



SESSION
FOUR

TEACHER EDITION

GLOBAL CHURCH TRAINING CURRICULUM

Billion Soul Network® | Global Church Learning Center®

Global Church Training Curriculum

Copyright © 2014 by James O. Davis

Contents and/or cover may not be reproduced in whole or part in any form without written consent of the authors.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible, New King James Version*. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the *King James Version*. Public domain.

Scripture quotations marked TLB are taken from *The Living Bible*. Copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, *New Living Translation*. Copyright© 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked AMP are taken from the *Amplified Bible*. Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation.

Scripture quotations marked NCV are taken from The Holy Bible, *New Century Version*®. Copyright © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Scripture quotations marked HCSB are taken from the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*. Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from the *The Message*. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson.

Editor and Developer: Robin MacIntosh

Robin MacIntosh serves on staff at Grace Fellowship of Four Corners, an interdenominational church plant in the Orlando, Florida area. She received her M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from the School for International Training (SIT) Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont. Her experience includes writing curricula for students from a variety of cultural, professional, and educational backgrounds.



Billion Soul Publishing
Orlando, Florida
www.billionsoulpub.com

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 that reads "James O. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- ❖ **Preview:** Always preview the course as a whole with the students. This means reading through the explanations of the course features and giving a simple outline of the course.
- ❖ **Activator:** Use activator questions to activate students' prior knowledge. Asking a question at the *beginning* of teaching elicits the natural wonder that leads to good concentration. Due to the uniqueness of your environment, altering the activator questions might be necessary.
- ❖ **Interaction:** There are many opportunities for students to do listening, writing, and speaking tasks, as well as small and large group discussion. Minimal teacher direction has been given, to allow for the variety of settings in which these courses will occur. Whenever time allows, and whenever appropriate, encourage discussion, either between partners or in the whole group.

Important: Always give a time limit for discussion or a limited number of responses you will take from the group.
- ❖ **Questions:** Ask questions as the Holy Spirit leads, during the course. Be clear about the response you are looking for. Do you want students to write it in their personal notes? Do you want a certain number of individuals to respond? Do you want a showing of hands? Is it a rhetorical question that requires no immediate response?
- ❖ **Fill in the Blanks (Knowledge for Insight):** Some of the "Knowledge for Insight" boxes have blanks for students to fill in. *Always* have students guess before you tell them the answer.
- ❖ **Share Your Stories:** Your own narratives and examples will bring value to the experience. Whenever appropriate, and time allows, share from your heart as the Holy Spirit leads.
- ❖ **Effects:** Use this for written responses, oral responses, or both. Sometimes students are explicitly asked to write something down. However, it is ultimately up to your discretion, depending on the environment and time available.

- ❖ **Review:** Always summarize what has been taught. For increased interaction: build an oral summary as a group by asking students what important points were discussed.
- ❖ **Time:** Skipping some of the longer narratives may be necessary to finish the course on time. In most cases, they should be considered optional. It should be understood that their purpose is to enhance a main idea with a personal story or example. Read them ahead of time, to determine which ones you will read during the course.

Explanations:

- ❖ **Objectives (The Purpose):** The learning objectives are not specified, but left open, to be determined by the teacher in each environment. For example, in a lecture environment, learning objectives would differ drastically from potential learning objectives in a small group environment. “The Purpose” is intended to replace objectives, by communicating what will be *provided for* the student, not *expected of* the student.
- ❖ **Narratives:** (In italics) You may notice these are much more conversational in nature. This is meant to keep the quotes authentic, and as close to the original oral narrative as possible. Narratives not included in the student book (included only in the teaching notes) are optional.

Expansion Activities:

- ❖ **Problem Solving:** Relay a challenging scenario (related to the topic) from your ministry experience. Ask students to get into groups, or partners, and decide how they would respond. Then, share how you responded. Note: there will generally not be only one right answer, but this will serve to promote useful thought for future experiences.
- ❖ **Feedback Groups:** Ask students to get into groups and discuss: what was most valuable about the course, what they found most practical, and what points they will be teaching to others. Have the group report on one—three in each category. (This is one way to get quick feedback, and to help students remember what they learned.)
- ❖ **Developing homework, practical assignments, or reflection assignments:** Teachers with experience are encouraged to use their own ideas, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, to develop subsequent teaching and learning experiences out of this content.

CONTENTS

1. Stewarding Your Life's Mission <i>by Jack Hayford</i>	9
2. Turning Members into Missionaries <i>by Ronnie Floyd</i>	32
3. The Five Core Commitments <i>by Mark Balmer</i>	52
4. Knowing the Whole Bible <i>by Walter Kaiser</i>	71
5. Climbing Visionary Mountains <i>by Peter Mortlock</i>	118
6. Synergizing Across Generational Lines <i>by George Wood</i>	141

THE GLOBAL CHURCH TRAINING CURRICULUM

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1. Character Formation *by Stan Toler*
2. How to Cast Vision *by Elmer Towns*
3. Strong Families *by Paul Cole and Joann Cole Webster*
4. Winning My Race *by Ben Lerner*
5. Becoming a Kingdom-Minded Leader *by Eddy Leo*
6. **Stewarding Your Life's Mission *by Jack Hayford***

GLOBAL MISSIONS

1. Unreached People Groups *by Alex Abraham*
2. Developing a Christian Worldview *by Philip Jenkins*
3. Funding the Mission *by Kenneth Ulmer*
4. The Making of a Missional Church *by Leonard Sweet*
5. The Strategic Church *by Frank Damazio*
6. **Turning Members into Missionaries *by Ronnie Floyd***

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

1. Principles of Church Planting *by Ed Stetzer*
2. How to Plant a Church in a Village *by Alex Mitala*
3. The Healthy Church *by David Dykes*
4. How to Plant a Church in a Global City *by David Sobrepeña*
5. Doing Church in Multiple Locations *by Greg Surratt*
6. **The Five Core Commitments *by Mark Balmer***

EVANGELISM & DISCIPLESHIP

1. How to Share Your Faith *by John Sorensen*
2. Understanding the Great Commission *by James Hudson Taylor IV*
3. Prayer and Fasting *by David Mohan*
4. How to Study the Bible *by Howard Hendricks*
5. Everyone in Ministry *by John Ed Mathison*
6. **Knowing the Whole Bible *by Walter Kaiser***

VISIONARY NETWORKING

1. Essentials of Networking *by James O. Davis*
2. Developing a Synergy Plan *by Doug Beacham*
3. Crafting a Global Networking Church *by Suliasi Kurulo*
4. Synergizing Apostolic Movements *by Glenn Burris*
5. **Climbing Visionary Mountains *by Peter Mortlock***
6. **Synergizing Across Generational Lines *by George Wood***

ELECTIVES

1. How to Lead a Church *by Joel Hunter*
2. The Seven Organizational Shifts *by Jo Anne Lyon*
3. Conflict and Resolution *by Ademola Ishola*
4. How to Preach to Any Audience *by James Merritt*
5. How to Coach a Winning Team *by Tom Mullins*
6. Godly Women Who Helped Shape the World *by Kimberly Tibbs*

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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor's voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: "Wisdom," "Understanding," "Known" (Knowledge for Insight), "Purpose," and "Effect." These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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.

The 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.

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.

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared. Check for real understanding of stewardship. If students are unsure, provide the basic definition: the role of protecting something or being responsible for something. Give one or two real-life examples of stewardship in real life.

Activator: What is stewardship?

The 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.
 - Fresh overflow of His Spirit in our lives
 - Constant feeding on the Word
 - Waiting on the Lord
 - Being instructed and corrected by God
- Daily time with God needs to be an established pattern in our lives.
 - Cultivate an internal sense of accountability leading to discipline, rather than a religious routine.
- 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:
 - Personal private prayer: not looking for your next sermon, but listening for what God is speaking to you.
 - Intercessory life: areas of responsibility, concern, caring, congregation to nation, fellowship of churches, prayer for Israel, etc.
 - Suggestion: Pray over the worship space:
 - For God to permeate the place with His presence.
 - For the people who will fill the seats.

🔑 **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.
 - Worship is focused on the throne and communicates the reigning dominion of the Kingdom.
 - The sense of the Kingdom is prominent, and time spent worshiping Him is the anchor of all activities.
- Cultivate leaders:
 - It's about discipling a flock of God, not just generating a crowd. It's cultivating people effective in their own life, not just effective in church life.
 - Do not purpose simply to mobilize people toward your own vision.

- Purpose to partner with people, to move toward the realization of the calling of the entire church body.

TEACHER: Students fill “purpose” in the blank as you read below.

