



SESSION FOUR

STUDENT EDITION

GLOBAL CHURCH TRAINING CURRICULUM

Billion Soul Network® | Global Church Learning Center®

Global Church Training Curriculum

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THE GLOBAL CHURCH TRAINING CURRICULUM

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INTRODUCTION

You hold in your hands the very first Global Church Training Curriculum. It represents the circumference of Christianity in the twenty-first century. The Gospel that has been sent to the four corners of the earth has now come back to the places where it originally was sent out. The mission field has become a mission force. We are witnessing an unparalleled move of God throughout all the nations of the world. Truly, these are the greatest days of Gospel advancement and Kingdom establishment since Jesus Christ came out of the grave more than two thousand years ago.

In January of 2002, the Billion Soul Network was launched in Orlando, Florida. More than five thousand pastors and leaders came from all fifty states, every province in Canada, and more than twenty nations around the world. We established a God-sized goal to help plant five million new churches for a billion soul harvest in our generation. The spine of this vision was to pull together the finest teachers and training and make it available worldwide through Internet technological devices. We said that this training must be online, on-ground, and on-time! We are watching today as that vision is becoming a reality. I remember, as if it were yesterday, sitting in the back of a Bangkok city bus with several U.S. pastor friends. We were watching a choppy video, *Red Sky in the Morning*, by the late Dr. Bill Bright, on a PalmPilot handheld device. At that moment I heard the Holy Spirit whisper to me, “They will study like this one day.”

As the Billion Soul Network was launched, it was released and unfolded in several different phases. The first phase is what we called the **Discovery Phase**. Dr. Elmer Towns, cofounder of Liberty University and dean of the Global Church Learning Center, has often said, “You’ll never know something new until you learn something new.” When we think of synergy being the summation of all the parts having greater value than its individual parts, we think of this in terms of the global nature of the Body of Christ. We decided to go out and host Billion Soul Summits in every major world region. More than ten thousand leaders joined us in these summits. Leaders were not invited to participate in the summits unless there were at least fifty pastors or churches underneath them. We chose not to just have summits for the sake of having meetings; rather, we invited decision makers to come so that real synergy and strategy could be developed. At Billion Soul we often say, “If your movement is not moving, it is not a movement. It’s a monument.”

On the heels of the discovery phase came the **Development Phase**. In the development phase we began to listen to key men and women as they articulated the training subject needs throughout the Body of Christ. This was not *the West going to the rest*; it was *the best around the world going to the rest of the world*. Out of this development phase

came what is called the Global Church Learning Center (www.gclc.tv). The Global Church Learning Center is comprised of five major categories: leadership development, global missions, church multiplication, evangelism and discipleship, and visionary networking. For this Global Church Training Curriculum, we chose the top thirty nonnegotiable courses that every pastor and Christian leader needs to study for effective ministry today.

But what good is great content if you don't have a channel of distribution? As we continued in the development phase, we moved into the **Distribution Phase**. The distribution phase was the streaming technology and the relationship development that took place over a long period of time, so that the training content is now made available online, on-ground, and on-time.

At the time of this writing, more than forty thousand pastors and leaders are taking courses in the Global Church Learning Center. Each course is designed to have fifteen sessions of approximately six to seven minutes each. We did not ask each of the teachers to tell us everything they knew about a particular subject, but rather to tell us the best they had learned about that particular subject. In the future, more than 100,000 pastors and leaders will take the training courses offered through the Global Church Learning Center.

In 2013, we began to execute the **Deployment Phase**. The deployment phase is what we call the *Global HUBS of Christianity*. In 2004 I was in a public park in Springfield, Missouri, with my oldest daughter, Olivia, who at the time was three years old. I remember holding her up over my head while she was laughing. It was in this divine moment, as I looked into her Asian eyes, that I sensed the Holy Spirit say, "Look at what I've raised up all over the world." If you want to know what God is up to, just look at what He's raised up! From that point until today, we have determined to seek out those leaders whom God has raised up throughout the earth and do our best to tie relational knots with them and others for the largest harvest possible. The Global Church Training Curriculum and the Global HUBS of Christianity go hand in hand as we march forward into the future.

There are three overarching outcomes for a Global HUB. First, a HUB *synergizes the best relationships*. Second, it *systematizes the best training*. Third, it *strategizes for the unreached people groups in the area*. A HUB is a real place where men and women come together to synergize, systematize, and strategize in their region. In the years ahead there will be more than eight hundred HUBS throughout the Global HUBS of Christianity. There will be one HUB for every ten million people on the planet. For example, in India we will need 130 HUBS. (This takes into account future growth.) In China we will need approximately 125 HUBS. In North America, the country that I come from, we need thirty-five HUBS.

Every two years, a new group of pastors and leaders register for the training that will be taught in the HUB. Every six months, they return to that location to be taught ten courses from the top thirty courses in the Global Church Learning Center. In less than twenty-four months, they will have been taught thirty courses and will be empowered to go and start their own HUB in their village, town, or city.

Never before in the history of the Global Church has there been such a willingness to synergize efforts together, moving beyond egos and logos, to help finish the Great Commission. I'm often asked, "James, do you really believe that we can finish the Great Commission in the twenty-first century?" My response is always the same: "It is the only century I have!" Let's believe our beliefs and doubt our doubts, instead of doubting our beliefs and believing our doubts. Together we can make it a lot harder for people to live on this planet and not hear the glorious Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James O. Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" being the most prominent part.

Dr. James O. Davis
Cofounder/Billion Soul
Founder/Cutting Edge International

COURSE FEATURES

Part: Unless otherwise noted, each “Part” is numbered to correspond with the original video session on the Global Church Learning Center website.

Activator: Engages and focuses your thinking before instruction. Often accompanied by a quote from the original instructor or a Bible verse.

Purpose: Communicates the intent of the instruction in that “Part,” and whenever possible, the objectives of the original video instructor.

Term: Provides understanding for a term that is specific to the topic, and therefore may not be easily understood, or is used in a unique way during the course.

Key for Understanding: The main organizing principle for the course content. The Keys may be represented by one word, a phrase, or a useful generalization. (Seen as “Key” “Key One,” “Key Two,” etc. in the course).

Narrative: Printed in *italics*, this is an example or story from the original instructor. As much as possible, the original wording has been maintained, and has not been significantly edited for syntax (word order) or word choice, to maintain the voice of the original instructor. If significant editing has occurred, it is marked [Edited Version].

Knowledge for Insight: Explanations, helpful facts, and conclusions based on the original instructor’s vast ministry experience.

Wisdom: Spiritual wisdom passed on from the original instructor.

Effect (Outcome): Promotes thought about the potential effect of the ideas presented when applied in real life. Occasionally it includes a prayer.

Review: Connects main ideas from the previous section, or the entire course.

In Conclusion: Provides a space for identifying valuable insights, reflecting, and writing questions that have emerged as a result of the course.

*Not all of the features are present in every course.

STEWARDING YOUR LIFE'S MISSION

Jack Hayford

***Dr. Jack Hayford**, founder and chancellor of The Kings University in Los Angeles, CA, and Dallas, TX, and served as president of The Foursquare Church from 2004 to 2009. He is probably best known, however, as “Pastor Jack,” the founding pastor of The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, CA, where he was senior pastor for more than three decades.*

Course Summary

Developed from a video teaching by Jack Hayford, this course identifies essential areas for stewardship in ministry. In doing this, foundational truths and basic frameworks will be identified. We will also explore some practical suggestions for stewarding your life's mission.

Part One: A Structure for Stewarding Your Mission

Video Sessions 1-6

Wherever there's gifting there's stewardship, because you've been given a resource. —Jack Hayford.

Activator: What is stewardship?

Purpose: To identify the main components of the structure for stewarding your mission: your walk with God, leadership, administrative life, and married life.

🔑 **Key One:** Walk with God

- Let this be the beginning place for everything. Without life in Him, there is no ministry life.
- Everything that flows out of our lives must first flow from being in His presence.
- Daily time with God needs to be an established pattern in our lives.
- Acknowledge that you first and foremost belong to God, not your job, or any worldly ambition.

There was a time of my life, for nearly a year, that I got on my knees and read the Word every day when I did my Bible reading because I wanted to get fixed in my mind that I am coming to this Word in submission to the Speaker.
—Jack Hayford.

- Develop a prayer life

🔑 **Key Two:** Leadership

- Be a leader in worship: The passion, priority, and substance of worship must flow from you. Your worship must transcend music and be infused in everything you do.
- Everything that happens in the ministry must be born from an atmosphere of worship.
- Cultivate leaders

Knowledge for Insight: In growing people, you will see a fruitfulness in fulfilling the church's _____.

- Nurture leaders (Mark 10:45).

- Your goal should be to help people to become part of a team in which they realize the fulfillment of their own ministry as they partner together for collective ministry.

I am actually more interested in the fulfillment in the people I serve than I am my own fulfillment. —Jack Hayford

- Delegate

🔑 **Key Three:** Administrative Life

- Take care of only basic issues of management.
- Measure goals, but don't attempt to accomplish them all yourself.
- Partner with gifted leaders who can work with you in the areas of administration (finance, business, etc).

Wisdom: Don't allow people to believe the ministry is a product of your enterprise and effort. If the ministry is something God is doing, it will be a product of His enterprise and effort.

- Administrative life should come from the appropriate spiritual passion of preparedness.
- It is your job to ensure wise and judicious management of budget.

Knowledge for Insight: Sudden economic shifts are outside your control. But _____ debt shows a lack of careful financial planning.

🔑 **Key Four:** Married Life

- Everything in your life springs out of what God is doing in your marriage.
- Understanding the growth of a marriage is pivotal in a pastor's life.
- The *health* of the marriage is one of the primary requirements of a leader.
- A healthy marriage will require dying to self and resurrecting as a couple.
- Be more interested in who you are as a spouse than what you are as a pastor.

Wisdom: If you can't be a father of your family, you can't be a father to the flock. If you can't be a lover of your spouse, you can't be a lover of the Bride of Christ.

Effect: Which points were most significant for you? Which areas do you need to get more serious about? Which areas do you not understand well enough? Review these notes after the course. Make a commitment to pray over those areas with a friend or mentor, and to talk about your next steps towards better stewardship.

Notes:

Part Two: Be a Steward of Your Time

Video Sessions 7 and 8

When I think about the tyranny of time...when it comes right down to it, oftentimes the difference between success and failure are summed up in these words, "I did not have enough time." It may only be a minute, but eternity is in it. It's how we use each and every minute that really makes the difference. —Contributed by James O. Davis

Activator: Do you think most people accomplish their priorities in life? What methods have you seen pastors use for time management and prioritizing?

Purpose: to provide practical guidelines for good stewardship of time

☞ **Key One:** Put the "Big Rocks" in First

Illustration:

The professor gathers his students together around a large boardroom table. And in the middle of this boardroom table is a huge glass jar. Around this glass jar are different sizes of rocks. Small ones, big ones, and little ones.

The first assignment that the professor gave to the students was to see how many of these big rocks they could get into this very large jar. So the students collectively began to take those rocks and drop them nicely into that jar. Finally, those rocks were all the way to the top. Then the professor asked the students, "Is the jar full?"

And the students said, "Well, yes. The jar is full." At that time, from underneath the table, the professor pulled out a box that contained some pebbles. He took the pebbles and poured them into the jar. They made their way in between these rocks, all the way to the bottom and then back to the top. Then the professor said, "Is the jar full?"

The students said, "Well, it looks full to us." So, he pulls out a box that contains sand. He takes the sand, and he gently pours it. It makes its way through the pebbles and the rocks down to the bottom, makes its way back to the top. And then he said to the students once again, "Is it full?"

By now the students had learned and said, “Only you know, Mr. Professor, whether it’s full or not.” He pulls out a big jug of water and he pours that water into that open-mouthed jar. The water makes its way in between the pebbles and the sand and the big rocks to the bottom and all the way back to the top until it’s brimming. And then he looked at the students and he said, “Now it is full.”

And then he said to all of them, “What have we learned here today?” And the students began to share, “Well, we learned about sand.” They shared that they learned about pebbles, water, and the jar. Finally one student spoke up and said, “If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you won’t ever get them in.”

This is the essence of stewarding your mission.

Wisdom: If you don't get what's really important into your life first, you'll never get it in.

- Ask yourself: Are you getting the essential elements done? Or are you just engaging in activities with no accomplishment?
- Plan your schedule according to your big main priorities (your big rocks).
- Divide your big rocks into categories and begin putting them on the calendar.

Knowledge for Insight: Most leaders agree that having more than _____ categories of priorities in your life is not realistic.

🔑 **Key Two:** Develop G.O.A.L.S.

