¹ Among Paul's close associates, the best known are his young assistants, Timothy and Titus.

Timothy

Timothy was a native of Lystra (Acts 16:1) in the Lycaonian region of the province of Galatia.² He was the son of a mixed marriage, his mother being a Jewess and his father a Greek (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim 1:5). His mother Eunice and grandmother Lois (2 Tim 1:5) brought him up in their faith, well trained in religious matters, particularly in the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Tim 3:15).

Apparently the members of the family had been converted by Paul in his first visit to that city (Acts 14:8-18; 16:1-3; cf. 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:1, 5). Paul calls him his "beloved and faithful child" (1 Cor 4:17 NASB), "my true son in the faith" (1 Tim 1:2). That expression, says Hawthorne, suggests that Paul was Timothy's spiritual father, responsible for his conversion.³ As a Christian young man, whose spiritual development had been rapid, "Timothy could be called a disciple."⁴

¹Eugene Stock, *Practical Truths from the Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1983), 6-12.

²F. F. Bruce, *The Pauline Circle* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1985), 30.

³G. E. Hawthorne, "Timothy," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 4:857.

⁴F. Bruce, *Pauline Circle*, 30.

By the time Paul returned to Lystra, Timothy had already earned a good reputation among the believers at Lystra and nearby Iconium (Acts 16:2). Seeing in Timothy a promising worker for God, Paul decided to take Timothy with him as assistant in his missionary and pastoral work.

Timothy would have ranked as a genuine Jew; but he had never been circumcised. Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews (Acts 16:3). After that, Timothy became a nearly constant companion of Paul. Bruce points out that "His ready self-sacrifice and unfailing devotion were deeply appreciated by Paul."¹

When Timothy was set apart to work as pastor-evangelist (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14), he received a special endowment for his mission, through the laying on of the hands of the elders and of Paul (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6).

Timothy was young and had exceptional "potential for missionary statesmanship and church leadership."² Because of this, Paul authorized him to appoint elders and establish order in the Ephesian church and supervise other churches in Asia Minor.

Paul's closeness to Timothy and admiration of Timothy are seen in Paul's letters, which name him as the co-sender of six of his letters.³ Paul spoke highly of him to the Philippians (Phil 2:19-22). At the end of Paul's life, he requested Timothy to join him at

¹Ibid., 31.

²Hawthorne, 4:858.

³2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 and 2 Thess 1:1; Phlm 1:1; F. Bruce, *Pauline Circle*, 29.

Rome (2 Tim 4:9, 21). According to Heb 13:23, Timothy himself was imprisoned at Rome.

Timothy was not an apostle, but a most prominent pastor-teacher in the New Testament. He ministered widely to help establish churches and appoint elders in every church (Titus 1:5).¹

Titus

Titus is mentioned only occasionally in the letters of Paul, but it is plain that he was a member of Paul's circle and enjoyed Paul's confidence and appreciation to an exceptional degree.² Titus himself was a Greek and probably one of Paul's converts, as he is addressed, like Timothy, as "my true son" (Titus 1:4).

That Titus was Gentile is indicated by Paul's refusal to circumcise him in order to appease Jewish Christians at Jerusalem (Gal 2:3).³ He was a native of Antioch, a delegate to the council of Jerusalem (Gal 2:1, 3), a proof that grace was equally sufficient for Gentiles and Jews, with or without circumcision.⁴ Titus probably accompanied Paul on his several journeys, but no definite information of his work is available until the time of the Corinthian crisis (2 Cor 7, 8, 12).⁵

¹1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:19, 20; 1 Tim 1:3; Acts 17:14; 1 Thess 3:1-2.

²F. Bruce, *Pauline Circle*, 56.

³*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary (SDABD)*, ed. Siegfried Horn (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979), s.v. "Titus."

⁴F. Bruce, *Pauline Circle*, 59.

⁵D. Guthrie, "Titus," *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1980), 1574.

Though Titus's name does not appear frequently, he was the kind of man whom the apostle could entrust with delicate commissions.¹ Such was his mission in Crete, "to straighten out what was left unfinished" (Titus 1:5).

Paul's Training Methods

Wherever he went, Paul stood out as a man of unusual authority and forceful personality.² His leadership qualities lifted him above his colleagues and associates. Paul's leadership was not perfect, but it provides us with an encouraging and inspiring example of what it means to continue pressing towards maturity.

Paul's conception of leadership training is reflected in the words he uses in that connection. A leader is a steward, a servant of Christ, "entrusted with the secret things of God" (1 Cor 4:2). He is an administrator, the one who directs the task.

Paul's own leadership is demonstrated in the various tactics he employed in dealing with the problems of differing people and churches. He was sometimes kind-hearted and paternal (1 Thess 2:7, 8, 11). But when the occasion so demanded, he thundered and warned his spiritual children (2 Cor 13:2, 3). He was brotherly and gentle in dealing with others (1 Thess 2:17, 18), yet at times he used stinging sarcasm in the hope of bringing his readers to a better state of mind (1 Cor 4:8-10). He gave generous praise for their good works (1 Thess 2:14; 2 Cor 8:8). Robert Speer finds him "playful" when he says, "I caught you by trickery" (2 Cor 12:13).³

¹F. Bruce, *Pauline Circle*, 60.

²J. Oswald Sanders, *Paul the Leader* (Kent, England: Kingsway, 1983), 38.

³Robert E. Speer, *Studies of the Man Paul* (London: Partridge, n.d.), 289.

Paul's ability to lead others was born from his genuine love and deep concern for others. Sanders says, "One great secret of Paul's friendships was his capacity to love unselfishly, even if his love was met with no return" (2 Cor 12:15). This was demonstrated by his friendship with Luke, Barnabas, Timothy, and many others. "His capacity for friendship was a prime factor in his ability to inspire others to similar qualities of leadership."¹

Using all these qualities, Paul trained leaders. He did this through on-the-job training and his letters.

On-the-Job Training

Timothy's training was received on the job, as he traveled with Paul. Sanders points out that this was "a unique privilege for so young a man."² Timothy thus came into contact with all kinds of people, personalities, and achievements. From his tutor, he learned how to meet crises and overcome them, which seemed routine in Paul's life and ministry.

Paul entrusted Timothy with responsibility for establishing the Christian nucleus at Thessalonica (1 Thess 3:2-5) and confirming the believers in the faith. From Ephesus, he was sent to Corinth, a hot spot where Paul's apostolic authority was challenged (1 Cor 4:17).

Many times Paul enlisted Timothy as an emissary to do what Paul himself could not do (1 Thess 3:1-3; Acts 19:22). Timothy shared in the evangelization of Macedonia

¹Sanders, *Paul*, 50.

²Ibid., 168.

and Achaia (Acts 17:14-15; 18:5) and was with Paul during much of his long preaching ministry at Ephesus (Acts 19:22). He traveled with Paul from Ephesus to Macedonia, to Corinth, back to Macedonia and to Asia Minor (Acts 20:1-6). He seems to have accompanied him all the way to Jerusalem. He was with Paul during the apostle's imprisonment (Phil 1:1; Col 1:1; Phlm 1).¹ Following Paul's release Timothy again traveled with him, finally remaining at Ephesus.

Paul poured out his own life into Timothy's faithfulness, passing on to him all that he had personally experienced about the gospel.² Timothy's response to this training was everything Paul could have hoped for. Timothy dedicated himself to learning and grew in faith and energy to evangelize and teach and become a trusted and valuable co-worker of Paul.

Titus was brought along by Paul and Barnabas to the Apostolic council in Jerusalem as an uncircumcised Gentile Christian. A fellow-worker of Paul, he was subsequently sent by the apostle as his representative to Corinth. He apparently discharged his commission to satisfaction (2 Cor 2:14; 7:11-15). The Corinthian church repented from its earlier improper conduct towards Paul and received Titus "with fear and trembling" (2 Cor 7:6-16). Paul urged Titus to come to Corinth immediately to gather the collection (2 Cor 8:6). Probably this was the second visit of Titus to which Paul looks back in 2 Cor 12:18.

It is possible that Titus had a more independent position in regard to Paul than did

¹More details on Timothy's ministry with Paul are given in Stock, 18-19.

²Hawthorne, 4:858.

Timothy.¹ That he is not mentioned again in Paul's letters may indicate that he parted from Paul and worked independently, as did Barnabas.

Titus 1:5 suggests that Titus went to Crete to straighten out disorders there and appoint elders, encourage, rebuke, and teach sound doctrine (Titus 1:5, 2:1, 15).

Letters

It was necessary for Paul and his associates to keep in touch with the new Christians. According to W. A. Meeks, "foremost among the techniques that the Pauline mission invented were return visits by the missionaries to the groups they had planted and when a visit was not possible, letters were written."² This is confirmed by Acts 15:36, 41.

Paul's letters were primarily composed for the people to whom they were addressed, although there is evidence that he intended some to be read by others as well (Col 4:16; 1 Thess 5:27). Here was a man with something to say, and "what he had to say was so much part of himself" that there could be nothing artificial about the way it was expressed in the epistles.³

Acts makes reference to the letter that Judas and Silas carried with them to Antioch, accompanying Paul and Barnabas, after the council of Jerusalem. It was a means to exhort and to strengthen the believers (Acts 15:20-32). These letters also introduced a

¹Holmberg, 60.

²W. A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New York: Binghamton, 1983), 113.

³F. F. Bruce, "Paul the Apostle," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 3:697.

special relationship among the different communities. The exchange of letters was practiced by the apostolic church, as can be seen from the letter that Paul addressed to the community of Colossae (Col 4:16).

Barclay says that the church was wise in sending a person as well as a letter. "A letter alone could have sounded coldly official but the words of Judas and Silas added a friendly touch that the bare reception of a letter could never have achieved."¹ A. Loisy points out that "the letter was a means of catechesis and was essential to prevent the dissolution of the communities."² In fact, the numerous churches mentioned in Acts had their origin in large measure due to the initiative of Paul and his letters, which form a large section of the New Testament literature.³ The letters were deemed so precious that they were considered a substitute for personal presence. Through his letters Paul extended his presence and restored what was lacking in the faith of the believers. Holmberg notes: "Through the letters he builds upon the foundation he laid on his first visit."⁴

Paul's Instruction for Elders

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders to lead the newly formed congregations (Acts 14:23). Thus, they instituted "in the gentile churches a form of organization already

¹William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Daily Study Bible (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 1987), 117-118.

²A. Loisy, *The Origins of the New Testament* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950), 239.

³F. Bruce, "Paul the Apostle," 3:707.

⁴Holmberg, 80.

adopted by Christians in Jerusalem.”¹

Paul gave specific information for elders in his Ephesus discourse (Acts 20) and in the pastoral epistles.

The Ephesus Discourse (Acts 20)

Paul’s farewell address to the Ephesian elders contained admonitions concerning the faithful discharge of ministry (Acts 20:26). Paul charged the elders to be diligent and faithful in their duty because the Holy Spirit had made them overseers of the flock (vs. 28). Elders must not only take care of their own souls but must have a constant regard for the souls of those under their charge, for their “spiritual nutrition.”² The elders are charged to keep watch over the flock as shepherds keep over their flock by night. Ellen G. White agrees with Paul: “Those who occupy the position of undershepherds are to exercise a watchful diligence over the Lord’s flock. This is not to be a dictatorial vigilance, but one that tends to encourage and strengthen and uplift.”³

Paul gave good reasons why the elders should mind the duty of their ministry.

1. “The Church of God” was “bought with his own blood” (vs. 28). Christ “lay down His life to purchase it.”⁴

2. The flock of God was in danger (vs. 29). The danger could be from

¹*SDABC*, 6:301.

²*Ibid.*, 6:390.

³White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 526.

⁴*Mathew Henry’s Commentary*, 1720.

persecution, but mostly it came from seducers and false teachers, referred to as "savage wolves."¹ Paul warned the elders to guard the sheep against the wolves. He also warned of a future apostasy (vs. 30).

Paul re-emphasized the vigilance that was to characterize those elders who had oversight of the church at Ephesus.

Letters to Timothy and Titus

The epistles to Timothy and Titus "have a pastoral character." They are specifically addressed to individuals as "purely private correspondence." They were written from personal feeling and affection and are "for the arrangement of ecclesiastical discipline."² They were written to strengthen the hands of the "apostle's lieutenants" and therefore provide valuable insight into Paul's advice to his helpers. The pastoral epistles are called "semi-personal and perhaps, semi-ecclesiastical." All three epistles also contain exhortations, warnings regarding false teachers, and various others admonitions.³

In 1 Timothy and Titus, Paul gives instructions to the churches concerning the duties of the elders (1 Tim 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-7). Elders should rule or oversee well the house of God (1 Tim 3:4-5; 5:17). They should preach and teach the word of God (1 Tim 5:17). Elders should protect sound doctrines from any perversion and guard members against the intrusion of error (Titus 1:9).

¹Ibid.

²D. Guthrie, "Pastoral Epistles," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 4:611.

³D. Guthrie, "Pastoral Epistles," *ISBE*, 3:679.

Ellen G. White on Training for Leadership

Ellen G. White provided rich resources on a wide variety of subjects. One of the important subjects she dealt with was Christian leadership training.

This analysis of her writings on the topic deals with the purpose of the church; the need for training workers, especially in practical matters; the church as a training center; the minister as a trainer; and the training of young people.

