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DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM AT
THE VIETNAMESE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
JONESBORO, GEORGIA

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DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM AT
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JONESBORO, GEORGIA

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To my wife, Kim Anh.

Your sacrifice and support is a precious gift from the Lord
that causes me to praise Him and be thankful for you.

To our sons, Jonathan and Nathan.

It is a blessing to be your father.

May your lives be committed to serve the King of kings.

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PREFACE

This project was the result of so many amazing people in my life who contributed in some way or another. First, I want to thank Dr. Pham, who has encouraged me to pursue my doctorate, Dr. Beougher, who was willing to be my supervisor and helped me to complete this project, Dr. Fuller, who had provided great advice as a second reader, and the great support staff from the Professional Doctoral Studies Office, especially Prof. Omanson, who assisted me with the style reading.

Second, I would like to thank my families who have given me financial and other support during the work of the project. I am especially thankful for my son Jonathan, who devotedly worked endless hours with me lending me the expertise of his English skills. I pray that he loves, trusts, and serves Jesus, the King.

Third, I would like to thank those who participated in this training and are now actively serving as the leaders of the Vietnamese Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Georgia. These men and women were the reason for me to develop the training, and I am excited to view the impact that they will make for God's kingdom in future years.

May God use this study as the first step toward enlarging His church at the Vietnamese Baptist Church of Jonesboro and blessing among the Vietnamese in Jonesboro and the surrounding areas!

Dung Duong

Jonesboro, Georgia

December 2016

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop a leadership training program at the Vietnamese Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Georgia (VBCJ).

Goals

This project incorporated four goals. The first goal was to recruit potential leaders who would participate in the leadership training. This goal was measured by my promotion of the project to the church, and was followed by a personal invitation to members who felt led by God to assume roles as leaders in the church. Those so led were asked to complete an enrollment registration card and agreed to enroll in fifteen weeks of leadership training.¹ In addition, each leadership candidate was required to complete a leadership training survey aimed at measuring their current level of understanding and practice of spiritual leadership skills and principles within the church.² This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of seven leadership candidates enrolled and completed the leadership training survey.

The second goal was to train potential leaders to be effective Bible teachers. At the completion of this training and on subsequent Sunday mornings, each leadership candidate was required to prepare and teach a Bible lesson for a Bible study class. I

¹See appendix 1.

²See appendix 2.

measured this goal through observation and subjective evaluation in conjunction with feedback from participants in the Bible study groups. Participants utilized a rubric to evaluate each other's Bible knowledge and understanding, as well as each other's teaching methods.³ This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion was met or exceeded.

The third goal was to train potential leaders in effective evangelism. This goal aimed at training the leaders to be able to give a clear, succinct presentation of the Gospel message. I measured this goal by utilizing a rubric to evaluate the leaders on their hands-on methods of sharing the Gospel within the community.⁴ This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of seven leadership candidates committed to go into the community with me to conduct evangelistic outreach. Each potential leader must have invited at least one friend to attend the church's evangelistic service at the end of the leadership training. In addition, a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion sufficient for this level of training must have been met or exceeded.

The fourth goal was to increase the level of knowledge among potential leaders in the areas of discipleship, mentoring, and assimilating new members into the congregation. This goal was measured through the administration of a written examination designed to measure attainment of the desired level of discipleship knowledge.⁵ This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of seven potential leaders scored 80 percent or above on the examination.

³See appendix 3.

⁴See appendix 4.

⁵See appendix 5.

Context of Ministry Project

This ministry project took place within the context of the VBCJ. The VBCJ is located about seventeen miles south of downtown Atlanta, Georgia. The church is approximately two miles from downtown Jonesboro, a small town in Clayton County. The cities immediately surrounding Jonesboro are Riverdale, Morrow, and Stockbridge. According to the information from the “Vietnamese Speaking Households Around Jonesboro” sent from state missionary, Bryan Nowak, 1069 Vietnamese people live within a five-mile radius from the VBCJ.⁶ Based upon the average church attendance for this area, the total number of Vietnamese who live in Jonesboro and the surrounding areas could support a potential growth for the church of between fifty-to-sixty people in the present day.

In October 1999, Pastor Thong Huynh founded VBCJ. During the fifteen years since its founding, God had used VBCJ to spread the message of the Gospel and His love to the Vietnamese community in the south-metro Atlanta area. However, the church had not experienced appreciable growth during that time. Within the context of this project, several factors relevant to the specific ministry at VBCJ must be taken into consideration. A major contributing factor to the anemic growth had been the church’s lack of a leadership team. Gary McIntosh writes, “Leadership has always been a major factor in the growth of God’s kingdom.”⁷ Since its founding, VBCJ’s pastor had been left alone to accomplish all the work in and for the church. The duties required simply to maintain the church at a functioning level have demanded virtually all the pastor’s time and attention. The result was that the VBCJ lacks any effective evangelistic outreach program worthy of the name. Additionally, the lack of leadership within the church’s congregation

⁶Bryan Nowak, email message to the writer, April 28, 2014.

⁷Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work with God to Build A Faithful Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 96.

contributed to weakness in, or the downright absence of, other programs which would otherwise tend to cause the church's membership to expand.

In 2006, the church called me to the position of associate pastor. Although the church was moving forward, growth was extremely weak, and there was not a great deal of improvement in the church's programs and ministries. By the end of 2010, Pastor Thong Huynh decided to retire, and the church called me to be the pastor of the VBCJ. Over the span of the past several years, many people had come to this church, but many had also left. Careful analysis of the problem had brought me to the realization that the primary reason for many people leaving the church after joining it, had been insufficient care and support extended to visitors and new members. The inability of the existing membership to offer such vital outreach was directly attributable to a lack of training and effective leadership in this area. For a church to grow, the pastor could not be the only one leading the way, doing all the work by himself.

A second factor relating to this ministry project was that some members from within the VBCJ had indicated recognition of their responsibility to help lead the church, but they simply did not know how to help. Recently, a young couple explained that they felt led to participate in leading the church, but were afraid to do so, because they simply were unequipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills. On the other hand, a few members had become actively involved in attempting to help lead the church despite their lack of leadership training. Unfortunately, most of them had quit for lack of knowledge and skills, resulting in their failure of the successful fulfillment of their duties. This sad situation reflected a desperate need for the church's members to be trained properly in leadership in order to experience effective church growth. Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby write, "People may become leaders by responding in a healthy manner to all they encounter in life, but they will not become spiritual leaders unless God calls them to

this role and equips them for it.”⁸ Therefore, the church’s responsibility is to be God’s instrument for equipping those who were called.