- Increase the efficiency of your time using this acronym: **G**ather facts; **O**rganize a plan; **A**ct on the plan. Note: Don’t wait until things are perfect to get started! Many ministers get stuck here; **L**ook back and review; **S**et new goals.

🔑 **Key Three:** Become Reproductive

- Ask God to help you to become reproductive in your life, not productive.
- Spend your time on only those things which can be reproduced.
- Don’t waste time on individual achievements that will be of no usefulness beyond your lifetime.
- Endeavor to take what God has taught you and place it in the hearts of others.
- Cultivate the elements in your life that God can use to reproduce disciples and multiply Christ followers to finish the Great Commission.

Effect: What are the big rocks in your life right now (marriage, health, ministry)? What are your goals for this season of ministry? What activities do you need to cut out of your life because they are not “reproducible?”

Notes:

Part Three: Be a Steward of Unity with Other Christian Leaders

Video Session 9

Activator: Do you think most pastors make an attempt to partner with pastors of other denominations for the Great Commission? Are you willing to?

Purpose: Identify steps towards unity with other Christian leaders.

🔑 Key: Steps to Unity

- Realize that there will never be a total unity of doctrine. The Bible doesn't give any indication this will happen on earth.
- We can and should expect unity in the fundamental doctrine.
- Recognize that in our variations in doctrine, experiences, and terminology—we can sharpen each other—but they must become less of a priority than our fundamental doctrine.
- Develop connections with other pastors who have a heart for the Kingdom, and unite in prayer together.

I'll never forget the morning that, upon awakening, when I was at prayer, I felt the clearest impression in my heart to call the pastors of my city together for prayer. Now that was, you would first think, a wild-eyed notion. A city the size of Los Angeles had thousands of pastors. How do you get in touch with them? How do you reach beyond your own immediate network into networks that may have an immediate similarity to yours, and then to ones that are so very, very different? How do you do this?

Well, I began to ask the Lord. And it started when I invited a dozen men to breakfast. Every one of them from a different arena. Because there was some visibility of our church and my leadership as a pastor for many years, all twelve of them accepted the invitation. I personally called them; I didn't write it. I said, "I want to ask you to consider something, and here's why...." And the purpose was that with their voice and mine, and another ten, we can gather together the pastors of this city. Because there's at least one of us they'll all listen to.

We began to gather at prayer meetings. We met two or three times at breakfast. Then following the third time, at the house where we were, we got down on our knees in the middle of the living room. And before long we were all face down with our faces in the carpet, calling out to God to forgive us for anything that ever would have separated any of us. It wasn't a matter of something we made up our mind to do; it's something the Spirit of God did.

No one in the room would have called it fanatical. With the wide spread of people we had, there were enough who would have said, "Hey, just a minute. Don't start wedging me in a direction I'm not ready to move, in terms of my emotional responses." No, if there was a fanaticism it was a fanaticism of devotion to Jesus Christ and to brothers that serve Him. We recognized that there were infinitely more things common to all of us than anything that would slightly make us different. And the most important thing was the common bond to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. And when we invited pastors to come, they came in droves.

We need each other. We need ways to reach or to pursue. And then also to recognize how uniquely God has called and circled us with the splendor of His gift of the glory of the privilege of the high calling of God in Christ. In that circle we can all get together. —Jack Hayford (Edited Version)

Effect: How might you call a prayer meeting with other pastors? Write down the names of five people you could reach out to for a prayer meeting over your town/city.

Notes:

Part Four: Be a Steward of Your Assignment

Video Sessions 11-13

I am persuaded that the only way there comes the real incarnation of Jesus Christ in people's lives is through their being fed by the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. —Jack Hayford

Activator: How do you decide what to preach?

Purpose: To outline how to be a steward of your assignment as a preacher of the Word of God.

🔑 Key One : Preach the Word (2 Timothy 4:2)

- Preach the Word so that people can see Jesus.
- Stay away from preaching sermons that have their origins in attitudes towards the world, opinions, learning how to argue with the world.

- Deliver the Word out of the substance of your life, not out of convenience.
- Let the purpose of your message be not only to communicate His grace, but to also make disciples.

Knowledge for Insight: It is not possible to make disciples without being a solid _____ preacher.

🔑 **Key Two : Preach with Preparedness**

- Preaching plans need to be derived from what God gives you in prayer.

My experience is that where you find churches that grow, there are two kinds: those that grow by systems and those that grow by teaching. And I will tell you immediately, that years later, the ones (who grow) by teaching will still be there. The ones that are dependent on methods, those things will only go so far.
—Jack Hayford

🔑 **Key Three : Preach with Inspiration**

I remember when I was working on my doctoral work in preaching, and one of my professors was Dr. Jack Hayford. He came over and he spent quality time with us, about thirty of us in the class. And I'll never forget it; he spent the whole day teaching on preaching. But toward the end of the day, he was talking about the power of the Holy Spirit in our preaching being like the wind of the Spirit.

He said, "It's one thing for my breath, me the communicator, to be on my words. It's another thing for God's breath to be on my words."

Then he went on to unpack the word, inspiration. Sometimes we in ministry, we use that word, inspiration, lightly. When in the biblical context, inspiration simply meant, "God's breath." So the way we got the Word of God on paper is that God breathed those words on the paper. So when you and I are studying His Word, we are inhaling God's breath. So we might exhale to a lost and dying world.

So on that particular day when Dr. Hayford was teaching, he literally got on the ground on the floor in the classroom. He got on his knees and on his hands. And then he acted out as though he was giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to someone that was lying on the ground. And then I saw him take his hands and act like he was pushing on a man's chest. He was trying to revive him. And then he looked at everyone in the class and he said, "That's what preaching is."

—Contributed by James O. Davis (Edited Version)

- Preaching with inspiration is to preach not with your own breath, but the breath of God.
- When we study the Word, we are inhaling God's breath so that we might exhale to a lost and dying world; we preach so that dead men may live.

Effect: How are you doing as a steward of your assignment? (Do you preach the Word out of the substance of your life? Are you preaching out of time spent in the Spirit? Are you preaching with inspiration?) Which points do you need to utilize in your own life as a preacher? What changes do you plan to make?

Notes:

Part Five: Practical Planning

Video Session 14

Activator: What methods have you used to plan for the year ahead?

Purpose: To provide an outline of a practical approach to planning your preaching.

🔑 **Key:** Develop a Preaching Calendar

- Think about the next six months to a year: Where do you believe the Lord wants to lead the church that you lead in the next year?
- Think about the fifty-two Sundays in a year:
- After considering guest speakers, vacations, and holidays, you'll have only a certain number of Sundays left. (In the U.S, about thirty-nine Sundays will remain open.)
- Planning ahead can: 1) Free your mind to focus on material and resources; 2) Lower the overall stress of preaching; 3) Result in a greater quality of preaching.
- Realize there may be times when the Holy Spirit changes the plans.
- Be sensitive to adjust your preaching if an event of great magnitude needs to be addressed (disasters, traumatic events, etc.)

I have found throughout my ministry and preaching life, when I've communicated and connected with pastors and leaders who have a preaching calendar who really truly plan ahead, that creativity goes up. Freedom goes up. Stress goes down. And they're able to really manage the affairs of their life. I have found that this is not based upon the Western culture or an Eastern culture. I have found that those who are really doing an effective, reproducible job in ministry, they plan ahead and really plan ahead in how they're going to preach and how they're going to teach. And the quality really accelerates. —Contributed by James O. Davis

Effect: What do you think about having a preaching calendar? How might it benefit you?

Notes:

Part Six: Conclusion

Video Session 15

Activator: What points in this course have been most inspiring to you?

Purpose: Conclude the course with basic principles of stewarding your mission.

Key: Steward Your Calling

- Steward your mission by being a steward of your calling.

The following is a narrative that includes a story about Adoniram Judson, as told by James O. Davis. His story is an example of one man's determination to steward his calling.

Two hundred years ago, in 1812, Adoniram Judson set sail from Massachusetts with his wife Ann to answer a call to go to India. However, Adoniram's heart was always for missions in Burma.

After being in India a while, they traveled to Burma to begin missionary work. They found it was extremely hard work. A lot of people there didn't accept the Judsons' ministry. In fact, Adoniram was thrown into prison. For over two years, his wife Ann followed him from prison to prison. She would make sure that he had enough food so that he wouldn't starve to death. After two years of torture and imprisonment, he was finally released.

In 1834, his wife Ann died in Burma. But he continued his work. He was working on a translation of the Bible in the Burmese language. When he and his wife had first arrived, they could not speak Burmese. So they had taught themselves. They had been working on the translation together before she died.

Adoniram was remarried. His second wife also died in Burma. Over another period of time he was remarried again. And before he would finish his missionary work, his third wife also died and was buried there. At the time when Adoniram was closing up his missionary work, all he had were about twenty-five known converts to Jesus Christ out of all the years of missionary work and ministry in Burma.

Finally, he began to travel back to the United States, though, on his way, he got very sick and died at sea. His body was buried in the ocean. He never made it

back home. He never made it back to give a public report of the work. But in Burma today, there are more than two million Christians.

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ in Burma is growing in a powerful way. Do you know what the standard is of the translation of the Bible? To this day, the best translation of the Bible in the Burmese language is the one that Ann and Adoniram did back in the early 1800s.

I've been to Burma a couple of times. The first time I was there, I was there to teach and train and spend time with pastors. There were about seven or eight hundred pastors in this meeting.

A dear friend, named Mel Chet, was the leading pastor in Yangon in Burma. He said, "You need to go with me downtown in Yangon." So we got in a small car and a man drove us downtown in Yangon. Mel Chet took me to the very first church that was ever planted in Burma. It's a little small, white building. When we walked into this little building he said, "Look at the pictures of the converts along the top of the wall. Notice the third gentlemen." I looked and I noticed he had the same last name as Mel. He said, "That is my great-great-grandfather. He was the third man in Burmese history to come to know Jesus."

May you find a time soon to get alone with the Lord, and just ask the Lord to help you to realign anything that's needed and to refocus anything that's blurry. And let's recommit to go and do it all to the best of our ability. —Contributed by James O. Davis (Edited Version)

Effect: What has impacted you the most from this course? Write down the ways you want to be a better a steward. Take time to pray and ask God to accomplish His will through you in those areas.

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

Knowledge for Insight Answers:

Part One: purpose, reoccurring

Part Two: 7-9

Part Four: Biblical

TURNING MEMBERS INTO MISSIONARIES

Ronnie Floyd

***Dr. Ronnie Floyd** was elected President of the Southern Baptist Convention in June 2014. Since 1986, he has served as Senior Pastor at Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas, where thousands gather for worship each week across five campuses and in multiple venues. Under Dr. Floyd's leadership, the church has maintained a strong commitment to planting new churches regionally, nationally, and internationally.*

Course Summary

Developed from a video teaching by Ronnie Floyd, this course explores how a pastor can lead church members to become personally involved in fulfilling the Great Commission. In doing this, both the roles of the pastor as leader and the roles of the church members will be highlighted.

Part One: The Big Picture

Video Sessions 1-3

Activator: What percentage of the world's population do you think is unsaved?

Purpose: To give an overview of the need for all members of the church of Jesus Christ to participate in the Great Commission.

☞ **Key One:** The World Is Lost

- All believers need to have a burden to reach their nation, other nations, and the unreached people groups of the world.
- Out of the 7 billion people in the world, less than 1 billion profess Jesus Christ alone as their Lord and Savior. That means: only eleven out of every one hundred people are genuine Christ followers.
- Who do we need to reach for Christ?
- We need to think in terms of not only reaching the community or the state, but reaching the entire world for Jesus Christ.

☞ **Key Two:** The Importance of Having the Right Vision

- God has called the Church (all of us) to reach every nation for Jesus Christ.
- The need is urgent: This is our only opportunity to make whatever contribution we can to reach the world for Jesus Christ.
- God is building His global church right now—so what is the task?

We live in a time of hopelessness. People around the world, it doesn't matter whether they live in China, whether they live in Africa, whether they live in Thailand, whether they live in England, or whether they live in the United States of America; people, as a whole, have a great deal of hopelessness. Therefore, the conditions are right, because the greatest thing we have to offer people is the hope of Jesus Christ. —Ronnie Floyd

☞ **Key Three:** God Wants to Turn Members into Missionaries (Matthew 28:19-20)

- Pastors cannot reach the world by themselves.
- Pastors *can* help train, equip, build, empower, and mobilize leaders toward the advancement of the Gospel.
- God tells us to go and make disciples of “all nations.”
- God empowers us with the authority of Christ for the Great Commission.