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

- Focus on growing the people, not the church.
 - People who are growing will multiply the ministry. (There may not be numerical growth, but there will be growing impact.)
 - People who are growing will be focused on the Kingdom and not on themselves.
- Nurture leaders:
 - The nurturing of the leaders is as important as the nurturing of the congregation.
 - Investing in others’ lives is not meant to be done as an effort to accomplish your goals.
 - Invest in the lives of the leaders to help them accomplish God’s goals for their lives.
 - Give your love and service for them, just as Jesus gave of Himself to the disciples.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (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:
 - Delegating should be related to your gifting. Give away what you are not called to.
 - You should not be “off-loading.” Let your heart and passion *remain* with ministries you have delegated to others.
 - Trust the leaders you choose.
 - Make financial provision for them to minister.
 - Take special interest in children and youth: they are the Lambs who will grow into Sheep. These ministries are pivotal to cultivating the body.

🔑 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.
 - Pursue spiritual priorities by keeping centered in His Word.
 - Keep your lifestyle focused on the patterns of the character of God.
 - Work alongside people who have the same goals.

- It is your job to ensure wise and judicious management of budget.
 - Do not persuade those who manage the budget to go into debt with your vision.
 - Vision that goes outside provision is likely not from God.

TEACHER: Students fill “reoccurring” in the blank as you read below.

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.
 - Constant learning process
 - Constantly being refined
- The *health* of the marriage is one of the primary requirements of a leader.
 - Leaders keeps their house in order (take care of their family, and maintain a healthy standing in the community).
 - A leader keeps *marriage* in order (relates to spouse with a Christlike love.)
- 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.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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:

Supplementary Sessions

TEACHER: Tell students that the next section has been developed from separate but related instruction.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The Purpose: to provide practical guidelines for good stewardship of time

Key One: Put the “Big Rocks” in First

TEACHER: The narrative below will illustrate what “big rocks” means.

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.”

TEACHER: Pause and ask students what they think the message of this illustration could be. Encourage them not to read on until they have come up with a guess.

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).

Examples:

- Quiet time with the Lord
- Quality time with your family
- Time to focus on mental and physical health—exercise, education, recreation
- Divide your big rocks into categories and begin putting them on the calendar.
 - Putting your priorities on the calendar is essential; you can't measure progress on something until it's on the calendar.

TEACHER: Students fill "7-9" in the blank as you read below.

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

- Suggestion: Consider the next seven days on your calendar and begin scheduling in the big rocks.
 - What is the big rock for your marriage?
 - What is the big rock for your physical health?
 - What is the big rock for your preaching ministry? For your teaching ministry?
- After you have scheduled big rocks, work the smaller pebbles, sand, and water in your schedule (the less important tasks).

- Important: Do not try to schedule the big rocks last. You will run out of time.

🔑 **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.
 - Make it simple, but not shallow.
 - Make it reproducible, but not rigid.
 - Make it faithful to the call, but flexible.
- Cultivate the elements in your life that God can use to reproduce disciples and multiply Christ followers to finish the Great Commission.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.
 - What we believe about Jesus (Christology): He is the only begotten Son of God, born of a virgin. He is our Redeemer, our only true Savior. He has been, is, and always will be one with the Father and the Spirit.
 - What we believe about the church (Ecclesiology): The church is to be one, and our common call is centered on Jesus Christ.
- 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)

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

Activator: How do you decide what to preach?

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

Key One : Preach the Word

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” (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.
 - The world is operating out of blindness; you must have great compassion for those who are stumbling in the darkness.

- Remember, it is only by the grace of God you, yourself, are no longer trapped in the tragedy of the brokenness of the world.

TEACHER: Pose the question (Jack Hayford posed in his video teaching): “Would you be angry with a blind man when he fell? We should no more be angry at the world for its fallen state. It is a waste of time and energy.”

- Deliver the Word out of the substance of your life, not out of convenience.
 - Consider Jesus’ mother Mary: she opened herself to the Word. It grew in her and was delivered through her.
 - The Holy Spirit has given you the power to bear and deliver the message of God.
 - Let the Word be freshly conceived in you, grow in you, and be delivered through you week after week, to reveal Jesus.
- Let the purpose of your message be not only to communicate His grace, but to also make disciples.

TEACHER: Students fill in “biblical” in the blank as you read below.

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.
 - May be greatly assisted by the Word, but must come from prayer.
 - Your passion will come from your time of prayer.
 - In times of prayer, the fire of the Holy Spirit will prepare the substance of what you will feed the people.

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.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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:
 - How many guest speakers do you want to have this year? What Sundays do you want them to come?
 - How many Sundays will you take for vacation this year? Which Sundays do you want to go?
 - How many Sundays are going to be focused on holidays?
- 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.)

- What will your goals be (what do you want to make sure to preach about) for those Sundays? How many weeks will you spend on each goal?
- What is important to your church? What is important to your people?
- What is the vision of the house? Where do you believe the Lord is taking you and the congregation over the next year to two years?
- What books of the Bible or subjects need to be taught?
- Planning ahead can:
 - Free your mind to focus on material and resources
 - Lower the overall stress of preaching
 - 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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

Effect:

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

Notes:

Part Six: Conclusion

Video Session 15

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.
 - Fill the pulpit, and expect God to fill the building.
 - Be ready when it's time to get up and deliver the Word of God.
 - Give your very best no matter the size of the group.
 - Take your ministry seriously, so people will take you seriously.
 - Preach every message to the Great I AM.

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)

TEACHER: Ask students what they learned from this story. Encourage discussion.

TEACHER: Ask students to look back at their answers in “Effect” in “Part One.” Encourage them to commit to making any real changes they believe God may be prompting them to make. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion. Pray over them, to become better stewards of their life’s mission.

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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor's voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: "Wisdom," "Understanding," "Known" (Knowledge for Insight), "Purpose," and "Effect." These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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.

The 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.

Part One: The Big Picture

Video Sessions 1-3

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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?
 - There are 11,600+ people groups in the world; 6,700 of those groups are unreached.
 - Of the 6,700 unreached, 3,800 have never heard the Gospel.
- 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 assignment is big, and we must not shy away from it.
 - *Every* disciple of Jesus Christ must be committed to making disciples of all nations, all people groups in the world.
- 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?
 - To partner and network across denominational lines.
 - To take the Gospel to a world that is in desperate need of hearing it.

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

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen (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.”

“All nations” means all people groups of the world (not geographical territories).

- God empowers us with the authority of Christ for the Great Commission:
 - We have biblical authority to go and make disciples.
 - We have spiritual authority to go and make disciples.

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:

“You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

- God is completely committed to bringing the world into a saving relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ:

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:9,10)

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11,12)

- Pastors need to see themselves as equippers of the saints.
 - Get people ready to join in fulfilling the Great Commission.
 - Mobilize people for Gospel advancement in their communities, families, relationships, nation, and people groups around the world.
- Pastors need to think not in terms of how many people they reached, but how many people were sent.

Think in terms of:

- Who are we sending as missionaries to their families this week?
- Who are we sending to be missionaries in their businesses this week?
- Who are we sending to be missionaries in the cities this week? The nation? The world?

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

- Prayer invites the power of God to move through your church members.
 - Are you praying for them? How much are you praying? How are you praying?
 - Do you pray for your members to become missionaries?
 - Do you pray for your members to really be committed to taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth?
- 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.

(Read Ronnie Floyd's description of his prayer time)

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.
 - Fasting is defined as: abstinence from food with a spiritual goal in mind.
 - Consider also fasting your practices, such as social media, to have more time with God.

- Change your math from addition to multiplication.
 - Discipleship is about multiplication, not just adding people to your congregation.
 - Multiplication happens when you influence and invest in others.

- Understand the theological urgency.
 - People are hopeless, desperate, lost, and bound for hell without God.
 - Jesus alone is the only Way, Truth, and Life. There is no other way for anyone to get to the Father but through Him. (See John 14:6)
 - When people pass from this earth, they will either go to the presence of God, or away from the presence of God.

- Understand the statistical urgency (according to missiologists).
 - Less than 1 billion out of 7 billion people in the world are Christ followers.
 - 2.6 billion people have rejected Christ. (38 percent)
 - 50 percent of the world has never heard the Gospel.
 - 1.7 billion people currently have no way to hear the Gospel.

(In other words, out of the 11,600 people groups, 6,000 are unreached, and at least 3,700 have no Gospel witness at all.)

- Change your passion

“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man’s foundation.” (Romans 15:20)

 - Ask yourself:
 - Do I desire to go into the places in my communities that are dark and lost and penetrate them with the good news of Christ?
 - Am I willing to go to the dark cities of the world? (Eighty percent of the world’s population now live in cities.)

- Be willing to do ministry in ways you've never done ministry before.
- Be willing to become a missionary: where you are and around the world.
- Let the Holy Spirit use you to call God's people to full-time ministry service: to be pastors, missionaries, church planters, and other roles.

TEACHER: Review main points. Review the questions in this section (the Effect questions are based on those above). Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

Read this example from the Southern Baptist Convention:

- The Southern Baptist Convention has 50,000 churches, twelve national entities, 10,000 missionaries, and 1,100 associations of churches. Ronnie Floyd led a group of twenty-one people to study the organization thoroughly and to see what would be involved in bringing a Great Commission resurgence to the churches throughout the denomination. The leaders voted to implement the changes needed, and the denomination has since experienced massive changes. Already millions of dollars have been used for Gospel advancement in places where the Gospel has not been before.

