



Connect to the Vision

DISCOVERY CLASS

Vision Version 2020

STUDENT BOOK



WELCOME TO THE FAMILY WHERE YOU BELONG

CONNECT - GROW - BUILD

Becoming a Worshipper – The Doorway to God

Introduction: The most important thing a Christian Leader must learn is to connect with God in their everyday life. The way we do this is through worship, expressing honor and praise to the Lord and focusing on Him instead of our issues. As we offer up worship to God, we see Him and sense His presence. When this happens, we become motivated to deal with our sin issues, our character is changed, and we find answers to our problems (Galatians 5: 16-26). True worship to God is not an action that can be imitated. It is a response to an inward love of the Father. As we express our love for the Lord in our daily lives, we bless God. This is worship. There are many expressions of worship.

I. Praise is loving and honoring God for what He DOES.

A. What is Praise?

1. Praise is _____ who God is (Ps. 104; 1Chron. 29:10-13).
2. Praise is being _____ towards God for all He has done (Ps 25:8-10; Isa 25:1)
3. Praise is _____ God (Ps 34:3; 99:5)
4. Praise is _____ God (Daniel 4:34-37).
5. Praise is _____ God (Luke 1:46; Acts 10:46).
6. Praise is _____ at God, and being IN AWE of Him (2 Thess 1:10)
7. Praise is _____ God (Rev 15:4; Psalm 29:1)

B. Why Should We Praise?

1. God is _____ in the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3)
2. Nothing in creation can give praise to God like MAN (Psalm 30:9; 115:17-18)
3. Praise lifts up and rejoices in God's great DEEDS (Psalm 40:5; 98:1; Exodus 15:6)
4. Praise proclaims God's _____ and MAJESTY to the world (Psalm 66:5-8)
5. Praise releases God's _____ (Psalm 67:5-7)
6. Praise releases God's POWER (Psalm 149:6-9; 2 Chronicles 20:12, 22)
7. God _____ man to praise Him (Isaiah 43:21; Ephesians 1:3-14)
8. You have been _____ to praise God (Ephesians 5:18-20; Psalm 100:4; 146:1)

9. Praise is a _____ that pleases God (Heb. 13:15-16; Psalm 107:21-22; 2 Samuel 24:24); it comes from a person's whole being, not just from the words of our mouth. (Romans 12:1)
10. God is _____ to receive all praise. (Revelations 5:9-14)

C. Praise is a Weapon of Spiritual Warfare

1. Praise works like a _____ against Satan, your enemy. Satan can't stand it when you praise. That's why he tries so hard to distract you from praising God.
2. In praise, you are not just singing for the sake of singing, but extolling the Word of God until you feel a difference in your emotions. (Psalm 56:4; 10-11; 2 Chronicles 20:21-22). When we praise God, _____ always follow _____, not the other way around.
3. Then you persevere until the _____ of God breaks through (Acts 16:25-26). This kind of praise is not a *quiet* expression, but rather, it is *vocal, forceful, and powerful* expression.

II. **Worship is loving and honoring God for who He IS.**

A. What is Worship?

1. Worship is how we respond to all of _____
 - a) All problems in life are connected to our _____.
 - b) Everything we experience and deal with either glorifies God as worship or glorifies something or someone else as _____.
2. Worship is literally expressing how worthy God is of our **LOVE** and _____ (Revelation 4:11; 5:12)
 - a) Two key Hebrew words for "worship" (*segad* and *shachah*) mean "**TO BOW DOWN**." They also imply any outward expression of adoring love.
 - b) The main Greek word translated as "worship" (*proskuneo*) means "to lean into and **KISS**." or "offer homage or reverence."
3. **JESUS** gave His life so that we could have the ability to worship God. Without him, we would not be able to fully worship Him (Hebrews 10:19-22).
 - a) Through Jesus, you become a _____ of God, capable of presenting others to God and God to others (Revelation 1:6; 1 Peter 2:9).
 - b) Worship is an _____ expression of putting God first in your life. When you give to God in this way, He draws you to Himself and gives back to you.
4. Worshipping God is more than just **SINGING SONGS**.

- a) Because you are a _____ of Jesus, everything you do (work, pleasing activities, study, family life, and so forth) should be an act of worship to God.
- b) True worship of God involves giving **100%** of your life to Him being totally available and totally obedient to Him.
- c) Worship is based on a _____ of bringing glory to God.

B. The Father seeks true worship.

1. Jesus said, *“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* (John 4:22-24)
 - a) *You are _____ to worship the Father.* Worship is not an option in your life. Because Jesus first loved us, we are expected to love Him in return.
 - b) *You worship from your _____.* To do this we must be born again, and able to be led by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; John 16:13-15).
 - c) *You also worship from your _____.* Worship is an expression and manifestation of your relationship with God. True worship is done with all of your heart. If we worship without meaning it, it will be hollow and unacceptable as to God (Psalm 51:15-17, Matt 15:8-9, Ephesians 5:19). Would it mean as much if someone told you that they loved you, but they didn’t mean it?
 - d) *You worship with your _____.* You don’t have to be a theologian to worship God. All you need to know is how God has been faithful in your life. Your personal knowledge of God and what He has done will feed the fire of your worship (John 4:22; Acts 17:22-23; 1 Cor. 14:15)
 - e) *Your worship is a _____.* Sometimes we do not feel like worshipping God or taking time to focus on Him. It is in these moments that we must make a decision to honor him because he is worthy. This is not faking worship, this is ***understanding that God is worthy of our worship regardless of how we feel.***
2. When we read about God in the Bible, worship is present. Understanding who God is, and His nature, we also understand why it is important to worship Him. (Isaiah 6:1-5; Revelation 4:6-11; Ezekiel 47:1-12)

III. In what ways can you offer praise and worship to God?

- A. You can praise with _____ . (Psalm 9:1)
- B. You can _____ (Psalm 95:1)
- C. You can _____ down (Psalm 95:6)

- D.** You can _____ (Psalm 33:1; 104:33; Eph 5:19-20)
- E.** You can _____ before Him (Psalm 149:3; 150:4)
- If we are truly abandoned to God, we should not hold anything back. Dancing before God is a sign of this devotion and lets God know that there is nothing we will not do for Him. Worship has no limits.
- F.** You can _____ your hands to Him (Psalm 134:2).
- Raising your hands is a sign of surrender. It can also be a sign of proclamation, love and dependence, or desperation.
- G.** You can praise with _____, with or without singing (Psalm 98:4-6; 150:3-5).
- H.** Your **WHOLE LIFE** should be worship and praise. (Romans 12:1; Phil 1:20; 1 Cor 6:20; Eph 5:20; 1 Thess 5:16-18)
- I.** You can _____ or sing in your spirit language (1 Cor 14:15)

Summary: Praise and worship encompasses more than singing on Sunday. It is a lifestyle of devotion and expression of love towards God. It is manifested in the way we treat each other, the manner in which we work, and the way we talk to God. Make a conscious effort each day to express your commitment to God in your words and actions.

Hearing the Voice of God

Introduction: The vision of God is ultimately communicated to man by God. This is true even for the lives of individual believers. But to hear the voice of God we need to understand how He communicates. Not only that, we need to know what prevents us from hearing the voice of God. We are constantly being bombarded by messages, but they are not always from God. Sometimes we are hearing our own thoughts, and other times, we are hearing from the enemy. This lesson discusses each of these aspects in hopes of preparing leaders to hear the voice of God for their lives and their families.

IV. Barriers to Hearing from God.

A. UNBELIEF

1. _____

2. _____

B. A SENSITIVE Spirit

- _____
- _____
1. Jesus said, “*Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?*” (Mark 8:18). In another scripture he says “*He who has ears to hear let him hear!*” (Mark 4:19).
 - a) Jesus was not just talking about natural ears to hear natural things, but spiritual ears to hear what God is saying.
 - b) If we do not learn what God sounds like we will never be able to hear him.
 2. Exercising our spiritual ears happens primarily from reading the **WORD OF GOD**.
 - a) If we are “hearing” anything that is contrary to the Word of God or the nature of God, then we can be certain that it is not the Lord.
 - b) The opposite is true as well. The more time we spend in the Word of God, the more we will hear and know what God is saying to us.

C. Doing It OUR WAY.

1. God _____ throughout the Bible to many different people. Old Testament characters like Noah, Abraham, Moses, Deborah, Samuel, David, Isaiah and many others heard from God on a regular basis in order to get directions for themselves, their families, and their people.

2. God also spoke with the New Testament believers. Jesus said that we are the sheep and He is our shepherd. His followers will be able to know and hear his _____ (John 10:3).

D. A Calloused _____

1. Romans 12:2 says, “*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*” If we perceive and focus on the world and worldly mindsets in the same way we did when we were not saved, we will not effectively hear God.
2. As you grow stronger in your _____ with God, hearing his voice will become easier. Likewise, when we connect to ungodly things, it becomes more difficult to hear His voice and obtain new revelation from His word.
3. Wrong _____ lead to wrong _____. If we do not change the way we think, we will repeatedly fall into the same temptations that led us to need God in the first place. This hardens our conscience, and keeps us from hearing His voice.

V. Hearing God through His Word

A. The Word speaks to us and opens our spiritual ears, so we must learn to read it and study it on a regular basis.

1. Read _____: reading with a system helps to stay on track and provides accountability.
2. Read _____: When Jesus spoke, it was only with the help of the Holy Spirit that His followers could understand the true meaning or lesson. In the same way, we need to study the Bible with the help of the Holy Spirit, or we can miss what God is trying to say. Before you study God’s Word, ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand it.
3. Read _____: If we only read the Bible as an obligation, we will hear very little of what God wants to say. Each time you open the Bible, expect God to say something through it.

B. The Word teaches us to understand the type of things God says by _____ his nature through sound doctrine.

C. The Word will _____ things that you have heard from God leaving no doubt that he spoke them to you.

D. The Word _____ us from our sins. As we read the Bible, we are in fact spending time with God. Through this fellowship, he opens our ears and purifies our hearts.

- E. The Word _____ the mouth of the enemy. The Devil wants to speak to us as much as God does. The best way to combat him is with the weapon of God's Word. The more we arm ourselves, the more effective we are at defeating the enemy.
- F. The Word _____ our spirit. When we become weak from not eating in the natural sense, we are unable to accomplish the physical tasks we encounter. It is the same with our spiritual health. If my spirit is not fed by the Word of God, I can become weak and unable to do what God directs me to do.

VI. Hearing His Voice

A. CONVERSATIONS with God

1. Remember that God is a _____, not a robot or a recorder. God wants to have relationship and conversations with us. It is not good to "talk" to God the whole time when we pray. We have to stop talking in the entire time we pray, be quiet, and learn to listen to God and obtain what we need from him.
2. Moses would ask God _____ on behalf of the Israelites, then he would wait for God's answers. When he returned, the people expected to know what God had told Moses. Often Christians pray to God by speaking for an extended period of time, as if leaving a voicemail. But they never really wait for a response. Don't hang up on God!

B. Praying in the Spirit (Tongues)

1. **PRAYING** in _____ clears a person's mind and spirit, leaving them open to hear what God is saying.
2. When you are feeling down or depressed, praying in the spirit can **EDIFY** you and _____ you. It is one of the best ways to lift yourself up so you are able to fulfill the plan of God for your day. When we do, we are left feeling refreshed and rested. Our minds are peaceful and clutter free from our busy life (1 Cor. 14:4).
3. We never have enough **WORDS** to say. Because praying in tongues is actually a heavenly *language* we are able to communicate with God when our natural language fails us (1 Cor. 14:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:17).
4. When we pray in tongues we receive _____. When we need it, God will give us the revelation we need to help us through even the most difficult situation. Often, our natural words just aren't enough, and can clutter our minds. Our spiritual language does the opposite. We become clear and focused so that we see exactly what God wants us to do.

C. Actually Hearing God

1. When most people **HEAR** God, it is not an audible sound like you would hear from a person sitting next you, although God is not beyond doing so in some cases (Don't put limits on God).
2. Typical conversations with God happen in a similar way as our deep _____. You will most than likely have one of three experiences when God speaks to you.
 - a) You will _____ something: God may show you a vision of something He is trying to communicate. This can be as a still picture or even like a movie playing in your mind. Pay close attention to these visions; God is showing it to you for a reason (Joel 2:28).
 - b) You will _____ something: Again, this often happens within your mind or heart. Have you ever had a "little voice" telling you to do a particular thing, and then wish you had listened? You may have been hearing from God and not known it. Don't try to over-analyze the voice you are hearing. Just receive it in faith.
 - c) You will _____ something: Sometimes we don't get a clear vision or statement of what God is trying to tell us. You may simply feel something. Emotions are a little tricky and should not rule our lives, but they can definitely be connected to God. For example, if you feel apprehensive about something it may be because God does not want you to do it. If it is God's will for your life, he will give you peace, not fear.