So Jesus has anchored His empowering message with His hope, with His authority, and with His glorious power of the Word of God, and His glorious power as the Son of God, and as the Holy Spirit of God. —Ronnie Floyd

- God gives us a strategy (Acts 1:8).
- God is completely committed to bringing the world into a saving relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ (Revelation 7:9,10).

Effect: What steps are you taking with your church to help to fulfill the Great Commission? What questions do you have about turning your members into missionaries? (Refer back to these at the end of the course.)

Notes:

Part Two: The Leader

Video Sessions 3-6

Activator: What basic steps could a pastor take to become ready to lead his members to become more passionate about saving the lost?

Purpose: To highlight important steps for a pastor to personally take to help his members turn into missionaries.

🔑 **Key One:** The Pastor's Role Has to Change (Ephesians 4:11,12)

- Pastors need to see themselves as equippers of the saints.
- Pastors need to think not in terms of how many people they reached, but how many people were sent.

🔑 **Key Two:** The Importance of Prayer

- Prayer invites the power of God to move through your church members.
- Pray over the businessmen and women in your church, that God would use them to make a difference for the Gospel.
- Set aside time to pray specifically over the global mission.

Every Sunday morning, if you were to join me in my office (before I walk down to preach the Word), I will get on my knees in a back study, and I will have the Word of God opened to the book of 1 Corinthians, chapter 2.

I read and quote out of verses 4 and 5 that God will not let "my message be with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and

power, so that the people's faith will not be in me, but it will be in the power of God."

I get up off of my knees after I pray for a while. I walk into my office. My office, some would say, is almost like a Great Commission Center, because in my office is the Great Commission, out of Matthew, 28:18-20.

I pray that [Scripture] and I ask for authority as I preach, the authority of the Great Commission. I walk over to a large, global map, and I pray that God will use me to reach the nations of the world. I walk over to various elements in my office and I think about them.

I'll tell you about one of them, specifically. It's a bronze mold of an Indian leader, and I pray that God will give me the ability to reach the ethnic groups of the world.

I have a sword in my office that someone gave me because I had influenced their life with the Gospel. They wanted to use that as an illustration of my preaching the Word and being true to the Word. I asked God to let His Word be the sword of the Spirit in people's lives that day.

I walk over and twirl a beautiful globe that some of my people brought for me from Jerusalem. I pray and I ask God to put a nation on my heart. So every Sunday morning, I will find that nation. I will put a finger, or a thumb, on that nation, and I pray that God will give us a way to reach that nation with the Gospel.

☞ **Key Three:** Gain New Understanding

- Fast to draw near to God and gain better understanding.
- Change your math from addition to multiplication.
- Understand the theological urgency.
- Understand the statistical urgency (according to missiologists).
- Change your passion (Romans 15:20)

Effect: Do you need to focus more on equipping the members in your church? Who could you be sending out as missionaries every week? How could you be praying differently for your church members? How well is your church multiplying itself? Describe your level of willingness to go into the "dark places" with the Gospel.

Notes:

Part Three: Awakening in the Church

Video Sessions 7-8

I've become convinced that what really needs to happen in many churches, and even in many denominations, and networks, and associations of churches, is a Great Commission resurgence. —Ronnie Floyd

Activator: Do you think most churches are truly awake to the urgency of the Great Commission? Why or why not?

Purpose: To identify the need for a Great Commission resurgence in the church, and how a pastor can lead the church to become fully involved in the resurgence.

🔑 **Key One:** The Need for Great Commission Resurgence

- We need resurgence in our passion for the lost.
- We need to be awakened to our purpose again.
- God wants to use churches and organizations *right now* to reach people for Christ.
- Everything the church does must be for the sake of the Great Commission.

🔑 **Key One:** Leading the Great Commission Resurgence

- Pray for God to do a great work through your church (Isaiah 6:8).
- Teach parents to begin the Great Commission at home by discipling their children and then teaching them to make disciples.
- Lead people to reach the community for the Gospel.
- Teach people to finance the Great Commission:
- Don't get discouraged with the magnitude of the task.
- Keep your vision big.
- Keep your heart driven, passionate, and committed to involving every one of your members into becoming missionaries for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The task is big. The need is great...God wants you, and He wants your church, every one of your members, involved in the Great Commission. Let's do it for the glory of God. —Ronnie Floyd

Wisdom: God will honor your prayer if you're truly focused on the Great Commission in your life.

Effect: Do you have a Great Commission vision for your church? What does it look like? Has it been made clear to you yet? How do you want your life, and your church, to be used for the Great Commission? What needs to be done in your church to awaken to the Great Commission?

Notes:

Part Four: The Forgotten Vision – Capturing Your City for Jesus

Video Sessions 9-12

It is rare, highly, highly rare, that you ever hear in today's church life, anyone talking about winning their city to Jesus Christ. Very few people rise 30,000 feet up, see beyond themselves, and think, "How can I capture this city for the Lord Jesus Christ?"
—Ronnie Floyd

Activator: What would be the first steps in reaching an entire city for Jesus?

Purpose: To identify important steps involved in reaching a city for Jesus Christ.

🔑 **Key One: Understand Your City** (Acts 17: 22-27)

- Context
- Paul understood the city.
- Become the missiologist of your city; learn every detail.
- Become a missional strategist; understand your city so well that you are able to strategize about how to reach the people for Jesus Christ.

🔑 **Key Two: See Your City the Way Jesus Sees It**

- See your city theologically (Acts 17:24, 26, 30-31).
- See your city providentially (Acts 17:26).
- See your city purposefully (Acts 17:27).

🔑 **Key Three: Invade Your City Strategically**

- Identify: People groups; Cultural clusters; Distinctive communities
- Customize: Do not imitate another church. Become the church God has ordained you to be.
- Intensify: Grow up; Gear up; Rise up; Hurry up (Jesus is coming!)

If someone were to ask me, “What is the difference between today’s church and the church of the New Testament?” I’ve got one word—urgency! Whatever happened to the urgency in the church? Whatever happened to the urgency of your denomination, the urgency of your network? I challenge you, in Jesus’ name, reach back, grab hold, find, rediscover the urgency to reach your city for Jesus Christ. —Ronnie Floyd

Effect: How well do you understand your city? How passionate are you about your city? Do you think you see it with a supernatural affection, like that of Christ? How well have you identified the people groups in your city? Based on the points above, what steps do you believe God would have you take for your city?

Notes:

Part Five: Fasting for Your Vision

Video Sessions 13-15

Activator: How could fasting affect the ministry of a pastor, or the ministry of a church as a whole?

Purpose: To highlight the need for fasting, the effectiveness of fasting, and to identify ways to fast for spiritual breakthrough.

🔑 **Key One:** Insights from Ezra (Ezra 8:23)

- Prayer and fasting is a biblical principle for pursuing God and asking Him to do something supernatural in a specific situation.
- Leaders can call for a specific period of time for their congregation to pray and fast together.
- People should expect to hear from God when praying and fasting.

In 1995 I was sitting in my office one morning, having a quiet time reading the Book of Exodus, and the Holy Spirit really spoke to me. He said, “Ronnie, I want you to go on a forty-day fast for the condition of our nation and for the condition of our church, and yes, even for the condition of your own life.”

I didn’t have a clue what that meant. At that time, I’d only heard of one other person alive, whom I knew, who had even done that. I thought, “Lord, there’s no way.” I began to study it. God began to lay certain things in my path.

All of a sudden I began the journey one day and into forty days that literally changed my life and changed my ministry. —Ronnie Floyd

- There is a direct correlation between fasting and humility (Ezra 8:21; 1 Peter 5:6).

🔑 **Key Two:** Delivering a Vision through Fasting

- The vision needs to be birthed in prayer and fasting.
- The vision needs to be shaped by prayer and fasting.
- The vision will be fulfilled by prayer and fasting.

🔑 **Key Three:** Fasting for Breakthrough

- Fast and believe that your greatest need will be met.
- Fast for a fresh, double anointing to be upon you in this decade.
- Fast for your church to return to God.
- Fast for your nation to have a spiritual awakening and revival.

Effect: How often do you see God move supernaturally in your church body? Which points in this section do you know need to become part of your life? What could your church fast and pray for in the coming weeks?

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

THE FIVE CORE COMMITMENTS

Mark Balmer

***Mark Balmer** is founder and senior pastor of Calvary Chapel Melbourne in West Melbourne, FL. Over nine thousand people worship each weekend at the church's main campus or at one of two satellite campuses via live video feed, and thousands around the world watch the services live on the Internet. Pastor Balmer also teaches annually in various parts of Asia.*

Course Summary

Developed from a video teaching by Mark Balmer, this course outlines the “Five Core Commitments” that characterize believers who are serious about following Jesus Christ and reaching the potential God has for them.

Part One: Commit to Being a Growing Follower of Jesus Christ

Video Sessions 1-3

It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, He had His eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose He is working out in everything and everyone. (Ephesians 1:11, MSG)

Activator: What makes someone a follower of Christ?

Purpose: To describe what it means to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ.

☞ **Key One:** Characteristics of Followers (Matthew 16: 21-23)

- Followers of Jesus follow God. They don't lead.
- Followers of Jesus live as stepping-stones, not stumbling blocks.
- Followers of Jesus think like God.

☞ **Key Two:** Commitments of Followers (Matthew 16:24)

- Commit to deny ourselves.
- Commit to take up our cross.
- Commit to follow Jesus daily.

☞ **Key Three:** Following Is a Lifestyle

- Jesus commands us to follow Him, but we still have a choice to make in how we live our lives. (See Matthew 16:24)
- Following Jesus requires radical obedience twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- A follower of Christ is committed to think, to be, and to act like Jesus. "Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did." (1 John 2:6)

Effect: Who do you know that would benefit from this teaching? How do you help new believers understand what it means to follow Christ? How would you use this teaching in your ministry context?

Notes:

Part Two: Celebrate and Live a Fulfilling Lifestyle

Video Sessions 4-8

Jesus said, if we'll follow Him, we will find true life. We will have purpose, and meaning, and fulfillment, and joy, and contentment, and peace, and excitement. These are the benefits of following Jesus Christ. —Mark Balmer

Activator: Do followers of Christ celebrate as much as they should? What should we be celebrating?

Purpose: To highlight five important reasons to celebrate as a follower of Christ.

☞ **Key One:** Celebrate – Christ Lives in You

- Life is no longer about you. It's about Christ living in you (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- God is available to you twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, a very present help in time of trouble. (See Psalm 46:1.)

☞ **Key Two:** Celebrate – God Is at Work in You

- God's Holy Spirit is at work in your life twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- When you became a follower of Christ, you were given a new set of spiritual clothes (Ephesians 4:22-24).
- Live like God is at work in you; be kind, loving, forgiving, and compassionate, as you put off the "old self" (Ephesians 4: 30-32).
- God has given you the power to become more and more like Him (Ephesians 5:1, 2; Philippians 2:13).

Celebrate! God has given you a new nature, a new set of clothes, spiritually. Wear them as you become more like Him. Walk the talk. True belief and conversion simply lead to changed behavior and lifestyle. You are a new person. Old things are passed away. All things have become new. Live like it. That's why I can celebrate. —Mark Balmer

☞ **Key Three:** Celebrate – God Has Arranged for Testing and Trials to Make You More Like Jesus

- Testing and trials are opportunities for joy. (They are the only way for our endurance to grow.) (James 1:2-4).
- Great men and women of faith emerge from trials and testing (See Hebrews 11.)
- God will always complete the work He begins in you (Philippians 1:6).

🔑 **Key Four: Celebrate – Learning to Be Content Brings a Rewarding Lifestyle**

- You can learn to be content because you have everything you need in Christ (Philippians 4:11-13).

Wisdom: Contentment is an attitude.

- Learn to be content where God has placed you and wherever He takes you. All God's plans are for your good (Romans 8:14).
- The temptation to accumulate the things of this world is only a hindrance to following Christ (Matthew 16:26; Luke 12:15).

Knowledge for Insight: Contentment means being _____ with God's plan for your life.

🔑 **Key Five: Celebrate – Your Saved Soul Is Worth More Than Anything**

- The most valuable choice you will ever make is to become a growing follower of Jesus Christ (Luke 10:17-20).
- The freedom and security of your soul has been purchased by Jesus Christ on the cross.
- Celebration begins here on earth, but you will celebrate forever in heaven!

The most important thing in all your life is following Jesus Christ. When you get to that place of following Him it's easy to commit to being a growing Christ follower. It's easy to celebrate and live this fulfilling lifestyle. —Mark Balmer

Effect: Which points in this section were most significant to you? How do you encourage celebration in your church? Who do you know that would benefit from this teaching? How would you use this teaching in your ministry context?