Third, since the church was planted, the VBCJ had never made an effort to initiate any form of leadership training. The pastor had always done most of the work alone, including teaching Sunday school, preaching, counseling, and mentoring, as well as doing the church’s administrative work and managing social functions. I was convinced that the lack of an effective program for training the church’s leaders to aid and assist the pastor in caring for new members and visitors had been a major factor in inhibiting the growth of the VBCJ.

Rationale for the Project

An examination of the three contextual factors above indicated that the VBCJ was now ripe for a concerted effort to train church members in leadership. First, because I simply could not handle all the church’s ministries, duties, and responsibilities alone, the church’s members needed to be involved in helping me. Since the church had not promoted leadership training in the past, this project afforded a fresh opportunity to improve how the membership thinks about church leadership. This project positively impacted most of the members to see the importance of the roles played by church leaders in helping the church to grow and to prosper in the days to come.

Second, a limited number of VBCJ members already recognized the vital role played by leadership training and its necessity for effective church outreach and growth. Therefore, convincing potential leaders of the importance of the project was not needed. They needed to be trained for leadership, and this project helped train them.

⁸Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People On to God’s Agenda* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 46.

Third, I recognized that God places gifted and talented people in His church. However, due to a lack of strong leadership within the VBCJ, many of those gifts and talents remained undiscovered. Oswald Sanders states, “All Christians are called to develop God-given talents, to make the most of their lives, and to develop to the fullest their God-given gifts and capabilities.”⁹ Unfortunately, Christians could not know what their gifts and abilities were unless someone helped them to discover them. For this reason, solid biblical leadership training was required in order for a church’s potential leaders to discover their gifts and utilize them for the benefit of the entire church.

In the past, the church had not tried hard enough to help its members to discover, develop, and utilize their gifts. This project was intended to correct the situation and to further that purpose. Moreover, this project was expected to gain immediate acceptance within the membership and had the potential to bring great and long-lasting benefits to the church as well. To attain the greatest benefits from this project, the prospective leaders of the VBCJ needed to comprehend fully the significance of God’s calling upon their lives and respond with the hearts of willing servants. Christian leaders should always have a servant’s heart, willing to give of themselves to serve among God’s people in both the church and the community. Accordingly, getting the project started and pursuing it with a spirit of urgency and utmost vigor was vitally important.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions, limitations, and delimitations as used in this proposal are important to the understanding of the project and its development.

Discipleship. The term “discipleship” refers to mature Christians who are guiding and facilitating the smooth assimilation of new believers into the local church,

⁹J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 13.

while teaching and mentoring them as they grow up in their faith. As Gary McIntosh defines the word, “discipleship is the process of finding and winning the lost, folding them into a local church, and building them up in the faith.”¹⁰

Evangelism. The term “evangelism” refers to the Holy Spirit-led work of Christians in sharing the love of Jesus Christ and His message with their friends, relatives, and contacts, and bringing them to a salvation relationship with God through the complete and finished work of Christ. As John Mark Terry defines, “Evangelism is presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit so that people will become his disciples.”¹¹

Leadership. The term “leadership,” as used in this project, refers to Christian leadership. According to Albert Mohler in his book *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matter* Christian leadership is defined as “beliefs that are transformed into corporate action. The central role of belief is what *must* define any truly Christian understanding of leadership. This means that leadership is always a theological enterprise in the sense that our most important beliefs and convictions are about God.”¹² In addition to this, Mohler adds, “Leadership is a trust, and we will answer to God for that trust.”¹³

Mentoring. The term “mentoring” refers to the aid, assistance, and guidance extended by a mature Christian to new believers as they grow in the faith. Typically and ideally, it will be characterized by the sharing of experiences and the offering of advice

¹⁰McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 68.

¹¹John Mark Terry, *Church Evangelism: Basic Principles, Diverse Models* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 4.

¹²Albert R. Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 133.

¹³*Ibid.*, 139.

based on sound biblical principles. As Paul Stanley defines the term, “mentoring is a rational experience through which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources. The resources vary. Mentoring is a positive dynamic that enables people to develop potential.”¹⁴

Potential leaders. The term “potential leaders,” as used throughout this project, refers to Christians who are eager for learning, have a heart for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a willingness to serve others. As John Maxwell defines it, potential leaders are those who “help carry the load.”¹⁵

Time was a limitation of this project. In order to hasten the church experiencing positive results from the project, it needed to be completed within a fifteen-week timeframe. Additionally, delimiting factors applied to this project as well. First, the focus of the leadership training program was restricted only to those members of the VBCJ who exhibited a potential for leadership and who were at least eighteen years of age. Second, the scope of the training was limited to the areas of teaching Bible classes, evangelism, and discipleship.

Research Methodology

The focus of this project was to train potential leaders of the VBCJ in the areas of teaching Bible study classes, witnessing to their friends through a clear and succinct presentation of the Gospel message, and increasing the knowledge and skills required for mentoring and smoothly assimilating new believers into the local church. The research

¹⁴Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992), 12.

¹⁵John Maxwell, *Developing the Leaders around You: How to Help Others Reach Their Full Potential* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 6.

methodology for this project included a pre-training survey, an identical post-training survey, an examination, and an evaluation rubric.¹⁶

As stated in the goals section of this project proposal, four goals determined the effectiveness of the project. The initial goal of this project was the promoting of the project to the entire congregation, followed by my personal invitation for candidates for leadership positions to enroll in fifteen weeks of leadership training through the completion of a registration card.¹⁷ This was done in the first week of the project. Additionally, this week consisted of my providing a detailed orientation to the participants, accompanied by the pre-training survey being administered to them.¹⁸ The purpose of the pre-training survey was to assess their level of awareness about, and willingness to dedicate themselves to, biblical principles of leadership. Participants identified themselves on the survey by using a personal four-digit code of their choice. The intent of this four-digit code was to preserve individual anonymity. To be included in this training, each candidate had to commit to attending at least twelve of the fifteen training sessions and further commit to listening to DVD recordings of any missed sessions. This goal was considered successfully accomplished when a minimum of seven candidates had made a commitment to participate in the training and had completed the pre-training survey.