Summary: Learning to Hear God's voice makes life easier than you can ever imagine. If we will simply stop and listen for what He is saying, we can be led through every tough decision instead of trying to figure everything out for ourselves. Remember to write down what God tells you. Remembering what God tells you is as important as hearing it in the first place.

The Power of Vision

Introduction: Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (KJV). Vision is more than a plan or a goal. It is what we are supposed to be. A vision is much like the natural vision we have. If your vision is bad, you see things more blurred making it hard to see details. Without the vision of God, we see things in our own ability, and not what God sees about the situation. We may see a mess, but God sees hope, potential, and success. Nothing is impossible through the vision of God. It is therefore very important to understand what God desires us to be, to do, and to build so that we may press towards His vision in our lives. There is a tremendous amount of power in a person who has a vision set before him.

VII. God gave Abram a _____ (Genesis 13:14-17).

VIII. Five major parts to God’s vision for Abram.

A. _____: Removing the Distractions

1. Abram had to _____ from Lot, who represents worldly believers. When Lot looked up (Gen 13:10) he saw the lush land and chose it.
2. It was only when Abram was separated from Lot that God told him to look up and see his land, which was _____ times as big as Lot’s land.
3. In order to see the **VISION** of God for your life clearly, you must “look up” from your situation and remove _____ from your life. Once you change from a secular worldview to a biblical worldview things will begin to look different. Things that bothered you before won’t look as bad. Discouragement becomes encouragement, and light will shine through the darkness.

B. _____: Taking the First Step

1. The Bible says that God told Abram to “**WALK** through the land” (Gen 13:17). You will never see the vision fulfilled in your life if you stand still. You must take steps towards what God has shown you.
2. Your steps prepare to _____ the Word of God over your life. If he has called you to preach, go to Bible College. If you are called to be a musician, take lessons. If you sit and wait for things to happen for you, you may miss the open door just a few yards away.
3. The **VISION** only comes to pass when we begin to walk it out in our lives. People find out about Jesus when we tell them. If we want to see the sick healed and the dead to rise, we should be praying for them. God requires us to act in order for Him to move.

C. _____: Arming the Servants (Genesis 14:14)

1. The third step in fulfilling your vision is _____. Abram had to arm the men under him. Not only must you seek the training you need to

accomplish the vision, but you must arm and train those around you to do the same.

2. Keep your _____ on the Kingdom of God, the harvest, and using the harvest to plant more seeds. If our focus is only on our lives, we will miss the opportunity to minister to others. If this happens, they may never see the vision for their lives and what part they play in the Kingdom.
3. Each person around your life is _____ and has an important part to play for the Kingdom of God. Not every puzzle piece looks alike, but without every one of them the picture cannot be complete. You are a significant piece of the puzzle, and so are those you encounter every day.
4. **LIFE GROUPS** are an essential way to provide this training. Once you witness to someone, and integrate them into a Life Group, there is a foundation from which they may be equipped to do the same. This is how we are going to grow the church!

D. _____: Giving Tithes

1. Genesis 14 tells us of the encounter between **ABRAM** and Melchizedek. Because Abram shared his blessing with Melchizedek, he was in turn able to be blessed.
2. God does not **BLESS** a greedy heart. A person with selfish motives will not be able to multiply, since it takes a selfless outlook to see souls that need Jesus and do something about it.
3. God requires a **GIVING** heart in order to promote growth and see the fulfillment of the vision.

E. _____: Faith in the Lord

1. _____ is a vital component to seeing the vision come to pass. Often, the vision God has shown to His people regarding what He is asking them to do, is an astonishing task. Being a leader of people can be overwhelming if people do not have an understanding and faith in who God is and His ability to do anything.
2. Genesis 15:6 says that Abram “_____ in the Lord”. Your belief in God’s ability and faithfulness will either hinder you or enable your potential to be limitless.

Summary: A person with a vision from God has tremendous potential and ability because they understand that nothing is impossible with Christ. When we follow the plan and process for growth established by the Lord, we take the lid off of our own limits and are able to do anything.

The Jubilee Mission

Introduction: In addition to the global church vision, God has a specific vision for each local church. As this vision becomes clear, the pastors and leaders may see what their daily mission is when running the church. Without a mission, there is no direction. You may see the vision, but have no idea about how to get there. Just as a general gives his troops orders to accomplish the mission, so God gives us orders to accomplish our mission. Jubilee International Ministries has many different departments and supporting ministries that enable us to fulfill our mission. Each one has its own unique purpose, function, and identity. No one would ever confuse the jail ministry with the academy or bible college. Each has its own procedures and requirements for participation. Each has its own measure of success and its own method of building the kingdom of God. However, regardless of whether you are in the nursery or the worship team, the mission remains the same. This session will look at each individual part of our mission at Jubilee in order to better understand how you can play a part in fulfilling the vision.

IX. The Church at Antioch

- A. Jubilee uses the _____ church mentioned in the book of Acts as a model for our ministry. There are eleven key aspects of the church at Antioch that characterize what we consider foundations for our mission.
1. _____ to Go – The early believers were motivated to go throughout the lands preaching in new places. They had a pioneering spirit that wanted to impact society while still moving under authority. (Acts 11:19-20)
 2. _____ – The book of Acts accounts many examples of how the early church had a mission of winning the lost Jews and Gentiles. The Word says that Philip went to Samaria where he preached, and healed the sick. (Acts 8)
 3. _____ Minded – Antioch received input from Barnabas and acted as an apostolic hub for other church plants in the region. (Acts 11:22)
 4. _____ Ministry – The Antioch church sent teams of ministers to the cities to preach. This is very important as a covering, accountability, and encouragement for one another. (Acts 11:25-26, Eph 3:5)
 5. _____ - Antioch was a teaching center. Believers would be trained and then sent to the lost to minister the Word of God and spread the Gospel. (Acts 13:1, 1 Cor. 12:28)
 6. _____ – In addition to paying tithes and offerings, God calls us to give alms to the needy. The early church gave to minister to people in need outside of their local house. (Acts 11:28-30)
 7. _____ Ministry – Antioch churches often had prophets of God come and minister. It is a key to hearing the Word of God for the church and for specific people. Leaving it out of the church denies the body of revelation, direction, and vision from God. (Acts 11:27; 13:1)
 8. _____ Leadership Team – The ministry at Antioch was not wrapped up in one person. The responsibility was spread among many. This

is a vital key in training others. There must be an opportunity to walk in these gifts within the house of God. (Acts 13:1)

9. _____ – Personal worship is essential in developing one’s relationship with God. However, it is also important to come together as believers and conduct corporate worship. Worship is done in various ways and it is where we give to God of ourselves to show Him how worthy He is in our lives. (Acts 13-2)
10. _____ and _____ – Fasting helps to control our own desires so that we may know, understand, and submit to the Lord and His desires for our lives. (Acts 13:1)
11. A _____ Church – The church at Antioch would train leaders, pray for them, and then send them to spread the Gospel. (Acts 13:3)

X. Jubilee Mission Statement.

“We exist to glorify God by living as a light to the world and discipling people in Christ.”

A. GLORIFY God

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

B. Reach the LOST

1. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matt 28:19-20
2. “So they went out and preached that people should repent.” Mark 6:12
3. _____

4. _____

C. Heal the _____

1. “And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.” Mark 6:13

2. _____

3. _____

D. TRAIN Men and Women

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

E. MULTI-CULTURAL

1. _____

F. MULTI-GENERATIONAL

1. Although many churches cater to one age group or another, Jubilee strives to be a church where all feel welcome and have a place to use their gifts.
2. Whether the person is 8 or 80, we feel like there is a place for you to minister and preach the Word. (1 Tim 4:12)

G. BUILD the Church

1. _____

2. _____

“No one deserves to hear the Gospel twice until everyone has heard it once!”
Pastor Lindell Ballenger

Be the Vision

Introduction: As we have discussed the Vision of God and all that it entails, it is important to note that the vision does not come without taking steps to cultivate it in our own lives and in the local church. This lesson will give you the guidelines needed to successfully develop the Vision of God and what your part is in developing it in the church.

XI. Understand God's Vision for Your Life

A. You are called to fulfill the MISSION of Jesus Christ

1. Jesus was called to _____ the works of the devil and to seek and save those who are lost. (1 John 3:8; Luke 19:10) In John 14:12 Jesus says that we are also called to this same mission.
2. In our everyday life, we should seek ways in which we can **SEEK** those which are lost and **LEAD** them to Christ. We should also understand that our works either build the devil's foothold in the earth, or destroy what works he has already established. Become the weapon of destruction you are called to be!

B. You are called to bear FRUIT.

1. The Word of God tells us clearly that we are to be active in _____ to the lost and leading them to Christ (John 15:16; Luke 12:8-12)
2. As you _____ yourself from the ways of the world (Rom 7:4), you will begin to see the vision of God for your life more clearly.
3. 5 Areas of _____ in Your Life
 - a) _____ the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)
 - b) To _____ your mind to think like Jesus did (Phil 4:8-10; Rom. 8:5-8; Eph. 4:22-24).
 - c) You should bring honor to God and reflect a commitment to a life of _____ to Him and his people (Col 1:10)
 - d) You should **USE** and develop the spiritual gifts inside of you (1 Pet 4:10; Rom 12:4-6)
 - e) You should make _____ (Acts 6:7). Keep in mind that you are not making disciples of yourselves; you are making Disciples of Christ.

C. You are called to support the "Vision of the House"

1. When we speak of the "Vision of the _____" we are talking about the specific vision that God has given to our senior pastor regarding Jubilee. Every church has a vision that God has given to them, and only them, which outlines what their part is in building the global church.
2. As a _____ of the church you have a part to play in this vision (Acts 2:46-47)

3. When we don't walk in the vision of the house we cause _____ . This is very destructive to what we are building. Always make sure that what you say is in line with the vision.
4. People begin to reveal how closely they are connected to the vision by their _____. Instead of using phrases like "your church", "them" and "they", they begin to say things like "my church", "us", and "we".

XII. Barriers to Entering Into the Vision

A. FEAR and DISCOURAGEMENT

1. According to 2 Tim 1:7, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of **POWER**, **LOVE**, and a **SOUND** mind.
2. Fear is nothing more than the devil's _____ of the worst case scenario for our situation. He will take the absolute worst thing that can happen and plant it in your thoughts. As we dwell on this thought, we become more and more consumed with it making it difficult to believe anything positive can every happen.
3. As a leader, it is vital that you **GUARD** against fear and discouragement in your life. Consume your thoughts with holy, positive, God inspired thoughts. (Phil 4:8-9, NKJV)
4. Most people, when confronted with the question, have no problem stating whether a _____ is of the Lord or of the devil. However, it becomes difficult to recognize those thoughts when you are in the midst of the situation. Take time to evaluate whether what you are feeling is of God.

B. PASSIVITY

1. _____

2. If you faith is not put to action, God will not be able to work through you. (James 2:26)

C. CARNALITY

1. Not everything in the "the _____" is a sin. However, there are serious pitfalls when it comes to separating the wheat from the chaff. If those around you have no idea that you believe in God or actively worship Him, then there is probably too much of the world in your lifestyle.
2. God wants us to come as we are to Him, sin and all; but once we come to Him, His desire is to _____ us from the inside out. If we live our lives for God and nothing really changes, then we will remain bound to the sins that caused us to need Him in the first place.
3. God wants to change our _____ and our _____. (Romans 12:1-2). We should aim to portray Jesus to all of those around us.

XIII. The Vision is From God

A. The Vision originates from the FATHER (John 3:16; 20:21)

1. The ultimate vision is to _____ lives. This goal of redemption comes from the Lord our God and no one else.
2. This must be our VISION as well. Our hearts and minds need to be focused on what God is focused on. It is only then that we may begin to see the vision come to pass.