The Purpose of the Church

Ellen G. White pointed out the purpose of the church: "The Church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world."¹ She further wrote: "The Church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth."²

In another passage, Ellen G. White wrote: "The church must be a working church if it would be a living church. It should not be content merely to hold its own ground, . . . but it should bear the yoke of Christ, and keep step with the Leader, gaining recruits along the way."³ This type of church requires training of its members.

¹White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 9.

²White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:649.

³Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Washington, DC: Home Missionary Department of the General Conference of SDA, 1947), 83, 84.

The Need for Training Church Members

Ellen G. White was convinced that church members always need to learn. She affirmed: "The Lord desires us to obtain all the education possible with the object in view of imparting our knowledge to others."¹ She also noted that God "wants us to make the very best and highest use that is possible of the talents that He has given you."² In strong language she pointed out the importance of educating church members: "It is very essential that such an education should be given to the members of the church that they will become unselfish, devoted, efficient workers for God, and it is only through such a course that the church can be prevented from becoming fruitless and dead."³

In regard to training church members for evangelism, Ellen G. White was very clear: "Many would be willing to work if they were taught to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged."⁴

In her opinion the task of training was so important that "in all our conferences there should be well organized plans for the instruction and training of those who desire to give themselves to the work of God."⁵ To accomplish this end, she made the following recommendation:

There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the

¹White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 333.

²White, *Christian Service*, 62.

³Ibid.

⁴Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View: CA: Pacific Press, 1942), 149.

⁵White, *Gospel Workers*, 75.

upbuilding of the church, and also for unbelievers. It is training, education that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work.¹

Because members were not using their talents in diffusing light, she said, "the churches are withering up." Therefore, careful instruction should be given so that members could use their light in practical missionary work.² Because of the importance of the practical work, her advice was: "There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people, and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts."³

Her advice was clear: "Companies should be organized and thoroughly educated to work . . . in their own neighborhoods and in other places."⁴ Doing so they would gain a rich experience that would qualify them to become better consecrated workers in a larger sphere. She pointed to the urgency of the task: "In this closing work of the gospel there is a vast field to be occupied. . . . More than ever before the work is to enlist helpers from the common people."⁵ To prepare these helpers, "there should be no delay in [implementing] this well-planned effort to educate the church-members."⁶ The thrust is

¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:117.

²Ibid., 6:431.

³White, *Ministry of Healing*, 149.

⁴White, *Christian Service*, 33.

⁵Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1952), 109.

⁶White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:119.

clear; the urgency is evident: members need to be educated and trained.

The Church a Training Center

Ellen G. White described the church as a center for training members to be workers for God: "Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath School classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted."¹ She suggested that this training could be accomplished by letting "the missionary meeting be turned to account in teaching the people how to do missionary work."²

The Minister as Trainer

According to Ellen G. White, the minister or pastor of the local church is the best person to educate and train the church members: "Our ministers should give special attention to the instruction and training to those who are to cooperate with them."³

She also affirmed that "ministers should not do the work which belongs to the church. . . . They should teach the members how to labor in the church and in the community."⁴ In fact, she wrote, "the best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do

¹White, *Ministry of Healing*, 149.

²White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:431.

³White, *Gospel Workers*, 76.

⁴Ellen G. White, *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 291.

for others. . . . Let all be taught how to work.”¹

Ellen G. White understood that in order to grow spiritually, church members needed to use their “talents in giving the truth to those around them.”² So important was the teaching function for Ellen G. White that she wrote: “If this duty is neglected, the work of the minister is incomplete.”³

Training Youth

The Lord chooses young people because they are strong and vigorous in mind and body, and have “overflowing energies.”⁴ Ellen G. White further noted: that if they are rightly trained, and disciplined, they will be powerful and earnest workers for the Master.⁵ Very specifically she noted, “The Lord has appointed the youth to be His helping hand.”⁶

Her conviction was clear:

We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. . . . We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor.⁷

These young people, talented as they are, must be taught, trained, disciplined, and

¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:82.

²White, *Gospel Workers*, 20.

³White, *Welfare Ministry*, 111.

⁴White, *Gospel Workers*, 211.

⁵White, *Pastoral Ministry*, 278.

⁶White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:64.

⁷White, *Christian Service*, 30.

drilled in the best methods of winning souls to Christ.¹ Ellen G. White urged: "Educate the youth to help the youth," because there are many lines of work in which they can find opportunity for helping others.²

The earnestness of her plea for youth to be part of God's work is clear in the following quotation:

Upon the youth there rest grave responsibilities. God expects much from the young men who live in this generation. He desires to use them in dispelling the error and superstition that cloud the minds of many. . . . God holds them responsible for the opportunities given them. The work before them is waiting for their earnest efforts, that it may be carried forward from point to point as the time demands.³

Finally, Ellen G. White expressed great confidence in the ability of young people to take part in the work of the church. She wrote:

With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come . . . the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!⁴

Conclusion

According to the New Testament and Ellen G. White, God gave the church the work of evangelizing the world. The supreme task of every church and every Christian is bringing people into a redemptive relationship with Jesus.

¹White, *Gospel Workers*, 210.

²White, *Christian Service*, 33.

³Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Nashville: Southern Publishing, 1930), 199.

⁴*Ibid.*, 196.

To accomplish the task, church members need to be reminded that “the Lord calls for living, working, believing Christians.”¹ Furthermore, they need to be trained, as were the leaders in the New Testament and as Ellen G. White urged should be done.

Chapter 3 has presented leadership training in the New Testament and in the writings of Ellen G. White. The following chapter surveys lay leadership training in current literature.

¹White, *Evangelism*, 117.

CHAPTER IV

LAY LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN CURRENT LITERATURE

Chapter 3 presented the concept of leadership training in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G White. This chapter reviews lay leadership training in current literature. The chapter first answers the question, What is leadership? It then considers the need for training leadership and the benefits of such training, the selection of leaders, and the actual training of future leaders.

What Is Leadership?

The single greatest problem facing any organization is dealing with people and “developing management skill.”¹ Essentially, managing is making an organization work effectively and efficiently. According to Peter Wiwcharuk, “management works primarily with ideas, concepts and intangibles.”² Leadership, on the other hand, works with people. However, leaders and management are not mutually exclusive. Anthony D'Souza points out that leadership demands “a basic knowledge of group behavior, human relations,

¹Anthony D'Souza, *Leadership* (Bombay: Better Yourself, 1987), 11.

²Peter Wiwcharuck, *Building Effective Leadership: A Guide to Christian and Professional Management* (Three Hills, Alberta: International Leadership Development Foundation, 1987), 51.

managerial skills, and training in applying these skills.”¹ One may safely say that good leaders can be good managers, but good managers are not necessarily good leaders because they may be weak in terms of motivating action in others.

Leadership is a difficult term to define because it means so many different things to different people. Some people think of leadership in terms of power or authority, some as personality traits, still others as status or position.² Though leadership may be hard to define, the one characteristic common to all leaders is the ability to make things happen, to help others work, encouraging and stimulating them to realize their fullest potential to contribute meaningfully.³ In his book *The Servant as Religious Leader*, Robert K. Greenleaf states: “To lead is to go out ahead and show the way when the way may be unclear, difficult or dangerous.”⁴ Clarence A. Weber says that “leadership is a moral function, best known by the personalities it enriches and not necessarily by the smoothness of operation or the number of persons it captivates.” Furthermore, he feels that “leadership is a process to help people examine, evaluate, change, and develop roles and purposes.”⁵

Christian leadership essentially involves “service,” not power, authority, honor,

¹D'Souza, 11.

²Willard Claassen, *Learning to Lead* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1963), 8.

³T. Engstrom, 20.

⁴Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Servant as Religious Leader* (Indianapolis: Robert K. Greenleaf Center, 1983), 7.

⁵Clarence A. Weber, *Fundamentals of Educational Leadership* (New York: Exposition, 1961), 67-82.

prestige or personal advantage, as does the worldly concept of leadership. D'Souza says that Christian leaders are to be of service rather than to dominate; they are to encourage and inspire respect, rather than exploit other persons.¹

Though leadership may be hard to define, we need to have a clear understanding of what Christian leadership is. Engstrom and Dayton describe it as "leadership motivated by love and given over to service. It is leadership that has been subjected to the control of Christ and his example."² Attributes such as selfless dedication, courage, decisiveness, and compassion definitely mark Christian leadership.

J. Robert Clinton captures this distinctive by describing a Christian leader as "a person with God-given capacity and God-given responsibility who influences a group of followers towards God's purposes for the group."³ A Christian leader is a spiritual leader, one who is led by the Spirit, maintains a spiritual outlook, and takes a personal interest in the well-being of those with whom and for whom he serves.⁴

In conclusion, leadership is the ability to enlist followers and attain the goals of the organization through people. A spiritual leader guides God's people and makes Christ the first, last, and best in everything. Christian leaders need to understand spiritual leadership and improve their leadership skills to equip others for ministry.

¹D'Souza, 11, 12.

²Ted W. Engstrom and Edward R. Dayton, *The Art of Management for Christian Leaders* (Waco, TX: Word, 1980), 27.

³J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988), 127.

⁴Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 125.

Types of Leaders

Christian leaders may be classified into five general types.¹ These five differ in terms of the nature of their ministries, sphere of influence, power, role, status, amount of training, and degree of professionalization. Also, they differ significantly in terms of their experience, but not in value. All are essential before God and need to work together harmoniously to ensure effective leadership for the growth of the church.

These types of leaders are not classified by gender or by age. However the spiritual and social maturity that is required for each type of leadership emerges out of the life experience. Generally, more experience is required to enter a higher type of leadership. Age does not automatically move a person from one type of leadership to another. Men and women in type IV and V leadership are generally above thirty-five years old, whereas type I and II leaders may be in their twenties.²

These five types of leaders often correspond to five levels of leadership in growing churches.³

Type I: Usually lay leaders of small groups or ministry teams of 6-12 members (unpaid)

Type II: Overseeing/co-ordinating leaders, lay pastors of small churches (unpaid or partially paid)

¹For authors who advocate these five types of leadership, see Edgar J. Elliston, *Home Grown Leaders* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey, 1992), 26-35.

²Ibid., 29.

³Adapted from Erich W. Baumgartner, Class Lectures, MSSN 630 Leadership Development, Spicer College, Pune, July 9-31, 1997.

Type III: Local pastors of large churches (fully paid)

Type IV: Conference/section leaders (fully paid, without local church responsibility)

Type V: Union leaders, seminary teachers (leaders paid by the church).

Each type of leader must be equipped. However, special attention should be given to types I and II because of their potential for overall impact. Most of the future leaders will come from the ranks of types I and II. Leadership training must therefore be developmental.¹

In the beginning of their training, type I and II leaders will learn how to be growing Christians and witness for Christ by caring for a small group. As leaders advance to wider level of responsibility (types II and III), they will use the competencies and skills they have developed through previous leadership tasks to teach others. Thus, each leader in training will mentor other, less experienced leaders. At the same time they also will add new competencies and knowledge needed for new levels of responsibility.²

The focus of this study is on developing local church leaders, types I and II. These leaders are critically important to the health and growth of the church. They carry the primary responsibility of shepherding the members of the church.

Level I and II leaders can best be trained informally, on the job. The cost of providing this training is minimal, since it is usually done by the pastor training elders and they, in turn, preparing others.

¹Elliston, 32.

²Baumgartner, Class Lectures.

Need for Training Leaders

"Leadership is the key" in any organization."¹ Since "leadership is the key" for the growth and the health of the church, local church leaders must be trained.

If Christian service is dependent upon the call of God and accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, why train leaders? There are several reasons for training leaders.

The Scriptures clearly state the purpose of the gift of leadership in Eph 4:12, 13: "for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (NASB). "Equipping" the saints literally means "to put in working order" or "to repair."²

Effective leadership training addresses the needs of the whole person. It is concerned with discerning God's direction, helping people to discover God's purpose for their lives, and equipping them to fulfill that purpose.³

Training is also needed to help people discover their spiritual gifts and use those gifts in ministering to the body of Christ. Burrill emphasizes that "if we are serious about lay involvement, we must take the time to help people discover their spiritual gifts and find their place of ministry in the church."⁴

¹Larry B. Lewis, *Organize to Evangelize: A Manual for Church Growth* (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), 84. A similar statement is made by John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993), ii.

²Logan, 40, 41.

³Ibid., 114. The same is emphasized by J. J. Denison, *Training the Whole Church* (Kuala Lumpur: Academe Art, 1982), 47.

⁴Russell Burrill, *Revolution in the Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart, 1993), 59.

Training local leaders multiplies leaders. It is God's design that those God has called should equip others (1 Tim 2:2).

Effectual lay leadership training multiplication will result in continual ministry expansion and cover the whole spectrum of the great commission. Thus "there will be a growing movement of leadership in every church, both [in] quality and quantity."¹

Equipping leaders for ministry demands the pursuit of three essentials, as noted in Paul's exhortation to Timothy. Leaders are to: (1) grow a Christlike character; (2) be equipped with biblical knowledge, and (3) teach ministry skills (1 Tim 4:12-16). Commenting on these three essentials, Busenitz says: "Training for the leadership ministry cannot be market driven; it must be Bible driven."²

The purpose of training leaders is to develop competent leaders. This means training for particular skills such as evangelism, teaching, and administration. Training leadership is learning to understand group life.³

Larry L. Lewis observes that, for growing churches, training leadership is not an option, rather it is "an absolute imperative." He adds: "Your church will become not more than you train your people to be."⁴ He further notes: "You are today no less than what you trained to be yesterday. You will be tomorrow no more than what you train to be

¹Dann Spader and Gary Mayes, *Growing a Healthy Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1991), 170.