In weeks 2 through 5, I implemented the second goal of this project. I taught potential leaders the first four lessons in the series, “Leadership and Teaching the Word of God.” I taught this series on four consecutive Sunday afternoons and instructed

¹⁶Prior to use in the ministry project, all of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee.

¹⁷See appendix 1.

¹⁸See appendix 2.

participants on the basics of how to prepare and teach a Bible study class effectively. By the time this training was completed, participants had been afforded the opportunity to put into practice what they had learned by teaching a Bible study class. Following the second and third training sessions, each candidate was scheduled to teach a class on each of the subsequent Sunday mornings. During these practice classes, a rubric was used to evaluate the skills, knowledge, and teaching methods of the candidates by the author and members of the Bible study group.¹⁹ When a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria had been met or exceeded, this training goal was considered successfully accomplished.

I implemented the third goal of this project in weeks 6 through 9. During that timeframe, I taught the candidates a second series of four lessons on “Leadership and Witnessing to the Lost.” This series was taught on four consecutive Sunday afternoons, and covered what the Gospel message really is and how to present it clearly and succinctly. In weeks 10 to 13, following the completion of witnessing training, each leadership candidate was required to go out into the community with me to witness to others. These witnessing excursions were conducted parallel to the classroom training of weeks 10 to 13. These occurred in the afternoons, after training classes for session 4 had been concluded for the day, or during the weekdays. During the practice sessions, I used a rubric to evaluate the candidate’s skills, knowledge, and abilities to apply the material learned in the training.²⁰ This goal was considered successfully accomplished when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria had been met or exceeded.

In weeks 10 through 13, I implemented the fourth goal of this project. I taught the leadership candidates a third series, consisting of four lessons on “Leadership and

¹⁹See appendix 3.

²⁰See appendix 4.

Discipling New Believers.” As with previous training sessions, this series was presented over four consecutive Sunday afternoons. In this section, prospective leaders learned what the role of discipleship is within the church. The focus was on expanding the candidates’ level of knowledge in the area of mentoring, as well as teaching methods for the seamless assimilation of new believers into the local church. Upon completion of this section of training, an examination was administered in order to evaluate the level of knowledge attained.²¹ This goal was considered successfully accomplished when a minimum of seven leadership candidates scored 80 percent or above on the examination.

In week 14, leadership candidates took the exam as stated previously. During this week, a post-training survey was distributed to the candidates.²² Only those candidates who completed a pre-training survey, attended at least ten training sessions, and completed no more than two training sessions via DVD, were able to take the post-series survey. Leadership candidates were asked to identify themselves on the post-training survey, using the same four-digit code that used on the pre-training survey. This survey assessed each candidate’s post-training knowledge in the area of Christian leadership. Comparing against the same candidate’s pre-training survey results provided a means of evaluating the leadership training program. This project was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a statistically significant positive difference in the pre-training and post-training survey scores. After the post-training survey, the participant leaders were given an opportunity to discuss the training as well as provide feedback about the entire project. Any questions or concerns regarding this project were expressed during this week.

²¹See appendix 5.

²²See appendix 2.

In week 15, leadership candidates worked together with the congregation to conduct an evangelistic service. During this week, each candidate invited a friend to attend the evangelistic event. Even though candidates were required to extend invitations, I did not set a goal relative to the number of converts who may, or may not, result from this service. That is not the work of men, but rather of the Holy Spirit. However, the group was asking God to give them at least two new converts into the VBCJ in order to give a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment to the new leaders that they might continue to implement this project with zeal and commitment.

In addition to week 15, the VBCJ conducted a celebration in recognition of the completion of the project. During this celebration service, the new church leaders were recognized formally and afforded the opportunity to share their testimonies with the congregation regarding their experiences with God throughout the leadership training program. Possibly, their testimonies encouraged others members to participate in the future.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The leadership training set forth in this project is extremely important, because the church's future growth will depend upon its effectiveness. Paul writes in Ephesians 4:11-13,

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.¹

According to Paul, God gives various gifts to those who have been saved. The purpose of the gifts is to prepare recipients for service within His body, to build it up in the faith, and to ensure the full and complete attainment of all that Christ can bestow on them. An Van Pham affirms, "In the time of the New Testament, God gave His children many gifts, and the purpose of these gifts was to help the body of Christ—the church—to grow."²

In order for the VBCJ to grow, each member should be responsible for exercising the gifts he or she receives from God, according to the motivation of the Holy Spirit. If any individual member does not utilize his or her gifts from the Lord, the VBCJ cannot reach its fullest and greatest potential. In the event that many fail to do so, the VBCJ will inevitably remain stagnant. Training leaders to facilitate the development of

¹Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the New International Version of the Bible.

²An Van Pham, "A Missiological Strategy for Korean-American Church Growth in Georgia" (D.Miss. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 66.

members' gifts becomes vitally necessary in order to overcome an apathetic cycle of stagnation.

The concept of leadership training is broad and can take many forms. However, two main aspects that are normally used in leadership training are mentoring and lecturing. Lecturing is teaching through the presentation of theory in classes. On the other hand, mentoring is coaching combined with practical application in the field. In order to present leadership training fully from God's perspective, two sections of argument occur in this chapter. In the first, I will discuss the biblical foundation for leadership training through mentoring. In the second, I will discuss the theological foundation for leadership training through teaching.

Biblical Foundation for Leadership Training Through Mentoring

The Bible says that God has called diverse people from all walks of life to take on the roles of leadership in furtherance of His purposes. His call to leadership continues from generation-to-generation, beginning with Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and the kings of Israel, down to Jesus' disciples, Paul and Timothy. The call of the Lord for godly leadership within His church continues in the present day and will continue until the day that Jesus returns. In this section of biblical foundation, I will cover two examples of leadership training through mentoring from both Testaments. In the Old Testament, I will discuss the methods of Jethro in mentoring Moses, and the approach of Barnabas in mentoring Paul in the New Testament.