Notes:

Part Three: Connect to Others in Personal, Vibrant Relationships

Video Sessions 9 and 10

Remember, the church is not a building. It's not a denomination; it's not an organization, actually. A church, by definition, is a living organism, a body of believers, of people, of followers of Jesus Christ, who are here to simply carry out the purposes of God on earth.
—Mark Balmer

Activator: Why is being connected to others a crucial part of being a follower of Christ?

Purpose: To highlight the importance of being connected to other followers of Christ.

🔑 **Key One:** Connecting Is Related to Committing and Celebrating

- Every person was created by God to be connected in a personal relationship to God and to other people (Matthew 22:36-39).
- Commitments made outside of any connection with other Christ followers are often quickly broken.
- Connecting with people helps us to celebrate.

🔑 **Key Two:** Live Life Together

- Every person wants to belong, to be needed, to be known, and to be loved.
- All believers are meant to influence each other and to go through life together.
- Jesus demonstrated what community looked like by choosing disciples rather than doing ministry alone. He invested in the disciples' lives for three-and-a-half years. (See Matthew 16:24.)
- Paul understood the importance of relationships: "For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone." (Romans 14:7, NIV)
- The early church lived life together (Acts 2:42, 46-47).

Knowledge for Insight: Early church believers studied together, worshipped together, ate together, prayed together, and _____ together.

We share the Savior; we share the same Guide for Life. We share the same love for God. We share the same desire to worship Him. We all share the same struggles. We share the same victories. We share the same job of living for Him, maturing for Him, becoming the person He has designed us to be. We share the same joy of communicating the Gospel to others and seeing people come to Christ, as they do at our services. Perhaps the most powerful witness to the world

is exactly that word, “together.” Jesus Himself said, “The world will know that the Father and I are real by the love that you have for one another.” —Mark Balmer

➤ **Key Three:** Be Intentional About Staying Connected

- All believers need to be careful to keep their hearts turned toward God—He does not want anyone to fall away (Hebrews 3:12).
- Being together gives opportunity for correction for a believer heading in the wrong direction.
- Being connected helps us to be real, authentic and grow spiritually (Hebrews 3:13).

Effect: What points in this section are significant to you? How do you teach about the importance of connection? Who do you know that would benefit from this teaching? How would you use this teaching in your ministry context?

Notes:

Part Four: Communicate the Good News to Everyone, Everywhere

Video Sessions 11-13

“For the son of man came to seek and save that which is lost.” (Luke 19:10) That is still the heartbeat of Jesus today. That is still the mission of the church. That is still the mission of every single Christ follower. —Mark Balmer

Activator: What do you think is the hardest part of sharing the Gospel with an unbeliever?

Purpose: To highlight the importance of sharing the good news with everyone, everywhere.

➤ **Key One:** The Importance of Sharing the Good News

- The enemy has blinded people to the truth and the light of the Gospel; God wants to open their eyes through our message (2 Corinthians 4:4).

🔑 **Key Two:** Commands and Promises

- Command: Go and make disciples of all nations. Promise: Jesus will be with you until the end (Matthew 28:19-20).
- Command: Before you go, wait to be empowered. Promise: You will be empowered to change the world (Acts 1:8).

🔑 **Key Three:** Principles of Communicating

- Open your eyes (there are lost people everywhere) (John 4:34, 35).
- Open your heart (Matthew 9:36).
- Open your mouth (Romans 1:16).

Effect: Which points in this section were most significant to you? How do you teach people to communicate the good news? Who do you know that would benefit from this teaching? How would you use this teaching in your ministry context?

Notes:

Part Five: Contribute Your Time, Your Passion, Your Talents, and Your Possessions

Video Sessions 14 and 15

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so that we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10, NLT) Before you were born, God wired you individually...with talents and abilities, and a lifetime of opportunities to be useful for Him. —Mark Balmer

Activator: Why would contributing be considered one of the five core commitments?

Purpose: To highlight the importance of being a contributing follower of Christ and to identify principles of godly giving.

🔑 **Key One:** Our Final Rewards

- God will be judging and evaluating the things done in our bodies (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- God has a blueprint for our lives: much of His judgment will be regarding the gap between the potential He gave us and what we reached (Romans 14:10-12).
- Our final rewards will be based on: 1) Outward service; 2) Inward motives.

🔑 **Key Two:** Christ Followers are Both Servants and Stewards

- Believers are to have a humble attitude as a servant and also to be responsible for what God has given to them (Psalm 24:1).
- You should use everything God gave you to do five things: 1) To meet your needs; 2) To meet the needs of others; 3) To expand the kingdom of God; 4) To enjoy life now; 5) To store up treasure in heaven.
- Three types of giving: 1) Tithes – 10 percent of income off the top; 2) Offerings – freewill gifts as God directs; 3) Alms – freewill gifts to help the poor.

🔑 **Key Three:** Principles for Giving

- Contribute with the goal of pleasing God (2 Corinthians 5:9) and with humility (John 15:5), excellence (Ecclesiastes 9:10), and passion (2 Timothy 1:6).

God has given you unlimited potential. Now will you go and accomplish all that He's planned for your life? —Mark Balmer

Effect: Which points in this section were most significant to you? How would you use this teaching in your ministry context?

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

Knowledge for Insight Answers: Part Two: satisfied Part Three: suffered

KNOWING THE WHOLE BIBLE

Walter Kaiser

***Dr. Walter Kaiser** is President Emeritus and Distinguished Professor of Old Testament and Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Hamilton, MA. As one of the Church's foremost scholars on the Old Testament, he has written more than forty books and led more than twenty graduate and undergraduate study tours abroad while lecturing and preaching at thousands of schools and churches worldwide.*

Course Summary

Developed from a teaching by Walter Kaiser, this course will provide an overview of the entire Bible. In doing this, we will identify the three-part "Promise Plan" of God. We will also consider the ways in which God has used and will be using His faithful servants to carry out His plan.

Part One: Overview

If we're going to look at individual books (of the Bible) like trees in a forest, we will need to look first of all at what the forest looks like. And I suggest that if God is the author of the Bible, and indeed He is, then there must be a single mind, a single plan, a single organizational principle that pulls the whole thing together. It is not as if we have sixty-six books and numerous disparate authors who are putting it together at one time or another and eventually it sort of came out all right. But no, it is one mind from one point of view driving home the very point that the Spirit of God wanted us to get. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: Do you feel you have an equal understanding of the Old and New Testament? Have you ever thought of the Bible as one story rather than two separate Testaments?

Purpose: To provide an overview of the course.

🔑 **Key One:** God's Promise Plan

- The promise plan of God is always a word (Genesis 12:3).
- How was the promise transmitted?

🔑 **Key Two:** Defining the Promise Plan

- The Word of God as He declares to Israel that He will bless Israel (so that Israel, through all who believe, may be a blessing to the nations).

Knowledge for Insight: The New Testament uses the word “_____” seventy-one times to refer back to the Old Testament. The Old Testament uses “word,” “oath,” and “rest” to communicate God's promise plan.

- The Promise Plan is the umbrella under which the whole Old and New Testament is embodied as a single plan of God.
- The Promise Plan has a three-part formula: I will be your God. You shall be my people. I will dwell in the midst of you (John 1:14a).

🔑 **Key Three:** Common Questions and Answers

- Why do we need to understand the Old Testament? Is the God of the Old Testament the same God of the New Testament? Answer: Hebrews 1:1-2. The same Heavenly Father who spoke in the Old Testament is the same Heavenly Father who speaks to us today.

- Are all of the books of the Bible relevant? Answer: Do not neglect any single part of God's Word. It could become an unintended open door for heresy. The whole Bible, in all of its parts, has relevance for us today.
- Isn't Christianity a new religion since it's based on the New Covenant? Answer: In Hebrew, there is only one word for both "new" and "renew." In English, Greek, German, most of the Indo-European languages, we have two words. The Hebrew word is much like the idea behind "new moon." (The same moon reappears, not a different moon.) (See Jeremiah 31:33b).

The Promise Plan of God is:

The three parts are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Effect: In your own words, write down the points that brought you the most insight in this section.

Notes:

Part Two: The Blessing of the Promise (Genesis 1-11)

In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth.... The word for promise in these early chapters (of Genesis) is the word "blessing." God blessed the man; God blessed the woman. God blessed them and made them fruitful and they multiplied. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What themes do you recall from the first eleven chapters of Genesis?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Genesis 1-11: How it is part of the Promise Plan of God?

🔑 **Key One:** The Blessing of Creation

- How did God do it? (Psalm 33:6, 9)

☞ **Key Two: The Blessing of Seed**

- What was the crisis? The Fall of Man.
- God told Eve that there would be enmity (hostility) between her seed and the serpent's seed. He also told her that she would have a male descendant who, though he would have his heel bruised, would tread on the serpent's head. (Genesis 3:15)
- The Promise: Though there was a fall and sin had come into the world, God had a remedy in His promise plan. This male descendant will give a crushing defeat. As Paul says in Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."

☞ **Key Three: The Blessing of Dwelling**

- What was the crisis? The Flood.
- God sends a means of deliverance, the ark of Noah. Noah's family along with two of each kind of animal and seven of the clean animals board the ark.
- The Promise: "May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant." (Genesis 9:27) God said He would come and would tabernacle in the midst of Shem.

☞ **Key Four: The Blessing of the Gospel**

- What was the crisis? The Tower of Babel.
- In Genesis 11, the people are building a tower, attempting to reach the skies and create a reputation for themselves.
- The Promise: God calls a man named Abram from Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram obeys and goes north up to the Euphrates river at Heron, crosses over, and eventually comes into the land (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:8).

Three crises could not keep God's Word back. Neither a fall, nor a flood, nor the flop of the tower are going to upset the power of the Word of God. What a blessing. What a Gospel. What a plan. The promise plan of God. —Walter Kaiser

Part Three: The Word of Promise (Genesis Chapter 12-50)

The Three Fathers of the Faith are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But they are called prophets too, and the Word of God came through each one of them. In Genesis 12 through 15 we learn that the Word of God comes through visions and through Theophanies or Christophanies. We notice also that the Word of God comes from the Lord speaking directly to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What events or themes do you recall from these chapters in Genesis, especially in connection with God speaking directly to someone?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Genesis 12-50 and how it is a part of the Promise Plan of God.

☞ **Key One:** The Seed = The Blessing of the Heir to Be Born

- The Promise: the promise of the Heir, which is in the line of our Lord Jesus (Genesis 15:2-4).
- Obstacle to overcome (Genesis 18:14).

☞ **Key Two:** The Land = The Blessing of the Inheritance

- The Promise: The unconditional Covenant with Abraham (then Abram) in Genesis 15:9-21.

☞ **Key Three:** The Good News = The Blessing of the Heritage of the Gospels

- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the fathers of our faith. They were the means and the channels through which God gave the message of His Promise. It was based not upon their credibility or their faithfulness; it was based on the faithfulness of God who walked between the pieces of the covenant.

Part Four: The People of the Promise (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers)

Activator: Why might this part be called “The People of the Promise?” What significant events or themes do you recall from these three books?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 **Key One:** Israel Becomes a Nation

- God calls Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 12:37,38).

🔑 **Key Two:** Israelites Become God's People

- Israel's identity defined by God (Exodus 4:22; Exodus 19:3-6).
- God gave His Law (Psalm 119:35; Exodus 20:2).

Wisdom: We need to know the Lord before we know how to walk in Him. Grace precedes any kind of requirement, any kind of obedience. Faith comes first, then obedience.

- Provision for Failure (Leviticus 19:2)

Sin is forgiven on the basis of a substitute. Sin is forgotten and removed as far, says Psalm 103, "as far as east is from the west." He (David) didn't say north and south; there are poles there—we could find it. He said as far as east is from the west. It just keeps on going and going and going. That's how far our sins are removed from us. And what's the standard? Is it a principle; is it a law? No, it's a Person. The character of God forms holiness and righteousness and justice and truth and all of the standards to which we are called. Therefore the standards of God are absolute. —Walter Kaiser

Part Five: The Place of the Promise (Deuteronomy-1 Samuel 15)

In the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and all the way up to First Samuel 15, (the Scriptures) talk about the fact that God promised that He would take his very special name and put it into a special place. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What events or themes do you recall from Deuteronomy–1 Samuel 15? Do you recall a portion of Scripture in which God makes a promise?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and 1 Samuel 1-15, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 **Key One:** The Promise of a Temple

- The tabernacle, which had been the place of God's Name, where people had come together to worship, is now ready and a permanent residence.