²Irvin A. Busenitz, "Training for Pastoral Ministry," in *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, ed. John MacArthur, Jr. (Dallas: Word, 1995), 117.

³Claassen, 11.

⁴Lewis, 45.

today. It is imperative that the growing church have a thorough program of worker recruitment and worker training."¹ Along the same lines, Logan says: "Church effectiveness rises or falls on the quality and quantity of a church's leaders."²

Many business corporations spend 20 percent of their budget on training workers. On the other hand, many churches have not budgeted at all for training lay leaders for their important task. Lewis insists:

The growing church must train its members. Poorly trained, unfaithful, incompetent workers will turn people away rather than reach them. The untrained worker may destroy a class or department rather than build it. More people will be lost through the back door than can be reached through the front door unless adequate worker training is provided.³

People grow faster and are more faithful if they are trained and involved in personal service. Lewis quotes D. L. Moody as stating: "I would rather train ten soul winners than win ten souls."⁴

Leaders are trained for the growth of the church and to provide qualified lay persons for positions of leadership. Their ability, commitment, and personality will stimulate other laypersons to work for God.

Leaders are trained to perform ministry. The whole church has a ministry to perform and lay persons need training as Christian educators, evangelists, shepherds, and stewards. For this, they need to be equipped. Alvin Lindgren says: "Only a church in

¹Ibid., 23, 24.

²Logan, 142.

³Lewis, 23, 24.

⁴Ibid., 104.

which laymen assume major responsibility for carrying the load can be adequate for today's demands."¹ Lindgren is emphatic on this: "The importance of placing qualified laymen in positions of leadership in the church can hardly be overemphasized. Unless its leaders understand the purpose and mission of the church, the church's real goals and objectives will never be realized."²

Therefore, if the real work of the church is to be done, lay persons must assume responsibility for witness and service. This, in turn, demands the equipping of lay persons for leadership.

Benefits of Training

Improving leadership functions will help church leaders participate to the fullest extent of their ability in the work of the church. The benefits of training leadership work in two ways. The first is the benefit that trainees receive and the second is the benefits the church receives through the quality ministry rendered by the trainees.

Benefits to the Trainees

Human beings are born without knowledge and experience, but with a tremendous capacity to learn. This capacity must be developed. Those who will be church leaders must be trained to do their work properly.

¹Alvin J. Lindgren, *Foundations for Purposeful Church Administration* (New York: Abingdon, 1965), 188.

²*Ibid.*, 195, 196.

The following are some of the benefits derived from leadership training in the local church:

1. Trainees receive important, deep spiritual perceptions as they "walk with God" (Gen 6:9). Only spiritual leaders can produce spiritual followers.
2. Trainees are exposed to new knowledge and situations and are helped to apply their knowledge to a given situation.
3. Trainees come to understand and deal with problems.
4. Training helps to discover the spiritual gifts of a person. Gangel says, "The key is not so much to seek new gifts as to recognize, develop and use the one(s) we have."¹
5. Training helps develop deep personal conviction, not opinion. Trainees will have a sense of destiny and will work more intelligently, becoming excited about what they are doing and where they are going.²
6. Trainees will perceive the potential of others and master the art of developing persons, not manipulating them.³
7. Trainees will become more expert, confident, and self-disciplined. They can approach life with a positive attitude and, above all, have the kind of faith that does not fear to take risks.⁴
8. Trainees learn diplomacy, how to deal with people sensitively to avoid giving

¹Kenneth O. Gangel, *Unwrap Your Spiritual Gifts* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983), 14.

²Perry, 79.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

offense, and how to handle delicate situations.¹

9. Trainees are inspired to action, to attempt the impossible. The new leaders can smooth the rough path to achievement and invite those around them to travel with them to victory.²

10. Trainees experience the power of creativity in their own leadership style and can determine to use every possible means to produce effective ministry.³

Benefits to the Church

There are several ways the church will benefit by having trained lay leaders. Some of the most important are as follows:

1. The church rediscovers the power of "the priesthood of all believers." Burrill calls this a "revolution in the church." It focuses on "the real work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and the congregation."⁴

2. The church revitalizes its ministry through trained lay leaders. The church will press on to a higher level of spiritual growth and wider outreach for the cause of the gospel (Phil 3:10-14).

3. The church experiences quality leadership. Gangel says "quality control"

¹Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 72.

²Robert H. Pierson, *How to Become a Successful Christian Leader* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1978), 15.

³Ibid.

⁴Burrill, *Revolution in the Church*, vi.

begins and ends with the people in the congregation.¹ When the lay leaders provide quality services, the attitude of "quality mindedness" begins to grow in the mind of the congregation.²

4. There is a healthy desire on the part of the church and its leaders "to return to the biblical ideal of church ministry, where the laity perform ministry instead of only the pastors."³

5. The lay pastors are well able to exercise the leadership by themselves, which makes for "leadership transition."⁴ After this transition period, the "clerical security of tenure will be a thing of the past."⁵

6. There will be "a great flowering of lay leadership"⁶ in the church as effective lay leadership multiplies. This will yield the exciting result of continual ministry expansion.⁷

7. The discovery of the gifts of the members multiplies the ministry of the church. This is where an "expanding network of cell groups"⁸ takes place.

¹Kenneth O. Gangel, *Competent to Lead: A Guide to Management in Christian Organizations* (Chicago: Moody, 1974), 125.

²Ibid., 126.

³Burrill, *Revolution in the Church*, 115.

⁴Elliston, 142-144.

⁵Michael Green, *Freed to Serve: Training and Equipping for Ministry* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983), 101.

⁶Ibid., 102.

⁷Spader and Mayes, 174.

⁸Logan, 118.

8. As lay pastors take over the care of the local church, the pastors will be free to do the work commissioned for them by God: Their work is evangelism, prayer, planting new churches (Acts 6:1-6), and training members.¹

9. There will be an increase of self-supporting ministries which cause no financial burden to the church.²

10. Lastly, the whole process leads to the quantitative and qualitative growth of the church.³

Selection of Leaders

To a great extent, the success of a church program depends upon the abilities of the leaders. If the church wants to become healthy, capable leadership must be placed in the positions of greatest responsibility.

Keeping this in mind the next important step is the identification, preparation, and evaluation of candidates for leadership training. The matter of leadership selection and development should not be neglected or left to chance.

Steps before Selection

Pray for Leaders

Jesus commanded us to pray for workers: "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore,

¹Burrill, *The Revolutionized Church*, 141.

²Green, 101.

³Perry, 183.

to send out workers into His harvest field" (Matt 9:38). The reason many churches complain of a shortage of leaders or workers is the same as James gave: "You have not because you ask not" (Jas 4:2). Jesus spent the whole night in prayer before the important work of selecting His twelve apostles (Luke 6:12-13). This example must be followed.

Preach for Leaders

The prophet Isaiah heard God's clear call: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" (Isa 6:10). Jesus motivated some fishermen to become leaders when he said: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19).

In a similar manner, pastors and leaders are required to stimulate people to a feeling of dissatisfaction with the status quo. The leader has to touch the will in order to move people to want leadership and leadership training.

Give Job Descriptions

One of the most important principles in staffing an organization is to fit individuals to jobs rather than jobs to individuals. Each position in the church must have a job description that shows exactly what the person who fills that position is expected to do. This job description should be prepared by the pastor and church board.

Identifying Candidates

The next step in the recruitment of leaders is determining the general characteristic of a Christian leader. Although this list is not exhaustive, it may provide guidance.

Leaders Should Be Spiritual

According to Robert K. Bower, the spirituality of a person is an absolute imperative for work in the cause of Christ.¹ Chester Barnard feels that morality is included in spirituality: "A low morality will not sustain leadership long, its influence quickly vanishes, it cannot produce its own succession."²

A leader must feel called to Christian ministry and maintain spiritual disciplines in personal relationship with God. Lois Fuller says: "They need to be emotionally mature and otherwise personally suitable."³ Only a genuinely converted person, deeply committed to Christ, with a strong devotional life is acceptable as a leadership candidate.⁴

Prospective leaders should demonstrate the possession of spiritual gifts. Says Logan: "If people seem to do what they're doing well, and are enjoying it, they likely are gifted to do it."⁵

Leaders Must Be Teachable

Future leaders should possess the necessary capacity to become leaders. Even though their educational background may be limited, they should be willing to learn. They

¹Robert K. Bower, *Administering Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 99.

²Chester I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 283.

³Lois Fuller, "Starting a Missionary Training Program," in *Establishing Ministry Training*, ed. Robert W. Ferris (Pasadena, CA: William Carey, 1995), 132.

⁴Green, 102.

⁵Logan, 169, 170.

should have good communication skills or be able to learn them. Chapman has said,

The ability to express oneself and the ability to understand what is expressed are absolute prerequisites for successful executive performance. . . . The man who cannot express himself will not be successful. . . . Without the ability to read intelligently and write coherently, the young man is not a prospect for executive responsibility.¹

Leaders Must Be Cooperative

Many persons are dismissed from their jobs because they lack social understanding and are unable to get along with others, rather than for lacking knowledge or technical competence. According to Bower, "The organization with technically capable but uncooperative and intolerant persons will not be nearly as productive as one with persons slightly less capable but cooperative, tolerant and understanding."²

Chapman states that in management there must be "people who understand others. This is the key to leadership."³ Leaders should not only be cooperative but be friendly with others. They must be sensitive to the needs of others.

Leaders Must Be Dedicated

When people dedicate themselves to God, they set themselves apart for God's work. They commit themselves to the plan which God has designed for them. Once they put their hand to the plow, they must not look back (Luke 9:62).

¹Bower, 100.

²Ibid., 101.

³Ibid., 101, 102.

Leaders Should Be Enthusiastic

Perry says, "Enthusiasm is contagious." It influences others to be interested in things which may have had little concern for them before.¹ Enthusiasm is defined as "a quality of mind characteristic of a person who is able to find enjoyment in pursuing a goal."² A healthy enthusiasm about the work of God is a sign of a growing relationship with the Lord that keeps bursting out.³

Leaders Should Be Respectable

Leaders must be well respected and have a good reputation in the church and in the community around them (1 Tim 3:1). They should have the confidence of the church and the respect of outsiders.

Leaders Must Love God and Human Beings

The church should select a person who loves God and human beings (Matt 22:37-40). A leader must be willing to sacrifice money, time, and family. True leaders should be willing to undergo persecution. If a leader is weak on sacrifice he or she is going to be weak in servant ministry.⁴ John Wesley's number one requirement in selecting a leader

¹Perry, 94.

²Bower, 103.

³Spader and Mayes, 135.

⁴Green, 104.

was that he should be "truly alive to God, with love for God and man."¹

Selecting the right people for a job is critical because of the lack of qualified personnel. This problem can be overcome if the people trained come as close as possible to the required characteristics for the task. Naturally, everything possible must also be done to help them succeed in their role. The church has great untapped potential leaders. However, leadership usually does not happen by itself. It can happen only by setting up a system of regular leadership training in the church. The following section presents an effective design for training leaders.

The Effective Training Design

An effective training design has several elements. It must first have a clear definition of what the church is to do to achieve its objectives. Tasks should be defined as clearly as possible. Persons who are performing the tasks should see the relation of their tasks to the objectives and ultimate goal of the church.² In addition, the identification of resources needed to do the task must include ideas, skills, tools, programs, curriculum, methods, person, facilities, and finance.³ Ranjit DeSilva says that leadership development involves three components: cognitive input, spiritual reflection, and practical experience.

¹Carl F. George and Robert E. Logan, *Leading and Managing Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1987), 108.

²Alvin J. Lindgren and Norman Shawchuk, *Let My People Go: Empowering Laity for Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 115.

³Ibid.

It focuses on "know how" and "on the job" experience.¹

Important decisions must be made. One must determine who should do the training. Then one must decide what areas should be taught. Finally, consideration must be given to the methods of teaching to be used. Several of these aspects of the training program can be incorporated into small groups.

The Trainer

A Bible passage that clearly teaches the foundational purpose of pastoral leadership is Eph 4:12, 13: "To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Logan says, "It is the pastor's job as a leader to cultivate spiritual maturity--in short godly character, . . . in the lives of those they lead."²

In Eph 4:12, "to prepare" is sometime translated "to equip." The Greek word literally means "to put in working order" or "to repair." It is used in the classical Greek in reference "to setting a broken bone" and in the Gospels, to mending a torn net (Matt 4:21; Mark 1:19). Thus, the pastor's job is "to repair those nets so that they once again can hold fish."³

¹Ranjit DeSilva, "The Missing Ingredient in Leadership Training," *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 32 (1996): 52.

²Logan, 40.

³Ibid.

Components/Contents

The pastor's task is to teach the elders to understand who God is and to know that He loves human beings.¹ Thus they will understand that "God's mission is to bring us into relationship with Himself and through that to relate to one another."² Lindgren and Shawchuk point to personal spiritual formation and empowerment of the Spirit as the most important thing a new leader should learn.³

Another important topic is the involvement of all members in the activities of the church. Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12 clearly point to the need of all the members of the body to accomplish the task. Furthermore, these same texts point out that all members are gifted. Elders need to clearly understand the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:9).