The Methods of Jethro in Mentoring Moses

Although the word "mentoring" does not appear in the Bible, nevertheless, Scripture provides numerous examples of this principle. The story of Jethro advising Moses is one of the greatest examples of mentoring in the Old Testament. The authors of

Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life write, “Mentoring is as old as civilization itself. Through this natural relationship process, experience and values pass from one generation to another. . . . Throughout human history, mentoring was the primary means of passing on knowledge and skills in every field—Greek philosophers to sailors—and in every culture.”³ According to the authors, “mentoring” refers to the aid, assistance, and guidance provided by one of greater knowledge, experience, and/or wisdom to another of a lesser degree of advancement. Typically and ideally, it will be characterized as the sharing of experiences and the offering of advice based in sound biblical perspectives. Accordingly, good mentoring is an essential element of effective leadership training. Without mentoring, sound biblical leadership cannot be passed from generation-to-generation.

The story of Jethro mentoring Moses clearly illustrates that Moses became a more effective leader as the result of Jethro’s advice. In this section, I will discuss four of Jethro’s methods in mentoring Moses. Those four methods are that he observed Moses’ leadership performance, confronted Moses’ leadership problem, advised Moses for the change, and promoted a good result to Moses as a command from God.

Jethro observed Moses’ leadership performance. The first method in Jethro’s mentoring of Moses was simply to observe Moses’ leadership style. Exodus 18:13-14a records, “The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. . . . his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people.” Mentoring is not an easy job, requiring time and patience. Jethro was willing to spend all day observing the performance of Moses’ leadership before giving any advice to Moses.

³Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992), 17.

Observing the situation is one of the most important steps in being an effective mentor. Good observation can be challenging, because it requires attentive listening and analyzing to frame sound and helpful advice. Scripture describes that Jethro “saw all that Moses was doing for the people” (Exod 18:14a). That means Jethro observed carefully all the details of Moses’ performance by watching and listening. At the end of the day, Jethro had come to the conclusion that Moses was not handling his duties in the most efficient way possible.

In order to help someone effectively overcome a problem, careful observation and analysis of the full scope of the situation are essential. John Maxwell states, “You cannot connect with someone if you don’t try to listen to and understand them. Not only is it not fair to ask for the help of someone with whom you haven’t connected, it is also ineffective. If you want to be more effective connecting with people, make it your goal to understand them.”⁴ Jethro did not merely look at what Moses was doing, but rather, he attempted to observe every aspect. To look means to watch idly, whereas to observe means to watch, listen, and analyze in an attentive manner.

A wise mentor can learn much through observation. Jethro is a case in point. He had not seen Moses for quite some time, so renewed observation was a must. Their last meeting was before Moses left Midian for Egypt to lead the people out of bondage. According to Exodus, they had not seen each other at all during the timespan covered between Exodus 14 and Exodus 18. That may have been as much as several years. Jethro could not have known all the details about Moses’ leadership during that time. He would only have had secondhand knowledge of what God had done for Moses and the Israelites. Appreciating his own lack of firsthand information, Jethro was wise enough to take his time in observing Moses.

⁴John Maxwell, *Leadership Gold: Lessons I’ve Learned from a Lifetime of Leading* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 51.

A good mentor can view things through observation. Jethro was an example. He did not need to ask anyone, or even read a book in order to identify the problem. The only thing he needed was to spend a day watching and listening to Moses' performance of his duties. Therefore, observation is a great tool in mentoring, and one that must be acknowledged in the mentoring process.

Jethro confronted Moses' leadership problem. The second of Jethro's methods in mentoring Moses, after observing the manner of Moses' leadership, was to confront him about his leadership problem. After Jethro questioned and listened to Moses' rationalization of his ways, he confronted Moses, saying, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone" (Exod 18:17-18). Not surprisingly Moses turned down Jethro's confrontation. The Israelites all knew Moses was the great leader at that time and recognized him for being such. That is why they all came to him for help. It could not have been easy to be in Moses' shoes, the sole leader of more than a million people out in the desert. Confronting a great leader like Moses would have been a big challenge. However, as an effective mentor, Jethro had to take that step in order to deal with the problem of Moses' leadership. No one would feel comfortable telling an important leader that "what you are doing is not good," unless his approach to a situation is superior to that of the one being corrected. Jethro might not have been a great leader like Moses, but Jethro was a great mentor. A great mentor must choose to do the essential things, even though the resulting confrontations may be challenging indeed.

Confronting a problem when the problem lies within oneself is difficult, but it is often harder still to confront and point out a problem within someone else. Why might the confrontation of someone else's problem be more of a challenge? This is so, because it requires tact and diplomacy as well as a genuine concern for others plus a willingness to accept rejection. John Maxwell remarks, "Caring for people should precede

confronting people.”⁵ Jethro would not know if Moses would be willing to respond favorably to criticism of his leadership style or if he would reject it. However, Jethro really cared for his son-in-law as he saw him occupied from morning to night in deciding the disputes that had arisen among the Israelites. For this reason, Jethro was willing to risk rejection to confront and even to challenge Moses.

Confrontation of Moses’ leadership problem was definitely the right thing to do. In order to guide someone effectively, the mentor has to point out the true problem. Unless a mentor gets to the point of recognizing the problem, the one being instructed will not see the need for change, resulting in the continuation of the problem producing undesirable results. J. Oswald Sanders writes, “The first step toward improvement is to recognize weaknesses, make corrections, and cultivate strengths.”⁶ Speaking clearly and directly of the problem can sometimes be difficult, but it is necessary. The job of a mentor is to help the mentee recognize a problem and provide a solution to adjust, correct, and eliminate it. Jethro could see that Moses’ leadership was greatly hampered and headed nowhere if Moses did not realize what he was doing. Thus, Jethro was willing to take the challenge to help Moses deal with the crippled situation, whether Moses would be able to settle disputes more effectively or not.

According to the Exodus, Moses did not reject Jethro’s endeavors. Moses was willing to listen to his father-in-law. Jethro explained to Moses, “You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (Exod 18:18). Jethro helped Moses realize that Moses faced intolerable administrative burdens that would quickly cause him to burn out, something

⁵John Maxwell, *Winning with People: Discover the People Principles that Work for You Every Time* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 107.

⁶J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 109.

that commonly happens to those who do as Moses did. From morning till night Moses was working himself into a state of exhaustion by attempting single-handedly to judge and arbitrate all the problems and disputes of the people. This needed to be fixed. If Moses did not change, he and the people would be headed for disaster. However, Moses accepted Jethro's solution and was willing to change.