- Deuteronomy chapter 12 promises a place where God's Name should dwell, a place of inheritance, and a place where His people can find rest and a purpose (Deuteronomy 12:10,11).
- Joshua went into Canaan and God gave him a marvelous victory over all of the nations there. After that generation, after Joshua died, came a series of Judges.
- In the book of Judges every person did what was right in their own eyes. There was no king and they had forgotten the law of God. Nevertheless God promised a place in the center of the promise land to set up the Temple of God and where there would be rest for His people.

🔑 **Key Two:** The Three Offices of the Messiah

- God raised up men who would have the office of a priest, the office of a prophet, and the office of a king.
- Moses as Prophet
- Aaron as Priest
- David as King

🔑 **Key Three:** Ruth's Divine Placement (The Book of Ruth)

- Ruth, known as a virtuous woman, meets (her relative) Boaz in his grain field. Though she was a foreigner from Moab, she found favor with Boaz and he married her. From that marriage came Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of King David.

So God is still on target with His plan, working providentially. It looked like it was almost an accident, as if it happened by chance. But it did not. It happened by the plan of God. And in the Promise plan of God, He welds together where history is going and how He will bless the nations, all the nations of the world. What a beautiful place of promise. —Walter Kaiser

Part Six: The King of Promise (1 Samuel 16-1 Kings 11)

Included in this section we have the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, all written by David or by Solomon. For a little bit of a check in time, we're about 1000 BC and we're right in the days of King David, who is followed by this son, King Solomon. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What themes and events do you recall from 1 Samuel–1 Kings 11 and from the other writings of David and Solomon? (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon)

Purpose: To provide an overview of 1 Samuel 16–1 Kings 11, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

☞ **Key One:** A House, a Throne, and a Dynasty

- David tells Nathan the prophet that he wants to build a house for God’s presence to dwell (2 Samuel 7:1,2)
- The Lord gave King David a promise through Nathan the prophet (2 Samuel 7:12-16).
- David responded with thankfulness (2 Samuel 7:18,19a; Psalm 89).

☞ **Key Two:** The Writings of King David and King Solomon

- Both David and Solomon were used by God to write books of wisdom and song: Psalms; Proverbs—the wisdom of Solomon; Ecclesiastes—written by Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1,2; 12:13,14; 3:11); Song of Solomon—a book about the great blessing of marriage.

Wisdom: What’s the common thread in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and a number of the wisdom Psalms? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, knowledge, and life itself.

Can you imagine two more significant men that God would call to be that seed? And that God would say, “I myself will personally validate and guarantee what I gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I’m going to give you a house, a throne, and a dynasty that will be forever.” —Walter Kaiser

Part Seven: The Day of Promise (Joel-Obadiah)

Two of the earliest books, at least according to some ways of looking at it, are the prophet Joel and the prophet Obadiah. These are small books, actually, but with the earliest statement of the day of the Lord. The “Day of the Lord” is that period of time in connection with the second coming of our Lord in which He is going to bring out a whole new series of events like this old world has never seen before. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: How familiar are you with the prophets Joel and Obadiah? What comes to mind when you think of these two books?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Joel and Obadiah and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 **Key One:** Joel Cries Out

- Context: The book of Joel begins under the threat of an emergency. Locust plagues were coming in one wave after another, devastating vegetation.

These little critters are a real problem in many places of the world. They come and they march like soldiers. They stay in rank. You can stamp on them, you can use a blowtorch, but they will stay together and others will fill in the ranks. They come to a building and they go up the side of the building as far as they need to go, over the roof, and pick up the corresponding blade of grass on the other side of the building. They are just marvelous in their ability to strip everything green.
—Walter Kaiser

- Joel cried out, telling the people it was time to turn back to the Lord.

Knowledge for Insight: If you were to put all sixteen of the prophets' messages together, what one word would encapsulate all of them? _____. God wanted the people to _____ back to Him.

- Scripture indicates that the people turned back to God. "Then the Lord was jealous for his land and took pity on his people" (Joel 2:18).
- God gave blessings of two kinds: 1) Immediate blessing: The pastures became green again, seed began to sprout, rains came down; 2) Prophetic blessing: God said He would send a downpour of His Holy Spirit (Joel 2:29-32).

Knowledge for Insight: Out of the seventy-one verses of Joel, twenty-seven of them are repeated by other _____.

🔑 **Key Two:** Obadiah Speaks Out

- Context: The neighbors of the sons of Esau, who are now the nation of Edom, wanted to destroy Jerusalem.
- Obadiah gave correction. (paraphrase) "Is that what you should do to your own brother? Is that how you should act with him?"

- Obadiah also spoke of The Day of the Lord, and the judgment to come. “The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head” (Obadiah 1:15).

Isn't that something worth shouting about? It is a fantastic day when we all will see the King in all of His glory. Are you ready? Are you ready for that great day and for the deliverance of the Lord? Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered, says the Lord of glory Himself, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. What a great Lord! —Walter Kaiser

Part Eight: The Promise of the Servant (Isaiah–Jonah)

The prophets of the Old Testament are a wonderful place in which we meet that gracious Word of God that keeps coming through His messengers. There are a number of them in one of the most famous centuries of all, the eighth century BC, the 700s. The leader of that group, the one who really has to be put at the head of the class, is Isaiah, that wonderful prophet of God. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What comes to mind when you think about Isaiah’s prophesies? What can you recall about the lives of Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Micah?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Micah, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 Key One: Jonah’s Reluctant Message

- Context: Jonah 1:1,2

*The Assyrians (the people of Nineveh) were brutes. When they came in battle they would chop off the left palm.... They put them in bags and took them home.... And some (victims) were impaled. They put them up and peeled down their skin and saved the skin for wallpaper in the palace of the king.
—Walter Kaiser*

- Jonah attempted to flee to Tarshish and was thrown into the sea. God sent a “great fish” to swallow Jonah; and he remained in the belly of the great fish for three days and nights. When Jonah repented, God spoke to the great fish and it vomited Jonah out.
- God spoke to Jonah a second time (Jonah 3:2; Jonah 3:4).

☞ **Key Two:** Isaiah Speaks of the Servant

- The Book of Isaiah: The first thirty-nine chapters, like the first thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, deal with a judgment theme. Then the last twenty-seven chapters, like the twenty-seven books in the New Testament, speak of comfort and salvation.
- In the middle of the second section of the book, Isaiah speaks of this Great Servant of the Lord and His glorious resurrection (Isaiah 53: 6).

☞ **Key Three:** Micah Declares Pardon

- Micah ends his book in chapter 7 with words of comfort (Micah 18-20).

In the Jewish community there is a ceremony done on the New Year. They go down to the waters of a stream or river; they take their pockets and empty them out. It's called Tishla. They cast all their sins into the water and it carries it on down the stream. Who can pardon sin like God does and removes it all from us?

—Walter Kaiser

☞ **Key Four:** Amos' Message of Restoration

- Context: Amos 9:11a
- Through Amos God declares that regardless of the current conditions, He would continue His Promise Plan (Amos 9:11,12).

☞ **Key Five:** Hosea's Love

- Context: Hosea had lost his wife. She ran off to the temple to give herself as a prostitute. He preached in public, telling the people that God loved them with an infinite love.
- Hosea's message: The people had been unfaithful to God, much like his wife had been unfaithful to him. Yet, God still wanted them to return to Him, just as he longed for his wife to return.

These are fantastic eighth century prophets...with great promises given here of (God's) rebuilding David's house and throne and dynasty, because it's forever. And the forgiveness He gives, made possible because of the servant of the Lord who gave His life for ransom for all who will accept and take it to themselves. Great little section, wouldn't you say? —Walter Kaiser

Part Nine: The Renewal of Promise (Jeremiah–Nahum)

Activator: What comes to mind when you think about Jeremiah’s prophesies? What do you recall about Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Nahum?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Nahum, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

☞ **Key One:** Jeremiah’s Plea

- Jeremiah was given promises of renewal from God (chapters 30-33).

Knowledge for Insight: The word translated as “new” in the phrase “new covenant” is the same word used for “new” in “new moon.” It communicates a sense of

_____.

- Jeremiah was called to be a prophet of God before he was born, while he was still in his mother’s womb. (Jeremiah 1:5) When he was a teenager, God gave Him clear direction (Jeremiah 1:7,8).
- Jeremiah urged the people to repent and warned them of a coming captivity, but they would not listen. They were eventually into captivity.

☞ **Key Two:** Habakkuk’s Determination

- Habakkuk saw all the evil and distress of that day. He had one question (paraphrased), “Lord, why do you make me so super sensitive to my generation? There’s so much evil. This is the worst of times.”
- God told Habakkuk that He would bring the Babylonians (modern-day Iraq) to carry the Israelites into captivity.
- Habakkuk protested and was determined to keep watch and wait for the Lord’s answer (Habakkuk 2:1-4). The New Testament repeats this theme (Galatians 2:20; Romans 1:16,17; The “Faith Chapter,” Hebrews 11).

So that’s the great theme of this section... “the just shall live by faith.” Jeremiah, the senior leader of that group of seventh-century prophets, is one that kept the Word of God alive even though very few were believing in that day. Can you hear the theme? Righteous people really live. They really live. But they live by faith. What a great word for our day. —Walter Kaiser

Part Ten: The Kingdom of the Promise (Daniel–Ezekiel)

Scripture: Psalm 137

Activator: What significant events do you recall from Daniel’s life? What do you recall about Ezekiel?

Purpose: To provide an overview of the books of Daniel and Ezekiel and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

☞ **Key One:** Daniel

- Context: Daniel and three of his friends, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, were taken into captivity by the Babylonians. The king, Nebuchadnezzar, told them to train in the ways of the Babylonians and to eat the king’s diet. They were trained, but refused to adhere to the king’s dietary plan. Still, they were as healthy as those on the king’s diet.
- King Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream and called for one of his wise men to interpret. None of the men were able to interpret the dream, and this angered the King greatly (Daniel 2:12,22; 31-35).
- The main theme of Daniel is the everlasting reign and Kingdom of the Lord.

☞ **Key Two:** Ezekiel and the Glory of God

- Ezekiel was taken into Babylonian captivity around at the same time as Daniel and was ministering around 598 BC.
- Ezekiel was a prophet of the glory of God (His presence and power). He saw the glory of God depart from the temple (chapter 10).

What is the glory of God? Nothing less than either an appearance of Christ or an appearance of the living God. The glory of God is just another name for the effect that the living Lord and His Son create when they are here in this terrestrial place.
—Walter Kaiser

- Ezekiel speaks of God as the good shepherd. (Chapter 34) Jesus continues with this truth in John 10, “I am the good shepherd (Ezekiel 34:11-13, 30, 31).
- Ezekiel describes the rightful King (chapter 21), the One who will come to rule and reign because the kingdom belongs to Him. Israel is described in relation to the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 21:25-27).
- God tells Ezekiel of His plan to revive His people.
- Ezekiel is taken to a valley scattered with bones all over the hillside. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the dry bones. Ezekiel preaches the powerful Word of God and they are put back together. He preaches again and they receive life. This

signified that God could bring the nation together once more (Ezekiel 37:4-6; 11-14)

- God tells Ezekiel of His plan to dwell among His people as their one King in an everlasting covenant (Ezekiel 37: 21,22, 26-28).

How could God be ruling in these kinds of circumstances? Where is His throne? Where is His temple? Where is the dynasty? Where is the kingdom? Yes, where? It resides with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Even though it's not manifest at this time in the earth, doesn't mean God has forgotten about it at all. Can you imagine? This is the one who is coming—our Lord Jesus, that seed of Eve, that seed of Shem, that seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David, and Solomon. Yes, that's our Lord Jesus. He will once more return one more time. Are you looking for him? This is the blessed hope. The hope that brings life and vitality and meaning and purposefulness into life right here and now today. May that be your hope. —Walter Kaiser

Part Eleven: The Triumph of the Promise (Haggai–Malachi)

Now we come to the final books of the Old Testament, with at least two of them written in the 500s (BC). In August of 520 BC Haggai begins his message. Then in November of 520 BC Zechariah begins his message. Then comes Malachi, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. That cluster of books was all written at the time of the postexilic period, after the seventy years of exile in Babylon. We call this the Triumph of the Promise because now God is going to bring His people back into the land. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What do you recall about the lives and prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Ezra, and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 Key One: Haggai's Message of Renewal

- Haggai's name means "festival." God calls him to tell the people that it's time to renew the work of God.
- They returned to Jerusalem in 536 BC and started laying the footprint for the new temple; the old one had been destroyed.
- The heathen had begun to demean them, hiss at them, and mock God because the temple had laid in ruins for so long.