B. Vision grows as you spend time in the Word of God (Josh 1:8; Psalms 1:1-3; Romans 10:17)

1. Without knowing the WORD of GOD, it becomes difficult to discern whether the vision you see and hear is really from Him. God will never contradict His Word.
2. The more you read the Word of God, the more he will reveal to you through your _____. God may use one scripture to reveal 20 different truths about the Kingdom.

C. The Vision is imparted by HOLY SPIRIT (Acts 16:6-9; 26:19)

1. A GOOD idea is not always a GOD idea. In Acts 16, Paul and his companions were forbidden to go to a particular region to preach. It sounded like a good idea, but God had other plans for them.
2. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct and guide you in your ministry.

XIV. Enter Into the Vision

A. The _____ (Luke 9:23; 2 Cor. 5:14-16)

1. Jesus paid the price for all of us to have eternal LIFE and enter into a right relationship with the Father. This is the message we take to the multitudes. Without this understanding, we cannot understand the vision.
2. As a follower of Jesus, we must live this message out _____ by allowing God to change us. Once people see how having Jesus in our lives has benefited through our testimonies, they begin to desire Him for their lives as well. We are supposed to live the vision, not just talk about it.

B. PRAYER (Matt 6:6; 9:37-38)

1. _____

2. _____

C. OBEDIENCE (Mark 1:17; Luke 5:27; Heb. 11:6)

1. The Word of God tells us that when Jesus began His ministry, he gave each man the _____ to follow Him or continue living their normal life. Following Jesus is a choice. It requires each person to make a choice to stop the life they have known and begin to follow God's direction in every aspect.
2. Without obedience to the voice of God, the vision will never be _____. We cannot do things our way and expect them to lead to a better life.

D. UNITY (Phil 2:1-2)

1. A **GROUP** will always be more effective in spiritual matters than one (Lev 26:8; Deut. 32:30; Matt 18:20). Together we stand stronger than if we were alone. Although God has used one person to do great things, His desire is that we stand unified as the body.
2. We are different parts that make up _____ body, not several. A body can only have one head (one vision) (Romans 12:4-5). Be a member in the body of Christ today!

Two Keys to Spiritual Growth

Introduction: Prayer and God's Word are the most vital pieces of the Believer's life. These communication points, where we develop our relationship with God, are often the where Satan attacks us the hardest. The first key to growth in your relationship with God is prayer. Many believers find it difficult to spend more than ten minutes a day praying, if they pray daily at all. Others only have prayer time on the run or while doing other things. God wants our relationship with him to be living and breathing. The mark of a strong relationship with God is a strong prayer life. The second key and the basic ingredient to becoming more like Christ is the Word of God. His Word renews your mind, it is the two-edged sword that discerns the thoughts and intents of your heart, it is the measuring stick with which you can measure your decisions and motives, and it is anchor that gives strength and endurance to stabilize your spiritual life. The ultimate process of God for your life is that you become more like Jesus. The process of your spiritual growth requires these vital keys to becoming the man or woman God desires.

- I. Get _____ to pray by seeing the tremendous benefits of a prayer-filled life.**
- A.** Praying effectively will give you spiritual _____ so you won't quit and give up. [Luke 18:1] *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart...* (NIV – "give up")
1. Prayer is the heartbeat of your spiritual life. It is important to establish consistent times and places for prayer.
 2. God will always respond to perseverance and persistence. Never give up!
- B.** Praying brings you into the _____ realm and makes God and His truths real to you. [2 Kings 6:17] *And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*
1. When you pray, your eyes are opened to people, situations, and circumstances in ways that you may not have seen before. (Psalms 73:16-17)
 2. Doorways to supernatural manifestation and revelation are always opened through prayer.
 3. Praying into the spiritual realm allows you to see things the way God sees them and understand things you would have never known otherwise.
- C.** Prayer is the key to being able to _____ to others effectively. (Acts 6:4) *But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.*
- D.** Through prayer you receive from God His _____ and His provisions for your life. [James 4:2] *...you do not have because you do not ask.*
- E.** Effective prayer enables you to find _____ and guidance for your life. [James 1:5] *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

F. Prayer is vital to _____ the devil and his forces in your life. [Matt 26:41] *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

NOTE: Prayer motivation is often assaulted by past feelings of guilt and condemnation for not praying regularly or failure to keep promises to God. God is interested in a relationship with you, not a duty from you. Let prayer become part of who you are so you can become one with Him.

II. Learn how to pray in _____ ways. [Ephesians 6:18] *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints – NIV.*

A. Pray by using the Lord's Prayer as a _____ prayer guide.

1. In Luke 11:1, one of Jesus disciples said to Him: "*Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*" His reply came to be known as the Lord's Prayer. In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus instructs His disciples to pray "in this manner." Rather than giving a prayer to be recited, Jesus was demonstrating a model of prayer, showing basic elements which should be contained in your prayer life.

2. The following breakdown is a listing of the basic parts of prayer found in the Lord's Prayer. Use these as a model for your prayer time.

a) Prayer of _____: *Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name* – acknowledging Who God is and what He has done. Begin your prayer by worshipping God. You may want to use the names of God found throughout the Old Testament:

b) Prayer of _____: *Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven* – praying for others. Pray from the "inside out" beginning with yourself, your family, your church, your workplace, your state and nation, etc...

c) Prayer of _____: *Give us this day our daily bread* – praying for your own personal needs and those around us. Learn to be specific when you pray!

d) Prayer of _____: *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors* – praying for forgiveness in our lives while forgiving others for hurts or offenses. (Mark 11:25)

e) Prayer of _____: *And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one* – putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17) and confronting the enemy of our soul.

- f) Prayer of _____: *For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever – surrendering your mind and will to God’s authority. (Matthew 26:39 with 16:21)*

B. Pray in the Spirit:

[1 Corinthians 14:15] *What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.*

1. When you are filled with the Spirit, the Spirit gives you a language of prayer, which is called “speaking in _____.” (Acts 2:4)
2. This prayer language is a way that the Spirit prays the mysteries of the _____ of God through you. [1 Corinthians 14:2] *For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.*
3. When you pray in the Spirit, your _____ is praying, not your mind. [1 Corinthians 14:14] *For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.*
4. Praying in the Spirit will _____ you up in your faith. [Jude 1:20] *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.*
5. Praying in the Spirit will _____ or strengthen you. (1 Corinthians 14:4)
6. Praying in the Spirit will help you to pray _____ throughout the day. [1 Thessalonians 5:17] *Pray without ceasing.*

III. Establish an _____ prayer life. The basis of all prayer is our relationship of love for the Father God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- A.** Pray early in the _____. Praying before you start your daily work is often best because the mind is uncluttered and the body is refreshed. This also gives you an opportunity to pray over the situation you will face during the day. [Psalms 5:3]
- B.** Find a _____ where it is quiet and free from distractions. [Matthew 14:23]
- C.** If possible, pray out _____ loud _____. This will keep your mind from wondering. [Psalms 3:4]
- D.** _____ to God. Learn to distinguish His voice from all others. [John 10:4-5]
- E.** Pray over the _____ as you read it, and pray over what God speaks to your heart through the Word. [Psalm 119:18]
- F.** Pray to the Father in the name of _____. [John 16:23]

- G. Pray from a _____ heart and a pure conscience. [Psalm 66:18]
- H. Pray the _____ of God as it is revealed in His Word. [1 John 5:14]
- I. _____ yourself before God. [James 4:10]
- J. Be _____ in your approach before God, as He wants to give you mercy, grace, and help. [Hebrews 4:16]

IV. Focus on God’s _____ for you – to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

- A. Recognize that God has a _____ for you and the discovery of its process begins in the Word of God.
 1. The root of God’s plan of redemption for us is to shape us into people who have the character and nature of Jesus. [Romans 8:29-30] *29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*
 2. Paul told the Galatians, in Galatians 4:19, that he would labor ...*until Christ is _____ in you.*
 3. We are changed in to the image of Jesus by _____ at Him. [2 Corinthians 3:18] *18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*
 4. As we change, we begin putting off the “_____ self” and putting on the “_____ self.” To do this, Colossians 3:16 says you must *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...*
- B. Begin to build according to a spiritual _____ by reading God’s Word.
 1. Find a _____ and _____ when you can regularly sit down and study the Bible.
 - a) Being consistent in a study time, finding a specific location, and sticking to it will help you begin making “good habits” in your spiritual growth process.
 - b) Good times are usually first thing in the morning or late in the evening, but consistency is the key.
 2. Develop a reading _____.
 - a) Use a one-year Bible or set yourself on a formulated “one-year” plan. Reading through the Bible in a year periodically throughout your life is a healthy habit to develop.
 - b) Work out a balanced approach for your reading. Find studies or leaders to help you in your Bible reading process. Use worship and prayer to enhance your study time.

V. Submit to the Word of God that _____ you.

A. Submit to God's Word that _____ you. [Ephesians 5:25-27] 25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

1. God's Word that purifies you from _____.
 - a) By knowing the Word of God, I know how to please God and keep from sinning. [Psalm 119:11] *Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!*
 - b) By knowing the Word of God, I know how to be forgiven of sin if I fall. [1 John 2:1] *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*
2. God's Word keeps you pure in _____.
 - a) Scripture warns us against "double-mindedness" [James 4:8] *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
 - b) Scripture focuses us on singleness of heart [Matthew 6:33] *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

B. Submit to God's Word that _____ your mind.

1. The word of God commands us to take charge of our minds and renew them to His word. [Rom 12:1-2] *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
 - a) We must be willing to bring *every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...* (2 Corinthians 10:5)
 - b) Our minds need to be re-formed to know how we ought to think. [Philippians 4:8].
2. Right thinking leads to right behavior: Our behavior will conform to Jesus' image as our thinking aligns with the Word of God.

C. Submit to God's Word that equips you for _____.

1. God's Word is the "Sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17)
2. Jesus modeled spiritual warfare when He faced the enemy in the wilderness. With every temptation He used the word: "It is written..."

D. Submit to God's Word that equips you to do _____ works.

1. Through the Word's teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, we are equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Our lives can become a miniature picture of the kingdom of God.
2. As you learn how to study the Word of God, you will discover – especially in the New Testament – that it is full of practical "how to" instruction.

VI. Understand how to _____ God's Word.

- A.** Ask God to _____ with you in Scripture.
1. Believe that God will speak to you through the Scripture.
 2. Ask the Lord to be your interpreter (to help you understand what you read).
- B.** Read with a _____ spirit.
1. Determine to do what the Scripture asks you to do.
 2. Don't read just for information, but for transformation.
- C.** _____ on a brief passage.
1. Saturate yourself in a few verses.
 2. Read the passage slowly.
- D.** Take one key thought or verse with you through the day.
1. The fruitful person meditates day and night.
 2. What the mind repeats, it retains.
 3. Memorizing Scripture is a powerful means of transforming our minds.
- E.** Be a doer of the Word, not a hearer only!

Walking in Faith

Introduction: Faith is probably the most important message beyond the Gospel. Faith is the key that releases the blessings of God into your life. It is the mechanism through which everything in the Kingdom of God happens. We received Christ by faith and receive everything else from God the same way. (Col 2:6). Hebrews 11:6 says it is impossible to please God without faith. Through faith, the impossible becomes possible.

...with God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26)

...all things are possible to him who believes. (Mark 9:23)

Faith is the channel that makes God's possibilities available to you. By faith, believers have received financial blessings, been spared from judgment, received strength to endure persecution and hardship, escaped from danger, became mighty in battle, received back their dead by resurrection, and obtained approval from God (Hebrews 11).

XV. What is Faith?

A. Dictionary definition: "Faith is 1) a confidence or dependence on a person, statement, or thing as trustworthy 2) belief without certain proof."

B. Bible definition: Faith is a _____ and an _____.
[Hebrews 11:1] *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

1. Faith must be so real it actually is _____. The Greek word literally means "that which stands underneath and supports" or "provides the basis for" something else. It is the foundation on which you stand and the establishment on which you build your life.
2. Faith is also the _____ of things that you cannot see with your natural eyes. It deals with things that are unseen – things that are invisible. [Hebrews 11:3] *By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*
3. There is a difference shown here between the visible and the invisible worlds. Your senses relate to that which is seen, but faith takes you behind the visible to the invisible. This is where your faith works [2 Corinthians 5:7] *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*
4. Faith and sight are really _____ to one another. If you walk by sight, you do not need faith. This is contrary to our natural way of thinking. The world says, "seeing is believing." The Bible turns it around and says believing enables you to really see! [Psalm 27:13]

13 *I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.*

5. The same Greek word translated _____ in Hebrews 11:1 was also translated “title deed” in some ancient secular documents written during the time of the New Testament. Faith then is like a title deed to property. It is not the property , but it is proof of ownership.