Jethro advised Moses for change. The third of Jethro's methods in mentoring Moses was to advise Moses on how to go about accomplishing changes for the better. After observing the situation of Moses' leadership, Jethro knew exactly what Moses' predicament was, and helped him see his difficulty. The next step was for Jethro to advise Moses on how best to create effective change.

Exodus 18:19-22 records that Jethro offered sound and practical guidance to Moses concerning the governance of the people as follows:

Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

In this advice, Jethro clearly pointed out two things that Moses needed to follow. First, Moses must be the people's representative before God and teach God's laws to the people. Second, Moses must delegate much of the responsibility of resolving the disputes of the people.

First of all, standing before God for the people and teaching God's laws were essential steps for beginning to solve the problem facing Moses. These steps could bring great benefit to Moses as well as the people. Through this advice, Jethro was saying Moses needed to seek God's counsel and assume the role of the people's representative

before God. In addition, Moses needed to teach all of the people about God's laws so they would know the way they should live.

The benefit of teaching God's law to the people was that they know God's laws for themselves, know how to live, and know how to perform their duties. Knowing God's laws would help the people gain wisdom and even to resolve their own disputes in many cases. As a result, much of the workload would be dealt with prior to it ever being brought to Moses. Thus, they would not be discouraged by standing in long waiting lines to have their cases heard.

In order completely to solve the problem of Moses' leadership, the second part of Jethro's advice needed to be implemented. Jethro counseled that Moses should select honest and capable men and delegate the duties of settling the relatively minor disputes according to their abilities. Only the more difficult cases would be brought before Moses. Additionally, Moses would retain oversight and leadership over those under him.

Choosing the right man for the right task is not always easy. This was an essential step that only Moses, as the leader, could do. Sanders states, "One facet of leadership is the ability to recognize the special ability and limitations of others, combined with the capacity to fit each one into the job where he or she will do best. To succeed in getting things done through others is the highest type of leadership."⁷ Jethro understood the challenges of delegating. He knew that failure to delegate properly could result in more harm than good. Accordingly, Jethro advised that only Moses select the men and delegate the tasks best befitting their abilities.

Thoughtful delegation could save Moses from being worn out. However, success in delegation was still not complete in Jethro's presentation. Moses needed to continue overseeing and leading the men under him. He had to stand by them, ready to

⁷Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 137.

guide, but reluctant to intervene in their performance of duties. A good leader not only fulfills his or her duties, but also needs to go along to help others to fulfill their duties better as well. In the introduction of his book, Maxwell writes, “Knowing how to do a job is the accomplishment of labor. Showing others is the accomplishment of a teacher. Making sure the work is done by others is the accomplishment of a manager. Inspiring others to do better work is the accomplishment of a leader.”⁸ Jethro displayed a compassionate concern for Moses. He not only helped Moses solve his burdensome leadership problems, he also skillfully mentored Moses, further facilitating God’s development of Moses as a great leader.

Jethro promoted good results to Moses as a command from God. Jethro’s promise of a good outcome resulting from following his advice, and promoting it as a command from God, was also a sound method employed by Jethro in his mentoring of Moses. Exodus 18:23 records Jethro promoting the good result: “If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.” Jethro was very clear that good things would be seen for both Moses and the people. The promise of a positive result is very helpful for the one being mentored. It encourages him or her to listen and have the courage to step forward and implement the advice. Jethro was a very skilled mentor. He made sure Moses would be certain to follow his advice as a command from God.

Carefully examining Jethro’s promotion of the positive results to follow reveals Jethro did not say that the result “may” turn out good, but that they “will” turn out good. One might well wonder how Jethro could be so certain about the results. Exodus 18 does not clearly state the answer, but one may well infer from the context of the story that

⁸John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993), xi.

Jethro recognized that the God of Moses had preordained the advice and the good result to follow. The phrase issuing out of Jethro's mouth was, "if you do this and God so commands," could well mean the advice Jethro gave also came from God. Bible commentator Terence Fretheim states with certainty that Jethro's advice was also God's command. He explains it this way:

Jethro also says, in an almost offhand way: God so commands this. Yet there has been no verbal command from God, and one ought not be assumed. Jethro exudes the kind of confidence in his own plan that it will in fact be in tune with God's own will for the situation. Wise discernment of what seems prudent in this situation is believed to be just as much the will of God as a specific divine verbal communication.⁹

According to Fretheim's statement, God gave no verbal command to Jethro, but Jethro could be certain his advice also came from God's own will for the situation. Fretheim remarks that with wise discernment, one can conclude Jethro's advice is just as much the will of God as a specific divine verbal communication. Jethro could confidently affirm to Moses that God so commanded this advice; therefore, the result would be a positive one if Moses followed the advice.

Exodus 18 does not clearly state whether Moses believed Jethro's advice came from God or not, but it does record that "Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said" (Exod 18:24), which could mean he believed Jethro's advice was also God's command to him. In further searching to the book of Deuteronomy, one realizes that Moses also affirmed that God had commanded him the same as Jethro's advice which was recorded about forty years later. Deuteronomy 1:3; 9-17 records:

In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses proclaimed to the Israelites all that the LORD had commanded him concerning them. . . . At that time I said to you, "You are too heavy a burden for me to carry alone. The LORD your God has increased your numbers so that today you are as many as the stars in the sky. May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised! But how can I bear your problems and your burdens

⁹Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox, 1991), 199.

and your disputes all by myself? Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you." You answered me, "What you propose to do is good." So I took the leading men of your tribes, wise and respected men, and appointed them to have authority over you-- as commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens and as tribal officials. And I charged your judges at that time: Hear the disputes between your brothers and judge fairly, whether the case is between brother Israelites or between one of them and an alien. Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it.

After examining Exodus 18 and Deuteronomy 1, one could conclude that the backgrounds of the two accounts are not very different in detail. Daniel Block states that,

"Exodus 18 provides background to this report, but Moses' recollection differs in some details from the earlier account. However, the differences are not fundamentally contradictory, and neither text claims to be exhaustive; condensation and expansion are possible in each account. After almost four decades of hassling by these people, it is understandable that Moses' reminiscences would exhibit distinctive properties."¹⁰

Overall, from both contexts, it seems the two accounts show a difference in perspective, but come from one situation, which was that Moses dealt with his burden and delegation.