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

- Pray for God to do a great work through your church.
 - Pray for church members who are ready to say, “Here I am! Send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)
 - Pray for God to use the families in the church to make a difference for Jesus Christ.
 - Pray to plant churches and plant seeds for generations to come.
- 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.
 - See your community theologically, providentially, and purposefully. (Know that God has a plan to reach your city for Jesus Christ.)

- Study to see how to invade your city for Jesus Christ:
 - Identify people groups, cultural clusters, and distinctive communities in your region.
 - Ask: How can I customize (not change) the Gospel to reach the people in my city?
- Teach people to finance the Great Commission:
 - Teach them to become first-tenth givers.
 - Challenge them to give beyond the first tenth for the advancement of the Gospel.
 - Encourage them to leave 10 percent of their estate to their local church in their will and another 5 percent to an organization that will mobilize and train ministers to spread the Gospel around the world.
- 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.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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:

Supplementary Sessions

TEACHER: Tell students that the next section is developed from separate but related teachings by the original instructor.

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

TEACHER: This segment is from a separate sermon (from the earlier teaching) by Ronnie Floyd, in which he discusses the importance of believing for a city to be captured for Jesus Christ.

Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

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

🔑 Key One: Understand Your City

Then Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that you are extremely religious in every respect. For as I was passing through and observing the objects of your worship, I even found an altar on which was inscribed:

TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it—He is Lord of heaven and earth and does

not live in shrines made by hands. Neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives everyone life and breath and all things. From one man He has made every nationality to live over the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live. He did this so they might seek God, and perhaps they might reach out and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. (Acts 17: 22-27, HCSB)

- Context:
 - Athens, Greece, was the great intellectual center of the world. Idols abounded everywhere. Paul was talking about Jesus everywhere: the synagogue, the marketplace, and wherever he went.
 - Paul had encountered two groups: the Epicureans, who believed that God was not involved in the affairs of men; and the Stoics, who believed they were sufficient in themselves. Both groups became intrigued with Paul, and they brought him to the court of justice, the Areopagus.

TEACHER: Ask students if they believe they may have Epicureans and Stoics in their city today.

- Paul understood the city.
 - He knew the people's beliefs and acknowledged them. (Verse 22-25)
 - Paul declared to them, "While you live in the land of the religious, you also lived in the land of the lost." (paraphrase) Paul understood that they had religion, but not a personal relationship with Christ.
 - Paul customized his Gospel message for them by telling them about the "unknown God." (Verse 23)

Wisdom: If you're going to be effective in reaching your city, you have to become an expert in understanding your 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
 - In Acts 17, Paul spoke in a theological way, helping the people to understand their common Creator (verse 24), their common ancestry “from one man,” (verse 26) and a common problem. (See verses 30,31)
 - See what Paul saw in the people of your city: that all men and women, from every race, are in the same desperate need for a Savior.
- See your city providentially
 - God alone has “made every nationality to live over the whole earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live.” (Acts 17:26, HCSB)
 - God, in His sovereignty, has already designed a plan for you and the people in your city.

TEACHER: Ask students to identify, based on Acts 17, the three things that God determines. Answer: race, when you live, and where you live. Remind them that God has a plan for every person in their city, including them.

TEACHER: Ask students to look at Acts 17:27 and identify what God’s purpose is for the men and women of their city.

- See your city purposefully
 - God set the times and boundaries for men for a purpose:
“...perhaps they might reach out and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.” (Acts 17:27, HCSB)
 - God has orchestrated opportunities for all men to be saved.
 - Understand that God has already made provision for your city to be captured for Jesus Christ.

🔑 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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: This segment is from a separate sermon (from the earlier teaching) by Ronnie Floyd, in which he discusses the importance of prayer and fasting for effective ministry. Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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

“So we fasted and pleaded with our God about this, and He granted our request.” (Ezra 8:23)

Context: Ezra was leaving Babylon on his way back to Jerusalem with a group of people. He knew there was great potential for danger on that journey. He knew there were thieves on the path who were capable of killing his people. He was afraid for the lives of his people and was considering asking the king to send a cavalry to lead them through the dangerous part of the journey.

But he realized that would not make for a good testimony of his God. Ezra thought, “I’ve told the king that God has favored me and that God wants me to go back. How would it look to the king if I asked him for human help when I said, ‘God was able’?” (Paraphrase; see Ezra 8:21-23) So he proclaimed a fast to seek God for a safe journey.

- 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.

Wisdom: If you are willing to deny that which is natural in life, for a season, God will do something supernatural and powerful in your life, your family, and your ministry.

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.

"Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions." (See Ezra 8:21.)

- Believers are not to wait to "be humbled," but to humble themselves. (1 Peter 5:6)
- Believers need to put their goals before God, knowing He can do more in a moment than they could do on their own.

TEACHER: Ask students this question, "When was the last time God did something so great in your ministry that only He could get the credit?"

Key Two: Delivering a Vision through Fasting

- The vision needs to be birthed in prayer and fasting.
 - In the midst of prayer and fasting, Nehemiah received a vision to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall.
- The vision needs to be shaped by prayer and fasting.
 - Prayer and fasting keeps the vision focused and centered on God's plan.
 - Prayer and fasting keeps a heart filled with humility so that all the glory goes to God.

- The vision will be fulfilled by prayer and fasting.
 - The church at Antioch had the vision to advance the Gospel. They prayed and fasted before they sent out Paul and Barnabas.

🔑 **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.
 - Be your best for God before He comes.
 - Seek for God to do something mighty through you.
 - Seek for God to help you see what He sees, feel what He feels, speak what He speaks, and do what He wants you to do.
- Fast for your church to return to God.
 - Pray for repentance.
 - Pray for renewal by the Spirit of God.
 - Pray for a return to the Word in each life.
- Fast for your nation to have a spiritual awakening and revival.

If you're ready for God to do something new, fresh, powerful, and supernatural, pursue prayer and fasting in your life. —Ronnie Floyd

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor’s voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: “Wisdom,” “Understanding,” “Known” (Knowledge for Insight), “Purpose,” and “Effect.” These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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 thinking before instruction. Often accompanied by a quote from the original instructor or a Bible verse.

The 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.

TEACHER: Tell students that that Five Core Commitments characterize believers who are serious about following Jesus Christ and reaching the potential that God has for them. They will begin with the first in this section, “Commit to Being a Growing Follower of Jesus Christ.”

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)

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

Activator: What makes someone a follower of Christ?

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

Key One: Characteristics of Followers

From that time on Jesus began to explain to His disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to You!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” (Matthew 16: 21-23, NIV)

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “get behind Me,” “stumbling block,” and “human concerns.”

- Followers of Jesus follow God. They don’t lead.

“Get behind Me...”

- Followers of Jesus live as stepping-stones, not stumbling blocks.

“You are a stumbling block to Me...”

- Followers of Jesus think like God.

“...you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

🔑 **Key Two:** Commitments of Followers

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’” (Matthew 16:24, NIV)

(In the original language the verse implies, “Keep on denying yourself, keep on taking up your cross, and keep on following Me.”)

- 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, NLT)
- 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, NIV)

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

TEACHER: Point out that in the verse below, Paul says “Don't you realize....” Some believers were not realizing this important truth.

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19, NLT)

- 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.

You were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, to be made new in the attitude

of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22-24, NIV)

- Live like God is at work in you; be kind, loving, forgiving, and compassionate, as you put off the “old self.”

“... And do not grieve the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of bitterness, and rage, and anger, and brawling, and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate for one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:30-32, NIV)

- God has given you the power to become more and more like Him.

“Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children.” (Ephesians 5:1, 2, NLT)

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13, NIV)

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.)

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. (James 1:2-4, NLT)

- Great men and women of faith emerge from trials and testing. (See Hebrews 11.)
- God will always complete the work He begins in you.

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;” (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.

Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:11-13, NLT)

TEACHER: Remind students that Paul wrote Philippians from prison.

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.
 - Make sure you are led by the Spirit.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)
 - Be careful to align your desires with God’s desires.
- The temptation to accumulate the things of this world is only a hindrance to following Christ.

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26)

And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” (Luke 12:15)

Illustration:

A monk had spent his life traveling around the world. One day someone asked him, “Whom do you like to work with the best? People who are rich or people who are poor?” He answered immediately without any pause, “I love to work with the rich, of course.” And the person said, “But you’re a monk. Why do you

love to work with the rich?” The monk said, “The poor live under the delusion that one day money and possessions will bring happiness and contentment. On the other hand, the rich people already know. They have money, they have possessions, and there is no happiness and contentment.”

TEACHER: Students fill “satisfied” in the blank as you read below.

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.

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”

And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” (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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:36-39)

TEACHER: Ask students how they think commitments and connections are related.

- Commitments made outside of any connection with other Christ followers are often quickly broken.