🔑 **Key Two:** Rebuilding in the Book of Ezra

- Context: The book of Ezra tells us (Ezra 3 and 4) that the young people were shouting for joy at the plans to rebuild the temple. The older Jews were convinced it wasn't the right time to rebuild. The people discouraged each other with their conflicting opinions and they did no work on the temple for sixteen years.
- God spoke through Haggai to let the people know that they needed to return to building the Temple. Within a month the people came back, rejoiced, and started rebuilding. Haggai said (paraphrase), "This building is connected with that great work of God in the final day."

Wisdom: No work done for God in His way will ever lack God's significance.

🔑 **Key Three:** Zechariah's Visions and Burdened Messages

- Nine visions: all of them pointing forward to the great work of God.
- Two burdened messages: 1) The first coming of the Messiah (chapters 9, 10, and 11).; 2) The second coming of Messiah (chapters 12, 13 and 14). See Zechariah 12:10,11; 14:4.

🔑 **Key Four:** Malachi, Messenger of the Covenant

- Malachi stresses the Messenger of the covenant—Jesus, that great One who shall come in connection with the day of the Lord.

Every eye is going to see Him...Kings will shut their mouths at him, says Isaiah... And every knee shall bow...The triumph of God's promise plan now comes to full fruition as we end the wonderful study of the first thirty-nine books of the Bible, sometimes called the Old Testament. —Walter Kaiser

Effect: What insights have you gained during this overview of the Old Testament books? Do you feel prompted to go and reread any of these books in particular? Which ones? Write down any notes or questions you want to remember for the future.

Notes:

Part Twelve: The Appearance of The Promise (Matthew–Luke)

Three gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and as a sequel, the book of Acts. So the four books belong together as we talk about that great appearance of the first coming of our Lord Jesus. Jesus steps into town and what does He say? That He comes preaching and proclaiming the kingdom of God. And what's His message? It's at hand. It's near. It's right on the threshold. And there it is for the people of God. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What do you recall about the lives and different perspectives of Matthew, Mark, and Luke?

Purpose: To provide an overview of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the book of Acts.

🔑 **Key One:** Matthew Presents the King of Promise

- Matthew tells us about the “kingdom of heaven” thirty-three times, and uses a parallel phrase, “the kingdom of God,” four times.
- He stresses the restoration of David’s kingdom. The key words, “Son of David,” is used nine times.
- Matthew has over fifty-three citations and quotations from the Old Testament and has seventy or more allusions to the Old Testament.
- Matthew starts his genealogy with words from Genesis, “generations of,” and goes back through David to Abraham explicitly showing that Jesus came from the line of men who had been given the promise of God.
- The purpose: To present Jesus as the Messiah, the King of Promise, and some key characteristics of the kingdom of God for Israel and the church.

🔑 **Key Two:** Mark Presents the Servant of Promise

- Mark is written to the Roman audience, action-packed, presenting “snapshots” of Jesus: “Immediately Jesus did this,” “immediately He did that.” The book’s events move forward steadily.
- The outline of the events of Mark’s gospel follow the outline of Peter’s sermon given in Acts 10:34-43. It was likely written with help and direction from Peter (not because of text, but because of its outline).
- It reflects the oral style of preaching in the day of Jesus.
- It begins with the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus’ baptism
- Purpose: Mark 10:45. This is also a pivotal verse for the book, to transition to Jesus’ death and resurrection.

☛ **Key Three:** Luke's Gospel and Acts

- A two-volume history, the only gospel with a sequel.
- The book of Luke: 1) Longest of the gospels; 2) Has the widest variety of miracles, teachings and parables; 3) It gives the fullest portrait of Jesus' ministry. The content of Luke chapter 9-19 appears only in this gospel; 4) See Acts 1:1-3.
- The book of Acts: 1) Was written for a government official, Theophilus. Luke wanted him to have solid facts; 2) Shows what the work of the Holy Spirit did in and through the apostles as they spread the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome; 3) Shows the case for Christianity based on the facts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; 4) Special emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the written Word of God; 5) Tells of the first day of preaching at Pentecost, when the Spirit came with power and three thousand were added to the church.

Part Thirteen: The Church of the Promise (The Apostle Paul)

The church of the promise: The promise plan of God actually includes the people that belong to God. That's what church means—belonging to the Lord. And so you have the apostle Paul, who is the great apostle of the church, as he moves from being one of the persecutors of the church to actually becoming one of the greatest advocates and one of the greatest missionaries. He moves all the way from Jerusalem up through Asia minor, present day Turkey, over through Greece and Italy, and then eventually to Spain.

—Walter Kaiser

Activator: What significant events do you recall from the life of the apostle Paul? What subjects and themes do you recall from his writing?

Purpose: To provide an overview of the life, ministry, and Scriptures written by the apostle Paul and explain how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

☛ **Key One:** Paul's Conversion

- Encountered Jesus on Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-4).
- Spent three years in the desert of Arabia immediately after conversion.
- Was not taught by man, but by revelation (Galatians 1:11,12).
- Wrote autobiographically about the importance of his discovery that God's Word, from the beginning, had been pointing to Jesus Christ.

☞ **Key Two: Paul's Ministry**

- Went on three major missionary journeys: AD 47-49, AD 50-52, AD 53- 57
- Part of the counsel of Jerusalem in AD 50, among the other apostles, when they recognized the Gospel was for Gentiles also.
- Imprisoned in Rome and executed in AD 67.
- Wrote Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

☞ **Key Three: Paul's Letter to the Philippians**

- "The little letter of joy"
- Acrostic: LEGS. L – Christ our LIFE (chapter 1); E – Christ our EXAMPLE (chapter 2); G – Christ our GOAL (chapter 3); S – Christ our SUPPLY (chapter 4)
- In chapters 1-4 Paul writes about having the right mind-set through Christ (Philippians 2:6-8).

☞ **Key Four: Great Chapters from Paul's Writings**

- Romans 4: the just shall live by faith, justification by faith
- Romans 8: What is life in the spirit?
- 1 Corinthians 12: Love
- 1 Corinthians 15: Resurrection of the body, life after death
- Ephesians 6: The Armor of God
- 1 Thessalonians 4: Sexual purity
- 2 Thessalonians 5: The Day of the Lord

Paul is a great apostle of our faith and writes these thirteen letters. He writes them to us so that we might know the ongoing plan of God. What a great and marvelous plan. —Walter Kaiser

Part Fourteen: The Suffering Church and the Promise (1 and 2 Peter)

What about suffering? What about evil? What about pain? What about grief? What about war? What about all of those enormous things? What about when we expect the good, and the right, and the just to triumph? Then all of a sudden, what happens? Evil seems to come along and evil seems to be what takes precedence. —Walter Kaiser

Activator: What Scriptures do you use when helping someone through a time of suffering? What Scriptures help you?

Purpose: To provide an overview of the life, ministry, and Scriptures written by the apostle Peter and explain how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

🔑 **Key One:** The Life and Ministry of Peter

- Seen as an uneducated and untrained fisherman (Acts 4:13).

Knowledge for Insight: Fishermen were likely _____. They needed to speak Greek in order to exist in the culture. They needed to speak Aramaic in order to trade and go to the marketplace. And based on artifacts found, it is also very likely they needed Hebrew as well.

Many say, "This book is too advanced. First Peter couldn't have been written by a fisherman. Look at the eloquent thoughts on suffering and the glory of God." I remind you, this fisherman was trilingual. —Walter Kaiser

- Peter's time spent with Jesus would have greatly affected his perspective as he wrote.
- Silvanus, Peter's secretary, would have helped in his writing and phrasing in the scrolls (1 Peter 5:12).
- Died in Rome during Nero's reign.
- Peter likely died the same time apostle Paul died in AD 67.

🔑 **Key Two:** The Themes of First and Second Peter

- Christians should expect suffering as part of the normal Christian life; God shapes character through suffering (1 Peter 1:6,7; 3:14; 4:12).
- Live righteous and holy lives in the face of the trouble and evil of the day.
- Submit to one another rather than demanding your rights. (What Jesus endured for us on the cross is our model.)
- The Day of the Lord (1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 3:11-13)

A suffering church: This is part of the promised plan? Yes. Why? Because it was part of the plan even for our Lord who has gone on ahead. But does it end with suffering? No way. It ends with triumph and with the victory of the resurrection of all who believe in the Lord, and with our ruling and reigning together with the Lord forever and ever. This section is about a suffering church and the promise as brought to us by the apostle Peter, one of the fishermen who was in the first seminary, the first school ever taught by our Lord Jesus Himself. —Walter Kaiser

Part Fifteen: The Gospel of the Kingdom and the Promise Plan of God (John–Revelation)

Activator: What are the main themes you remember from the gospel of John? His letters? What names of Jesus Christ do you recall from the book of Revelation?

Purpose: To provide an overview of the writings of the apostle John and how they are part of the Promise Plan of God.

➤ **Key One:** The Life and Ministry of John

- Called one of the “Sons of Thunder.”
- Became a leader in the church in AD 30 until well after the fall in Jerusalem in AD 70.
- In AD 90 John wrote his gospel, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John.
- In AD 93 John is exiled to the island of Patmos and in AD 95 John writes the book of Revelation.
- John Ryland’s Papyrus, found in Egypt near the Nile River, dispelled any doubts that the apostle John wrote the gospel of John. It came out of the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of John and was dated by papyrologists as AD 90-125 or even earlier.

➤ **Key Two:** The Gospel of John

- There are seven signs, or miracles: 1) Water turned into wine at the marriage feast in Cana. (chapter 2); Healing of the nobleman's son. (chapter 4); Healing of the lame man. (chapter 5); Multiplication of the loaves and the fish. (chapter 6); Walking on the water. (chapter 6); Healing of a blind man. (chapter 9); Lazarus raised from the dead. (chapter 11)
- There are seven “I ams”: 1) Originate in Exodus 3:13,14; 2) “I am the bread of life.” (chapter 6); 3) “I am the light of the world.” (chapter 8); 4) “I am the door of the sheep.” “I am the good shepherd.” (chapter 10); 5) “I am the resurrection and the life.” (chapter 11); 6) “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (chapter 14); 7) “I am the true vine.” (chapter 15).
- Seven signs and seven “I ams” are recorded so that, “you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:31)

So these miracles are signs. They point a way. They point to Jesus. And what do they point to? That He is the Messiah. That He is the anointed one of God. And that believing, we might have everlasting life for just coming and giving ourselves to this one who performed such miracles that validated His claim. —Walter Kaiser

➤ **Key Three:** Three Letters of John

- Simple, straightforward, clearly written messages.

➤ **Key Four:** Revelations of John: The Completion of the Promise

- Called the “apocalypse,” meaning the unveiling of Christ.
- John said, “I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day.” (Revelation 1:10)
- Jesus depicted in several ways: Glorified Son of Man; Lion of Judah; The Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world; The Bridegroom; The conquering King and Lord of Lords; The rightful Ruler over all of earth and eternal kingdom; The One who will rule in the millennium; The Maker of a whole new heaven and a whole new earth.

Knowledge for Insight: There are _____ names and offices for Jesus in the Bible.

- John describes resurrections (Revelation 20):

What a plan of God, from way back in the beginning of Genesis where He says, “I will be your God. You shall be my people. And I’ll dwell in the midst of you.” It was a definite plan in which He declares that He will give a blessing to Israel, and that through them, blessing is to come to all the peoples upon the face of the earth. That’s missions. That’s also about our Lord Jesus. That’s about the great hope that we have as believers. And it is the solid basis for joy now and for everlasting joy in the presence of a righteous and holy and matchless God. —Walter Kaiser

Effect: What insights have you gained during this overview of the New Testament authors and books? Do you feel prompted to go and reread any of these books in particular? Which ones?

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

Knowledge for Insight Answers:

Part One: promise

Part Seven: Turn, turn, prophets

Part Nine: renewal

Part Fourteen: trilingual

Part Fifteen: 144

CLIMBING VISIONARY MOUNTAINS

Peter Mortlock

Rev. Peter Mortlock and his wife, Bev, are senior pastors of City Impact Church based in Auckland, New Zealand. The church meets in five locations in New Zealand and also has locations in Tonga and Canada. He and Bev are also the hosts of Impact for Life, a contemporary Christian television program that reaches the homes of thousands around the world.

Course Summary

Developed from a video teaching by Peter Mortlock, this course explores how believers can grow in their vision, view, and vantage point. In doing this, we will use the metaphor of mountain climbing to describe key components to personal growth.

Part One: Enlarge, Lengthen, and Strengthen

Video Sessions 1-3

God said to Abraham, the higher you go the more you can see. The more you can see, the more you can have. It's a principle of life. Even the devil knows this. He wants to take you up his mountain. (He tried to get Jesus to jump off that pinnacle, as you know.) God wants to take you up the mountain for a different reason. He wants you to have a better view in life. He wants to increase and enlarge your view. —Peter Mortlock

Activator: Has God ever given you a glimpse of a future blessing in the midst of a trial? How do you typically respond in times of barrenness?