Ajith Fernando confirms "the parallel account in Exodus 18 says that this was initiated by Moses' father-in-law Jethro. Here it looks like Moses initiated it. . . . Jethro initiated the idea, and Moses fully accepted it and made it his own."¹¹ One can conclude that Moses accepted Jethro's advice and did everything Jethro said which could mean that Moses believed that Jethro's advice also came from God as well.

Moses was a man of God. Enns states, "He is God's chosen instrument. He is on an intimate basis with God."¹² Since Moses had a close, personal communicative relationship with God, and since he did everything according to his father-in-law's

¹⁰Daniel I. Block, *Deuteronomy*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 64.

¹¹Ajith Fernando, *Deuteronomy: Loving Obedience to a Loving God*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2012), 45.

¹²Peter Enns, *Exodus*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 372.

advice, Moses' action indicates he also knew his father-in-law's advice was really instruction from God. Fretheim states, "Moses does not hesitate for a moment and puts the plan into effect."¹³ In addition to this argument, Enns affirms, "By dividing the labor, Moses was following God's order given through Jethro."¹⁴ Through the arguments from Fretheim and Enns, one can conclude Jethro was confident in his promotion of a good result to Moses, because he acknowledged that his advice was also God's command to Moses.

At the conclusion of the story, one is presented with what, on the surface, may seem a very puzzling situation. One sees Moses, God's chosen instrument to lead His people, in need of advice on how to conduct God's business from Jethro, the pagan priest of Midian. One might well suppose that Moses could have gotten advice and guidance on any subject directly from God, since he was able to communicate with God on a daily basis. Yet, God chose to act in another way through Jethro. This clearly demonstrates God is sovereign, and He can use anyone He pleases to accomplish His purposes.

Moses' leadership was much improved through his adherence to Jethro's advice. John Maxwell states, "Something revolutionary happened after Jethro confronted Moses over his leadership methods: Moses moved from merely ministering, to leading. Instead of doing all the judging himself, he released other leaders to join him and lead according to their gifts."¹⁵ A couple of lessons one can take away from the story of Jethro and Moses are these: First, leadership training is greatly enhanced by mentoring. It certainly improved Moses' leadership ability and style, not only benefiting Moses, but the people of Israel as well. Second, one learns that God is able to use whomever He pleases

¹³Fretheim, *Exodus*, 199.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵John Maxwell, *The Maxwell Leadership Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 90.

to guide, shape, mold, and direct the steps of less mature believers through wise mentoring.

The Approaches of Barnabas in Mentoring Paul

Barnabas was one of the first people mentioned in the book of Acts who sold property that he owned and brought the money and placed it at the apostles' feet (Acts 4:37). According to Luke, Barnabas's real name was Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, who the apostles called Barnabas, which means Son of Encouragement (Acts 4:36). Barnabas was known to be generous and supportive of others. David Peterson states, "Barnabas is progressively revealed as a model disciple because he unites in himself such a concern for mission and the welfare of other believers."¹⁶ One of the greatest examples of Barnabas's concern for others was his concern for Paul.

Paul is one of the most prominent figures in the New Testament. However, one may wonder if Paul would have gained such significance without Barnabas who came alongside Paul early in his Christian walk to offer mentoring. In this section, I will discuss the two approaches employed by Barnabas in his mentoring of Paul. Those two approaches are: he believed in Paul's testimony, and he encouraged Paul to use his gift of teaching. To simplify discussion, the names of Paul and Saul will be used interchangeably with one another throughout the section.

Barnabas believed in Paul's testimony. The first approach of Barnabas in mentoring Paul was to believe in Paul's testimony. For the early Christians to believe in Paul's testimony if they knew anything of his past life was not easy. Before his own

¹⁶David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 207.

conversion, Paul was one of the greatest persecutors of the fledgling church.

Consequently, no one trusted Paul's testimony of his conversion.

Luke records, "When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple" (Acts 9:26). Who can imagine how desperate and alone Paul must have felt after being rejected by all disciples when he came to join them as a new believer? John Phillips states, "Nothing in this world can be more frustrating than to be an object of universal suspicion and mistrust, to be eyed by everyone, to be kept at arm's length. Saul was a social leper to everyone in Jerusalem."¹⁷ According to Phillips, Paul was in a desperate situation, which he might not have overcome had no one reached out to help him at that time. Whereas, the disciples mistrusted Paul's testimony and isolated themselves from him in fear, Barnabas believed in Paul and reached out with a hand of support.

Reaching out and believing in Paul was not an easy thing to do, especially with Paul's reputation. All the disciples in Jerusalem were afraid of Paul. They knew he had had a hand in killing believers in the past, and trusting Paul might endanger them all. Ajith Fernando argues, "Their reaction was understandable, considering the terror he had inspired and the wounds he had inflicted on them. Was it not a well-known strategy for spies to infiltrate the inner ranks by faking commitment to a cause?"¹⁸ Fernando's argument may quite accurately reflect the disciples' misgivings about Paul. Given Paul's past reputation, believing in him would involve grave risk. However, Barnabas was willing to accept that risk as a mentor.

¹⁷John Phillips, *Exploring Acts: An Expository Commentary, John Phillips Commentary Series* (Grand Rapids, Minn: Kregel Publications, 2001), 187.

¹⁸Ajith Fernando, *Acts, NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 301.

Luke records, “Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul, on his journey, had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus” (Acts 9:27). Why did Barnabas take Paul to the apostles? He took that bold action, because he truly believed in Paul. In addition, as a great mentor, Barnabas not only believed in Paul, he also persuaded others to believe in Paul as well. The end result was that Barnabas was able to convince the apostles Paul’s conversion was genuine.

To be an effective mentor, one must believe in his or her mentee; he must be able to see the promise and potential within the one being mentored even when it is not obvious to others. Barnabas did not wait for someone to step up and authenticate that Paul’s testimony was true before believing in him. Barnabas believed in Paul first, and convinced the apostles to do the same. The approach of Barnabas in mentoring Paul was vitally important to help Paul resolve his problem. It certainly would have resulted in a very strong bond between Paul and Barnabas. Further, it resulted in Paul staying with the disciples and moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord (Acts 9:28). The faith Barnabas placed in Paul greatly facilitated the launching of a ministry that would completely transform the entire world. Believing in the mentee was a prerequisite for Barnabas to be able to approach Paul and mentor him. Without this first step, Barnabas would never have had the opportunity to establish a relationship with Paul, much less mentor him.