C. There is a difference between faith and _____. [Mark 11:24]
Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

1. Faith receives _____ while hope looks to the _____. Faith is a substance, something that is already here. Hope is an expectation of something to come.
2. If someone says “I believe God will heal me...” what they often mean is “I hope God will heal me tomorrow.” But, faith is not for _____; faith is something that you have now. If you keep directing your expectation toward the future, you are substituting hope for faith.
3. When does Jesus tell you to _____ what you pray for? Is it at some undetermined point in the future? No – but at the very moment that you pray. You “ask” and at the same moment you receive even though the manifestation of the answer to your prayer may yet be in the future.

D. _____ corrodes your faith and causes it to diminish.
[James 1:6-7] *6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.*

1. Doubt is like water in a gas tank – it does not mix with the gas and it clogs up the carburetor, causing the engine to miss and malfunction. Doubt and faith do not mix together, and the doubt works to prevent the faith from acting.
2. You must guard your _____ from everything that could weaken or undermine your faith. [Proverbs 4:23] *Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.* Note: you can have demonic doubts come against your mind and still have true bible faith in your heart. God looks at your heart.

XVI. How to Release Your Faith.

A. In Mark 11:22-25, Jesus gave eight important elements in building and releasing your faith: *22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 For assuredly,*

I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. 24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. 25 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

1. *Have faith in God* – Make God the _____ source _____ of your faith.
2. *Whoever* – God will answer _____ your _____ prayers if you meet the conditions of faith. Ephesians 2:8-9 says that God blesses us because of His grace (undeserved love and mercy) and not our human efforts of “good works”. Anyone can believe God’s promises.
3. *Will have whatever he says* – You must _____ to your mountain of need before it will move. In I Samuel 17: 32-37 and 45-47, David constantly spoke out his faith in God when facing the giant Goliath. Faith is calling the things that are not (things needed or answers to prayer) as though they were answered “I am healed, strong, wise and blessed!” (Romans 4:17)
4. *Be removed and be cast into the sea* – You must be _____ in your requests
5. *Does not doubt in his heart* – Give no place for _____ doubt _____ in your heart.
6. *Whatever things you ask* – Put no _____ on God’s ability to answer your request.
7. *When you pray, believe that you receive them* – Believe that you receive _____ now _____, and you will have what you believe. Become “pregnant” with the answer to your prayer.
8. *Whenever you stand praying, forgive* – Guard against _____, offenses, or any other “faith robber.”

B. Other helps to releasing your faith.

1. Find the _____ of God, and pray for it in your life.
[1 John 5:14-15]14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. We find the will of God for our lives by looking in the bible and by asking God in prayer. Remember, all the Bible promises of God are “Yes” (His will) when we ask in Jesus name. (II Corinthians 1:20 & John 16:23)

2. Believe in your _____. [Rom 10:9-10] *9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

3. Keep a good _____ regarding your faith. When the woman whose child died went to the prophet for help, she was asked by the servant how her son was doing. By faith she confessed that it was well with her child. [2 Kings 4:26] *Please run now to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?' " And she answered, "It is well." Romans 10:10 Says that we “confess resulting in salvation” (or healing or deliverance).*

4. _____ for the answer to your prayers. The widow who needed money was told by the prophet Elisha to get empty pots and to pour the oil she had into each vessel. God filled the number of pots she brought to be filled. [2 Kings 4:6] *Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." So the oil ceased.*

5. Faith _____! – If you do not have strong faith, you can get it by planting the Word of God deep within your heart through reading, confessing and meditation on the scriptures (Joshua 1:8). Your faith will automatically become active and vibrant. [Rom 10:17] *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

6. Follow the _____! When a doctor gives a person medicine, the directions for taking it are on the bottle. The Word of God is like a medicine bottle; we need to carefully read the directions that are included. [Prov 4:20-22] *20 My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. 21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; 22 For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.*

7. _____ the devil and loose you blessing from his grasp in the name of Jesus. [Matt 16:19] *And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

XVII. How to Keep Your Faith Strong until the Answer Comes.

- A. Do not stagger in _____, going from side to side, but stay focused on what God has said. [Rom 4:20] *He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God.* Abraham praised God when doubt came against him.

- B.** Keep the _____ of God before you as Abraham did. [Rom 4:21]
...and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.
- C.** Find another believer who will stand with you in _____ in prayer.
[Matt 18:19-20] 19 *Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*
- D.** Be _____ in prayer, never giving up. [Luke 18:1] *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart*
- E.** Be _____ at the throne of grace, obtaining mercy and grace in your time of need. [Heb 4:16] *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
- F.** Pray and _____ to strengthen your faith. (Matt 17:19-21)

Overcoming the Devil

Introduction:

A. God's will for you is _____ .

1. Because of Christ's victory at Calvary over sin, death, and the devil, every believer has the right and ability to walk victoriously in life, free from guilt, condemnation, fear, bondage, and defeat (1 Corinthians 15:57). God always leads you to triumph in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14), and He never leads you to defeat.
2. According to 2 Peter 1:3, God has given you everything you need for life and godliness. Before you were saved, the devil was your master, controlling your life (Galatians 4:8). Now that you have been "born again," Jesus gives you whatever you need to face life and live godly.

B. You can _____ the devil.

1. As a believer you can now resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7). Believers in the Bible overcame Satan, and so can you (Revelation 12:11). God will crush Satan's power under your feet (Romans 16:19-20).
2. The Bible says in 1 John 4:4 that He that is in you (Jesus) is greater than he that is in the world (the devil). This should give you confidence to face life's difficulties, knowing God is on your side.

C. You must know the _____ or tricks, of the enemy.

1. To wage spiritual warfare effectively you must know the tactics of your enemy. It is essential that you become aware of his schemes (Ephesians 6:11), not just the fact that he exists.
2. You will find that Satan assumes three basic roles in his attacks and uses three basic weapons with which he hopes to defeat you:
 - As the tempter he entices with _____ .
 - As the accuser he seeks to bring _____ .
 - As the destroyer he attacks with _____ .

I. How to be victorious over temptation

In Matthew 4:3 and I Thessalonians 3:5, the Bible calls the devil the tempter. Satan has no power to make you do anything. He cannot force you to sin or to give up your faith. However, he does have a "bag of tricks" that he uses to get you to act independently of God and to go against His will. The strongest weapon that Satan has is temptation.

A. How temptation works [James 1:12-15]

1. The devil looks for an area of your life where you are _____ .
2. He then _____ you in that area. Temptation is not sin – only yielding to it is.
3. If you give in to the temptation, _____ is conceived.
4. After sin gets a "hook" in you, it becomes stronger and stronger (if you do not repent) until it _____ you and finally destroys you.

B. Three areas where believers are tempted [1 John 2:16]

1. The lust of the _____ . This area deals with the appetites of the flesh and includes such sins as sexual immorality, gluttony, drunkenness, drug abuse, and laziness.
2. The lust of the _____ . This area has to do with man's relationship to money and possessions. It includes such sins as greed, covetousness, stealing, and lying.
3. The _____ of life. This area involves putting self at the center of all things and relationships. It includes such sins as pride, vanity, strife, anger, envy, idolatry, and murder.

C. How to successfully overcome temptation:

1. Use a _____ approach to spiritual warfare by daily putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).
2. Build yourself up spiritually through _____ and _____ Bible study. The importance of this cannot be overestimated!
3. Stay away from _____ influences (1 Corinthians 15:33, 1 Timothy 6:11, 2 Timothy 2:22, 1 John 2:15). This may mean changing friends, entertainment, jobs, or anything else that could pull you back into the world and your old way of life.

4. Use the _____ as a sword against temptation and the devil's ties (Ephesians 6:17, Matthew 4:1-11).
5. _____ of all known sin in your life, especially unforgiveness, bitterness, rebellion, or occult involvement, as these left alone can allow access to Satan to build strongholds in your life.
6. Be sure to stay in close _____ with other believers through your local church (Hebrews 10:25).
7. Stand on the _____ of God that will not allow Satan to tempt you beyond what you can handle but will give you a way of escape (I Corinthians 10:13).
8. After you have submitted yourself to God, _____ the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

II. How to overcome the accuser's condemnation

In Revelation 12:10-11, Satan is referred to as “the accuser of our brothers.” One very effective weapon of the devil is to keep believers looking inwardly at their own shortcomings and failures instead of upwardly to the mercy and help from their Heavenly Father (Hebrews 4:16). This serves to divert them from the work of God they are called to do. It is similar to trying to drive with your eyes always fixed on the rear-view mirror instead of on the road ahead.

A. Satan wants you to quit.

B. Three areas of protection – Revelation 12:11 tells how the accuser of the brethren was overcome by believers.

1. The _____ - *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.* When the devil accuses you of past failures, inadequacies, shortcomings, and sins, you are to point him to the blood of Jesus. The Bible says in 1 John 1:7, *The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.* Your sins are gone because Christ took them away; therefore, the devil has no case against you before God.
2. The spoken _____ - *They overcame him by the word of their testimony.* This simply means that you are to speak (or testify) what the Word says about you and your sins. When the devil attacks you with condemnation, speak the Word to the thoughts and accusations coming against you.

3. Absolute _____ to the Lord - *They overcame him... and they loved not their lives unto the death.* They were so sold out to the Lord that not even death could make them turn back. When your commitment to God is sure, the devil's darts of accusation fall harmlessly off without hurting you.

III. How to turn back the enemy's destruction

A. Satan's major areas of destruction

1. Physical sickness
2. Bondage - especially to alcohol, drugs, or sexual sins
3. Mental and emotional attacks
4. Financial problems
5. Family problems

B. Scriptural ways to resist the devil

1. Stand on God's _____. Find out what God's promises are regarding your particular area of need, and claim them for your own life. For example, if the devil is hitting you with sickness, study what the Bible says about healing and believe that for your life.
2. _____ the Word. Speak God's Word to the need and to Satan when he attacks. This is what Jesus did when He was tempted by the devil in Matthew 4.
3. _____ God. Make sure you are walking in obedience to the known will of God. In the book of Malachi, the people of God were seeing their finances devoured, and they did not understand why. God told them it was because they were not paying their tithes. In Malachi 3:10-11, He said that He would rebuke the devourer if they would obey Him.
4. Bind _____ and loose _____. Bind the devil in the name of Jesus and loose the blessings of God from Satan's grasp (Matthew 12:28-29, 16:19). You act as God's delegated authority in this, and it allows you to enforce the victory that Christ has already won for you over the devil and his power (Luke 10:19).

5. Walk in _____ faith _____. Without faith it is impossible for you to please God or to defeat the devil. Faith is a shield that is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one (Ephesians 6:16, 1 John 5:4).

6. _____ . Finally, stand your ground, and don't give up. *Stand against the schemes of the devil... and having done all... stand* (Ephesians 6:11-13). There is no room for cowardice in God's army. If you are afraid of the enemy and try to run from him, he will devour you, but if you stand against him using your weapons of spiritual warfare, he will flee from you.

1. A Samaritan saw him.
2. *He felt compassion for him.*
3. It's one thing to see but something different to see and feel.
 - a) Today many times people see much and feel little. We are a desensitized and emotionally calloused generation.
 - b) The Samaritan is referred to as being “good” because he loved a man whom his fellow countrymen considered as an enemy. He was not influenced by their potential rejection of his action.

D. Be willing to _____ (verses 34, 35).

1. First aid (body ministry) was administered.
2. Time and financial resources were made available (I John 3:17).

E. Be a true neighbor (verse 36).

1. *...which of these three was neighbor to him... He who showed mercy...*
2. *Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”* (See also Romans 15:1)

III. Live a lifestyle of servanthood through evangelism.

A. Model the _____ of Jesus.

1. Jesus, the true Servant, lived to give of Himself to others.
 - a) He did not come to be served but to serve (Mark10:45).
 - b) Jesus commissioned His disciples to do the same (Matthew 7, 8).
LIVE TO GIVE!
2. With Jesus, serving was not a stepping-stone toward greatness; it was the measure of greatness.
 - a) Jesus was free to wash His disciples’ feet (John13:5).
 - b) Jesus served and loved so freely that He was able to bless His own betrayer (John 13:26) and even referred to him as His friend (Matthew 26:47-50).
3. Jesus bids us, “Follow me.”