Illustration: Commitments are like chains, and personal relationships are an important link. When that link is weak, the chain will break.

- Personal relationships keep you accountable.

- You will always struggle with commitments if you are not in open, honest relationships.
- Connecting with people helps us to celebrate.
 - Celebrate freedom together.
 - Celebrate salvation together.
 - Celebrate the Holy Spirit living in us.

🔑 Key Two: Live Life Together

TEACHER: Point out that hurt and discouragement can cause a person not to want to connect; but it is then that they are in most need of deep relationships.

- 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:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. (Acts 2:42, 46-47, NIV)

TEACHER: Students fill "suffered" in the blank as you read below. Point out that while Acts 2:42, 46-47 does not say this, it is clear in other Scriptures.

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.

“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12)

- Being together gives opportunity for correction for a believer heading in the wrong direction.

TEACHER: Ask students to think of a person they know who, over time, slowly disconnected from fellowship and eventually left the church. (Most everyone has seen that happen. This is the importance of Paul’s warning in Hebrews.)

- Getting out of the habit of being with other believers makes it easy to walk in the wrong direction.
- Walking in the wrong direction can result in total disconnection from the church.
- The enemy is always out to separate believers from each other and to cause people to develop hard hearts.
- Being connected helps us to be real, authentic and grow spiritually.

“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘today.’ So that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” (Hebrews 3:13, NIV)

- The original language for the word, “encourage,” means “to urge, to exhort, to confront.”
- Speaking the truth in love helps to guard against the enemy’s divisiveness.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

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

Key One: The Importance of Sharing the Good News

TEACHER: Ask, “What is the main barrier to people getting saved? Why don’t they automatically see how wonderful Jesus is?”

- The enemy has blinded people to the truth and the light of the Gospel; God wants to open their eyes through our message.

“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” (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.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV)

- If you are going to communicate the good news to everyone, everywhere, you must “go.”
- Note the “alls”: *All* authority has been given to make disciples of *all* nations, and Jesus is with us always (*all* of our days).
- Command: Before you go, wait to be empowered. Promise: You will be empowered to change the world.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8, NIV)

- To effectively communicate the good news, you must be filled with God’s power (baptized in the Holy Spirit).
- You are to “be” a witness, not just “go witnessing” from time to time.

🔑 **Key Three:** Principles of Communicating

- Open your eyes (there are lost people everywhere).

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work. Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” (John 4:34,35)

- Open your heart.

“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.”
(Matthew 9:36)

- Jesus knew people were searching.
- Jesus was moved by the devastating effects of sin in people’s lives.
- Jesus was known for his great love and compassion.

- Open your mouth.

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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

Activator: Why do you think contributing is considered one of the five core commitments?

The 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.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10, NIV)

- 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.

“For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.... So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.” (Romans 14:10-12, NIV)

TEACHER: Point out that many people serve but do not have the right motives. We need to always give with a cheerful and humble heart.

- Our final rewards will be based on:
 - Outward service
 - 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.

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” (Psalm 24:1, NIV)

- You should use everything God gave you to do five things:
 - To meet your needs
 - To meet the needs of others
 - To expand the kingdom of God
 - To enjoy life now
 - To store up treasure in heaven

- God designed three types of giving:
 - 1. Tithes – 10 percent of our income off the top
 - 2. Offerings – freewill gifts as God directs
 - 3. Alms – freewill gifts to help the poor

Wisdom: Be generous with God and He'll be generous with you.

🔑 **Key Three:** Principles for Giving

- Contribute with the goal of pleasing God.

“So we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.” (2 Corinthians 5:9, NIV)

- Contribute with humility.

“...apart from Me you can do nothing.” (See John 15:5, NIV)

- Contribute with excellence.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might....” (See Ecclesiastes 9:10, NIV)

- Contribute with passion.

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.” (2 Timothy 1:6, NIV)

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

TEACHER: Pray with students before ending the course. Here is a prayer you may wish to use (not in student book), adapted from Mark Balmer's prayer (in the video teaching) for those taking this course:

(Father, thank You. It's a joy to serve You, to follow You, to make a commitment to You, to celebrate, to share the Gospel, to communicate with one another, and to contribute our lives to You.

You've given so much to us. And I pray, God, that You would speak to our hearts about these Five Core Commitments. And that our lives, and our churches, and each of us individually, would grow and become more like You. Honor Your Word, change us together. Thanks for the privilege of doing life with You and with each other. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.)

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

Effect:

Which points in this section were most significant to you?
How do you teach people to take stewardship seriously?
Who do you know that would benefit from this teaching?
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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor’s voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: “Wisdom,” “Understanding,” “Known” (Knowledge for Insight), “Purpose,” and “Effect.” These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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.

The 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.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

The Purpose: To provide an overview of the course.

🔑 Key One: God's Promise Plan

- The promise plan of God is always a word. "In your seed, Abraham, all the nations upon the face of the earth will be blessed." (Genesis 12:3) (theme verse for the course)
 - A promise plan for the nation of Israel: through their seed—through the One who was to come, our Lord Jesus—all the nations of the earth might be blessed.
- How was the promise transmitted?
 - It began with Adam, then with Shem, then with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve tribes of Israel. The promise continues all the way through to David and Solomon and brings us up to the New Testament. Then suddenly and finally the appearance and the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

🔑 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).

Teacher: Students fill “promise” in the blank as you read below.

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.
 - I will be your God: God will be a personal deity to those who believe on Him.
 - You shall be my people: God will adopt believers as His people. This shows the communal aspect, that there would be a group of people, a body of believers. This body would eventually become what the New Testament called “the church.”
 - I will dwell in the midst of you: God says, “I myself will come and tabernacle.” He comes and dwells right in the midst of us, so that where we are, there He may be. John’s gospel also reflects this theme, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory....” (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: “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.” (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?

Example of common questions in this category: Aren't some books more important than others? Why do I have to read Lamentations? (Isn't life sad enough?) Why do I have to read Song of Solomon?

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.)

For example, in Jeremiah 31, God says, "I'll be your God, you shall be my people, I'll dwell in the midst of you, I'll forgive you your sins" (paraphrased). This is a repeat of the covenant God made in Genesis, in Exodus, and in Leviticus. But He adds, "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts..." (Jeremiah 31:33b). He would bring universal peace and universal blessing in the wonderful days to come. That was not a making of a new religion, but a renewal of a covenant.

TEACHER: Summarize for students: There is a promise plan that spans from the Old Testament to the New, with a single source behind it: the mind of God. God's promise is His declaration. If time allows, ask the students to orally articulate the promise plan and its three parts. Otherwise review it one more time before they complete the section below. (Promise Plan: through Israel would come the means of blessing to all the nations of the earth. Three Parts: "I will be your God." "You shall be my people." "I will dwell in the midst of you.")

The Promise Plan of God is:

The three parts are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

TEACHER: Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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? Ten times over it says, "And God said...and God said...and God said." It was by the Word of the Lord that He created all of these things. "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalm 33:6, 9)

TEACHER: Tell students that three crises followed. Ask students if they can name them. Answer: The fall in Genesis 3; the flood in Genesis six through eight; and the fall of the tower of Babel. Tell them that with each of the crises there was a blessing.

🔑 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. God promises in Genesis 12:1-3:

Get out of your country,
 From your family
 And from your father's house,
 To a land that I will show you.
 I will make you a great nation;
 I will bless you
 And make your name great;
 And you shall be a blessing.
 I will bless those who bless you,
 And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

TEACHER: Ask students to see the promise of blessing the nation so that the nation could be a blessing as mentioned in Part 1.

- Paul said in Galatians 3:8, “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed.’”

TEACHER: Review with students: There were four blessings: the blessing of creation, the blessing of the seed, the blessing of dwelling in the tents of Shem, and the blessing of the Gospel going out to all the nations upon the face of the earth.

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

TEACHER: Check students’ understanding for Theophany (a visible manifestation of God) and Christophany (a visible manifestation of Christ). Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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

TEACHER: Point out that God had already spoken to Eve, Shem, and Abraham regarding His Promise Plan, confirming His plans to bless them.

- The Promise: the promise of the Heir, which is in the line of our Lord Jesus

But Abram said, “Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” (Genesis 15:2-4)

- Obstacle to overcome: Sarah, Abraham’s wife, was unable to have children. Abraham and Sarah decided they would help God by asking Hagar, the maidservant, to bear a child for them. But God spoke to Abraham and told him that Sarah was to bear the child. When Sarah heard that, she laughed, being ninety years old. How did God respond? In Genesis 18:14, “Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

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

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

TEACHER: If time allows, read the entire passage. Otherwise use the verse below to give a brief description.

He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.

(The Lord caused a deep sleep to come over Abram. While Abram was sleeping, the Lord passed between the pieces, cutting a covenant)

On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying:

“To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.” (Verses 9,10,18-21)

TEACHER: Point out to students that in cutting the covenant and walking between the pieces of animals, it was as if to say, “May it happen to me what happened to these animals if I, God, do not keep my word.” (In other words, God was saying, “May I die if indeed I do not keep my promise.”)