Barnabas encouraged Paul to use his gift of teaching. The second approach of Barnabas in mentoring Paul was to encourage Paul to use his gift of teaching. Barnabas did not terminate his mentoring of Paul after he had convinced the apostles to accept Paul as a disciple. According to Luke, the believers in Jerusalem sent Paul back to his family and home in Tarsus, for they knew the Hellenistic Jews threatened to kill him (Acts 9:29-30). At that time, Barnabas and Paul were separated, but Barnabas later “went

to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people” (Acts 11:25-26).

From Barnabas’ perspective, encouraging Paul to be a teacher conceivably could involve some very real risks. The possibility existed that Paul might eclipse Barnabas as a teacher, resulting in Barnabas losing his position and standing as a teacher and leader of the church. Fernando states, “Paul was probably more talented and educated than Barnabas. By getting Paul, he was seriously jeopardizing his own position of leadership and prominence.”¹⁹ While it may be true Barnabas recognized that Paul was more talented and educated than he was, nevertheless, Barnabas was a godly man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith (Acts 11:24). In addition, he was the “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36). John Maxwell writes, “Truly successful people, on the other hand, raise others up. And they don’t feel threatened by the thought of having others become more successful and move to a higher level. They are growing and striving for their potential; they aren’t worried about having someone replace them.”²⁰ In this regard, Barnabas was the very model of a successful mentor. Motivated by such positive characteristics, Barnabas would not have been worried about jeopardizing his own position or becoming less prominent. He just saw a great opportunity for his mentee to learn and to grow.

The book of Acts records that Barnabas and Paul continued in preaching and teaching to great numbers of Christians in Antioch for an entire year (Acts 11:25). This fact shows that Barnabas did not have any problem with Paul sharing in the teaching. In all likelihood, Barnabas was encouraging and supportive of Paul’s speaking opportunities. Undoubtedly, they comprised a very good and effective team as they

¹⁹Fernando, *Acts*, 353.

²⁰John Maxwell, *Mentoring 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 4-5.

worked together in Antioch. That being the case, it would tend to indicate that Barnabas did a very good job as Paul's mentor. The net result was that the team of Paul and Barnabas became an exceedingly powerful and effective preaching team as they took the Gospel message to the Gentiles.

Barnabas became a successful mentor by encouraging Paul in early teaching at the church in Antioch. As a direct result of their work there, the Church of Antioch took on a key pivotal role in early Christian church history. Steven Ger adds, "Antioch was to prove an important center of Christian faith and theological development for the following four centuries."²¹ In addition to this, Antioch "became the home base, the metropolitan center, for the expansion of the gospel to the Gentile world," according to R. C. Sproul.²² One could make a sound argument that none of these good things would have happened to the Church of Antioch had there not been a bold and courageous mentor like Barnabas.

Paul became a prominent figure in the New Testament and throughout the formative Christian community, partly as a result of Barnabas's mentoring. Barnabas could be considered the most significant mentor in the book of Acts. Through the skillful mentoring of Paul by Barnabas, Paul became better equipped to fulfill his calling from the Lord to carry the Gospel to the Gentile world. Leadership training through mentoring is important, because it is a practical way to help others improve their leadership roles. Mentoring should be practiced as an integral part of the local church's ministries in order to develop better leaders and to be more effectively involved in serving the Lord.

²¹Steven Ger, *The Book of Acts: Witnesses to the World*, 21st Biblical Commentary Series (Chattanooga, TN: AMC Publisher, 2004), 167.

²²R. C. Sproul, *Acts*, St. Andrew's Expository Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 200.

Theological Foundation for Leadership Training through Teaching

The theological foundation of leadership training discussed in this chapter is based on the teachings of Jesus and Paul. In the New Testament, Jesus and Paul are, arguably, the two greatest examples of what a Christian leader should be. Between the two of them, they demonstrated the full range and scope of leadership qualities desirable in a Christian leader. Their teachings on leadership are timeless in their applicability. They were effective not only in the first century, but throughout successive centuries as well, and will continue to be so until the end time. Exploring and studying the teachings of Jesus and Paul on the subject of leadership can greatly benefit all Christian leaders as well as the church as a whole. In this section, I will discuss the teachings of Jesus concerning leadership and will follow up by discussing the teachings of Paul, which deal with the same subject.

The Teachings of Jesus on Leadership

Jesus is the Master of strategic leadership training. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus was not thinking in terms only of His three short years of ministry on earth. His thoughts went on to the end of the age by selecting and training the Twelve and charging them to train others in turn. Robert Coleman states, “His concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitudes would follow. . . . Men were to be His method of winning the world for God.”²³ This was the reason Jesus was always focused on teaching men who could and would implement His teachings to the world after He left.

The Bible reveals that Jesus’ first priority in beginning His earthly ministry was the recruitment of His twelve closest followers and the initiation of their training as

²³Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1963), 21.

leaders. The long-range plan for winning the world called for Jesus to use common men whom He had chosen and trained to become the future leaders of the masses. Efrain Agosto makes this point about Jesus, saying, “One of the first acts of his public ministry was to gather around himself a group of followers who would become movement leaders after his departure.”²⁴ In His three short years on earth, Jesus spent most of His time teaching His disciples on topics either directly or indirectly related to leadership, so that they could become effective leaders. According to Coleman, Jesus spent three times the amount of time explaining to the disciples than He did to the crowd.²⁵

The teachings of Jesus dealing with the principles of leadership were as critical for His disciples to learn as they are for the leaders of the local church today. Understanding those teachings of Jesus must not be looked upon as an option for the good church leader. Adoption of the principles contained in His teachings is a necessity and should be mandated within the church in order to ensure that leaders not only emulate the Lord, but that they experience success. In this section, I will discuss three teaching principles of Jesus on leadership. Those three teaching principles are that leaders must be responsible in teaching others, be able to partner with other leaders, and be humble in serving others.

Leaders must be responsible in teaching others. The first leadership teaching principle employed by Jesus is that leaders must be responsible in teaching others. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commanded, “go to make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” This command that Matthew records in His Gospel was Jesus’ final instructions to the disciples after His resurrection

²⁴Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press 2005), 35.