Patterson and Scoggins list many possible topics which would be beneficial. Two are especially relevant. Elders need to learn the "Timothy Principle" (2 Tim 2:2), according to which they themselves must become teachers. They also need to learn the importance of spiritual gifts, to discover their own gifts, and to use their gifts in harmony with the rest of the body.⁴

¹Lindgren and Shawchuk, 15.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 20.

⁴George Patterson and Richard Scoggins, *Church Multiplication Guide* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1993), 93-104.

Methods of Training

The word "method" is "simply descriptive of processes and techniques used by a teacher to communicate information to the students."¹ For training leaders, there are several methods of teaching but the most common methods are lecture, discussion, and demonstration.

Lecture Method

The lecture method consists of one person talking to students about a topic. The talk may be augmented by the use of audiovisual aids and occasional questions. When several questions are used, the lecture merges into a lecture-discussion method. Lectures may be supplemented with handout materials. The main purposes of the lecture are² (1) to convey information, (2) to generate understanding, and (3) to stimulate interest.

Gangel lists eight suggestions for effective lecturing:³

1. Combine the lecture with audience-involvement methods
2. Support the lecture with visuals
3. Use a simple outline
4. Practice good principles of speaking
5. Use interesting illustrations
6. Specify clear objectives

¹Kenneth Gangel, *24 Ways to Improve Your Teaching* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1985), 7.

²G. Brown, "Lecture Method of Training," *The International Encyclopedia of Education*, ed. Torsten Husen (New York: Pergamos, 1985), 5:2987.

³Gangel, *24 Ways to Improve your Teaching*, 15, 16.

7. Emphasize the important points
8. Provide copies of your outline.

Discussion Method

Discussion has been called "a cooperative venture in search of truth."¹ It is a process in which a small group assembles; its members communicate with each other using speaking, listening, and non-verbal processes in order to achieve instructional objectives. The group members perform different roles, such as leader, participant, and moderator.² Together they arrive at solutions that "are far superior to those of the best individual member of the group when working alone." Betz also notes that discussion teaches the learner to "listen, to think, weigh evidence and make sound judgements."³

Attitudes are important in discussion teaching, both in the teacher and the students. A teacher must have the disposition of a co-learner rather than that of a lecturer. He or she must be a good guide rather than a teller or transmitter.⁴

Demonstration Method

The demonstration method of teaching, that is teaching by showing, has the advantage of communicating with the learner both visually and orally. Language barriers

¹Charles H. Betz, *Teaching Techniques for the Adult Sabbath School* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988), 73.

²M. D. Gall, "Discussion Method of Teaching," *The International Encyclopedia of Education*, ed. Torsten Husen (New York: Pergamos, 1985), 3:1423.

³Betz, 74.

⁴Gangel, *24 Ways to Improve Your Teaching*, 36.

can be overcome and rapport established between teacher and student.¹

Research indicates that after thirty days people remember 10 percent of what they hear and 50 percent of what they see. At the same time, they remember 70 percent of what they say, and 90 percent of what they do.² People do what they see, not what they hear. With this in mind, four basic steps provide a conceptual framework for the learning-by-doing process:

- a. I do, you watch (model and observation)
- b. I do, you help (limited participation)
- c. You do, I help (assist, evaluate)
- d. You do, I watch (fully trained, encouraged).³

People learn best when they see someone effectively model the skill. They gain experience through on-the-job training. People learn best when they sense a need and "just-in-time training," coming from someone they respect.

Small Group Training

A century ago Ellen White emphasized the importance of small groups:

The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by One who cannot err. . . . Let the members be formed

¹L. C. Comber, "Demonstration Methods of Teaching," *The International Encyclopedia of Education*, ed. Torsten Husen (New York: Pergamos, 1985), 3:1351.

²Wiwcharuk, 268.

³George and Logan, 110, 111.

into small companies, to work not only for the church members but for unbelievers also.¹

In a small group setting, the pastor can train the local leaders in spiritual formation and in ministry skills. Information on organizing and implementing small groups is beyond the scope of this paper. It is, however, appropriate to consider Schilt's affirmation: "One of the most critical periods in a group's life is its beginning."² Participants should be advised of the purpose and plans for the group. From the first meeting, they need to understand what commitments are involved. Although small group meetings take time, the results in spiritual growth, intimate fellowship, and acquisition of ministry skills more than compensate for the effort and time.³

An Example of Effective Lay Leadership Training

Alberto Timm reported the following program used to train lay leaders in Northeast Brazil. He first chose three elders to train for six months in a special leadership program known as "spiritual multiplication" for two hours of instruction and visitation

¹White, *Evangelism*, 115.

²W. Clarence Schilt, *Dynamic Small Groups* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1992), 35.

³For more information on small groups, see the following: Arnold Jeffrey, *The Big Book on Small Groups* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992); Miguel Angel Cerna, *The Power of Small Groups in the Church* (Newbury Park, CA: El Camino, 1991); Kurt W. Johnson, *Small Group Outreach* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1991); Carl F. George, *Nine Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership* (Mansfield, PA: Kingdom, 1997); Ralph W. Neighbour, *The Shepherd's Guide Book: Spiritual and Practical Foundations for Cell Group Leaders* (Houston: Touch Outreach Ministries, 1996); Palmer Becker, *Called to Equip: A Training Resource for Pastors* (Waterloo, Ontario: Herald, 1993); Paul Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge, 1981), 135-143.

each week. After the first two months of training, each of the leaders chose another three potential leaders for leadership training or discipling, replicating the pastor's work in training them. (The scheme is shown in figure 1.) This process continued until all

P=Pastor

EL=Elder/Leader

NL=New Leader

Figure 1. Timm's spiritual multiplication, leadership-training program.

members were equipped for ministry.¹

This kind of multiplication ministry leads to dynamic growth. The spiritual development process improves as actively trained leaders for the church increase.

Summary

There is always a need for good leadership. Lack of good leadership hinders the growth of the church. Local leadership training should be focused on training lay leaders. The life force of Christian ministry in a local church is people. Effective training begins with the recruiting process. Once potential leaders are recruited, the next step is to design a training program, followed by actual training "on the job."

¹Alberto R. Timm, "Reviving Inactive Churches," *Ministry*, February 1992, 13-15.

The objective of training leaders is to help them to grow in Christlikeness, to empower them to be more effective in achieving goals. These objectives can be reached effectively through organizing small groups in which leaders in training can nurture and develop friendship.

In chapter 4 we have discussed lay leadership training in current literature. In the following chapter I develop a lay leadership program for the Northeast India Union.

CHAPTER V

PROPOSED LAY LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

This chapter contains a training program for local church elders/leaders of Northeast India Union. The chapter is divided into three parts: a description of the existing training program, a survey to discover the needs and preferences of the field, and the design of a new training program.

The Existing Training Program

The Northeast India Union Department of Church Ministries developed a training program for local church leaders that included sermon preparation, personal evangelism, and church leadership. The training was needed because of a lack of mission workers to take care of local churches and companies. This forced elders and lay leaders to assume the responsibilities of lay pastors in local churches. Realizing that these elders and leaders did not have formal ministerial training, and that not many of them were educated or had access to books to prepare their own sermons and Bible study guides, the union developed a training program to meet their need. Training sessions were conducted to offer instruction in sermon preparation, the development of Bible study guides for personal evangelism, and church leadership.

Emphasis was placed on the devotional study of the word of God. The method used has four basic phases:

1. **Approach to the Word:** Sincere prayer asking God for spiritual illumination
2. **Observation:** Close inspection of a Bible passage
3. **Interpretation:** Identification of timeless truths implied or illustrated by the passage
4. **Application:** Obedience to God's truth as revealed to the individual.¹

For the Bible study, the trainers divided the local leaders into groups of four or five and assigned Bible texts for study.² For this exercise, we allotted thirty minutes. At the end of the class, we asked them to submit their worksheet. This way we evaluated their progress and achievement. This was one of the methods used to teach sermon preparation.

For the church administration and leadership workshop, we used the *Church Leadership Handbook*. We reviewed the book step by step, answering their questions. In this training session, students and teachers discussed certain church problems and how to deal with them.

The leadership training sessions were conducted once a year for five days. As a result, many lay leaders became more involved in lay witnessing, and the life of their congregations was revitalized. Attendance increased both in the Sabbath services and

¹Terry Powell, *You Can Lead a Bible Discussion Group* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1996), 68.

²Passages assigned were John 1:1-4; John 3:16; Matt 7:7; 4:23-25; 20:25-28; 28:18-20.

mid-week prayer meeting. More baptisms took place in their local churches. Through lay efforts, tithes and offerings have increased substantially. Church officers have reported being helped in their roles and functions.

Lalbiaksanga Renthley, Mizo Conference Secretary, reported that, as the result of lay training, more laity are involved in witnessing. There has also been an increase in baptisms and lay participation.¹

Berun Sangma, President of the Garo Section, reported that 60 percent of the total baptisms came from lay evangelistic efforts. These were the result of the lay leadership training conducted in July 1996 at Raja Simla and of similar training events in other places.²

In the Assam region, lay leadership training was conducted October 14-17, 1999. As the result of this training program, more church leaders are actively involved in witnessing programs.

Johnny Shimray, President of the Manipur Section, reported that as a result of lay leadership training conducted in early 2000 in the Ukhrul District, church elders and leaders are more effective in performing their duties.³

Survey of Needs

To ascertain the need for further training for local church elders/leaders in the

¹Lalbiaksanga Renthley, Executive Secretary of the Mizo Conference, interview by author, Shillong, January 10, 2000.

²Berun Sangma, Garo Section President, interview by author, Shillong, January 10, 2000.

³Johnny Shimray, President of the Manipur Section, interview by author, Shillong, October 24, 2000.

Northeast India Union, a survey was conducted. A questionnaire was given out to twelve district pastors and to three presidents of conference/sections (see appendix B).

Three specific objectives were set for this survey: (1) to determine the most important duties of elders/leaders, (2) to ascertain three areas in which local church elders/leaders most needed training, and (3) to discover the best time for training the elders/leaders.

The list of the duties of elders/leaders was based on the researcher's experience as a Church Ministries Director in the Northeast India Union and as Director of the Assam Region. In the first section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to rate each of twelve duties of local elders/church leaders, to help decide which of these were considered most important.

In the next section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to select the three most important areas of the twelve, for which they thought local church elders/leaders would need training. The last question was with reference to the frequency of the training sessions.

The results of the survey are shown in three different tables in appendix B. The first table shows the opinions of the three local conference/section presidents. The second table shows the opinions of the twelve district pastors. Table 3 combines the results of tables 1 and 2. It shows that the most important duties of local church elders/leaders are to maintain personal spirituality of the elders (15), to do personal evangelism (14), to visit church members at home (13), and to prepare and deliver good sermons (11).

Design of the Proposed Training Program

Areas of Training

The author proposed to develop workshops in the three areas in which local church elders/leaders in the Northeast India Union have the greatest need. I have become convinced that paramount to the ministry of elders/leaders is their personal spirituality. Sanders says, "A true leader influences others spiritually only because the spirit works in and through him to a greater degree than in those he leads."¹ For this reason, the first of the three planned workshops for local church leaders is in spiritual formation. The next two are on how to conduct Bible studies for non-members and how to preach sermons. The presentation of the workshops appears in appendix A.

Factors to Be Considered

Out of many factors considered in training leadership, some are more important than others. I considered the following as extremely important: trainees, the teachers, finances, the place where the workshops would be held, the workshop schedule, the procedures, and teaching methods.

Trainees

The proposed training program aims at developing certain basic skills for local church leaders of the Northeast India Union. It is our desire to have successful leaders in local churches, where people are coming to Christ and are receiving personal pastoral care.

¹Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 28.

In addition to the current elders/leaders of churches/companies, the basic requirements for others to join the leadership training workshops are to be already actively involved in leadership ministry, be mature, and have potential for further development as a leader.

The number of students should not exceed thirty to thirty-five in a session. Workshops are intended to provide practical training, which involves three primary processes:¹ training, observing, and practicing. This sequence is negatively affected when the number of students is too large.

Many local church leaders have not completed high school. Some have graduated from high school. Only a very few have studied at the tertiary level.

Teachers

Quality teachers will help produce quality leaders. Those who train lay leaders should be totally committed to God, have a sense of calling, and recognize their gifts for ministry. They should possess an ability to equip members to do the work of ministry with love and concern and have the skills needed for the course that they teach.

Ellen G. White repeatedly stated that pastors and ministers should train members to become laborers together with God.² *The Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* states: "The Ministerial Association, in cooperation with departments promotes the training and equipping of local church elders. While the pastor has the primary

¹T. Powell, 124.

²White, *Pastoral Ministry*, 156-158.

responsibility for training local elders, conferences/sections are encouraged to schedule periodic meetings designed for training them.”¹

Finances

Finances are a matter of priority in planning. The conference/section and the local church must make provision in their budget for training leadership. Only in a few cases can the trainees themselves pay their own expenses.