- a) We're to follow Jesus by loving and serving others.
- b) We're to love with our hearts and eyes, speak words of peace and reconciliation with our mouths, and reach out to others with our hands.

B. Overcome _____ to evangelism.

1. The fear of _____ .

- a) Your acceptance is based on your identity in Christ.
- b) Fear of rejection can paralyze you. “What will he or she think of me?”

2. _____

- a) Your ego hates to suffer; it always prefers to be puffed up.
- b) Rather than humbling yourself, you prefer silence and exclusion, and many times even isolation.

3. _____

- a) We do not want to spend the time and energy.
- b) “But they smoke, drink, take drugs, and live promiscuously.”
- c) There is a price to pay to gain the lost as one’s inheritance (Psalm 2:8).

4. _____ of Scripture

- a) *Love not the world, nor the things in the world* (I John 2:15). This does not mean you should not love your fellowman.
- b) *As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world* (John 17:13-14, 18).
- c) *The field is the world* (Matthew 13:38).

C. Getting started in a lifestyle of evangelism

1. Carefully consider how you invest your _____ , energy, and financial resources. Do your investments show that you are truly committed to winning the lost?
2. Ask God for a lost person with whom you can establish a relationship.

3. _____

4. Express true friendship.
5. Be friendly.
6. Be committed.
7. Be loyal.
8. Don't be _____ (tactless). Allow space for a normal growth process.
9. Be natural in expressing your faith in Christ.
10. *A friend loves at all times* (Proverbs 17:17). This verse expresses the heart of true outreach – unconditional love.

Knowing What We Believe

Introduction: In his letter to the church, Peter instructs us to *always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...* (1 Peter 3:15 NIV). Knowing basic Christian doctrine is important for the believer who wants to have an impact on his or her generation with the Gospel. Besides that, Christian doctrine is vital to believers who want to grow in Christlikeness and to all who wage spiritual warfare against the devil, who will always try to make you doubt the truth. Paul instructed Timothy to *give attention to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine* (1 Timothy 4:13). The purpose of these lessons is to give a brief overview of the most important beliefs of the Christian faith. We must know what we believe, why we believe it, and how our belief system benefits us as believers.

IV. We believe that the Bible is the _____ Word of God.

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. [2 Tim 3:16-17]

- A. The word *Bible* means “_____ book _____.” It is a collection of 66 books written over a period of more than 1500 years by 38 different human authors.
- B. The true author of the Bible is God. The entire Bible is divinely inspired by Him and without error in the original manuscripts.
- C. The Bible is the revelation of God to man and the final authority for the church and the believer in all matters of doctrine and daily living.

BENEFIT:

V. We believe that God is infinitely perfect and eternally existent in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- A. What is God like?
 - 1. The Bible describes many attributes or qualities that belong to God. Some of them are as follows:
 - a) God is _____ . (Genesis 1:1)
 - b) God is _____ or all-powerful (Matthew 19:26).
 - c) God is _____ or everywhere (Jeremiah 23:24).

- d) God is _____ or all-knowing (1 John 3:20).
- e) God is _____ (Psalm 90:2).

2. What is true of God the Father is also true of Jesus and the Holy Spirit: they also possess the same divine attributes.

B. Jesus Christ, the Son of God

Ten Important Facts about Jesus Christ

1. As the eternal Son of God, Jesus was involved in creating the heavens and the earth.
2. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary's womb.
3. While on earth, Jesus was both fully God and fully man.
4. He lived a sinless life.
5. He possessed tremendous miraculous power.
6. He was crucified on the cross where He died as a sacrifice for the sins of all men.
7. God raised Him from the dead on the third day.
8. For forty days after His resurrection, over 500 people saw Him.
9. He ascended to heaven right in front of the disciples' eyes.
10. He is today at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for believers.

C. The Person of the Holy Spirit

1. _____

2. _____

BENEFIT:

VI. We believe that Satan and his demons are mankind's enemy.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. [1 Peter 5:8]

- A. Satan, or the devil, is a fallen _____ (Luke 10:18, 19), a created being, who was cast out of heaven because of pride and rebellion (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28).
- B. _____ are also fallen spirits, or angels, who work under Satan to undermine God's kingdom. The devil and his demons come to *steal, kill, and destroy* (John 10:10).
- C. _____ was created for Satan and his angels (Matthew 25:41), and their eternal destiny is sealed. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and He gave believers authority over the power of Satan (1 John 3:8, Luke 10:19).

18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. [Luke 10:18-19]

BENEFIT:

VII. We believe we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. [Ephesians 2:8-9]

- A. Because of man's fallen, sinful, condition, and because the consequences of sin are so very serious, _____ is necessary. God has graciously made salvation possible for all by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. All God requires of us is that we repent and believe the gospel (good news).
 - 1. _____ is turning away from sin and turning to God. Repentance is necessary for men to receive forgiveness of sins.
 - 2. Acts 3:19 says: *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...*

- B.** Salvation and the New Birth. Man is saved by grace, God's unmerited favor, through faith in Jesus Christ and His blood.
1. Salvation is a gift of God and cannot be earned by human efforts. A person must be "born again" by the Spirit of God. In this new birth, Jesus comes to live inside the new believer.
 2. In John 3, Jesus said: *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again.*

C. Living _____ (sanctification).

1. In one respect, we were sanctified the moment we put our trust in God. This instantaneous work places us as sons and daughters of God.
2. Sanctification is also progressive, however. This means that even though we are holy in God's sight and do not receive any condemnation from Him, we are to progressively become more holy in our daily conduct. The Christian life is a life of putting off the old self and putting on the new self (Ephesians 4:22-24).

BENEFIT:

VIII. We believe that heaven and hell are _____ and _____ places.

10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
[Revelation 20:10, 15]

I Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.
[Revelation 21:1]

- A.** It is important to understand and remember that Heaven and Hell are literal places reserved for people who live in after death and judgment.
- B.** It is also important to understand that every human being is an eternal person and will be resurrected and judged to eternal Heaven or eternal Hell based on their faith in Jesus Christ.
1. Heaven will be the glorious home for all true believers in Jesus.

2. Hell will be the prison where the wicked will be locked up in torment and darkness forever – fully conscious, without any way of escape.

BENEFIT:

IX. We believe that believers should follow the Lord's example in water baptism by

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins... [Acts 2:38]"

- A. After you are saved you should be baptized in water.
 1. Water baptism is a picture, or symbol, of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:3-5).
 2. When you are baptized, you are showing your identification and union with Christ. You are dead to sin and must, therefore, be buried in baptism. As you come up out of the water, you come up, so to speak, out of the grave, raised from the dead (old life) to walk in newness of life
- B. Water baptism is an opportunity to publicly declare that Jesus is your Lord and Savior.

BENEFIT:

X. We believe in the _____ with the Holy Spirit.

...for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. [Acts 2:38]

- A. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a separate experience from salvation in which the believer is endued with _____ from on high for godly living and service. Speaking in tongues (an unknown language) is the initial evidence of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- B. How do you receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?
 1. You must be born again (Acts 2:38, 39).
 2. You must recognize that the Holy Spirit is given as a gift (Luke 11:13, Acts 10:45).
 3. You must desire and ask for this gift (Acts 19:2,6; Luke 11:9-13).

4. You must receive the Holy Spirit, in faith (Acts 2:38, 8:15-19, 10:47, 19:2).

BENEFIT:

(Romans 8:26).

XI. We believe in the church (local and universal).

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many. [1 Corinthians 12:12-14]

- A.** The church, or the Body of Christ is a spiritual organism, with Christ as the head (Ephesians 5:23). It consists of all true born-again believers everywhere. The only way to enter into the Body of Christ is by being born again.
- B.** The local church is a part of the universal church in the earth (NOT THE SAME AS THE HERESY OF UNIVERSALISM). The Bible says that all believers are to be a part of a local church (Hebrews 10:25). A person cannot truly understand the universal church without understanding the purpose of the local church.

BENEFIT:

XII. We believe in observing the Lord's _____ .

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. [1 Corinthians 11:26]

- A.** As a memorial, or a reminder of His death, the Lord Jesus ordained the Lord's Supper (Communion).
- B.** When you participate in the Lord's Supper:
1. You come into the presence of Christ and remember that he died for you.
 2. You affirm that your sins are taken away only by the broken body and shed blood of Jesus. You also affirm that you need Him and trust Him to forgive your sins and give life and health back to your soul.

3. You receive the spiritual nourishment and refreshment that Christ is giving to your soul. He loves you and has invited you to this Supper.
4. You are united with all other believers who participate in this Supper.

BENEFIT:

The Right Stuff

Introduction: During this stage of the Growth Track, we will be talking about both leading and being led. As we begin to reach out and disciple others, it is important to remember that we train others by building into them biblical standards of righteousness. Not only that, but we must hold ourselves to the same standard as an example of what we teach. In the effort of discipling others and fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ, it is easy to get caught up in developing rules for those we lead and disciple as a means of controlling their behavior and setting a standard. However, we must be careful not to create rules and standards that God never stated or directed. We have to respond to people like Jesus. If we don't, we can actually limit or even prevent those around us from becoming the leaders they were call to be. The standards and commands of God are set in place for a specific reason and when we apply them correctly to our lives, they enable us to accomplish tremendous feats for the kingdom. God's laws enable us to soar; man-made, religious laws keep us bound.

I. Leading through _____ (1 Timothy 1:15)

A. Jesus **LOVED** you

1. The cross is the center of our message as believers. Never forget what Jesus did for you – and more importantly why He did it – then allow that to motivate your actions as a leader. (John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 1:17-18-23, 2 Corinthians 13:4).
2. Remind those you are leading to keep their focus on the cross and find their motivation in that (Titus 3:3-7).

B. Don't let _____ and _____ stop you from leading

1. If you are waiting for to fix all your issues before you begin to minister to others, you may never actually begin your ministry (1 Timothy 1:14; Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 9:16).
2. We may not be perfect, but we are in a perfecting process as we spread the Gospel to others.

C. Let love for _____ and hope for the _____ of souls motivate you to lead

1. Practice sharing your testimony and encourage those you lead to do the same. (Acts 9:20-21; 22:6-11; 26:12-18)
2. When developing your leaders, teach them to develop a lifestyle of evangelism, not just an event. (Romans 1:13-16; 9:1-3; Ephesians 6:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8)

II. Leading in _____ (1 Timothy 2:1)

A. Without **PRAYER**, we will eventually **DIE** spiritually

1. According to Jesus, a primary function of leaders is to pray (Matthew 6:9-13).

2. As we progress as Christians and especially as leaders, our prayer life must continually be growing.
3. The apostles were directed to pray and fast and even Paul states how important it is to pray without stopping (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 6:18).

B. _____ for those around your life who need Jesus

1. Jesus prayed for the harvest (Hebrews 7:25).
2. Prayer breaks down strongholds and opens the deaf ear (Colossians 4:3; Matthew 16:17-19; Ephesians 6:18-19).

III. Leading with a _____ of _____ (1 Timothy 3)

A. Leadership must begin with a desire to _____ (1 Timothy 3:1)

1. The more we mature we become, the more we want to serve others. In turn, the more we become servants of others, the more mature we become.
2. The word “minister” in 2 Corinthians 6:3-4, literally means “server.” The idea that being a minister is anything other than serving other people will lead to pride and arrogance.
3. Therefore, the development of one’s character begins at the point that the person is willing to become a servant.

B. Leadership must be built on excellence in _____ (1 Timothy 3:2-13)

1. “_____” (v. 2) – We all make mistakes. Being a leader is not about preventing yourself from falling, but rather your ability to pick yourself back up and keep going. But, we must strive for a blameless character in all we do.
2. “Husband of one **WIFE**” (v. 2) – God takes marriage seriously. It is a covenant we make before him. He even tells us that our marriage relationships is a reflection of our relationship with Him.
3. “_____” (v. 2) – This word means self-control and actually describes one who is not easily given to overindulgence, addictions, or other out-of-control behaviors. Any habitual act of excess in our life is unhealthy.
4. “_____” (v. 2) – Mature leaders must take their responsibilities seriously. They are not careless, unconcerned, disconnected, and unaware of the great responsibility of influencing and ministering to the lives of others.
5. “Of _____” (v. 2) – The way we treat others is a testimony to the maturity we possess in Christ. Especially, the way we treat those who may mistreat us. When we treat others poorly, or are uncaring and mean, it is a sign that we still have a ways to go in developing our maturity.
6. “_____” (v. 2) – We should always be open to ministering to other people in our homes and lives. Showing grace, giving, sharing meals, and taking care of people are all characteristics of godly leaders. True and effective leaders will be willing to open up their homes and lives to others.
7. “Able to _____” (v. 2) – The more a leader learns, the more he understands how much he still doesn’t know. Not only should we be able

to teach others about the Gospel and help disciple them, but we should be open to learning what others have to teach us as well.