- Why didn’t Abraham walk through the pieces? If Abraham had walked through, then both God and Abraham would have to keep the terms of the covenant. If Abraham failed, it would have been terminated. This unconditional covenant is a guarantee from God.

🔑 **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.

TEACHER: Review with students the three great truths.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.
 - God brings Moses into Egypt where he is raised in the palace of Pharaoh where he receives an education—all of the knowledge, language skills, and geographic skills that he would need.
 - Moses defends a Jewish man being mistreated and kills an Egyptian. He then flees to Midian. He doesn’t return to Egypt for forty years.

- Moses is used to communicate with Pharaoh. After God shows His mighty hand with ten terrible plagues, Moses leads Israel out of Egypt.
 - The Israelites traveled from Rameses to Succoth. There were about 600,000 men who were old enough to go into battle. The women and children went with them. So did many other people. The Israelites also took large flocks and herds with them. (Exodus 12:37,38)

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

- Israel's identity defined by God.
 - In Exodus 4:22, God says, "Israel is My son, My firstborn."

TEACHER: Point out that the meaning of "firstborn" is best described in the terms below

- First in preeminence
- First in rank
- First in priority

TEACHER: Read below then ask students to underline "special treasure," "kingdom of priests," and "holy nation."

- In Exodus 19, God further defines how He sees His People.

And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."
(Exodus 19:3-6)

- God gave His Law
 - "Law" comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to direct" or "to point."

- Best described as a path: “Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.” (Psalm 119:35)
- The environment of the law was grace. For example: In Exodus 20:2 the Ten Commandments begin with the theme of redemption, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

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
 - The standard was the character of God. “Be holy as I the Lord your God am Holy.” (Leviticus 19:2)
 - The Day of Atonement: The High Priest first went to make atonement for his own sins. He then made a sin offering in two parts:

He took two goats: The first one was chosen by lot, and all the sin of all of Israel (who had afflicted their souls) was confessed over it. Its blood—its life—was spilled out and taken into the Holy of Holies and put at the place of atonement.

TEACHER: Tell students that the word atonement is an English word created to mean “at-one-ment,” or the state of being at one. Point out that the Day of Atonement was not an automatic covering of sins, but an offering for those who had afflicted their hearts and souls.

All of the sin of all of Israel (who had afflicted their souls) was confessed over the second goat, the scapegoat. It was led away.

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

TEACHER: Review with students. If time, ask students to recall the main points: God called Israel out of Egypt. He gave them an identity as His people (God called them His Firstborn, Sons, Priests, Special Treasure, and Holy Nation). He gave them the law (path) with a provision for failure.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

The 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.

TEACHER: Point out that the entire chapter is part of the promise. Tell students this is just a small excerpt:

But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, then there will be the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the Lord.
(Deuteronomy 12:10,11)

TEACHER: Point out that Hebrews utilizes this theme of rest, both physical and spiritual. For example, “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.” (Hebrews 4:9)

- 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

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “priest,” “prophet,” and “king” as they read below.

- 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

TEACHER: Tell students that in Deuteronomy chapter 18, God promises that He would send a prophet like unto Moses, who would come from the Jewish people and speak in the name of the Lord.

- Aaron as Priest

TEACHER: Tell students that they can find the parallel in Leviticus, in Aaron’s role as the High Priest.

- David as King

TEACHER: Point out that in the next section, in 1 Samuel 16, there is a promise of the anointing of 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

TEACHER: Review with students: The Place of Promise: God promised a physical place for the Temple; He raised up men who would hold the places of office that would eventually be realized in the Messiah; and He placed Ruth and Boaz in the perfect union to fulfill His plan.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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)

The 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.

Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." (2 Samuel 7:1,2)

- The Lord gave King David a promise through Nathan the prophet.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “seed,” “house,” “throne,” and “your kingdom shall be established forever” as they read below. This is the promise of the house, the throne, and the dynasty.

When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:12-16)

- David responded with thankfulness:

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord; and he said: “Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord God; and You have also spoken of Your servant’s house for a great while to come.” (2 Samuel 7:18,19a)

Note: Psalm 89 speaks of this promise: “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.”

🔑 **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
 - David wrote over half
 - Solomon contributed
 - Proverbs—the wisdom of Solomon
 - Ecclesiastes—written by Solomon

- Begins on a negative note, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” (Ecclesiastes 1;2) Concludes on a positive note of God’s faithfulness and man’s purpose:

Fear God and keep His commandments,
 For this is man’s all.
 For God will bring every work into judgment,
 Including every secret thing,
 Whether good or evil.
 (Ecclesiastes 12: 13,14)

- A great message of the book: A man can’t know the beginning from the end until he knows God.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

- Song of Solomon—a book about the great blessing of marriage.

TEACHER: Point out that Song of Solomon is an example of the written word exalting God’s design for marriage. When the Living Word, Jesus, came, He attended and blessed a 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

TEACHER: Review with students: God promised David a house for His presence, a throne, and a dynasty that would last forever. God also used King David and King Solomon to write the great wisdom and song books of the Bible.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

TEACHER: Students fill “turn” in the blanks as you read below.

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, NIV)

- God gave blessings of two kinds:
 - Immediate blessing: The pastures became green again, seed began to sprout, rains came down.
 - Prophetic blessing: God said He would send a downpour of His Holy Spirit.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “day of the Lord” and “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” as you read below.

And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.

Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved;
for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there will be deliverance,
as the Lord has said,
even among the survivors
whom the Lord calls.
(Joel 2:29-32)

TEACHER: Students fill “prophets” in the blank as you read below.

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)

TEACHER: Point out that this “day” is not a twenty-four-hour day, but a period of time connected with the second coming of our Lord. Tell students that the prophets speak of it as a day that has both immediate effects for those who believed in that day and age (like those of us who believe and God sends revival in our day) and an effect later on when Jesus returns.

TEACHER: Review with students: Joel cried out for the people to turn and God proclaimed an immediate blessing and a future blessing. Then Obadiah spoke out against the destruction of Jerusalem and warned of the judgment to come. Both speak of the “Day of the Lord.”

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

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

TEACHER: Tell students that they will begin with Jonah. Point out that this course is geared more to give an overview of the Bible as it relates to God’s Promise Plan more than to cover the books in the order they appear in Scripture or in chronological order.

🔑 **Key One:** Jonah’s Reluctant Message

- Context: Jonah was called to declare God’s Word—he was very happy to do so whenever it spoke of the expansion of Israel and the greatness of the kingdom of God. However, Jonah was reluctant to one call of God. “Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.’” (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: “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.” (Jonah 3:2)
 - Jonah obeys. “And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” (Jonah 3:4)
 - Result: The king and all the people repented and put on sackcloth. God mercifully visited the Gentiles with His good news. (Jonah was angry—he would not have pity on the people of Nineveh.)

🔑 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.
 - The last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah speak of the entire Trinity: chapters 40-48 speak of God the Father; chapters 49-57 God the Son; chapters 58-66 God the Holy Spirit.
- In the middle of the second section of the book, Isaiah speaks of this Great Servant of the Lord and His glorious resurrection.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “laid on Him” as they read below, noting Jesus as Servant.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53: 6)

🔑 Key Three: Micah Declares Pardon

- Micah ends his book in chapter 7 with words of comfort:

Who is a God like You,
Pardoning iniquity
And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?
He does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights in mercy.
He will again have compassion on us,
And will subdue our iniquities.
You will cast all our sins
Into the depths of the sea.
You will give truth to Jacob
And mercy to Abraham,
Which You have sworn to our fathers
From days of old. (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: The House of David had lost its glory, "The kingdom of David is like a fallen tent." (Amos 9:11a, NCV)
- Through Amos God declares that regardless of the current conditions, He would continue His Promise Plan.

"On that day I will raise up
The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down,
And repair its damages;
I will raise up its ruins,
And rebuild it as in the days of old;
That they may possess the remnant of Edom,
And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,"
Says the Lord who does this thing.
(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.

TEACHER: Tell students that sometimes Hosea is called the gospel of John in the Old Testament because of its focus on God's love.

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

TEACHER: Review with students: God's offer of forgiveness to Nineveh; His promise in Isaiah to lay our iniquities on His Servant; His great pardoning spoken through Micah; His promise to rebuild the House of David spoken through Amos; and His infinite love spoken through Hosea.

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

TEACHER: Tell students that this next part is an overview of prophets in the 600s BC. Review with students: the promise plan began when God gave His word to Eve, then to Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Then they learned about Joel, Obadiah, and the Isaiah group of prophets.

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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).
 - Jeremiah 31: 31-34 is the largest section of Old Testament quoted in the New Testament (Hebrews chapters 8 and 10), a section in which the Lord says, “I am going to make a new covenant.” He not only gave His law, but said He would write it on men’s hearts. (Jeremiah 31:33)

TEACHER: Remind students of God’s three-part plan: I will be your God; you will be My people; and I will dwell in the midst of You. Point out that it has not changed.