Location of Workshops

Because of geographical characteristics and the several languages involved, the author suggests dividing the Northeast India Union territory into six areas. They are the Mizo Conference, the Khasi Jaintia Conference, the Garo Section, the Manipur Section, the Assam-Arunachal region, and the Nagaland region. The Mizo Conference is to be divided into three training units (North Mizoram, South Mizoram, and Tripura). Khasi Jaintia will have two units (Khasi and Jaintia). The Garo Section will have two units (West and East Garo Hills). Manipur will have three units (East, West, and Central Manipur). Assam-Arunachal will have two units (Upper and Lower Assam). Nagaland will have one unit only.

Within these units, appropriate places with adequate facilities will be chosen. Most often, these will be local churches. Wherever possible, schools may be used in order to provide lodging and food for those who attend.

¹*SDA Church Manual*, 46.

Workshop Schedule

Plans should be set up at least six months before the intended workshop. It is obvious that this type of planning is essential if the program is to be well coordinated with other church activities and given adequate support.

A frequent pattern for training sessions requires two hours once each week, for thirteen weeks (one quarter).¹ The schedule may be as follows:

Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., immediately following the midweek prayer meeting or Friday after the vesper meeting.

- 7:00 - 7:30 Welcome and opening sharing question
- 7:30 - 8:20 Bible study using a dialogue format
- 8:20 - 8:50 Group exercise
- 8:50 - 9:00 Closing and prayer

Another model is to spend one whole day (possibly on Sunday) for six to eight weeks. A suggested schedule for each one-day training session could be the following:

- 8:30 - 9:30 Welcome and introduction (10 minutes)
 - Sharing – 10 minutes
 - Devotional – 30 minutes
 - Prayer session – 10 minutes
- 9:30 - 9:40 Break
- 9:40 - 10:30 First training session (class)
- 10:30 - 10:40 Break
- 10:40 - 11:30 Second session
- 11:30 - 11:40 Break
- 11:40 - 12:30 Third session

¹Adapted from Becker, 56.

- 1:00 - 2:00 Lunch
- 2:00 - 3:00 Fourth session – group discussion
- 3:00 - 3:40 Fifth session
- 3:40 - 4:00 Evaluation and closing

The thirteen-week model is ideal for pastors who give training to lay leaders of one church only, or in one location. The whole-day training program for a district is not suitable to the Northeast India Union because of transportation difficulties.

Most acceptable in the Northeast India Union has been a once-a-year training session for five to six days (see appendix C). However, the effectiveness of the training was limited for lack of follow-up work. One week of training in a year was not sufficient. The best church leaders tended to forget what they had learned. After a major training program for five or six days, additional training should be provided in two-day sessions, once each quarter. This will enrich the ministry of local leaders and provide opportunities to share their experiences with one another. The training program must be repeated after two years.

Workshop Procedures

All workshops will be organized in the same way. The overall goals for the students are to be met by the end of the workshop. The course content indicates exactly the areas that will be covered in each lesson presentation. After this, required academic level of the students is indicated. Then the lesson objectives, which stipulate specific expectations from the students who attend the session, are stated. This is followed by the rationale for training elders/leaders in each area. Then a list of recommended books for

the particular workshop is provided. From these recommended books, the teachers draw insights for the preparation of the materials for each lesson. The materials for each of the workshops, including the outline of the presentation, appear in appendix A.

Teaching Methods

Some of the best methods of adult learning are those in which the learner is involved. John McKinley says:

The key to getting active participation lies in getting participants to accept a personal share of responsibility for the success of the learning venture. . . . The only practical way to bring this about is to help them take a responsible share in planning and evaluating the activity. . . . The successful shift of responsibility from teacher leader to participants is highly desirable since it signals personal involvement.¹

Knowles observes that because adults come with a great volume of experience, the emphasis in their learning should be experiential. These include group discussions, simulation exercises, problem-solving activities, case studies, and laboratory methods.² On discussion as a method of teaching, Gangel says that "one of the most important factors in securing a good discussion is framing the problem or question."³

As opposed to long classes, adults prefer learning in short sessions. Patricia Cross observes that "short term conferences, workshops or institutes are among the preferred approaches."⁴ In developing the format of these workshops adult teaching methods are taken into consideration.

¹John McKinley, *Creative Methods for Adult Classes* (St. Louis, MO: Bethany, 1960), 11.

²Malcolm Knowles, *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species* (Houston: Gulf, 1984), 57.

³Gangel, *24 Ways to Improve Your Teaching*, 35.

⁴Patricia K. Cross, *Adults as Learners* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1981), 208.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

A training program for local church elders/leaders was proposed at the beginning of this project as a solution to the existing problem in the Northeast India Union field. The problem is that the local church elders/leaders who function in pastoral roles in their churches, due to a lack of salaried pastors, are not well trained to perform their duties effectively. So, in order to equip elders/leaders for the task, a training program was developed.

A review of the New Testament witness on leadership highlights that true leadership is based on Christ's selfless servant model. His leadership was based on love, gentleness, humility, and a clear goal orientation.

Jesus exemplified a new leadership style in the way He organized and trained His disciples for the ministry. His training ministry addressed social, physical, and spiritual issues facing the people. The on-the-job training of the Twelve was for Jesus a major priority. He showed the disciples by examples how to minister and how to live.

As the New Testament church began to grow and established congregations in many provinces in Asia Minor and elsewhere, epistles began to be written to some of those local churches. They were encouraged to appoint elders/bishops and deacons as

local leaders. These were ordained to care for the local church, as shepherds of the flock, not lording it over the members but being an example.

Paul's concept of leadership training is reflected in the words he used. His leadership is demonstrated in the way he dealt with the people and their problems. His preferred method of training leaders for their lifework was deeply instructive on-the-job training.

According to Ellen G. White's concept of training leaders, every church should be a training school for Christian workers. The supreme task of every church and every Christian is the saving of the lost.

There is always a need for good leadership. Lack of it hinders the growth of the church. Local leadership training should be focused on lay leaders. The objective is to help them to grow into Christ's likeness and to be more effective in fulfilling the Gospel Commission. When the local church leaders are well trained, the work of the pastors will be made easier and the church will grow qualitatively and quantitatively.

As part of this project, training workshops covering three areas of the duties of elders/leaders were developed. These are: (1) spiritual formation of elders/leaders, (2) how to prepare and conduct Bible studies for non-members, and (3) how to prepare and preach sermons. This training program will be conducted for the local church elders/leaders of the Northeast India Union and should provide at least a partial solution of the personnel problem facing this field.

Conclusions

The project has helped me to discover many new insights into leadership qualities. Christ's method of leadership has broadened my view of true spiritual leadership. There is no such thing as self-made spiritual leaders. True spiritual leaders can influence others only because the Spirit works in and through them to a greater degree than in those they lead.

This project has enlightened me on how to train laity and help them to develop their spiritual gifts for better service. Why is the church not growing and why is there a lack of leadership in the church? It is because ministers failed to train local leaders in the church.

This project has been partially field tested. Now I am eager to implement the whole program as I am better equipped to carry out the training aspect of my work. I am also eager to see what contributions it will make to the task of local church elders/leaders in the Northeast India Union.

Recommendations

1. This study is limited to the training of local church elders/leaders, but the study should not be taken as a definitive document on the topic of elder/leaders in the local church. I want this project to be viewed as part of on-going study on the equipping of local church leaders.

2. Obviously, elders are not the only local church leaders. There are other church leaders such as Sabbath-school leaders and teachers, lay-activity leaders, church treasurers, church secretaries, youth leaders, deacons, and deaconesses. All must

eventually be developed. This project is only the beginning of the leadership training needed in the local church. Thus, further education and training events must be planned in the Northeast India Union.

3. Growing and advancing in ministry is essential to a successful lay ministry. To do this, I recommend that study be given to the possibility of having three levels of lay leadership ministry.

Level one — (Assistant Lay Pastors): Those who have completed the regular training sessions.

Level two — (Certified Lay Pastors): Certified by the section or conference after a successful lay pastoral ministry of at least two years.

Level three — (Credentialed Lay Pastors): Those who have performed lay pastoral ministries well for at least four years and have become resource personnel to train others. Such individuals may be given the privilege of performing church rites/ceremonies such as baptism and child dedication.

All three levels of lay pastors should be ordained as elders before they can function as lay pastors.

Local church elders should not function on a one-year term. This short-term leadership hampers the growth of the church. The local church elder should be elected for a minimum term of two years and, if needed, be re-elected to another two-year term.

APPENDIX A

THREE WORKSHOPS TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH

ELDERS/LEADERS

1. Spiritual Formation for Church Elders/Leaders
2. How to Prepare and Conduct Bible Studies for New Members
3. How to Prepare and Preach a Sermon

WORKSHOP 1: SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR CHURCH ELDERS/LEADERS

Goals

1. To teach the elders/leaders how to grow spiritually through the experience of spiritual disciplines.
2. To get the elders/leaders to commit themselves totally to Christ and to live a Christian lifestyle in which they will practice spiritual disciplines.

Course Content

1. How spiritual formation starts and continues. What the Bible and Ellen G. White say and how to apply these passages.
2. Spiritual disciplines in the family. What the Bible and Ellen G. White say and how to apply these passages.
3. Spiritual discipline in the leadership style. What the Bible and Ellen G. White say about it and how to apply these passages in the leadership style.

Lesson Objectives

After this lesson, the elders should be able to:

1. Describe how a person is spiritually formed by God,
2. Evaluate the role of spiritual disciplines in spiritual formation,
3. Assist their families in forming a devotional program,
4. Show enthusiasm for participation in the spiritual disciplines,
5. Show biblical evidence for the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Rationale

A call to ministry is first a call to spirituality. Spirituality is a response to God's initiative, not something we initiate on our own. It leads us to center ourselves in Him. Christ becomes the passion of our lives. This does not come by chance. It comes by learning the means that God has ordained to help people be formed into spiritual beings. Church leaders need to experience these disciplines.

Recommended Reading

White, Ellen. *The Adventist Home*. Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, 1952.

_____. *Steps to Christ*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1908.

Pierson, Robert H., *What Shall I Speak About?* Nashville: Southern Publishing, 1966.

Venden, Morris. *How to Make Christianity Real*. Siloam Springs, AR: Concerned Communications, 1986.

Materials

Songbooks, Bibles, reading materials, blackboard, and chalk.

Student Participation

Each student participates through singing, discussions, exercise, sharing, prayers, and written assignments.

Evaluation

The evaluation will be based upon the students' participation in reading, discussion, and presentations, as well as their willingness to apply what they have learned in their lives. For the final evaluation of the content and the presentations, the attending leaders will be asked to complete the evaluation form. See appendix D.

Presentation

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal*, #554, "O let me walk with Thee." After the hymn, ask questions based on the message in song for meditation and discussion.

1. How can we walk with God as Enoch of old walked with Him?
2. What does the Bible say are some of the ways of walking with God?
3. Is there anything in our life that hinders our walk with God?
4. Is there anything that we can do on our part to strengthen our walk with God?

How People Are Formed Spiritually

What is meant by the term spiritual formation or spiritual empowerment? Our understanding of spiritual empowerment is that it is an ongoing pilgrimage involving an open and sensitive search for the experienced of a growing relationship with God that expresses itself in behavioral action both personally and corporately.¹

Spiritual formation does not begin with what we do, but with what God does for us.

¹Lindgren and Shawchuk, 22.

Spiritual growth does not come because we make plans to live a righteous live, spiritual growth starts with what God does and continues to do for us. He gives us the gift of life through His Son Jesus Christ. He takes away our stony heart and gives us a new heart. When this happens He helps us to live spiritual lives. The gift of the Holy Spirit, indwelling in our heart enables us to live and grow spiritually.

What does the Bible say about the spiritual growth. What does Ellen G. White says on the matter?

Ps51:5	As human beings we are born in sin
Jer 13:23	We cannot change our nature
Jer 17:9	The human heart is wicked
Luke 6:44-45	Like it happens with bad tree, bad comes only from a bad heart
John 15:6	Without God, we can do nothing
Jer 24:7	God promised to give a heart that will know Him.
Ezek 36:26, 27	A new heart replaces the stony heart
Heb 10:15, 16	God places His laws in our hearts
John 14:16, 26	The Spirit will teach all things
John 16:8	The Spirit convicts of sin
Rom 8:13,14	Through the Spirit, we put to death all the deeds of darkness
John 16:13	The Spirit guides into all truth
Gal 5:22-24	The fruits of Spirit

The experience of this salvation is summed in Acts 2:38: repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sins, and receiving the Holy Spirit. Ellen G. White says,

The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death that to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. *Desire of Ages*, 172.

To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. *Acts of the Apostles*, 49.

Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness spiritual declension and death. *Acts of the Apostles*, 50.

To summarize: Spiritual growth starts from inside our heart when the Holy Spirit dwells in us.

Discussion and Demonstration

Read John 3:5-8. Compare physical birth with the spiritual birth.

Read *Acts of the Apostles*, 50, and answer the questions

1. What are some of the fruits of the Holy Spirit?
2. How can we today be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Teaching Procedures

Session 1: Your Prayer Life

Sing from the SDA Hymnal # 483 "I Need Thee Every Hour"

Aim: To explain the deeper meaning of communion with God and to encourage our members to seek this experience.

Lesson Objectives

1. Define true communion with God.?
2. Describe God's part in this experience.
3. Know our part in this experience.
4. List and explain the conditions of answering prayer.
5. Report answer to this prayers.
6. Describe how communion with God enriches our lives.