8. “Not given to _____ ” (v. 3) – Drinking an alcoholic beverage in itself is not sin. However, any addiction, including one to alcohol, is sin. The Bible teaches that leaders who drink in excess can become disabled in making wise decisions. Further, the Bible also tells us that if an activity we participate in gives causes others around us to stumble, we should avoid it. As leaders, we must be always vigilant and discern our choices and activities accordingly.
9. “Not _____ ” (v. 3) – Leaders should have a strong character that does not easily give in to strong contention or participation in violent behavior.
10. “Not _____ for money” (v. 3) – Money is not evil, but the love of it is the root of all evil according to the scriptures. When we mature as leaders, God must be able to entrust us with resources. Good stewardship and discipline financially is important for anyone in leadership. Failure to develop maturity in this area may cause us to squander the very gifts God provides for us.
11. “_____ ” (v. 3) – A calm and collected ability to handle various issues that come up in ministry only comes with experience and maturity. When we have grown in our faith and leadership skills, we can handle even the most difficult issues with an extreme amount of gentleness and tact.
12. “Not _____ ” (v. 3) – Remember that the most important part of what we do as leaders is to spread the Gospel and teach others to do the same. When we are quick to argue or get into a disagreement, we risk sending a negative message about the one whom we represent.
13. “Not _____ ” (v. 3) – When we have not dealt properly with issues of pride and greed, jealousy and envy will enter into our hearts. This can be very destructive and detrimental in our ability to work as a team with other leaders.
14. “One that rules his own _____ well” (v. 4-5) – According to the Bible, leaders should be able to keep their children and household in order. A poorly kept house, excessive debt, and unruly children are all signs of immaturity in a leader’s life. Our first ministry starts at home.
15. “Not a _____ ” (v. 6) – One destructive thing that a leader can do is to place people in positions of authority too quickly. It can harm those under the person’s authority, and cause that person to fall into areas of pride, instability, and others situations of sin. Increasing responsibility, experience, and humble servanthood are good signs that a person can be entrusted with more authority.
16. “A _____ testimony” (v. 7) – Leaders should not only have a good testimony of how God has changed their lives, but they should also continue to set a good example for those around their lives. This is as important outside of the church and at home as it is inside the church.

17. “Not double-_____” (v. 8) – Mature leaders say what they mean and mean what they say. We should be able to take a leader’s word for face value. When we do, it gives confidence that we can be trusted to speak truth into others’ lives. A leader should always keep commitments and be on time.
18. “Holding the mystery of the _____ with a pure conscience” (v. 9) – Mature Christians are strong in their faith, settled in their hearts, knowing the truth, and living according to what they believe.

Memory Verse

“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15).

Built on the Rock

Introduction: As we set out to become leaders, it is vital that we not only begin working in the Gifts of the Spirit, but we have to be sure that we are doing so with right motives, and on the right foundation. Building our ministry on ideas that God never intended will lead to destruction instead of production. False Doctrine, wrong motives, and flawed character, are all distractions and roadblocks that keep us from developing as leaders in the church. As leaders we must identify and resist these roadblocks and help others to do the same.

I. Resisting Doctrines of _____ (1 Timothy 4:1-5)

- A. The Holy Spirit constantly warns against demonic doctrines. The Bible describes those who teach such false or misleading doctrines as *“hypocrites and liars. They pretend to be religious, but their consciences are dead”* (vs. 2 NLT).
 - 1. Jesus warned against false prophets and false teaching (Matthew 7:15; 16:6; Mark 12:38; Luke 21:8).
 - 2. We are not to be carried about by every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14). Immature Christians are influenced by every new spiritual idea that comes along; mature leaders are not.

- B. False doctrine comes in many different forms:
 - 1. Rules and laws that God did not command
 - 2. Taking away from what God did say
 - 3. Misleading, or purposeful misinterpretation of God’s word

II. Feeding on the WORD of GOD (1 Timothy 4:6-10).

- A. The only way that we can keep from falling victim to false doctrine is to immerse ourselves in the Word of God. We must know the truth, before we can identify the lie.

- B. God told Joshua to meditate on the Word day and night. (Joshua 1)

III. Practicing what we _____ (1 Timothy 4:11-16).

- A. A person cannot be in God’s presence and read His Word without being changed.
 - 1. Speech
 - 2. Conduct
 - 3. Ability to Love
 - 4. Growing Faith
 - 5. Purity & Integrity

- B. A leader in God’s Kingdom must give attention to reading (or study), exhortation, and doctrine.

- C. Prophetic confirmation along with leadership confirmation becomes a test and launching point for you to step out into your calling as a leader. You must reproduce who you are.

IV. Committing to the multiplication of God's TREASURE (2 Timothy 2:1-2)

A. _____

- B. Timothy was instructed to deposit the truth with faithful men, not just any believer. We are to do the same.

V. Committing to WORKING, TRAINING, and FIGHTING (2 Timothy 2:3-5)

- A. Leaders must learn how to endure hardship for Christ. Their ministry is exercised not on a playground, but on a battlefield. They must learn how to live in freedom from the cares of the world and how to make the mission of Christ their first and foremost priority.

- B. Paul tells us to work like a farmer, train like an athlete, and fight like a soldier.

- C. The battle of we fight is spiritual, and it is fought in the spirit.

D. _____

- E. Strive for masteries (KJV) means, “contend in the games.” The local church needs a team of runners; that is, leaders racing toward the goal Christ has set for them (Philippians 3:12-14).

F. _____

- G. There must be teamwork in the local church. The phrase labored with me in Philippians 4:3 NKJV literally means “were teammates with me.”

VI. Walking in Divine _____ (2 Timothy 2:6-7).

- A. The word husbandman in the Bible means “farmer,” and the image is an agricultural one. (see 1 Corinthians 3:6-9)

B. _____

C. _____

“in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9 KJV).

Memory Verse

“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”
(I Timothy 4:6 NKJV)

Leadership Basics

Introduction: Being a leader is never easy. It can be best stated that leaders are not the head of the ministry or organization, but the feet. Leaders are chosen to carry the majority of the weight of ministry and respond to what the head (God) says. As the body works together to fulfill the task before it, the feet create stability, support, and forward movement for the body. This is how it is with leaders. Leaders provide the much needed support and forward movement for those in the Body of Christ. With this in mind, we must recognize that with these pressures, come pitfalls that leaders must be careful to avoid. In this leadership session, we will cover a brief overview of what leaders should be and the pitfalls they must avoid.

I. Becoming the Leader (2 Timothy 3:10-17)

A. What makes a leader a leader? _____

1. There's only one thing that makes a leader a leader, and that's followers.
 - a) "If you think you are a leader, but no one is following you – you're just taking a walk" – John Maxwell
 - b) "Being a leader is like being a lady, if you have to tell someone you are, you aren't" – Margaret Thatcher
2. _____

3. All leaders must first BE good followers, and then they must MAKE good followers.

B. Leaders must set an _____

1. As leaders we should be a walking testimony. We should be people of integrity, humility, and spiritual maturity.
2. As a leader, people look to us for guidance, confirmation, and stability. When we lack character as leaders, it hinders our ability to be a blessing to people's lives.
3. Each of us should ask these questions:
 - a) Are we a blessing to those around us?
 - b) If people followed my example, would it bring them closer to, or further away from the standard that I recommend for their lives?
 - c) Would I want the children of the church to be just like me?
4. More than to bring condemnation, these questions should serve as a good exercise for us to see areas that we may need to improve.

C. Leaders must know the _____

1. _____

2. Without a clear vision, leaders can't see where they are going and the body of Christ becomes blinded and lost. (Proverbs 29:18)
3. _____

D. Leaders must be able to develop _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. A leader will always inspire others to join in the quest – our quest is to love others and build the Kingdom of God.

E. Leaders must be able to solve _____

1. _____

2. A leader must be able to think and react from the mind of Christ, gather the available information, decipher the situation, and use good character and God’s Word to come up with a workable solution.

II. Pitfalls Leader’s Face

Leaders have many issues that come across their path that can prevent them from becoming the leader that God needs them to be.

A. Maintain your primary _____

1. _____

2. When we go to a restaurant, the server does not eat beside us while we eat. It is similar in church leadership. Leaders must nourish themselves spiritually during the week, so they can effectively serve and interact with people on Sundays.
3. Prayer and worship has to happen on a regular basis outside of Sunday worship in order to keep us refreshed and filled up when the time for ministry comes.

B. Learn to _____

1. Good leaders tend to serve heavy and stay busy – but that can sometimes prohibit them from seeking opportunities to receive themselves.
2. _____

C. Don’t bite off more than you can _____

1. There will always be needs. There will always be problems to solve and gaps that need to be filled. It is important to understand that sometimes it’s ok to say “No”.
2. If you get so busy with ministry that you burn out, what good are you really doing? It is better to be involved with one ministry that you can do extremely well, then to be involved in 5 ministries that you cannot fully commit to.
3. _____

4. _____

D. Know your _____

1. When a person takes on a leadership role in the church, he or she will often find people who approach them with issues they do not have the answers to. Never feel like you have to know all of the answers. God places people over us that are more experienced than we are for a reason.
2. Don't hesitate to refer something to a person in a higher position of authority when you don't have the answer or don't feel comfortable giving an answer
3. There are certain issues, that even if you feel comfortable giving a response to, only a pastor or elder should handle.
4. When you have a difficulty or are helping someone, it's always important to communicate to the leaders above you.

E. Know WHO YOU ARE

1. Unfortunately, people don't always get the affirmation that they deserve. If your motivation for being involved in ministry is for recognition, you will soon find yourself hurt, wounded, and offended.
2. The only appropriate motive for being in leadership should be a devotion to building the Kingdom of God. Ask the question, "If no one ever said 'Good Job' would I still follow through with this project?" We should seek God's approval and recognition.
3. Each leader should have a firm understanding of their identity and value according to God and not those around us.

F. Keep on _____

1. One of the biggest pitfalls that face leaders is a misguided and unspoken assumption that once you reach a level of leadership, you are mature and finished growing spiritually.
2. No person, including a pastor, ever fully finishes growing in the things of the Lord. God is always doing new things and bringing the church to new levels and experience and maturity.
3. We never know everything. The Word of God says that he shows in part and reveals in part.
4. We continuously keep growing in our character as well. John 15 says that even when a branch bears fruit it is pruned so that even more fruit may grow from it. It is the same way with leaders.

Memory Verse

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)

Our Greatest Resource

Introduction: The greatest resource that a church has is not a fancy building, state-of-the-art technology, or even millions of dollars in the bank. The greatest resource in the kingdom of God is people. Without people the Kingdom cannot be built since it is built with living stones (1 Peter 2:5). We are the expression of God's Kingdom... Christ lives in us. Therefore, we cannot get caught up in surface issues or material things that we need, while we pass by a new person in church on Sunday. God's highest value is every person's soul, whether saved or unsaved. As members of the Body of Christ, we must answer His commission to reach people and make disciples. Every person we have access to, every person within our reach, must become the priority of our life and work.

I. Every Person's Life Must be _____ (James 2:13)

- A. Each person we meet is a potential pastor, leader, missionary, Christian businessman, worship leader, prophet, etc... Each and every person has a divine call and destiny (even the one that gets on your nerves).
- B. Next time you are in church, look around when the opportunity is given to greet one another. How many times do church members walk past those they don't know to get to the people they know? Unfortunately, it happens too often. When people are treated poorly or ignored, valuable parts of the Kingdom are never plugged into the relationships God designed.
- C. Because of disconnection and loneliness, people often leave to find another church, stop coming to church, or stop serving God altogether.
- D. Even if we don't relate to certain "types of people," we are not to judge – we are to reach out and love. Approach each person you see as if your connection with them is the key to finding Christ, receiving ministry, and coming to church. (Romans 12:10)

II. Helping People Grow Into the **BODY** of **CHRIST** (Ephesians 4:14-15)

As the Body of Christ, we have a responsibility for the people God sends to our church both saved and unsaved. Jesus did not tell his followers to go and get people saved, he said

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-21)

A. **FEED** Them

1. Newborn believers and young Christians need nourishment. As with real children, people who are new or young in the Lord may need some help with spiritual nourishment so they can grow.
2. Basic nourishment for young believers is the same as it is for us. There should be regular reading of God's Word, daily time in prayer, and meetings with other believers in fellowship. This is basic, but without it a believer will never grow to full maturity.