TEACHER: Students fill “renewal” in the blank as you read below.

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

_____.

TEACHER: Give students the example 1 John 3:11, “For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” Tell students this is an example of a renewal of something God had said in the past.

- 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:

Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’
 For you shall go to all to whom I send you,
 And whatever I command you, you shall speak.
 Do not be afraid of their faces,
 For I am with you to deliver you,” says the Lord.
 (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.

TEACHER: Tell students that God sent Habakkuk at the same time.

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.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “The just shall live by his faith” when they read below.

I will stand my watch
 And set myself on the rampart,
 And watch to see what He will say to me,
 And what I will answer when I am corrected.

Then the Lord answered me and said:

“Write the vision
 And make it plain on tablets,
 That he may run who reads it.
 For the vision is yet for an appointed time;
 But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it;
Because it will surely come,
It will not tarry.
“Behold the proud,
His soul is not upright in him;
But the just shall live by his faith.
(Habakkuk 2:1-4)

- The New Testament repeats this theme.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” (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

TEACHER: Review with students: God’s promise to Jeremiah to renew His covenant by writing His law on men’s hearts, and Habakkuk’s determination and faith.

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

*By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept
When we remembered Zion.
We hung our harps
Upon the willows in the midst of it.
For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song,
And those who plundered us requested mirth,
Saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”
How shall we sing the Lord’s song*

In a foreign land?
(Psalm 137)

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. (Daniel 2:12)

- Daniel sought God, whom he said "reveals deep and secret things" (Daniel 2:22), and was given the interpretation for the king's dream.

You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! ...This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Daniel 2:31-35)

Interpretation: The great image represented the kingdoms of men (Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom and future kingdoms). The stone that struck the great image is the kingdom of God. It grows and grows and grows until that kingdom triumphs over the kingdom of men. The kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign forever and ever.

- 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).
 - The phrase “that you may know that I am the LORD” occurs over sixty times.
 - He saw the glory of God depart from the temple (chapter 10).

TEACHER: Point out the cross-reference: When Stephen was stoned in Acts chapter 7, his face lit up like an angel, and he looked up into heaven and he saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God the Father.

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.”

TEACHER: Point out the continuation of the theme: I will be your God, You will be My people, and I will dwell in the midst of you (as you read below).

For thus says the Lord God: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country....

Thus they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people,” says the Lord God. “You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God. (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.

Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end, thus says the Lord God:

“Remove the turban, and take off the crown;
Nothing shall remain the same.
Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.
Overthrown, overthrown,
I will make it overthrown!
It shall be no longer,
Until He comes whose right it is,
And I will give it to Him.”
(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.

Again He said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: “Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.”’” (Ezekiel 37:4-6)

TEACHER: Ask students to notice that God promises to put His Spirit in them (dwell in them).

Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’ Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord,

when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it," says the Lord.'" (Ezekiel 37:11-14)

- God tells Ezekiel of His plan to dwell among His people as their one King in an everlasting covenant.

"Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again....

Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."

(Ezekiel 37: 21,22, 26-28)

TEACHER: Ask students what themes they have noticed in this short summary of Ezekiel.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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:
 - The first coming of the Messiah: He would come meek and lowly and riding on a colt (chapters 9, 10, and 11). Jesus arrived exactly like Zechariah said 520 years before that event took place.
 - The second coming of Messiah (chapters 12, 13 and 14): the people would look on Him whom they pierced, and He would appear on the Mount of Olives.

TEACHER: Ask students to notice that Zechariah was not only prophesying of a Messiah, but of His second coming after crucifixion.

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. (Zechariah 12:10,11)

And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
(Zechariah 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

TEACHER: Tell students that the Old and New Testament are not biblical terms, but rather came in the second century. Point out that the terms can be helpful, but it's important to remember this is one continuous story.

TEACHER: Before proceeding into the New Testament books, pause for questions and discussion. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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: “That the Son of Man came not to serve Himself, but He came rather to serve others and to give His life a ransom for many.” (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:
 - Longest of the gospels.
 - Has the widest variety of miracles, teachings and parables.
 - It gives the fullest portrait of Jesus' ministry. The content of Luke chapter 9-19 appears only in this gospel.
 - In Acts, Luke says of his gospel:

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:1-3)

- The book of Acts:
 - Was written for a government official, Theophilus. Luke wanted him to have solid facts.
 - Shows what the work of the Holy Spirit did in and through the apostles as they spread the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome.
 - Shows the case for Christianity based on the facts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - Special emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the written Word of God.
 - Tells of the first day of preaching at Pentecost, when the Spirit came with power and three thousand were added to the church.
 - The church continued to grow with enormous rapidity.
 - The Gospel spread so much that by the third century (in North Africa, Turkey, across the Mediterranean, and north of the Mediterranean) it was the dominating force in the culture.

TEACHER: Review with students: Matthew’s gospel relates Jesus’ coming to the promises of the Old Testament; Mark’s gospel is action packed; Luke’s gospel is focused on giving a full account of Jesus’ life and ministry; and his book of Acts is an accurate account of the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God and the expansion of the early 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*

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

TEACHER: Remind the students that Scripture says that Paul thought he was serving God and thought Christians were opposing Judaism.

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

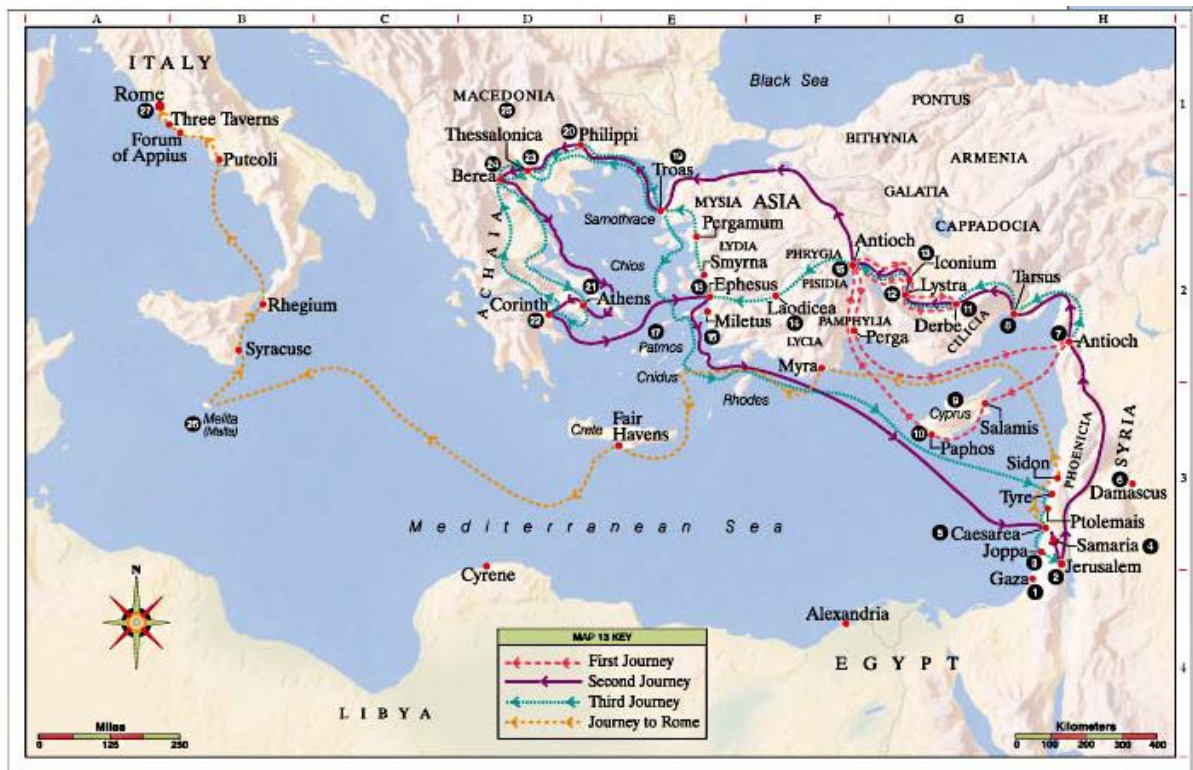
As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:1-4)

- Jesus revealed himself to Saul, His light causing a temporary blindness. He sent to Damascus to meet Ananias.
- Spent three years in the desert of Arabia immediately after conversion.
- Was not taught by man, but by revelation.

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. (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.

TEACHER: Tell students that they will focus on Philippians in this next Key.

🔑 **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.

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (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

TEACHER: Review with students: Paul’s dramatic conversion and revelation; ministry and missionary journeys; his letter to the Philippians (having the mind-set of Christ); and his great chapters.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

TEACHER: Students fill “trilingual” in the blank as you read below.

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.

By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. (1 Peter 5:12)

- Died in Rome during Nero's reign.