Lesson Outline

1. 1 Thess 5:17	Pray without ceasing
2. John 17	Example of Jesus
3. Gen 19:27	Example of Abraham
4. Exod 34:2-4	Example of Moses
5. Ps 5:3	Example of David
6. Dan 6:10	Example of Daniel
7. 1 John 3:22	Obedience is the condition for answered prayers.
8. Luke 24:32	How thrilling it is to have communion with God
9. 1 Cor 1:9	Called to fellowship with Jesus

Ellen G. White References

Steps to Christ. Chapter on the "Privilege of Prayer." "Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend" (93). "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's store house" (94. *The Ministry of Healing*, p 503-512.

Group Discussion

1. How should we pray to God?
2. What is the difference between private prayer and public prayer?
3. List the conditions of answering prayer
4. What does it mean "pray without ceasing"?

Session 2 - Christ and His Word

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal* # 273 "Lord I have Made Thy Word my choice."

Aim: To inspire a greater reverence for and a more prayerful study of the Word of God.

Lesson Objective

1. Understand the importance of knowing Christ and His Word.
2. Develop personal Bible study habits.
3. Have a good overall knowledge of the Bible
4. Learn how to study the Bible.

Lesson Outline

1. 2 Tim 3:16-17, 2 Pet 1:21 Inspiration of the Bible
2. Ps 19:7-11 Description of God's word
3. Ps 119:160 The word is true and eternal
4. Ps 119:105 It is a lamp and a light
5. Heb 4:12 The word of God is life
6. Isa 34: 16, John 5:39 Search the Scripture.

Ellen G. White References

- Great Controversy*, 593. Who will stand through last conflicts.
- Great Controversy*, 600. Teachings of the word must be stored in mind.
- Education*, 123. Occasional disconnected study unprofitable.
- Great Controversy*, 599. Never open the Bible without a prayer.
- Great Controversy*, 94. What study does for the individual.
- Great Controversy*, 600. What neglect of study does to individual.

Group Exercise

1. Explain the personal blessings of Scripture memorization
2. Show how to visualize a text for better memorization
3. Encourage them to learn by heart one verse every day.

Session 3 - Assurance of Salvation

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal* # 343 "I will Sing of My Redeemer."

Aim: To emphasize that we may know that we are accepted by God, not because of the emotion we experience but because of the assurance of God's unfailing promises.

Lesson Objectives

1. Make clear that the assurance of acceptance/salvation that we long for is based on God's sufficient promise, through Jesus Christ.
2. Trainees will be able confidently to express to another person their own assurance of salvation based on their personal faith in Christ.

Lesson Outline

1. Luke 15:17-24 God's love to His children
2. Matt 11:28-30 God's invitation to all who are heavy laden
3. Isa 1:18, I John 1:9 God is faithful and ready to forgive our sin.
4. Matt 9:6 The Son of God had authority to forgive sin
5. 1 John 5:11-12, John 3:36 Promise of eternal life

Ellen White References:

Acts of the Apostles, 552. Conditions of acceptance simple seasonable
Steps to Christ, 49-52. Believe because God has promised.
Steps to Christ, chap. "Faith and Acceptance."

Group Exercise

1. Go over the Bible and Ellen G. White references on Salvation.
2. Ask students tell how they were converted
3. How do they know that they are Christian?

Session 4 - Victory over Sin

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal* # 524 "Tis so Sweet to Trust in Jesus."

Aim: To set forth God's provision for victorious living and to review our part in gaining this victory

Lesson Objectives

1. Know that victory must be ours
2. Know that victory can be ours
3. Affirm that help is promised so that victory may be ours

4. Formulate a plan of attack against temptation and report on using it. (Our part in the victory)

Lesson Outline

1. 1 Thess 5:22	Avoid situation that will open you to problems.
2. 1 Cor 10:13, Isa 4:13	A way of relief promised
3. Rom 6:12-14	Sin shall not rule over you
4. Ps 1:23, 119:97-104	Spend time meditating on the word of God.
5. Matt 4:1-11	Christ's example of victorious life
6. 1 Thess 5:17,18	Develop a deep prayer life
7. 1 John 5:4	Our faith is the victory

Ellen G. White references:

Steps to Christ, chap "Test of discipleship."

Counsels to Teachers, 258.

Gospel Workers, 365. "The victory that Jesus gained in that wilderness is a pledge to you of the victory that you may gain through His name."

Testimonies to the Church, 3:457.

Group Discussion

1. What do you mean by victory over sin? Give five examples from the life of God's people in the Old Testament and five examples from the New Testament.
2. What do you understand by the text (1 John 5:4 "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world)" What overcomes the world?

At this time divide the class into groups of four/five elders/leaders and discuss the above questions. Give them thirty minutes. At the end of the discussion, each group is requested to give a report to the class.

Session 5 - Growing Up into Christ

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal*, # 311 "I Would Be Like Jesus."

Aim : To trace the growth in grace experience by the earnest Christian as they seek to become more and more like Christ

Lesson Objectives

1. Comprehend that growth in the spiritual life is necessary
2. Describe how God's grace works
3. List the results of Christian growth
4. Become more and more like Christ

Lesson Outline

1. 1 Pet 2:2 - Grow like a new baby in Christ
2. John 15:4, 5 - We grow in Christ like vine and branches
3. 2 Pet 3:18 - We can grow in His grace
4. Matt 7: 16, 17, 29 - Bears much fruit
5. Gal 5:22,23 - The fruits of the Spirit
6. Phil 2:13 - God works in us
7. 1 John 3:2 - We are now His children

Ellen G. White references:

Read SC Chapter "Growing up into Christ",
 COL Chapter "First the Blade, then the Ear." Pages 62-69.
 SC, Page 69. Newborn babes must grow up.
 SC, Pages 58,59. Entirely dependent upon Christ.

Group Exercise

1. What holiness is
2. Examples of Bible holiness
3. How Christ's character can be reflected in our life

Session 6 - Call to Complete Consecration

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal*, # 567 "Have Thine Own Way Lord."

Aim: To hold up complete consecration of all that we have or are as the only true basis of discipleship.

Lesson Objectives

1. Accept that there is no looking back in the Christian walk of life.
2. Understand and accept the call to obedience.
3. List the results of consecration.
4. Respond willingly to God's invitation
5. Make complete consecration.

Lesson Outline

1. 1 Pet 2:9, 10	Call to be chosen people of God
2. Ps 4:3	God has set apart
3. Luke 14:26, 33	Meaning of true discipleship
4. 1 Chron 29:5, 6, 14	The call to consecrate
5. Rom 12:1, 2	Be a living sacrifice
6. 2 Cor 8:2-5	They gave first themselves to the Lord
7. Matt 22:35-40	Love to God supremely and love to fellow human beings
8. Exod 32:29	Consecration brings blessing

Ellen G. White References:

Steps to Christ, 43-48: "The Test of Discipleship."

Gospel Workers, 111-116,

Gospel Workers, 753: "All belongs to God, He gives to test.

Christ's Object Lessons, 327, 328: How Christ entrusts talents.

Group discussion

1. Illustrations from your experience

2. Use Bible illustrations

David purposes to build the temple 1 Chron 29.

Caleb-followed Him fully Num 14:22-24.

Parable of talents Matt 25:14-29

Session 7 Christ The Head of the Home

Sing from the *SDA Hymnal*, #655 "Happy the Home."

Aim: To impress that with Christ as the head of the home all members of the household will be bound together in love

Lesson Objectives

Describe, understand, and accept the following:

1. Where Christ is, love will also be.
2. The need for Christ in the home.
3. The manifestation of Christ in the home.
4. Christ as head of the family.

Lesson Outline

1. Eph 5:25, 28	Even as Christ also loved
2. Eph 5:25	Love demonstrated at the home
3. Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16; Eph 6:1	Respect demonstrated in the home
4. Eph 6:4	Discipline begins in the home.
5. Deut 6:4-9	Home is the center of discipleship
6. Eph 6:23	Christ the head of the family

Ellen G. White references:

My Life Today, 84: "Without Spirit of God there is no harmony, no union and love at home" and Christ must abide in hearts of husband and wife

Ministry of Healing, 363. Home is the symbol of Heaven.

Adventist Home, 15. Home should be a little heaven on earth,

Child Guidance, 481: Sanctification begins at home.

Group discussion

Read the following Bible texts and note how we may make our homes "little heavens on earth."
Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 24). Jacob and Rachel (Gen 29). Lazarus' home (John 11:1-5).

WORKSHOP 2: HOW TO PREPARE AND CONDUCT BIBLE STUDIES FOR NEW MEMBERS

Goals

To teach the local Church elders/leaders how to prepare and conduct Bible studies for non-members. To encourage them to study the Bible by using simple method.

Course Content

1. The place and importance of personal labor, and preparation needed to write Bible studies.
2. The sources to prepare Bible studies.
3. The rules governing the preparation of Bible studies.
4. Topics for Bible studies.
5. The order of presentations of Bible study topics.
6. Other principles that make a Bible study successful.

Lesson Objectives

After learning this lesson, the elders/leaders should be able to:

1. Use the source materials for Bible study preparation.
2. Apply the principles that govern the order of presenting Bible studies.
3. Organize different Bible study topics in the order in which the subjects should be presented.
4. Demonstrate effective use of the Bible during actual Bible study time.
5. Give a Bible study to a non-member.
6. Practice other principles that apply in conducting Bible studies for non-members.

Rationale

Participation in personal outreach program is one of the duties of elders/leaders. One way to do this is through giving Bible studies to non-members. However, before they can give Bible studies to non-members, elders/leaders must learn how to do it.

Recommended Reading

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Home Missionary Department. *Training Light Bearers: How to Give Bible Readings*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1962.

Metcalf, Harold E. *Basic Bible Helps*. Atlanta: William Collins, 1976.

Seventh-day Adventists Believe: A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines.

Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1988.

Jemison, H. T. *Christian Beliefs*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1959.
Bible Readings for the Home: Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1951.

Student Participation

Participation in the various exercises class lectures, discussions, and demonstrations is required by the conferences /sections for the leadership training certificate.

Evaluation

Informal evaluation can be done by monitoring the students' ability to carry out the assignments as required and through the workshop demonstration in conducting Bible studies. Students will fill out a self-evaluation form after the workshop. See form in appendix D.

Presentation

Personal Work

"God expects personal service from every one to whom He has entrusted a knowledge of the truth for this time."² Ellen G. White emphasized "personal service." What is personal work? It may be defined as the art of reaching the heart. The most essential personal work is "house-to-house labor, searching for souls, hunting for the lost sheep."³ There is no substitute for personal work.

Christ spent much of His time in personal interviews with people with whom He mingled day by day. This is personal work. God expects this kind of involvement from every one who has a knowledge of salvation.

Discussion

Where do you think that personal work should begin? Should Christians begin in public places, witnessing to everyone that they meet? White wrote:

The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul.

To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ's method. His work was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one-soul audience. Through that one soul the message was often extended to thousands.⁴

Personal work should begin in the home, on behalf of any member of the family who has not yet found Christ.

²White, *Testimonies*, 9:30.

³White, *Evangelism*, 431.

⁴White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, 229.

A lack of knowledge of how to give Bible studies and what to teach people may hinder success in personal Bible studies. Anyone who plans to conduct personal evangelism through Bible studies should learn how to give Bible studies in order to win souls for the kingdom of God.

Sources to Prepare Bible Studies

How to get material to prepare Bible studies? What are the best available resources to prepare Bible studies? This is the first step in preparing a Bible study.

The Bible: A Primary Source.

The Bible is the main source of all Bible studies. To know your Bible and to have a personal acquaintance with and love for it is the first essential in teaching the Word of God.

For those who can read and understand English, I encourage everyone to read the Bible in different translations: The New International Version, The New Revised Standard Version, The New American Standard Bible, and The New King James Version are some possibilities. These Bibles can be bought from any Christian literature house.

This workshop is planned for an area where multiple languages are spoken. Many of the local church leaders can read the Bible only in their language, of which there is only one version.

Encourage leaders to mark verses that they find important in the Bible. That may help to keep track of the text that made an impact.

Doctrinal Books

There are many helpful books or booklets published by denominational authors collectively or individually. Among those books; the most extensive collection of Bible studies is found in *Bible Readings for the Home*. A shorter, yet more up-to-date comprehensive doctrinal presentation is found in *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines*.

Other helpful tools

1. Concordances
2. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*
3. Ellen White writings
4. Bible dictionaries and atlases.

Notwithstanding the abundant helps available, the preparation of a Bible study does not consist of copying the questions and Bible references from some printed book. Everyone must make the study as original as possible rather than copy other persons' thoughts.

Bible studies must begin and end with prayer. Pray to God for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will teach us all things (John 14:26).

Rules for Preparing Bible Studies

1. Use the most convincing text first. A first impression is always the strongest and the most likely to become permanent.
2. Don't use texts that are hard to comprehend.
3. Use as few simple questions as possible.
4. In answering your own questions, use few words.
5. Let each question be clearly stated and answered by a chosen text.
6. To end the study, use a text that clinches the points made in the study.

Demonstration

At this time divide the leaders into groups of four or five. Each group will have a sheet of Bible texts. (See a sample on "The Lord's Day," below, under the subtitle "Bible Study Worksheet.") Ask each one to look up all the texts and frame questions in a sequence that gives unity and coherence. This will be their main source during the workshop for their Bible study outline (see appendix E). This exercise is to help them to learn how to frame questions in order to make a Bible study come alive and how to develop a Bible study outline. Allow thirty minutes for this exercise. At the end ask each group to briefly tell how this exercise has helped them to sharpen their Bible knowledge.