B. Build Their FAITH

1. _____

2. Help young believers by reminding them of the promises of God. Support them and help them through struggles and difficulties. This will encourage them and help faith.

C. Give Them Godly _____

1. Young believers have many questions. If you don't know the answers, don't make one up. Point them to someone who will give them sound counsel and strong doctrine that they can build their faith upon.
2. Don't wait for them to come to you; be proactive in teaching young believers how to walk out their salvation.

D. Teach Them to _____

1. We may think that people just naturally know how to worship God. However, it can be difficult for young believers to understand what to do in worship, or even why they are doing it.
2. Take time before, during, and after worship services or even call and check up on people. Make yourself available to answer questions and explain areas of confusion.

E. Teach Them How to _____

1. Although prayer is simple to understand, it can be intimidating for those who have never regularly prayed to God. It is simple in that it's a conversation with God, but intimidation comes when it feels like an obligation or like you have to say your prayers in certain ways.
2. There is a level of learning that comes with praying – the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1-4). It is our job to break down wrong mindsets and stereotypes to help young believers develop a thriving relationship with the Lord.

3. _____

F. Teach Them How to _____

1. It is important to pray, but it's also important to hear the voice of God. We have to help young believers to learn how to discern the voice of the Lord and how to listen to His voice for themselves.
2. Although learning to discern and listen to God's voice takes some time, it is worth the effort. The more people are able to hear the voice of God for themselves, the easier it will be for them to grow and mature.

III. Integrating New People Into the Church (Ephesians 4:16)

Just because a person visits church or answers an alter call does not mean they will live a life committed to God. Each person has to make their own decision, but we can do a lot in encouraging people to become part of the church.

A. FOLLOW-UP

1. Visitors and new believers need immediate follow-up. With each day that passes, the enemy will pour another bucket of cold water over the newly lit fire in their hearts.
2. It is amazing how much a simple phone call or home visit can mean to someone who has recently visited the church or received Christ as savior.
3. Most people visit church and receive Christ when they realize that their life is not where it should be. New people are in need of help, ministry, and relationship connections. Follow-up is very important in giving a person the ministry and security he or she needs.

B. ENCOURAGE

1. Encouragement can take many forms. Regardless of the method, we must continually encourage the new people around us. Make sure they get connected and become involved in the life of the church.
2. New believers should be secure and happy with their decision to follow Christ. Take to time to reaffirm that they have made the single most important decision of their lives.

C. CONNECT

1. Take every opportunity to invite new people to your Connect Group if they are not part of one already. If your connect group is not convenient or targeted for them, help them find another one.
2. Invite new people with you to special meetings and introduce them to others. You may also want to take them for lunch after a Sunday meeting.
3. Find out the interests of new people in the church and help them to find an area of ministry that they can be involved in.
4. Make it a point to inform new people of important connecting events in the church (Connect Class, Growth Track, Freedom Weekends, etc.)

D. ACCEPT

1. People won't stay where they do not feel like they belong. The more friends a person makes and the more accepted they feel, the more likely they are to stay connected.
2. Be a true friend to those who are new to the church and make them feel like they are part of the family.

Memory Verse

<p><i>Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another (Romans 12:10)</i></p>

Let it Out (*Part 1*)

Introduction: In order for believers to live an evangelistic lifestyle, there are some mindsets that must change. It does not come naturally for most people to go up to a total stranger and talk about Jesus. This session will give practical tools for those who have always wanted to, but never had the courage.

I. The Problem of PERCEPTIONS:

- A. _____

- B. One of the greatest evangelistic barriers is an underlying fear that we have to become something we're not.
- C. _____

NOTE: What comes to your mind when you hear “evangelism” or “evangelist?”
What images or ideas do these words create in you?

II. Evangelism Made Simple

There is a difference between witnessing and “SOUL WINNING”. A witness communicates what he or she knows. But there comes a time when a personal faith decision must be made in order to be saved. Leading people to that personal decision is “soul winning.” Witnessing is a part of soul winning. Here are some tips to prepare you for witnessing:

- A. How did God LEAD you to trust Jesus?
1. Looking back, we can all probably remember ways that God’s hand moved in our lives, in a sense pushing us towards Him.
 2. _____

- B. How did you come to KNOW Jesus?
1. Practice rehearsing your testimony.
 2. When did you first truly give your heart to the Lord and how did it happen?
- C. How did trusting in Jesus CHANGE your life?
1. If we cannot communicate places in our lives where God changed us, then why would anyone want to serve Jesus?
 2. _____

III. Practical Principles of the Gospel

- A. Whenever possible, bring someone with you when you MINISTER the GOSPEL
1. Jesus sent His disciples out two by two (Luke 10:1), so when you go to minister the gospel, try to avoid going alone.

2. You will feel more confident if you minister with a partner. You can encourage each other, and one can be praying while the other one is speaking.
3. _____

B. Be on the lookout for PEOPLE you want to witness to

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone who is open, someone whose heart has already been prepared, and possibly even someone you know.
2. _____

C. Begin conversations in a NATURAL manner.

1. When Jesus ministered to the woman at the well, He began the conversation by asking for a drink of water (John 4:7). That was a very simple request, but it was the door that led to further interaction.
2. I Corinthians 2:14 says that the natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit; therefore, you must approach a person on a level that he can understand and relate to.
3. _____

D. Look for interesting and fun ways to ENGAGE people in conversation

1. _____
2. When shifting to spiritual things in the conversation, try asking open questions
 - a) Do you go to Church?
 - b) Do you believe in God?
 - c) Have you ever read the Bible?
 - d) What do you think happens after you die?
 - e) Can I pray with (for) you?

IV. Ways to Communicate the Gospel

A. ROMANS Road

1. Romans 3:23 – All have sinned
2. Romans 6:23 – Sin leads to death
3. Romans 5:8 – Jesus died, knowing we were sinners
4. Romans 10:9 – Confess with your mouth & believe in your heart
5. Romans 10:13 – Everyone who calls on His name will be saved

B. ABC'S of Evangelism

1. Admit that you have sinned. Romans 3:23
2. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you. John 1:12
3. Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Romans 10:9-10

Memory Verse

9 That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

Let it Out (*Part 2*)

Introduction: The Gospel itself is a message of love. When we spread it, the motivation behind it should be one of love as well. No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.

I. A New MINDSET

With that in mind, we will identify six components that make our Christianity Contagious, helping us paint a new mental picture of what evangelism is all about:

A. Contagious Christianity Flows Out of LOVE (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

1. People share their faith for a variety of reasons:
 - a. Guilt – feeling that they need to do more for God
 - b. Fear – thoughts that another Christian, leader, or even God may be disappointed with them
 - c. Competitive Desire – struggling to increase the number of people in their church or ministry

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

B. Contagious Christianity Flows Out of AUTHENTICITY (1 Timothy 1:5)

1. _____

2. Christians are called to *be* the good news before they *share* the good news.
3. When our walk with God is authentic, it will naturally overflow into the lives of others around us.

C. Contagious Christianity is Built on RELATIONSHIPS (Proverbs 27:9)

1. Friends listen to friends. When we encounter hardship or problems, we naturally turn to those we know and trust. Proverbs says that a friend's counsel is sweet.
2. _____

3. _____

NOTE: *We must never limit our passion for outreach to only those we currently know, or even to only those we don't. Our passion and willingness to reach out to others with the message of the gospel must be always available, reaching out in relationship to everyone, everywhere we go.*

D. Contagious Christianity is expressed with both ACTIONS, and WORDS (Romans 10:14)

1. _____

2. _____

E. Contagious Christianity is a PARTNERSHIP (1 Corinthians 3:5)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

F. Contagious Christianity is a PROCESS (1 Corinthians 3:6)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

II. Personal Styles of Evangelism

One of the most powerful things about the New Testament Church is that God built it with diversity. He didn't make all of us the same (1 Corinthians 12:18). He gave us different personalities, styles, and gifts. Even in the New Testament, followers of Jesus didn't all communicate their faith in the same way. But, they were all important and all relevant.

A. Style 1 – The DIRECT Style

Biblical Example – Peter in Acts 2

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter did a bold thing. He stood up in front of thousands of people in Jerusalem – the very city where Jesus had been crucified a few weeks earlier.

- He spoke directly to them without softening the message one bit
- He gave it to them straight, telling them that they had killed the Messiah
- This style was not foreign to his personality. He was a straightforward, “all-or-nothing” kind of person.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

B. Style 2 – The INTELLECTUAL Style

Biblical Example – Paul in Acts 17

Paul was talking to a group of philosophers in Greece. These people were different from those in Jerusalem and would not have responded well to Peter’s Direct Style. So God sent Paul, who used an intellectual Style. He made a cultural reference to the Athenian’s “unknown god,” then used it as an illustration to present Christ. He even quoted their own philosophers to make his point.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

C. Style 3 – The TESTIMONIAL Style

Biblical Example – The Blind Man in John 9

This man had been blind since birth. He would sit by the road and beg for food. Then, one day Jesus came by the place where he was and healed him. Now he could see! When questioned by some local religious leaders, he couldn’t answer their questions, but he told them what he experienced in verse 25, “*Whether he is a sinner or not I do not know. But one thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.*” A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

D. Style 4 – The INTERPERSONAL Style

Biblical Example – Matthew in Luke 5

Matthew, the tax collector, had only recently come to faith when he realized his tax-collecting coworkers also needed to know Jesus. He decided to throw a party in his home, and invited the guys from the tax office along with Jesus and the other disciples. Matthew’s party was no ordinary party; it was a “party with purpose.” He created an atmosphere for others to connect with Jesus. The most effective setting to reach someone for Jesus is a relational one, and those with an interpersonal style specialize in this area. They can get deep with people and utilize relational trust to influence others for Christ.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

E. Style 5 – The INVITATIONAL Style

Biblical Example – The Samaritan Woman in John 4

Jesus broke the social customs of his day to talk to a Samaritan Woman who was drawing water from a well – because she mattered to him and to God. After Jesus began a conversation with her, he shifted it toward spiritual things and ultimately revealed that he was the promised Messiah. Upon her life change, the woman ran back to her town and told her friends about the conversation. She urged them to come with her to hear what Jesus had to say and, as a result of her efforts, many of them became followers of Christ.

Some people have a divine ability to get other people interested in what they are involved with. According to a national survey by George Barna, over 25% of non-Christians indicated that they would visit a church if a friend ever made the effort to invite them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

F. Style 6 – The SERVING Style

Biblical Example – Tabitha in Acts 9

Tabitha was a woman who served others by doing good and helping the poor. One of the ways she did this was by making clothing for widows in her town. Her efforts had a great impact. When she died, God set Peter to pray for her and raise her from the dead – and get her back into service! People like Tabitha are so gifted in serving and caring for others that those being served can't help but look heavenward and realize that God must love them to motivate such self-sacrificing love.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

III. Be Contagious... Practice your style of sharing Jesus every day!

Summary: There are many different styles and methods, but the point and the message stay the same. Jesus came to save. Make sure you spread that message wherever you go and with everything you do.

Memory Verse

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38)

Building the House

I. Building through the Principle of _____

- A. In his book *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Dr. Robert Coleman points out the difference between “addition” and “multiplication” in the context of soul-winning. Addition happens when you win a soul; multiplication happens when you win a soul and teach that soul to win others.
- B. For example, if you personally win one soul each month for a year, you will simply add twelve people to the church, which is good. However, if you win one soul each month for a year and train each new convert to win a soul each month and each of theirs reaches and trains one, at the end of a year you will have reached 2048 souls!