TEACHER: Explain to students: Nero's reign was a time of the great tragedies for the church. He did horrible things to Christians. He tied them to posts, tarred and feathered them, and lit them on fire. He also brought them in the Colosseum to watch them defend themselves against lions.

- 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.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:6,7)

But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." (1 Peter 3:14)

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you. (1 Peter 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

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. (1 Peter 1:10-12)

- The prophets longed to look into these things, to know the time and circumstances regarding the Messiah. The prophets did know about a Messiah: He had to suffer, He would be glorified, the glory came after suffering to whom it would be revealed (they knew they were speaking to people of their day and to us).
- Second Peter picks up the same theme (The Day of the Lord).

TEACHER: Ask students to underline “looking for and hastening” as you read below. Tell students that it is widely believed that we hasten The Day of the Lord by sharing the Gospel—The Great Commission.

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (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)

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

The 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.
 - 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”
 - Originate in Exodus 3:13,14

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

And God said unto Moses, I Am That I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.
 - “I am the bread of life.” (chapter 6)
 - “I am the light of the world.” (chapter 8)
 - “I am the door of the sheep.” “I am the good shepherd.” (chapter 10)
 - “I am the resurrection and the life.” (chapter 11)
 - “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (chapter 14)
 - “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.
 - Jesus is the Life.
 - Jesus is the Light.
 - Jesus came to show us what love is.

- Everything about Jesus is the opposite of darkness and death.

🔑 **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

TEACHER: Ask students if they can see the Promise Plan coming to completion here, the good news coming to full reality.

TEACHER: Students fill “144” in the blank as you read below.

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

- John describes resurrections (Revelation 20):
 - The Righteous: The one thousand years’ rule and reign of the Lord with His church.
 - The Unrighteous: Everyone asked the same question, “Is your name written in the Book of Life?”

TEACHER: Use these questions to highlight the purpose of the “Book of Life” (not in student book) or your own questions. (*You were born to answer the question, “What*

do you think of Jesus Christ? Whose son was He? Was he the son of God? Did He die for you and your sins?")

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

TEACHER: Review with students: the ministry of John, his gospel with the seven signs and seven "I ams," his simple message in his three letters, and the great unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation.

TEACHER: If time allows, pause for questions and discussion regarding the New Testament books. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor's voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: "Wisdom," "Understanding," "Known" (Knowledge for Insight), "Purpose," and "Effect." These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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.

The 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.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

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

🔑 **Key One:** Obedience

TEACHER: Ask students to identify what God is asking His people to do in this passage.

“Sing, O barren,
You who have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud,
You who have not labored with child!
For more are the children of the desolate
Than the children of the married woman,” says the Lord.
“Enlarge the place of your tent,
And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings;
Do not spare;
Lengthen your cords,
And strengthen your stakes.
For you shall expand to the right and to the left,
And your descendants will inherit the nations,
And make the desolate cities inhabited.
Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed.
(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.

- When God gives revelation, He can change barren places into blessed places.

Example: Though the Island of Patmos is a barren place, cruise ships stop there for passengers to visit. Why? On that island, John was in the Spirit and heard a voice from heaven. He wrote in the book of Revelation of Jesus Christ from that barren and rocky place. The Spirit of God came to that place.

- God can multiply in the midst of barrenness.

Examples:

When Paul and Silas were in prison chains, they were in a barren place. But they sang and praised God in their barrenness. God showed up and set them free; and when Paul and Silas were set free, other prisoners were set free.

In Genesis 25:22, Rebecca cries out, “If all is well, why am I like this?” God answers and tells her that two nations are in her womb.

- As we are obedient, we must remember God has plans for us. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (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.
 - God treasures His Son and wants us to become like His Son.

“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19)

Note: He didn’t tell the disciples where He was going.

- “Follow Me” – Invitation to a journey.

- “And I will make you fishers of men” – As we follow, we get “made” into disciples.
- The Lost – The heart of God beats for the lost. (John 3:16)
- His Church
 - We need to abide. Abiding is a natural practice of a Bride who treasures the Bridegroom.

Note: In John 15, Jesus said “abide” *seven* times. Jesus spoke only *one* time when performing miracles: “Be still,” “Be opened,” “Come forth!”

TEACHER: Ask students why they think Jesus said “abide” so many times. Use narrative below by Peter Mortlock (not in student book).

(Maybe it’s easier to calm the troubled sea...to say to the wind to be still...to get a blind man to open his eyes or a dead man to come back from the grave than to get Christians to abide. Stay planted in the house of the Lord!)

🔑 **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.

Illustrations:

The General Sherman Tree (Sequoia): Over two hundred feet tall, sixty feet in circumference, and enough wood to build thirty-five houses.

The Bonsai Tree: A little tree that's been nipped, pruned, and stuck up on the mantelpiece as an ornament.

We can grow strong like the General Sherman tree or be kept restricted and small like the bonsai tree.

- 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.
 - Unforgiveness
 - Withholding tithes
 - Gossip and slander

TEACHER: Ask students to identify the moral of this story.

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.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

The 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:
 - There is new vision.
 - There is revelation.
 - There is provision.

“And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”
(Genesis 22:14)

- Going higher means getting above the noise of the world.

TEACHER: Suggest to students that turning off the “noise” of technology might help them to hear God’s voice more intently.

- 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:
 1. We limit the fulfillment of God’s promises with our lack of patience.
 2. We limit the manifestations of the supernatural by having no faith.
 3. We limit the completion of our personal assignment by lacking courage.
 4. We limit our capacity for anointing with our lack of room.
Example: We are filling our lives with lesser things of the world.
 5. We are limiting God’s ability to use us with a lack of obedience.
 6. We are limiting our accomplishments of great things because we lack dreams.
 7. We are limiting godly success by our lack of character.
 8. We are limiting our choices because we lack wisdom.

9. We are limiting the display of God's glory because we lack fruit.
10. We are limiting 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.

The angel of the Lord told the apostle John, "Come up here and I will show you...." (Revelation 4:1)

- God lives on a higher plane.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline "higher" as they read below:

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.
"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8)

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

- Abraham (Abram) lived a life of faith; Lot lived in the flesh.

TEACHER: Ask students to underline "strife" as you read below.

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord. (Genesis 13:1-4)

Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land. (Genesis 13:5-7)

- The flesh and the Spirit cannot coexist. Otherwise there is strife within a person.
- We cannot live with one foot in the Kingdom and one in the world.

Example: The wise boatman knows, if you've got one foot on the dock and one foot in a boat, sooner or later you're going to end up a very sorry person.

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.

Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.

So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left. (Genesis 13:6,8,9)

- Faith does not worry, but trusts God.
- The flesh screams for its rights; it trusts in itself.

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.”

Illustration:

A baby eagle is pushed from its nest so it will learn to fly. If it was never pushed, it would never learn to fly.

The parent eagle swoops down under the fluttering eaglet and picks it up so it can try again the next day. And in time it will learn to use its wings and fly.

- God wants to help you develop and learn.
- In faith we gravitate to the higher ground. (*In flesh* we gravitate to the easy life)

And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord. (Genesis 13:10-13)

- We need to be rid of the influence of the flesh.

TEACHER: After reading the passage below, ask, “When did the Lord speak?” (Answer: After Lot departed.)

And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” Then Abram

moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord. (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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward. (Genesis 13:14)

- Abraham was in the higher lands; he could see more.
- Lot was in the lowlands. He could only see at his own level

TEACHER: To highlight the point, compare Abraham to a high-soaring eagle and Lot to a kiwi bird (a flightless bird in New Zealand, Peter Mortlock's home country). Because it cannot leave the ground, the kiwi is extremely limited in its view; it has no sense of a higher place.

- We have an obligation to see beyond the vision of past generations.

Example: At a train station in Atlanta, Georgia, there is a plaque that says that the first railroad engineer could only envision one tavern, one general store, and one barber in the city. Today, Atlanta is one of America's major cities. The engineer could not envision it.

- We have an obligation to have a vision for the sake of the next generation.

...for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."
(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.
 - Lot's vantage point was the valley floor.
 - Abraham's vantage point was the mountaintop.
- 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

TEACHER: Students fill “rare” in the blank as you read below.

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

TEACHER: As you read below, point out how Lot did not want to go up in the mountains; he wanted the easier plan. Ask students to pinpoint at which point Lot gave in to the flesh, and God's response. (Answer: Lot gave in to fear, wanting the easier plan, going somewhere insignificant. God allowed him to have what he wanted.)

(Context: Lot and family fleeing Sodom just before its destruction.)

When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, “Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city. And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.

So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."

Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live."

And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there."

Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. (Genesis 19:16-22)

TEACHER: Students fill "us" in the blank as you read below.

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.

Illustration: One crab can most always get out of a bucket. Two crabs will never get out. Why? The one keeps pulling the other one 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.

"And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him." (Matthew 5:1)

- Mountain climbers should not climb in fear.

"Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave." (Genesis 19:30)

Note: Lot had the opportunity to go up a mountain but became a “cave dweller,” one who is afraid or hiding.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I

will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”

And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ “
(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.