In simple village churches, elders/leaders have limited sources to prepare their own Bible studies. So we supply Bible study sheets of texts on subject matters and let them choose and make their own Bible study outline, based on the study sheets. As they grow spiritually and gain experience, they will be able to prepare Bible studies on their own.

Bring this part to a close by demonstrating how to use concordance and other study resources.

Order of Presentations of Bible Studies

To fail in making a harmonious connection in presenting the order of topics would be to sever the chain of truth and weaken its strength.⁵

Truth must be presented "link after link, till it forms a clear, connected chain."⁶

No hard and fast rule can be laid down for the proper order of subjects. A great deal depends on who is receiving the studies. Some give Bible studies to non-Christians who have no knowledge of Jesus Christ, but others to Christians who have imperfect knowledge of Jesus. In each case the order of subjects may differ.

⁵General Conference Home Missionary Department, *Training Light Bearers How to Give Bible Readings* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1962), 55.

⁶ White, *Gospel Workers*, 326.

A step-by-step progression in understanding the plan of salvation and Christian growth is suggested below. Bible study topics are grouped in four consecutive sections. Following the sequence, the person is (1) introduced to Christ (New Life); (2) helped to grow in Christ (Christian Discipleship); (3) perfected in Christ (Christian lifestyle); and (4) helped to join the church of God (Church Fellowship).

Topics for Bible Studies for Sections

First Section:

Under the first section appear topics intended to introduce the person to Christ. The first Bible study must begin to lead to the experience of salvation (New Life) before a person can start studying doctrine. Let the persons first meet Jesus and surrender their lives to Him. When the heart is melted and subdued by the love of Christ, then only they will inquire "what must I do to be saved?"

In this first section the following Bible topics are suggested in order to lead people to accept Christ as personal Savior.

- (a) Your Bible and you; how the Scriptures reveal Christ.
- (b) How man sinned and the consequences of that sin.
- (c) God's plan for the restoration of mankind.
- (d) Human beings need salvation.
- (e) Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.
- (f) Beginning new life and sanctification through Christ.
- (g) The gift of eternal life (the experience of salvation).

Second Section:

The second section groups Bible studies that increase knowledge and confidence in Christ, leading to discipleship.

The objective is to help new disciples to grow in the knowledge of God and to live fruitful lives. Here the studies lead to a better understanding of God's power, of the plans and works of Christ, what Christ is doing now for them and for their future.

Under this second section the following Bible topics are suggested to generate confidence in Christ's ministry.

- (a) The ministry of the Holy Spirit
- (b) The priestly ministry of Jesus Christ
- (c) The nature of mankind and eternal life through Christ
- (d) The personal return of Christ
- (e) The signs of Christ's soon return
- (f) One thousand years with Christ
- (g) Preparation for Christ's return

Third Section:

The third section includes Bible studies that show Christ's way of life. The objective is to lead the candidates to accept a lifestyle that is consistent with the life and teachings of Christ.

Under this third section the following Bible topics are listed, to lead new believers to accept Christ's way of life.

- (a) The Law of God revealed the character of God
- (b) Law and grace clarified
- (c) The Christian lifestyle
- (d) The Sabbath commandment
- (e) The change of the Sabbath
- (f) The restoration of the Sabbath
- (g) Human beings as stewards of God (tithes, time, talents and temple [body])

Fourth Section:

The fourth section groups Bible studies that lead to join God's remnant church. The objective is to help the candidates to decide to join the fellowship of the remnant church of God in faith and in action.

Under the fourth section, Bible topics are suggested that would lead to new believers to accept God's remnant church.

- (a) Christ's last warning message to the world (Rev 14:6-12)
- (b) The tests of the true church (Rev 12)
- (c) The gift of prophecy
- (d) The sealing of God's people and the mark of the beast (Rev 13)
- (e) Christ's symbol of total commitment (baptism)
- (f) Marks of Christian fellowship (discipleship)

More topics could be added to each of the above lists. But we must keep in mind that after new believers have accepted Christ and joined the church, nurturing continues while they become disciples and begin discipling others.

Group Exercise

Divide the leaders into groups of four or five, and give them the following assignment to do together.

Here are eight topics. Two of these topics are taken from each one of the four major sections of topics for Bible studies. Identify the section where each of these topics belongs by placing a number (1-4) in the space provided.

Sections	Topics
_____	Christian stewardship
_____	The Three Angels Messages
_____	The Ten Commandments
_____	The Holy Spirit in personal experience

_____	Christ your righteousness
_____	How to keep the Sabbath
_____	How Christ will return
_____	God's Church

This exercise is intended to strengthen their understanding of the order of topics in their Bible study presentations. Twenty minutes will be given for this exercise.

Conducting Bible Studies

It is not enough to prepare a good Bible study. You must also know how to present it well. This section provides a few hints on how to present a Bible studies series that has been already prepared.

A Bible study is divided into three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.

(a) The introduction should be brief. Make the subject clear and definite.

(b) Body. Here the truth is presented link by link, each text connected with the next.

(c) Conclusion. A summary of the study, or an appeal to accept the truth that has been presented.

Demonstration

After discussing how to prepare and present Bible studies, demonstrate to the class, and explain to them step by step what you are doing. Use the blackboard when explaining the steps. The topic will be "Salvation" (mankind needs salvation).

Preparation

Step I - Write these texts: Matt 1:21; Acts 4:10, 12; Ps 51:5; Jer 17:9; Eph 2:1; Jer 13:23; Rom 6:23; Isa 45:22; Rom 1:16; Heb 9:28; Heb 5:9; 2 Tim 3:15.

Step II - Frame questions from the passages above in harmony with the information in the text. Organize your Bible study so that it has unity and coherence.

Through whom is salvation possible?

1. Is there any other salvation apart from Jesus Christ? Acts 4:10,12
2. What does the name Jesus mean? Matt 1:21

What is the condition of human beings?

1. In what condition is each human being born? Ps 51:5
2. What is the natural condition of the human heart (mind)? Jer 17:9
3. What is the spiritual condition of mankind? Eph 2:1.

Is it possible for mankind to change its condition?

1. Can mankind change its condition? Jer 13:23
2. What is the condition of mankind? Rom 6:23

What does mankind need in its quest for salvation?

1. Where can human beings find the story of salvation? 2 Tim 3:15

2. What is the good news for mankind? Rom 1:16
3. To whom do they need to look for salvation? Isa 45:22
4. When do they expect to receive salvation? Heb 9:28

The author of Salvation: Who is the source of salvation? Heb 5:9

Step 3 - Decide how you will introduce and conclude the Bible study.

Introduction - Salvation is saving human being from the consequences of sin and eternal death through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Salvation is the need of every human being.

Conclusion - We can have salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is a free gift. It is a blessing from God.

Show the students how to search on salvation topics in Ellen White writings by using the index to her books.

Presentation

At this moment invite one or two elders to come to the front and pretend to be Bible study candidates. You present the above Bible study to them as the rest of the leaders observe.

Student Exercise

At this time, divide the leaders in groups of five and ask them to choose a topic. Instruct them to do exactly what was demonstrated. Give them thirty minutes to complete the exercise. After they have done it, ask them to demonstrate as you have done earlier. After they have outlined the topic, ask the groups to hand the outlines to you to see how they have done. For example

Bible Study Worksheet : The Lord's Day

Verses to be used:

1. Gen 2:1, 3
2. Matthew 12: 8
3. Exodus 20:8-11
4. Isaiah 58: 13, 14
5. Mark 2:28; Rev 1:10
6. Exod 16:4, 5, 14-30
7. Luke 4:16
8. Acts 13:42-44
9. Luke 23:54-56
10. Luke 24:1-3
11. Mark 16:1, 9
12. Acts 17:3
13. Hebrew 4:8, 9
14. Isaiah 66:22, 23
15. Exodus 31:13, 17, 18

16. Ezek 20:12, 20

17. John 1:1-3

18. Col 1:13-17

Questions and texts containing answers:

1. Does the Lord have a day ? Isa 58:13
2. What is the name of the Lord's day? Isa 58:13
3. Which day of the week is the Sabbath day? Exod 20:8-11
4. Which day of the week is the seventh day Sabbath? Luke 23:53-56; Luke 24:1-3, 6
5. Which day is the first day of the week? Mark 16:2, 9
6. When did this weekly cycle originate? Gen 2:1-3
7. Why does God want us to remember the seventh-day Sabbath? Exod 20:8-11
8. Was the Sabbath made for Jews only? Gen 2:1-3; Mark 2:27
9. Did Jesus keep the Sabbath? Luke 4:16
10. Did the disciples keep the Sabbath after the death of Christ? Luke 23:54-56
11. Did Paul, the writer of many New Testament epistles, keep the Sabbath? Acts 17:3
12. Should God's people keep the Sabbath today? Heb 4:8, 9
13. What is the significance of keeping the Sabbath holy? Exod 31:13, 17; Ezek 20:12, 20
14. Will God's people keep the Sabbath in the new earth? Isa 66:22, 23.

Additional Suggestions for Presenting Bible Studies

Prayer

Open and close your Bible study with prayer. Explain to the candidates that we need to seek the Lord's help in the understanding of Scripture.

Time Keeping

Do not stay longer than what your candidates want to be with you, or more than what is enough for the learning process. On the average forty five minutes are adequate for a normal Bible study. Be definite, concise. Never allow the study to drag. Promptness in starting and in leaving will be appreciated.

Brevity is essential. From ten to fifteen questions are sufficient to cover any subject. Usually one or two Bible texts will be sufficient to provide each answer needed. However, one can give more texts to the candidate for further reading. Make sure that every text has direct bearing on the point to be stressed.

Unless the candidates would like to meet more often, once a week is generally the best.

Bible in the Hand of Candidates

The Bible is the main sourcebook for conducting Bible studies. Therefore, everyone present should have a Bible in hand. Let the candidate participate in reading the Bible when the question is asked that calls for a response from a Bible text. Ask the candidates to say in their own words what they understood the Bible to say. This way you help them understand and digest the Biblical

message. Encourage the candidates to mark their Bible and to take notes.

Formulation of Questions

Make the questions so clear and simple that the reader will be curious to know the answer. The question and answer method of teaching is the best in Bible studies.

Reserve Fund of Knowledge

Present your subject in a concise, definite, clear manner but keep a large reserve fund of knowledge in case an emergency arises.

Tips on Entering and Leaving a Home

Be pleasant and warm, in every way manifesting a sympathetic human interest. Similarly when the study has ended, conclude with prayer, a few pleasant words of farewell, and expressions of pleasure in planning for the next appointment. Then leave the house.

WORKSHOP 3

HOW TO PREPARE AND PREACH A SERMON

"Preaching is characteristic of Christianity."⁷ No other religion has ever made the regular and frequent assembling of the masses to hear religious instruction and exhortation an integral part of divine worship.

In the ministry of Jesus preaching occupied a central place (Matt 4:23). "Preaching deserves the highest excellence since it is the chosen instrument of the Savior of the world, who Himself came preaching."⁸ Jesus commanded "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Building on that command, Richards says that "true preaching is witnessing for Christ."⁹ We are to preach what Jesus preached. "Preaching is the proclamation of the good news of salvation by a human being to another human being".¹⁰

Purpose

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an introduction to preaching and to give an overview of the task of preparing a sermon. Inasmuch as those in the class represent a diverse cross-section of experience, the introductory approach is best. Some of the elders/leaders have preached many sermons, whereas others have never preached. With the simple introduction and overview approach, both groups would receive some benefit.

Goals

To teach local church elders/leaders simple, introductory sermon preparation and preaching. To get them to start following principles that govern sermon preparation and preaching.

Course Content

1. How to start: simple guidelines for Bible study.
2. Where to get sermons
3. Types of sermons
4. Stating a theme for a sermon
5. Sermon structure
6. Methods of sermon delivery

⁷John Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (New York: Harper & Row, 1943), 1.

⁸Ibid., 5.

⁹H. M. S. Richards, *Feed My Sheep* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 21.

¹⁰William Evans, *How to Prepare Sermons* (Chicago: Moody, 1964), 11.

Lesson Objectives

After studying this lesson the elders/leaders should be able to:

1. Study their Bibles and analyze the subjects
2. Find sources and sermon materials
3. Describe the types of sermons with their main parts
4. Create sermon outlines
5. Construct a simple sermon with its main parts
6. Deliver a sermon.

Rationale

It is important that local church elders/leaders learn how to prepare simple sermons and to preach, since they are the lay pastors of the churches in the absence of the full time pastors.

Recommended Reading

Blackwood, Andrew Watterson. *The Preparation of Sermons*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1948.

Broadus, John A. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979.

Evans, I. H. *The Preacher and His Preaching*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1938.

Evans, William. *How to Prepare Sermons*. Chicago: Moody, 1964.

Powell, Terry. *You Can Lead a Bible Discussion Group*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1996.

Materials

Songbooks, Bible, handouts, materials, blackboard, chalk, TV, VCR, video tapes, and samples of books that help in preaching.

Student Participation

Participation in singing, preaching, discussion homework, and demonstration.

Application

The basic application will be in preaching for fifteen minutes. Encourage the local church leaders to accept all preaching assignment as they are assigned whenever possible, so that they can practice how to prepare and deliver sermons during the training sessions.