II. Relationships are _____

- A. Relationships are **VALUABLE**
1. When Jesus said to love God and love people, He summarized the entire Bible in the values of the two greatest commandments.
 2. Ultimately, these greatest commandments deal with two relationships: our relationship with God and our relationship with people. There is nothing more valuable than relationship.
- B. Relationships are the foundation of God’s **KINGDOM**
1. The kingdom of God functions as a network of relationships. People represent the treasure and the commodity of the Kingdom of God.
 2. Money, houses, lands, and all our possessions will one day be consumed by fire. When God looks down on the earth, the only thing He cherishes and values is people.
 3. Only two things on earth are eternal – God’s Word and God’s People, His Church.
- C. Relationships are what will **CHANGE** the world
1. Jesus changed the world through building powerful relationships with twelve men.
 2. It was His relationship with His twelve that transformed them into leaders and enabled them to continue His work on the earth.

III. Strategic Overview – How Jesus Trained His Twelve

- A. _____ – *He chose from them twelve* (Luke 6:13)
1. Don’t expect people to approach you for ministry or salvation. Be bold and approach others. Jesus sought out and selected those in whom he could reproduce himself.

2. Pray and seek God for open opportunities to love, serve, and minister to others. If you will watch, opportunities to share Jesus will come your way each day.
 3. Some of those that you reach and minister to will become potential relationships that will be the seeds for a Connect Group.
- B. _____ – *Lo, I am with you always* (Matthew. 28:20)
1. Jesus had enduring relationships with his disciples. People will be limited in how they receive from you when there is no authentic relationship.
 2. You must be committed to the personal growth of those you reach, People around you need to feel your genuine friendship and commitment to their lives.
 3. Just like Jesus walked in relationship with those he reached and trained, you must also walk in relationship with those you reach and train.
- C. _____ – *Take my yoke upon you and learn of me* (Matthew 11:29)
1. Jesus set them apart for his purpose. He ordained them and required loyalty and obedience.
 2. A biblical yoke represented ministry work and plowing for harvest. The yoke was two-sided. One side is for you and the other side is for Jesus.
 3. Jesus is setting you apart and consecrating you for His purposes. He won't ask you to do anything he won't do with you.
 4. Speak blessings and identity into their lives of those you reach. Minister to their needs and speak into their future identity.
- D. _____ – *Receive the Holy Spirit* (John 20:22)
1. Jesus gave power to his disciples and to us today through the impartation of the Holy Spirit
 2. Those around you, especially those you lead and minister to, need to receive from what you have. Take the time to impart the relationship you have with Jesus and the wisdom you have learned through the Holy Spirit into their lives.
- E. _____ – *I have given you an example* (John 13:15)
1. Jesus didn't just teach his disciples, he showed them how to live a life of ministry and dedication. He led by example.
 2. The "Do as I say and not as I do" line of thinking does not apply to the kingdom of God. People must be able to follow your example of servanthood, godly attitude, and worship.
- F. _____ – *I will make you fishers of men* (Matthew 4:19)
1. Jesus did not stop at teaching and demonstration, but he also assigned his disciples to learn on the job, both physically and spiritually; they served with their hands and prayed with their hands, meeting needs and healing the sick.
 2. Give "assignments" to those you are reaching and leading. Look for tasks and projects that they can be involved in that will build their character.

- G. _____ – *Did you not yet perceive?* (Mark 8:17)
1. He made his disciples accountable for their ministry of evangelism. He met with them, he prayed with them, and he gave oversight to all they did.
 2. People will generally care about those who care about them. Hold people accountable for important areas of their lives, but be careful not to place unobtainable rules and regulations over them. You are called to lead people, not control or parent them.
- H. _____ – *Go and bring forth fruit* (John 15:16)
1. Jesus expected His disciples to give into the lives of others like He did into theirs.
 2. What gifts has God given you? What areas are you involved in around the church? Take time to identify people with the same gifts and train others to do what you do.

Memory Verse

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)

Stepping Out in Leadership

Introduction: When each of you made the commitment to enter the Jubilee Growth Track and learn how to be a disciple maker, you also embraced God's calling on you to lead. Now, as you approach the finish of the Growth Track and cross Home Plate, there may be a temptation to slip back into a routine of laying low and holding back in your calling as a leader. But stay focused and be encouraged to put what you've learned into practice. It is time to step out, taking what you've learned and applying it to become incredibly effective leader in God's House. As you are obedient to the Lord in this way, many people around you can find their way into a relationship with God through His church and devote their lives to Jesus Christ. It all begins when one person makes the decision to stand up and step out. You are equipped, now the question is – will YOU be that person?

I. Building a CONNECT GROUP

A. We believe at Jubilee that Connect Groups are best and most effective opportunity for the church to grow and develop healthy friendships and families.

1. In Exodus 18:13-26, the advice from Jethro to Moses gives us a scriptural foundation for the importance of training and equipping leaders to lead small groups in the Kingdom!
2. Instead of everyone being worn out (v18) – all are able to be satisfied (v23)
3. Also, we see in Acts 6 an example from the New Testament church, where faithful men were appointed to lead small groups and in verse 7 we see the fruit:
[Acts 6:7] Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.
 - * The Word of God spread
 - * The number of disciples increased *RAPIDLY*
 - * The religious saw the change and became obedient to the faith!

B. In order to successfully build a Connect Group, a person must be trained and given the tools that will make them successful. This is what the Growth Track is all about!

C. The Growth Track is the launching pad of Connect Groups. It prepares you to be an effective and fruitful disciple maker. Now you just have to step out and obey God.

II. Understanding the Function of a Connect Group

A. What is the PURPOSE: The purpose of a Connect Group is to provide our community with a connection point for building strong relationships within the church.

1. This community connection is NOT limited to those who are already a part of the church, but also to outside friends, visitors, and those seekers who may not have a saving knowledge of Jesus.
2. A Connect Group provides a place for people to build friendships with other people outside of a Sunday service. In fact, its primary agenda is relational.

3. For many who may be out of church or new to the church, a Connect Group can become a venue that is less intimidating than a Sunday service.
4. A Connect Group fosters healthy growth of individuals in their spiritual walk is. There is a relational and spiritual strength and accountability that is uniquely intertwined into each small group as they meet together week by week.
5. Finally, a Connect Group strengthens those who come through a deep and practical study of the Word of God. It is a training ground for everyone to learn more about their gifts and the gifts of others, and it also becomes a place to practice using them.

B. Who is the TARGET: Every person you encounter is a target for your Connect Group.

1. As more Connect Groups are launched, each person that attends Jubilee will be able to find someone that they can connect to.
2. Creating an atmosphere where people can find friends and feel a part of something is the way to bring many people to new depth in their relationship with Jesus and connection with his church.
3. A Connect Group must be built on personal friendship, openness, and trust. Without that genuine friendship, consistency in the Christian walk becomes difficult.
4. See the people in your everyday routine as your target, those with whom you already have a relationship, to begin building your Connect Group. From there, always be on the lookout for new people to connect with both inside and outside of church and invite them to visit your Connect Group.

C. What are the different TYPES: There are three basic types of Connect Groups at Jubilee:

1. *Discipleship-focused Groups* – Discipleship-focused Connect Groups may be heterogeneous (men’s or women’s groups) or focused on couples or families. This is the most effective type of Connect Group for growing the church. Discipleship groups meet weekly and are focused on practical and spiritual growth.
2. *Target-focused Groups* – Target-focused Connect Groups are made up of people who share a common trait or interest. Although Target Connect Groups are open to anyone who may want to attend, the focus is often related to the common interest of the group (Young Married, Singles, Business Professionals, Sports, Seniors, Widows, etc.). These Target Groups also meet weekly.
3. *Leadership-focused Groups* – Leadership-focused Connect Groups are made up of church leaders: Connect Group leaders, department leaders, or other church leaders. To have a Leadership-focused Connect Group, a leader must have reproduced other Connect Groups. Leadership-focused Connect Groups generally meet once a month to give those in their group free time to lead on a weekly basis. These groups give focused teaching and training centered on becoming stronger, more effective leaders.

D. What is the FORMAT: What are the nuts and bolts of a Connect Group meeting and how difficult are they to lead? Connect Groups are very easy to lead. Even a very young Christian can be successful leading a Connect Group.

1. A Connect Group meeting is never too lengthy. A typical meeting will only last about an hour to an hour and a half. Connect Groups should rarely meet for more than an hour and a half. If a meeting goes longer, it should only be because of a fruitful time of ministry in the Holy Spirit or a rich discussion.
2. The first 20-30 minutes should be a free time of fellowship and, visiting, and catching up. It should resemble a group of friends coming together to “hang out”...not a teaching or counseling session. (Light refreshments are suggested, but not required)
3. A good idea is to start the meeting with some type of mixer or icebreaker. A short game or “get to know you” question or even a testimony helps get people involved in the meeting. This should not take more than 10 minutes of the meeting time.
4. The devotion or “Bible study” should last about 20-30 minutes and should provide an opportunity for members to interact through open questions and discussion. Devotions are pre-written and given to Connect Group leaders in outline form along with discussion questions. These are very easy to facilitate.
5. The meeting should end with a time of prayer. Opportunities for salvation and personal ministry happen at this point in the meeting if it the leader deems necessary and appropriate.

III. The Role of a Connect Group Leader

A. Don't take on false _____

1. The role of a Connect Group Leader is not the same as a Pastor or Elder in the church. A Connect Leader's role is not designed to assert authority or give pastoral council. This mentality can make people shy away from leading a Connect Group because of the false expectation that it is more than they are ready to handle. But nothing could be further from the truth.
2. Connect Group Leaders are just that... the leaders of a Connect Group. As with any commitment, there are certain responsibilities and faithfulness is important, but Connect Leaders do not have to be perfect or highly skilled, just willing.
3. You don't have to be in the front of the line to lead, you only have to be one step ahead of those you are leading. Even if you're number 99 in a line of 100, you're still leading one person. We are not perfect, we are just pointers – pointing people to the perfect one, Jesus. And as we continue in the process of leadership, we grow, because leading others helps us grow faster and stronger than anything else we do.
4. As a Connect Leader you are serving God by connecting people to him, his house, and his people. You are also encouraging and challenging them along the path of discovering their God breathed identity and purpose.

NOTE: All direction and correction should be handled by our Pastors and Elders only

B. Hold your group members _____

1. As a Connect Group Leader, you should be there as a leader to hold those in your Connect Group accountable and encourage them as they walk through areas of struggle.

2. Connect Leaders can also encourage each other in their walks and integrity as they work together to build teams of disciples.
3. Accountability is a commitment to walk alongside someone else, encouraging and assisting. Asking questions is a great point of accountability – questions like, “How are you doing in your walk with God?” “Have you been reading your bible?” “Is there anything I can pray with you about?” “I didn’t see you at church. Is everything okay?”

C. Participate in regular _____

1. As you lead others, it is important to maintain your personal devotions and prayer life. Encourage yourself in the Lord so you will always be ready and able to serve others. Keep your fuel tank filled up.
2. You may also want to get together one-on-one with a pastor or with other leaders to discuss and pray about areas that God has been speaking into your life.

D. Be there to _____ those you lead

1. We all go through times of struggle and hardships. Connect Group Leaders should regularly be available to encourage those they lead and point them to the promises of God.
2. Ephesians 4:29 says that we should say things that encourage the people around us. Be a source of encouragement and hope to the people in your Connect Group.

E. Always be _____

1. You don’t have to spend hours preparing for your Connect Group meetings, but you should at least take a little time to go over the lesson, think through the meeting, and pray.
2. When you come prepared to anything as a leader, there will be less pressure and greater fruitfulness.
3. If you meet in your home, make sure things are put in order before your Connect Group arrives. If you meet at someone else’s home or at another venue, make sure to arrive early so you can be there to greet your Connect Group as they arrive.
4. As a Connect Leader, you don’t always have to do everything yourself. Freely delegate to others. It takes pressure off of you and helps others feel more connected.

F. Develop habits of _____

1. Share your faith, invite others to your group, talk about the great things happening in your life because of Jesus.
2. Connect Groups are intended for growth. This Kingdom of God is built... by “living stones,” people connected together. Always keep your eyes open for new building materials!
3. As a Connect Group leader, develop and maintain healthy habits of evangelism and share the testimonies with the group when you meet. Not only that, teach and

encourage your group to share their faith with others and invite others to the group each week.

G. REPRODUCE

1. Your success as a Connect Group leader comes when you are able to develop those in your group and help them start their own Connect Group.
2. Like parents watching their children grow, Connect Leaders should expect those in their group to grow until they become mature leaders themselves.
3. You are called to be a leader, then a leader of leaders. As you develop others around you, the multiplication effect takes over and together we will see our city, nation, and this generation transformed by the power of the Gospel.

Memory Verse

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek..” (Romans 1:16)