How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who proclaims peace,
Who brings glad tidings of good things,
Who proclaims salvation,
Who says to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”

Your watchmen shall lift up their voices,
With their voices they shall sing together;
For they shall see eye to eye
When the Lord brings back Zion.
Break forth into joy, sing together,
You waste places of Jerusalem!
For the Lord has comforted His people,
He has redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord has made bare His holy arm
In the eyes of all the nations;
And all the ends of the earth shall see
The salvation of our God. (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.
 - God watches over His Word to perform it. (see Jeremiah 1:12)
 - The devil knows we are ensnared by the words of our mouths. (See 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.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. (Matthew 28:16-20)

TEACHER: Point out that Jesus also gave the Great Commission on the mountain.

- Jesus and His Church will return to the mountain.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the Lord's house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow to it.
(Isaiah 2:2)

O Zion,
You who bring good tidings,
Get up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem,
You who bring good tidings,
Lift up your voice with strength,
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"
(Isaiah 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."

TEACHER: Ask students to take a moment and consider the invitation in Peter Mortlock’s narrative. Then review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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?”

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.

Course Content

This course was developed from a video course from the Global Church Learning Center (www.globalchurchlearningcenter.com). The core of the content contained in this course originates from the original videos. As much as possible, the instructor's voice, passion, and flow of thought are maintained. Any differences are intended to be for the benefit of those taking the course in the Global HUB environment, or other training-related setting.

Course Features

Guiding Passage:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:7-10, NIV)

This passage refers to the heart of the Global Church Learning Center, and the Global HUBS of Christianity: the work of salvation by His grace, the pursuit of His will and good pleasure, and the resulting unity of all things under Christ Jesus.

In this passage we can identify powerful terminology for the basis of the main features of this course: "Wisdom," "Understanding," "Known," (Knowledge for Insight), "Purpose," and "Effect." These terms are most fitting for the training of global leaders to expand the Kingdom across all denominations, borders, cultures, and languages.

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.

The 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.

Part One: Why Synergize with the Next Generation?

Video Session 2

TEACHER: The course begins at video 2 from the GCLC website. Video 1 contains an interview with George Wood, in which he shares the resources www.myhealthychurch.com and www.influencerresources.com.

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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
 - The apostle Paul was not a lone ranger or do-it-alone person. Ninety-one people are mentioned associated with Paul. Timothy is mentioned more than others.
 - Relationship spanned over two decades.
 - Timothy was likely in his early twenties when Paul invited him to join in ministry. (Acts 16)
 - Over two decades, Paul uses five terms to describe Timothy: coworker, brother, son, servant, and man of God

Wisdom: How we think about one another determines how we treat one another.

- 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.

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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?

The 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.
 - References: Romans 16:21 – Paul refers to Timothy as his synergos, 1 Thessalonians 3:2 – Paul refers to Timothy as his brother and *God’s* synergos.
 - The church and the people in the church belong to God.
 - Pastors are not owners but coworkers (avoid possessive phrases like “my youth pastor” or “my church”.)
- 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.
 - The younger generation will respect the older generation if they see the older generation working for the Lord rather than being a figurehead.

Note: Timothy observed Paul’s work habits during his tenure at Ephesus:

- Paul worked at tentmaking (Acts 20:34) likely in the morning.
- Taught in the hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19) from about 11-4 p.m.
- Taught publicly from house to house (Acts 19:20) likely in evening.

🔑 **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, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (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”

Note: Timothy’s background: Timothy likely came from a divided home. His mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, taught him the Scripture, but his dad was a Greek. It is assumed that his father was an unbeliever because he did not appear to have any spiritual influence upon Timothy. The spiritual influence was from his mother and grandmother.

TEACHER: Students may be interested to know that weeks after Paul had invited Timothy to join him, he refused to take another young man, John Mark. (Mark had deserted Paul in Pamphylia and did not have a good report in the eyes of believers. Timothy was well spoken of by believers in Iconium and Lystra.)

- 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.

Timothy was willing to follow Paul’s advice on this difficult, painful, and personal matter. Timothy’s commitment was not only to a cause—evangelism and church planting—but it involved a deep commitment to a person whom he trusted, his father in the faith.

- 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?

- Consider: We can remain fixed in doctrine while still embracing the dreams and visions of the younger generation to effectively reach their generation for Christ.

TEACHER: Students fill “40” in the blank as you read below.

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.

But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (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.
 - Timothy lived in Lystra and was there the day Paul reached out and spoke to the man who was lame from birth and healed him.
- Paul demonstrated how to operate in persecution:
 - Timothy saw, at Lystra, how a man of God takes a punch. He saw later how Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned at Philippi. He saw a lynch mob form against them unsuccessfully at Thessalonica and Berea.
- Paul demonstrated the three p’s: preaching, power, and persecution. (Note: many preachers are only interested in the first two p’s.)

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

- We must give testimony to God’s great acts and His acts of supernatural power.

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.
 - Paul calls Timothy a "man of God," but then commends him and commands him to develop character qualities, because God's power does not flow through impure channels.
- We should call on the next generation to be men and women of God

Paul reminded Timothy that the Word of God “thoroughly equipped” him for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:17)

- We should hope, pray, and work for the next generation to do greater things:
 - A new, great awakening.
 - A new outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
 - For five billion non-Christians to hear the Gospel, come to believe, and receive the gift of the Spirit.

So let’s synergize with God and with one another to accomplish the work that He has given us to do. —George Wood

Review:

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

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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

Notes:

Supplementary Sessions

TEACHER: Tell students that the next section is developed from separate but related teachings by the original instructor.

Part Three: Advice for Synergizing Pastors

Video Sessions 8 and 9

TEACHER: This section is developed from an interview with George Wood, in which he covers synergy across denominations. Ask students to keep in mind how these keys relate to synergizing with the next generation. At the end you will be able to discuss their conclusions.

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.

The Kingdom of God is a mosaic. I can't be the entire mosaic. It is impossible for me to be the entire mosaic; it is impossible for anyone. It is impossible for any church to be the entire mosaic. Because the Kingdom of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, the Living and Visible Church is bigger than any one fragment of the mosaic. —George Wood

- 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.
 - A glorious community, born out of the cross and resurrection, of slave and free, Jew and gentile, rich and poor, various denominations and the nondenominations.
 - Finds a common unity in faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” (Ephesians 3:14,15)

🔑 **Key Three: Getting Outside Your Box**

- Take time to form relationships beyond those you are forming at your church.
 - Build relationships with other pastors in your local community.
 - Be a part of your local community’s church organization.
 - Seek out other evangelical pastors. (Be somewhat selective to have spiritual fellowship with those who hold the same basic doctrine (avoiding blending religions, etc.)
 - Consider being a part of your local non-faith community organizations.
 - Find out what is happening in your community in and outside of the churches.
- 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.

Example: The Assemblies of God developed “My Healthy Church,” a resource provider without a denominational label on it, developed out of a desire to bless other faith communities. They have networked with evangelical publishers to share helpful resources.

“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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

TEACHER: This section is developed from an interview with George Wood in which he gives advice for new pastors. Ask students to keep in mind how these keys relate to synergizing with the next generation. At the end you will be able to discuss their conclusions.

TEACHER: Ask activator question(s). If appropriate, allow 3-5 answers to be shared.

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

The 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.
 - Strive to be able to exegete (expound on and interpret) both Scripture and culture.
 - Consider studying the Bible in its original languages.
 - Learn how to use a lexicon.
 - Study the grammatical structures of the Scriptures.
 - Utilize commentaries.
 - If at all possible, study in the Holy Lands of the Bible for exposure to the richness of the languages, culture, geography, history, and personal experience.

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
 - Jesus began with a message on character, the eight qualities called the “beatitudes.”

(Inside parenthesis are affirmations of “being,” by George Wood)

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
(I need help.)
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
(I am sensitive.)
Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.
(I am strong but easy to live with.)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
(I want to keep on growing.)
Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
(I care.)
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
(My conscience is clear.)
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
(Let me be your friend.)
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
(I will rejoice even in my down times.)
(Matthew 5:3-10)

- Jesus later preached a sobering word to Christian ministers who attempt to credit themselves with what they “do” rather than who they are:

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (Matthew 7:21-23)

Note: The Word for “lawlessness” (which is “iniquity”) is the same word used for the anti-Christ in 2 Thessalonians 2.

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.

“Skill sets can be devastating on a local church if those skill sets are possessed by a person who doesn’t have character.” —George Wood

- Formation of Christ in us is critical.

“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.”
(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.

TEACHER: Students fill “character” in the blank as you read below.

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.

Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.” (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

TEACHER: Review main points. Allow time for students to complete the section below and take note of their thoughts. Encourage discussion.

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

FIVE MILLION CHURCHES FOR A BILLION SOUL HARVEST

Billion Soul Network® | Global Church Learning Center®

417.861.6645 | www.BILLION.tv