Evaluation

Informal and self-evaluations will be used. The informal evaluation will be by observation as the elders prepare sermons and preach. The self-evaluation will be done as part of the demonstration and also through the completion of the assignments.

Presentation

How many of you have ever experienced difficulties in finding sermon topics or prepared sermons ready to deliver when a request has come to you? Have you preached something that you feel was not the right topic or was not properly prepared for the occasion?

The importance of sermon preparation and sermon delivery cannot be overemphasized. All leaders have to learn how to prepare sermons and preach when they are requested to preach.

Where to Start

"Preaching is a spiritual work."¹¹ It is the call of God. He has ordained that preaching shall be a means to save souls. Preaching is the procedure by which God, through His chosen messenger, reaches down to the human family and brings a person face to face with Himself. Without such a confrontation, there is no true preaching. Since preaching originated in the mind of God, preparation for preaching begins with prayer to God, the study of His Word and asking God to give a message for His people.

As you study the Word of God and meditate on it, silently ask the following questions on the passage you are reading.

1. What does this passage tell us about God?
2. What does this passage tell us about us?
3. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between us and God?
4. What does this passage tell us about the relationships among us?
5. How can we apply this message to our life?

Observation, interpretation, and application are parts of the method to be applied to understand biblical passages. Examples given below:-

¹¹I. H. Evans, *The Preacher and His Preaching* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1938), 30.

Bible Study Worksheet for Sermon Preparation

Date: _____

Scripture Text: _____

Theme: _____

Key points that I got from the texts.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Six Questions on the Bible text that is being studied.

1. What does this text tell me about God?

2. What does this text tell me about myself?

3. What does this text tell me about the relationship between me and God?

4. What does this text tell about my relationship with others?

5. How can I apply these thoughts in my life?

6. Things to pray for as a result of my studying this text.

The Source of Sermons

The Bible is the main source of sermons. God has spoken to His people most clearly in the Bible. For this reason, a preacher must go to the Bible as the main source of sermon preparation.

While the Bible is the primary source of sermon, there are other books that will help:

1. Writings of Ellen G. White
2. Bible concordances
3. Bible commentaries
4. Other good Christian literature

Types of Sermons

The following are the principal types of sermons.

Topical Sermon

Topical or thematic sermons begin with the subject. Texts are chosen to support the chosen topic. The development of the sermon is dominated by the topic.

Textual Sermon

The textual sermon is based on a comparatively short Biblical text. The difference with topical sermon is that while the topical sermon is dominated by the topic the textual sermon's text controls and dominates both the topic and the organizing of the topic.

Expository Sermon

The expository sermon draws the outline from a specific passage, a more or less extended portion of Scripture, and is organized around one main theme. All the divisions and sub-divisions of such sermon are drawn from the same passage of Scripture, but centered around one main theme. A significant difference between an expository sermon and a textual sermon is that the expository sermon treats a longer passage of the Scripture.

Doctrinal Sermon

A doctrinal sermon is more like a topical sermon, except that it deals with a specific doctrine.

Narrative/Biographical Sermon

A narrative sermon derives lessons from Bible narratives or biographies.

Stating the Theme of a Sermon

Of primary importance in the preparation of sermons is the task of choosing or stating in clear words a theme for the sermon. A theme is defined as the one single thought or statement you want the audience to remember.

The tasks of choosing a theme and selecting texts goes together. Some choose a text and then

frame a theme from the text. Others choose a theme and then look for supporting texts.

Demonstration

Demonstrate with one text how to write a theme statement for a sermon.

Micah 6:8: "He has showed you, O man what is good And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

What does the Lord require of you? (Theme)

- A. To do justice (Amplification)
- B. To love kindness (Amplification)
- C. To walk humbly with your God (Amplification)

Group Exercise

Divide the participants into groups of five and give them the following texts, requesting them to develop complete theme statements from the texts. Give two texts to each group. Allow fifteen minutes for this exercise. After fifteen minutes ask each group to report the text that they had and the theme that they developed. Ask the other group to respond on how well they have stated the theme.

1. John 3:26	3. Matt 28:19-20	5. Deut 7:6-7
2. Rom 12:2	4. John 14:1-4	6. Joshua 24:4

The Sermon Structure

The structure of a sermon refers to the way different parts of the sermon are put together. In the sermon we look for two things: unity and organization. Unity refers to fitting all parts of the sermon, from beginning to end, around the theme. Organization refers to the divisions and/or subdivisions of the sermon and their relationship one to another.

Every good sermon divides itself into three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.

Introduction

The introduction refers to the beginning of the sermon, when the subject is being introduced. Why is an introduction to a sermon needed? To awaken an interest, secure favor, to prepare the audience for what is to follow.

There are many ways of introducing a sermon. By using a Bible text, or stating the topic that is to be discussed, or referring to a particular situation or story or by making a striking statement.

Body of the Sermon

This part of the sermon has been called the plan or argument. The body of the sermon should be organized in such a way that it has unity of thought. This makes it easy for the hearers to follow and for the preacher to preach.

How many divisions or subdivisions should the body of the sermon have? It depends on how much material is each division or subdivision.

In order to help people understand the points made, use illustrations in each division. The purpose of the illustrations is to throw light upon the subject. They explain; they prove, and bring to conviction.

Demonstration

Text: Micah 6:8.

Theme: "What does the Lord require?"

I Introduction

II Body

A. The Lord requires us to do justice

1. Justice of the Lord

2. Justice required from us

B. The Lord requires us to love kindness

1. The character of God is lovingkindness

2. God's children must manifest Christian character.

Illustration:

Daniel Webster, going home one day from the Law Courts stopped on the way to see his daughter, Mrs. Appleton, who was dying. As he entered the room she looked up and said, "Father, why are you out on this cold day without your coat?" The great lawyer left the room with a sob, exclaiming, "Dying, yet she thinks of me." That is just what Jesus did He thought of others all His life.

C. The Lord requires us to walk humbly

1. To fear the Lord

2. To serve the Lord

Group Exercise

After the demonstration, divide the group into four or five elders, asking them to do the same thing you have done in the body section. Provide them with texts, allow them thirty minutes. You supervise their work and help them if they need, and at the end of this exercise, ask any group to share what they have done. Let them show it on the board in front of the class.

Conclusion of the Sermon

The conclusion refers to the last part of the sermon. The conclusion is very important because in this part a preacher bring the sermon to a fitting end. Here the preacher shows the listeners how the message applies to them, and then he guides the hearers to follow the will of God.

There are various kinds of conclusions. The direct appeal, the practical application, the final summary. The appeal to imagination a poem or an illustration. In short, a preacher can employ any form of conclusion that will lead the hearer to act aright.

Different Methods of Sermon Delivery

1. **Extemporaneous.** Preaching in which the sermon has been prepared but not written out or memorized.

2. **Reading from a manuscript.** Preaching which consists in appropriately reading a sermon written word for word.

3. **Reciting from memory.** Delivering from memory word for word, a fully written sermon.

4. **Composite sermon delivery.** This includes all the methods mentioned above. During part of the sermon the preachers will speak their own thoughts as they come to mind. But at other time they will read. Sometimes they will say something committed to memory. This method is commonly used. The composite method of sermon delivery is the one that we will practice and use in this workshop.

Demonstration

As soon as the principles of sermon delivery have been covered, demonstrate to the class, by preaching a sermon before them how to put into practice the principles of sermon delivery. After you have demonstrated to the class, each elder will have a turn in the following days to preach the ten-minute sermon that each has prepared. Ask fellow leaders to evaluate their peers. The teacher will evaluate them separately.

APPENDIX B

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS/LEADERS

Survey Materials

Local Church Elders/Leaders Responsibilities Survey Sheet

Name of the Unit: _____

Date: _____

Listed below are some duties that local church elders/leaders perform or need to perform. Please indicate which of these tasks are the most important by ticking the appropriate one. Please use the following code:

1 - Very Important

2 - Important

3 - Less Important

	1	2	3
Visit church members at home			
Lead out in platform activities			
Lead out in personal evangelism, conduct Bible studies			
Promote stewardship principles			
Lead out in Lord's supper			
Preach on Sabbath			
Prepare and deliver good sermons			
Organize public evangelism			
Prepare and examine baptismal candidates			
Personal spirituality of the elder			
Chair the church board and church business meeting			
Visit and preach in other churches			

List the three most important duties you would want included in a training program for elders.

How often would you like to have such training sessions in

_____ yearly _____ quarterly _____ monthly _____ weekly.

TABLE 1

ELDERS' DUTIES: OPINIONS OF THREE FIELD PRESIDENTS

	1	2	3
Visit church members at home	3		
Lead out in platform activities		2	1
Lead out in personal evangelism, conduct Bible studies	3		
Promote stewardship principles	3		
Lead out in Lord's supper	3		
Preach on Sabbath	1	2	
Prepare and deliver good sermons	2	1	
Organize public evangelism		1	2
Prepare and examine baptismal candidates		1	2
Personal spirituality of the elder	3		
Chair the church board and church business meeting		2	1
Visit and preach in other churches		1	2

TABLE 2

ELDERS' DUTIES: OPINIONS OF TWELVE DISTRICT PASTORS

	1	2	3
Visit church members at home	10	2	
Lead out in platform activities	3	4	5
Lead out in personal evangelism, conduct Bible studies	11	1	
Promote stewardship principles	7	3	2
Lead out in Lord's Supper	7	3	2
Preach on Sabbath	6	4	2
Prepare and deliver good sermons	9	2	1
Organize public evangelism	2	8	2
Prepare and examine baptismal candidates	7	3	2
Personal spirituality of the elder	12		
Chair the church board and church business meeting	6	4	2
Visit and preach in other churches	6	4	2

TABLE 3

ELDERS' DUTIES: COMBINED OPINIONS FROM SURVEY

	1	2	3
Visit church members at home	13	2	
Lead out in platform activities	3	6	6
Lead out in personal evangelism, conduct Bible studies	14	1	
Promote stewardship principles	10	3	2
Lead out in Lord's Supper	10	3	2
Preach on Sabbath	7	6	2
Prepare and deliver good sermons	11	3	1
Organize public evangelism	2	9	4
Prepare and examine baptismal candidates	7	4	4
Personal spirituality of the elder	15		
Chair the church board and church business meeting	6	6	3
Visit and preach in other churches	6	5	4

APPENDIX C

SCHEDULE OF FIVE-DAY TRAINING SESSION

Schedule of Five-day Training Session

	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
6:30 - 7:30	Devotional	Devotional	Devotional		Devotional
7:30 - 8:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00-10:00	Session	Session	Session	SS Program	Session
10:00-10:15	Recess	Recess	Recess		Recess
10:15- 11:15	Session	Session	Session	Divine Service	Session
11:15- 11:30	Recess	Recess	Recess		Recess
11:30-12:30	Session	Session	Session		Session
12:30-1:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2:00-3:00	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Group Discussion		Group Discussion
3:00-3:15	Recess	Recess	Recess		Session
3:15-4:15	session	session	Session	Discussion	Session
4:15-4:30	Recess	Recess	Recess		Recess
4:30-5:30	Practical Assignment	Practical Assignment	Sabbath preparation	Planning Session	Commissioning
6:00-7:00	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper
7:30-8:30	Devotional	Devotional	Vespers	Devotional	Closing

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION FORMS

Evaluation of Training Program

Please fill out this form as it applies to your experience in the Local Church Leadership Training Program you have just completed

1. How many sessions have you attended?

2. How do you rate the training program?

_____ excellent _____ good _____ fair _____ poor _____

3. Mention one thing that you feel has been most effective in this training program and should be continued?

4. Mention one thing that you think has been least helpful and should be discontinued or improved?

5. Mention one thing that might be included to make this training program more effective?

6. Comment about needed improvements to facilities, materials and instruction

7. How often should this Training Session be offered?

_____ yearly _____ quarterly _____ monthly _____ weekly

Class Evaluation

1. Please indicate in the space provided below your suggestion on what I should include or eliminate in the future when I teach this class again.

2. Write down three reasons why this presentation has been beneficial to you.

3. Write down what you consider the least exciting part of this presentation, not beneficial for your ministry.

4. How often should this kind of class be conducted in every local church? Would it be useful for the members?

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Personal Background

Name	Kongyui Awungshi Shimray
Date of Birth	October 1946
Place of Birth	Champhung, India
Wife's Name	Ahanbi Anny Shimray
Children:	Alywn Mathotmi Shimray Jose Mataimi Shimray Bernice Amy Shimray

Educational Accomplishments

Bachelor of Arts, Spicer Memorial College, India, 1971.

Bachelor of Theology, Spicer Memorial College, India, 1972.

Master of Theology, AIIAS, Theological Seminary, Philippines, 1980.

Doctor of Ministry, Andrews University, Spicer Memorial College Extension, 2001.

Professional Experience

1972-1973	Evangelist, Manipur, India.
1974-1975	Headmaster, Sophia English School, India.
1975-1979	Publishing Director, Northeast India Section, India.
1980-1982	Bible Seminary Instructor, Adventist Training School, India
1982-1984	Secretary, Manipur-Nagaland Section, India.
1984-1986	Health and Temperance Director, Northeast India Union.
1986-1996	Director, Church Ministries, Northeast India Union.
1997-1998	Director, Adventist Bible Seminary, Adventist Higher Secondary School, Meghalaya, India.
1999-	Director, Assam Region, India.