Purpose: To highlight the importance of obedience in barren times, having the right focus, and embracing growth.

☞ **Key One:** Obedience (Isaiah 54:1-4)

- To enjoy the manifestation of God's Word, we must obey it.
- "Sing, O barren." We start where we are—we rejoice even in our barrenness (Genesis 25:22).
- As we are obedient, we must remember God has plans for us (Jeremiah 29:11).
- We can decide to disobey and stay in the barren place, or to obey and go higher with God.

☞ **Key Two:** The Right Focus

- God's passion today is unchanged—He is not looking for new ideas.
- We need to treasure what God treasures (Matthew 4:19; John 3:16; 15).

☞ **Key Three:** Embracing Growth

- Lengthen tent pegs; do not hold back.
- Do not put a limit on God because He hasn't finished building yet.
- "Do not fear." God hasn't raised us up to fail. (Isaiah 54:4)
- We need to always be willing to grow.

So many Christians, unfortunately, they don't want to go higher. They don't want to be lifted up. They can't grow. In other words, they can't mature. Why? Because they've got a sign out and it's called "Completion." You don't arrive while you're alive. There is still room for you to grow. One of the greatest rooms is the room for improvement. And God has more in store for you. —Peter Mortlock

- God calls us to be “the head and not the tail.” (Deuteronomy 28:13)
- We choose whether to become big and strong or small and insignificant.
- The devil wants to bind us so that we stay small and ineffective.
- God has raised us up and seated us in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6).
- Caution: When a person starts to succeed, others try to pull them down. We can be tempted to become complacent and stay where it seems safe.
- Let go of anything that is “eating” at you, stunting your growth.

There is a little boy who wants to photograph an eagle, so he climbs up a mountain. As he is climbing up the mountain, he hears the flap of wings. He gets his camera out and he starts to click, but it's just a vulture. He climbs a little higher. All of a sudden, right in front of him, there's a majestic eagle. He's clicking his camera and taking photos. He's in awe; this was his dream, this was his passion. All of a sudden the eagle swoops down to the valley below and picks up a prey and begins to soar again. The little boy is photographing it all; he is ecstatic. Then the eagle swoops again to the valley floor. And the little boy thinks, “He's going to get another prey.” Instead of swooping back up, the eagle hit the valley floor. The little boy couldn't believe it. The little boy burst into tears. What happened to this majestic eagle? The little boy had to find out. He climbs all the way down into the valley. It took a long time but he makes the journey. As he gets near the eagle, he sees the eagle is dead. The little boy is sobbing. He turns the eagle over and there attached to the eagle's chest is a weasel. Now the weasel was way smaller than the eagle. But the weasel had eaten out the heart of the eagle. The interesting thing is: the eagle could have let go of that weasel but chose not to.

Effect: Which points in this section were significant to you? In which areas do you need greater faith for multiplication? In which areas do you need to embrace growth?

Notes:

Part Two: “Don't Put a Roof on It!”

Video Sessions 4-6

In the island of Crete, there's a government tax of 45 percent when you finish building your house and put the roof on it. So often people build one story and put another floor on top of it instead of a roof. All of the reinforcement is poking through. It looks like they haven't finished; but really, they don't want to pay that 45 percent tax. There's no second story ever to be built. They have no intention of going up, going higher. But in [our walk with] God, we're not called to put the roof on. We are called to go higher, to stretch out and to enlarge. —Peter Mortlock

Activator: What are some key factors in being able to see with spiritual eyes? What helps us to get the vision God wants us to have?

Purpose: To highlight the importance of having vision that goes beyond current circumstances.

🔑 **Key One:** Going Higher

- We are meant to keep going higher; we are not meant to stop.
- When we go “up the mountain” with God, we discover: 1) There is new vision; 2) There is revelation; 3) There is provision (Genesis 22:14).
- Going higher means getting above the noise of the world.
- Going higher means we are a threat to the enemy; he is pleased when we stop trying to grow.

🔑 **Key Two:** Limiting Your View

- Ten ways to limit God in our lives. We limit: 1) the fulfillment of God’s promises with our lack of patience; 2) the manifestations of the supernatural by having no faith; 3) the completion of our personal assignment by lacking courage; 4) our capacity for anointing with our lack of room. We are limiting: 5) God’s ability to use us with a lack of obedience; 6) our accomplishments of great things because we lack dreams; 7) godly success by our lack of character; 8) our choices because we lack wisdom; 9) the display of God’s glory because we lack fruit; 10) our vision because we have a limited view.

Wisdom: Going higher with God means seeing more. The more we can see, the more we can have.

🔑 **Key Three:** Faith Needs a View

- Faith has to see; it must have a view.
- Faith sees beyond impossibilities.
- Faith sees beyond the natural.
- We must be intent to climb to the summit.
Example: The eagle seeks the highest place for its nest. Not only is there protection there, it also sees what is available.
- A higher view inspires faith (Revelation 4:1).
- God lives on a higher plane (Isaiah 55:8).

☞ **Key Four: Two Views: Faith and Flesh**

- Abraham (Abram) lived a life of faith; Lot lived in the flesh (Genesis 13:1-4; 5-7).

Wisdom: Feed the Spirit man. If you feed the flesh, it will subdue the Spirit within you.

- Abraham rested in God's ability to provide for him regardless of Lot's choice (Genesis 13:6,8,9).

*We must die to the flesh. Remember, "being right" is not a fruit of the Spirit.
—Peter Mortlock*

☞ **Key Five: Developing Faith**

- Faith is developed through trials.

Wisdom: No one learns how to sail on a smooth sea.

- God knows the finished picture of your destiny.
- We were never promised an easy life. Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow Me."
- God wants to help you develop and learn.
- In faith we gravitate to the higher ground. (*In flesh we gravitate to the easy life.*) (Genesis 13:10-13)
- We need to be rid of the influence of the flesh (Genesis 13:14-18).

We need to deal with our carnality side so that we can hear from God. And there's a price. There's a price to be paid in getting to the place of progression where we begin to hear, where we begin to see a vision from God. But there's no two ways about it, the journey is well worth it. —Peter Mortlock

Effect: Does your faith need to get a better view? How might you be limiting your view? What points in this section were significant to you?

Notes:

Part Three: Becoming a Mountain Climber

Video sessions 7-10

Activator: What characteristics does a spiritual “mountain climber” need to have?

Purpose: To highlight some key factors in becoming a spiritual “mountain climber.”

☞ **Key One:** Getting a Vision for the Future

- Set your view above the place where you are right now (Genesis 13:14).
- We have an obligation to see beyond the vision of past generations.
- We have an obligation to have a vision for the sake of the next generation (Genesis 13:15-17).

☞ **Key Two:** Climbing Higher

“Problems are only the launching pad for new achievements.” —Unknown

- Your volume depends on your vision. Your vision depends on your view. Your view depends on your vantage point.
- The negative (reverse) is also true: Limited volume comes from a limited vision, view, and vantage point.
- Climb to the place where you can have the view that Jesus had when He said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18),

Why do some churches prosper and some churches get blessed and others don’t? God does not have favorites. The Bible is very clear that He doesn’t have favorites. It’s because some are prepared to climb the mountain. Why do some people prosper when others don’t? Why are some blessed when other people aren’t? It is not because God has favorites. The answer begins with vision. Some people are willing to climb higher than others. —Peter Mortlock

- There are twenty-six mountains named in Scripture. All have meaning. Important mountains that we must climb to a higher point:

1) Mt. Sinai	Revelation
2) Mt. Carmel	Faith and authority
3) Mt. Moriah	Sacrifice
4) Mt. of Olives	Prayer
5) Mt. of Transfiguration	Worship
6) Mt. Hermon	Unity
7) Mt. Bethel	Fellowship
8) Mt. Calvary	Cross

Knowledge for Insight: These mountain-climbing words are _____ in our generation: faithfulness, sacrifice, commitment, patience, faith, and endurance.

- Caution: Don't be jealous of other mountain climbers who were willing to climb higher than you are.

🔑 **Key Three:** Characteristics of a Climber

- Mountain climbers cannot operate in the flesh (Genesis 19:16-22).

Knowledge for Insight: God will encourage us to believe Him or allow us to stay in fear. The choice belongs to _____.

- Mountain climbers are prepared to believe that nothing is impossible.
- Mountain climbers are not content to stay in the valleys.
- Mountain climbers do not spend time with people who pull them down.

Interview with a mountain climber:

(Peter Mortlock recounts an interview with Sir Edmund Hillary)

I can recall visiting Sir Edmund Hilary here in New Zealand. I often say to people, "Who was the first man to climb Mt. Everest?" It was Sir Edmund Hilary, a New Zealander. A Kiwi. Then I say, "Who was the second man to climb Mt. Everest?" And you know, to be honest the answer is of course, it doesn't matter. It's always the first man.

Dr. James Davis, a dear friend of mine, arranged a meeting with Sir Edmund Hilary. My wife (Bev) and I, with James, went to see Sir Edmund Hilary in his home. By this time Sir Edmund Hilary was an older man. In fact, he died just a few months later. We were some of the last people to spend a significant amount of time with him. We spent over an hour and a half in his home talking with him.

(Some excerpts from the interview)

Peter: What advice would you give a young man like me?

Sir Edmund: Don't ever live a mundane life. This world is still full of great adventures. A lot of challenges still remain. People say it's all been done, but it's not true. Think up the things for yourself."

The greatest pleasure comes from doing challenges, overcoming things, especially things that no one else has done before.

You may be frightened at times. Never settle for a mundane life.

I'm always looking for things to do, especially things that other people haven't done before. There's a great satisfaction that comes from that. I look for challenges and I carry them through to the end.

Bev: Did you find the people to help you or did they find you?

Sir Edmund: I had to find the people to help me; they did not find me. Nothing was handed to me on a plate. You need a team. I could not have done it alone. (And then he said, with a twinkle in his eye) But I would have given it a go.

You have to enjoy the journey. At times, even it may be miserable, but you have to enjoy it. Being afraid, living on the edge, is a stimulating factor. It's not worth the effort if there is no fear factor.

- Note: Jesus climbed mountains (Matthew 5:1).
- Mountain climbers should not climb in fear (Genesis 19:30).

Effect: Do you consider yourself a “mountain climber?” Why or why not? How would you like to be more like a “mountain climber?”

Notes:

Part Four: Principles of Mountain Climbing

Video Sessions 11-14

Activator: What do you think most people need to understand about climbing spiritual mountains? What would inspire them?

Purpose: To identify some key principles of spiritual “mountain climbing.”

🔑 Key One: The Flesh Hates Mountain Climbing

- Requires faithfulness, sacrifice, commitment, patience, faith, endurance.
- Requires fleshly desires to be put aside.

🔑 Key Two: The Enemy Understands Mountain Climbing

- The devil wants us to climb his mountain rather than to climb the mountains of God.
- Consider: The devil tempted Jesus by taking Him to the high places (Luke 4:5-8).
- Our enemy wants us to compromise on God's purpose; Satan wants us to climb his mountains: greed, lust, success, pride, selfish ambition
- The enemy's purpose is to push you over the edge.

Overcome the mountain of criticizing. Overcome the mountain of that attitude. Overcome that jealous spirit. Overcome always wanting to be noticed. We're called to be overcomers. So my question is, whose mountain or what mountain are you climbing? —Peter Mortlock

☞ **Key Three:** Preaching from a Mountaintop

- Preaching from a mountaintop means having a better perspective, a greater vision, and the right view—a place where we can see all that God has for His Church (Isaiah 52:7-10).
- Preaching from a mountaintop means having a broader view.
- Preaching from a mountaintop means believing the Word over experiences.
- Preaching from a mountaintop means believing for salvations, healings, and provision as a result of the Word.
- Preaching from a mountaintop means never arguing with the Word of God.

There is a great doctor, Jesus! He knows every cell. He knows every hair upon your head. He has the last word, the final word. If we believe what the doctor says, why don't we believe what God says? —Peter Mortlock

- Preaching from a mountaintop means saying what God says (Jeremiah 1:12; Proverbs 6:2).
- Preaching from a mountaintop means not speaking doubt.
- Preaching from a mountaintop can mean getting sores, blisters, and pain; but God has made provision to heal us.

☞ **Key Four:** Jesus and the Mountain

- Jesus went up the mountain to preach (Matthew 5).
- Jesus preached the beatitudes, which began with blessing.
- Jesus left His church on top of the mountain (Matthew 28:16-20).
- Jesus and His Church will return to the mountain (Isaiah 2:2; 40:9). Note: Genesis 8:4 tells us that Noah's Ark came to rest on a mountain. (The ark is a type of Jesus and His church.)

Will you be a mountain climber in life? Will you climb with Jesus? He's made a way for you; He's gone before you.

Start from where you are. You may be in the valley today, but would you begin to take a step? The next step is within you. Believing is a choice, believing is a decision. Would you choose to speak the Word of God and not the word of flesh? Would you have faith in God, have faith in His Word today? Have faith in what He says about you, that you are more than a conqueror. Greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.

Let's rise to the summit and let's enjoy the journey. And let's remember Hebrews 11 verse 6, "Without faith, it is impossible to please Him. He that comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who do diligently seek Him." So remember, as we climb the mountain, the reason for climbing the mountain is so you can see more."

Effect: The common thread throughout this course: *The higher we climb, the more we can see. The more we can view, the more we can see. The more we can see, the more we can have.* In what ways do you feel you are supposed to "climb higher?"

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

Knowledge for Insight Answers: Part Three: rare, us

SYNERGIZING ACROSS GENERATIONAL LINES

George Wood

***Dr. George O. Wood** is General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, USA, part of the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. The church has over 12,500 congregations in the United States, with over three million members and adherents. Dr. Wood also serves as chairman of the World Assemblies of God fellowship, with a global membership of over 64 million.*

Course Summary

Developed from a video teaching by George Wood, this course examines how to create synergistic relationships across generational lines. In doing this, we will examine why leaders need those relationships, the attitudes they should cultivate towards the next generation, and some practical ideas and advice for moving forward.

Part One: Why Synergize with the Next Generation?

Video Session 2

Activator: Is there a particular age group missing from your church? Which one?

Purpose: To present the necessity of synergizing with the next generation and the biblical model for those relationships.

🔑 Key One: Findings

- David Kinnaman, president of Barna Research Group, authored *unChristian*, which examines the attitudes the next generation of non-Christians holds about the Christian church, along with *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving the Church...and Rethinking Faith*. He found that:
 - Next generation non-Christians think the Christian church is too hypocritical, too focused on salvation, antihomosexual, sheltered, too political, and judgmental.
 - “The ages eighteen to twenty-nine are the black hole of church attendance. This age segment is missing in action from most congregations.”
 - “Overall, there is a 43 percent drop-off between the teens and early adult years in terms of church engagement. These numbers represent about eight million twentysomethings who were active churchgoers as teenagers but who are no longer particularly engaged in the church by their thirtieth birthday.”
 - The 43 percent who drop out are divided into three categories: nomads, who walk away from church engagement, but still consider themselves Christians; prodigals, who lose their faith, describing themselves as no longer Christian; and exiles, who are still invested in their Christian faith, but feel stuck between culture and the church.
 - Why are next-generation Christians dropping out of the church? And sometimes dropping out of the faith? Because they see the church as overprotective, shallow, antiscience, repressive, exclusive, and doubtless.
 - “Most young Christians are struggling less with their faith in Christ than with their experience of the church. This incredible gap between the body of the Christ and the head of the church, Jesus Himself.”
- Picture: The next generation in the West is increasingly non-Christian.
- Many of the next generation that we need to reach are leaving the church.

🔑 Key Two: Biblical Model – Synergizing with the Next Generation

- Paul’s relationship with Timothy (Acts 16).

- Five attitudes for older Christians to hold toward the next generation:
 - We are coworkers, not in an employee/employer relationship.
 - We are brothers and sisters, not enemies.
 - We are fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, and not strangers.
 - We are servants of Jesus and not masters of people.
 - We are men and women of God.

Effect: How would you describe your efforts to engage the next generation? How would you describe your attitude towards the next generation (especially in light of the five attitudes above)?

Notes:

Part Two: Adopting the Attitudes

Video Sessions 3-7

Activator: What do you think the next generation is seeking from your church? What have you found to be effective/ineffective in engaging the next generation?

Purpose: To expand on the five attitudes Christians need to have towards the next generation.

🔑 Key One: We Are Coworkers

- Paul described Timothy as his “synergos” — “ergos,” meaning work, and “syn,” meaning to work together (Romans 16:21; 1 Thessalonians 3:2).
- The younger generation is looking for belonging in Christian community.
- Ministry flows out of relationship, not out of structure.

One of the most common complaints I get from younger staff pastors is that their senior pastor never takes time to share life with them. The only time they see him is within a formal, structural context. —George Wood

- *Model* the work of the ministry. Note: Timothy observed Paul’s work habits during his tenure at Ephesus (Acts 20:34; 19; 19:20).

🔑 Key Two: We Are Brothers and Sisters

- We are not enemies; we do not have adversarial relationships with the next generation.

- Paul refers to Timothy three times as a “brother.”
- Paul uses “brother” in regards to eight other people: Quartus, Sosthenes, Apollos, Titus, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Onesimus, and Philemon.
- The younger generation is looking for leaders who have the courage to unite the body of Christ rather than fragment it.

Billy Graham (when criticized for his wide circle of association), “He drew a circle to shut me out. Rebel, heretic, a thing to flout. But love and I had the wit to win. We drew a circle that took him in.”

- Witness to the world with brotherhood; they will never know we are disciples if we are fighting one another.

When we listen to people who are voices that do nothing but attack, attack, attack, that is not going to win this world for Jesus Christ. That is not going to bring health to the body of Christ. —George Wood

- Take seriously the Word of Jesus (John 13:35).

🔑 **Key Three:** We Are Fathers and Sons, Mothers and Daughters

- We are not strangers; we are family.
- Paul calls Timothy his son.
 - 1 Corinthians 4:17: “my son whom I love”
 - Philippians 2:22: “as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel”
 - 1 Timothy 1:2: “my true son in the faith”
 - 1 Timothy 1:18: “my son”
 - 2 Timothy 1:2: “my dear son”
 - Timothy underwent the painful rite of circumcision as a young adult, thereby demonstrating from the start that he was willing to follow Paul’s direction.
- We need to ask: Do we love our next-generation sons and daughters? Are we afraid of them? Are we afraid they will reformat the church?

Knowledge for Insight: Studies estimate that _____ percent or more of those born between 1979 and 1994 are children of divorce.

- The next generation is looking for intergenerational relationships.

[The next generation] is looking for moms and dads, grandpas and grandmas. They want to know what it's like to be considered part of a normal family. Shouldn't the church, as a whole, and leaders in particular, provide that kind of community of family for them? We are family before we are anything else.
—George Wood

☞ **Key Four: We Are Servants of Jesus**

- Philippians 1:1: Paul identifies Timothy as a servant of Jesus Christ.
- We must embrace servanthood in the midst of a competitive society.

One of my seminary professors was Dr. Robert Munger, who wrote the little pamphlet, "My Heart, Christ's Home," which has been circulated probably into the millions. I'll never forget Dr. Munger one time, in a classroom setting, going to the board and drawing a triangle on the board. He said, "In the secular system, in the business world, the idea is that you start at the bottom and you gradually work to the top of the triangle. Finally, you get to the very pinnacle, and when you are at the very pinnacle, everybody else is underneath you, supporting you. You are on top." He said, "The Christian way of ministry is this." He flipped the triangle and he drew it with the point toward the bottom. He said, "The idea of Christian ministry is to start out here and gradually work your way down, so that you are a servant of all." —George Wood

- We must value servanthood (Mark 10:42-45).

☞ **Key Five: We Are Men and Women of God**

- People who are called "man of God" in the Bible: Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha (of whom the term was used more than anyone else), Igdaliah (Jeremiah 35:4), and Timothy (on two occasions).
- "Man of God" title describes a prophet or an especially godly person who proclaimed the Word of the Lord, which was accompanied by signs and wonders.
- Paul, writing to Timothy says, "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness." (1 Timothy 6:11)
- Paul never refers to himself as "man of God," but demonstrated it to Timothy by operating in the supernatural power of God.
- Paul demonstrated how to operate in persecution.
- Paul demonstrated the three p's: preaching, power, and persecution. (Note: many preachers are only interested in the first two p's.)
- We must give testimony to God's great acts and His acts of supernatural power.

Wisdom: For the next generation to be effective, we must demonstrate ourselves as men and women of God.

My sister went off to Bible College; she was eighteen years of age. She had been afflicted with bad eyesight and wore lenses that were more like the bottom of a Coke bottle. She had 20 percent vision in one eye and 50 percent vision in the other.

Her first semester in Bible College, there was a great revival on campus. She was praying at the altar one night. While she was praying at the altar, she felt an impression. "Doris, take off your glasses."

Now if you grew up in the Assemblies of God in the '40s and '50s and early '60s, you were prayed for if you wore glasses, that you would be healed. But my sister had been prayed for so many times because her eyesight was so bad, she resisted the impulse.

Second time, "Doris, take off your glasses." Third time, "Doris, take off your glasses." In that third occasion, she fell into a visionary experience where she saw in her vision Jesus on the cross. She was so into the vision that she reached up her hand to take blood from the cross and put it on her eyes.

What she did, in fact, was take the glasses off, jerked them off, and threw them clear across the platform. When she came out of that vision she had 20/20 vision and has maintained it all of her life.

When you have something like that happen in your family, it is a ballast when you're going through seasons of doubt. The very bedrock of my faith was a miracle that I could not explain away. It was there in the face of my sister.

—George Wood

- We must focus less on techniques, tapping into the right methods, using proper demographics, reading everything on leadership, debriefing on the services, and social media.
- We must live a life that says, "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith may not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power."
- We should allow opposition to reveal our true character.
- We should call on the next generation to be men and women of God.
- We should hope, pray, and work for the next generation to do greater things.

Review: The five attitudes we need to have towards the next generation are:

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

Which of these do you need to develop in your life and ministry? What ideas do you have to make those changes?

Notes:

Part Three: Advice for Synergizing Pastors

Video Sessions 8 and 9

Activator: Have you made an effort to connect with pastors in your community? What was the result?

Purpose: To provide guidance for pastors who are stepping out into synergistic efforts.

🔑 Key One: The Kingdom Is a Mosaic

- The Kingdom of God is bigger than any one denomination.
- We need a great love and respect for those of other denominations.
- We need a great love and respect for our own denomination.

🔑 Key Two: The Church Is a Mystery and Masterpiece

- The Church of Jesus Christ is His mystery and masterpiece—on display before the world and before the invisible powers and authorities of both good and evil (Ephesians 3:14,15).

🔑 Key Three: Getting Outside Your Box

- Take time to form relationships beyond those you are forming at your church.
- Avoid isolating yourself in your own denomination.
- Remember: You are part of a larger faith community.

🔑 Key Four: Synergizing by Sharing Resources

- Invite other leaders to share resources.
- Make your resources available outside of your denomination.

“The Kingdom of God is bigger than any one denomination or tribe. We’ve taken a perspective that we want to serve not only our own Assemblies of God—we want to serve the body of Christ in any way we can. That’s been our heart and that is our attitude.” —George Wood

Effect: In what ways could these Keys of Understanding relate to synergizing across generational lines?

Notes:

Part Four: Advice for New Ministers

Video Sessions 9-11

Activator: (For those who have been in ministry for a number of years.) What were some foundational principles that guided you as a minister?

Purpose: To provide three principles for new ministers.

🔑 **Key One:** Laying a Strong Foundation

- Discipline: Being diligent to take the time to prepare for ministry by developing a deeper engagement with the Scriptures.

Wisdom: A healthy, growing, vibrant pastoral leadership helps to create a growing, healthy, vibrant church.

🔑 **Key Two:** For New Ministers – Being Is More Important Than Doing

- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-10; Matthew 7:21-23)

Wisdom: The use of those gifts must be connected to a character that is resonant with the character of Jesus Christ.

- Character is more important than skills sets.
- Formation of Christ in us is critical (Galatians 4:19)

🔑 **Key Three:** For New Ministers – Remaining in God's Will

- In thinking about the future: If you are in God's will today, you'll be in God's will tomorrow.

Knowledge for Insight: The New Testament addresses the _____ of a minister more than it addresses the location and type of ministry he should have.

- Principle of Life: Excel where you are today with what you have (Mark 4:24,25).

If we fill each day by being in God's will, doing the best we can for this day, we can be confident that He holds all of our tomorrows. —George Wood

Effect: In what ways could these three Keys of Understanding relate to synergizing across generational lines?

Notes:

In Conclusion: What are the three most valuable insights you gained from this course?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write down any questions you still have. Pray and ask God to reveal the answers as you seek Him.

Knowledge for Insight Answers: Part Two: 40 Part Four: character

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