²⁵Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 79.

and before leaving this world to return to the Father. R. T. France states, “Jesus’ final words in this gospel are often referred to as ‘the Great Commission.’”²⁶ Through this Great Commission, Jesus instructed His disciples that they were not simply to take His Gospel message to the world to lead people to believe. His command to His disciples goes well beyond that. Implicit in His directive is that they must also take responsibility in teaching new believers to obey and practice the Master’s teachings.

This final command of Jesus remains a vital part for the Lord’s Church today. The work was not complete after Jesus’ disciples died; rather, it carries on to today’s generation. Michael Wilder and Shane Parker state in their book, “When Jesus spoke those words, He made clear what he expected. Those same expectations—to order one’s life so as to engage fully the Great Commission—are placed on us as well.”²⁷ Jesus was extremely clear to His disciples as well as to contemporary believers. His command to the first church leaders holds true to the leaders of today’s church. Leadership carries with it the responsibility to teach others. Albert Mohler affirms that teaching is at the heart of Christianity. “After all, the Bible elevates teaching to the first mark of the church and the church’s primary responsibility.”²⁸ The New Testament clearly shows that teaching was a common practice in the life of the church. Because teaching remains at the center of the church, the church still stands strong today despite facing many forms of persecution and the rise of false religions.

²⁶R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1109.

²⁷Michael S. Wilder and Shane W. Parker, *Transfession: Making Disciples Through Short-Term Missions* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 51-52.

²⁸Albert R. Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 69.

Jesus was, and still is, the ultimate role model in teaching. Matthew records, “He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them” (Matt 5:1-2). Jesus spent most of the years of His earthly ministry teaching the Twelve. Among other things, He carefully taught those future leaders about God’s kingdom, which Matthew records in His Gospel from chapters five to seven. Correctly understanding the theology of God’s kingdom is a very important qualification that Jesus places upon leaders in His church. Mohler states, “If our leaders are not passionately driven by the right belief, we are headed for disaster.”²⁹ It is apparent that if Jesus’ disciples did not correctly understand the Lord’s teaching about His kingdom, then neither would those who would follow and be taught by them. The future church would neither understand nor practice Jesus’ teachings correctly if His disciples did not get their facts straight.

Teaching others is the most important task of leaders in the church. Mohler states, “Those we lead must be instructed so that they know what they need to know in order to be effective. They cannot be faithful followers and make their contribution to the organization if they lack the necessary knowledge.”³⁰ In this statement, Mohler points out that lack of knowledge in the followers could cause an organization to fail. In part, that failure must be laid at the feet of the leaders who are responsible for teaching them. Therefore, effective church leaders must recognize that they are charged by Jesus to shoulder in a sober manner a truly awesome responsibility—the responsibility carefully and diligently of teaching others to both believe and obey everything that Jesus commanded.

²⁹Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 20.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 72.

Leaders must be able to partner with other leaders. The second leadership principle taught by Jesus is that leaders must be able to partner with other leaders. After Jesus trained His Twelve Disciples on evangelism, He sent them out to practice in the mission field what they had learned in the “classroom.” Mark records, “Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two” (Mark 6:7a). According to Mark, Jesus did not send them out one-by-one, but two-by-two. Why did Jesus send them out in pairs? James A. Brooks remarks, “Going in pairs was a common Jewish practice. Compare Acts 13:1-3; 15:39-40. In the present instance it perhaps establishes the truthfulness of the message (cf. Deut 17:6). It may also tone down individualism and suggest the necessity of teamwork.”³¹

While partnership is important virtually in all organizations, learning to work with others is especially critical for the Christian leader. Because Christian leaders are to be one with Christ, out of necessity, they must also be of the same mind and intent in what they are doing for the Lord’s kingdom. Leaders cannot be considered successful in their roles of leadership if they fail to partner with other leaders. Jesus did not send His disciples in pairs by accident; rather, He had a purpose. H. A. Ironside states, “He sent them out two by two, because He recognized how much they needed fellowship with each other. The preacher in the book of Ecclesiastes tells us that two are better than one, for if one should fall the other can lift up his fellow; and so it seems to be according to divine order, generally, that Christ’s servants should labor two or more together.”³²

A close examination of the gospels of Mark and Luke reveals Jesus sent His disciples out for evangelism in pairs not once, but twice. Jesus sent the Twelve first,

³¹James A. Brooks, *Mark*, New American Commentary, vol. 23 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991), 101.

³²H. A. Ironside, *Luke, An Ironside Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 219.

followed by sending the Seventy. Mark recorded that Jesus sent the Twelve out two-by-two (Mark 6:7), and Luke wrote that Jesus sent the Seventy out two-by-two (Luke 10:1). It was not by mere chance or coincidence that Jesus elected to send His disciples out two-by-two. This deliberate action on Jesus' part clearly indicates He had a very definite purpose in sending them out in pairs.

Charles R. Swindoll is the founder of *Insight for Living*, which produces a radio program of the same name on Christian and non-Christian radio stations around the world. Swindoll served in the military before he became a preacher. As an experienced soldier who served in the United States Marine Corps, he explains the purpose of Jesus' sending the disciples out two-by-two, "We were taught in the Marines that when you dig a foxhole before a battle, always dig it big enough for two men. Two men fighting in the trenches strengthen and encourage each other. They maintain level heads. They are more effective in fighting and have a much better chance for survival."³³ In other words, one's likelihood for success goes up. Similarly, as Christians do spiritual battle in this world, the successful leader will employ partnership with other leaders to ensure success.

Further, when leaders employ partnership in support of their fellows, those others are strengthened and encouraged in the fight. Swindoll adds, "One warrior in combat, however, can easily become discouraged and retreat from the fight. In pairs, the workers enjoy the benefits of companionship, protection, affirmation, and encouragement."³⁴ Sooner or later, leaders who either will not or cannot work in partnership with other leaders ultimately will retreat from the fight. J. C. Ryle remarks, "There can be no doubt that this fact is meant to teach us the advantage of Christian

³³Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Luke, Swindoll's New Testament Insights* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 261.

³⁴Ibid.

company to all who work for Christ.”³⁵ Thus, leaders who learn and apply the partnership principle, as taught and practiced by Jesus, will realize far greater success in their endeavors. Consequently, they, themselves, will receive more aid and encouragement from others during their own times of trial and difficulty.

Leaders must be humble in serving others. The third leadership principle taught by Jesus is that leaders must be humble in serving others. Matthew records this principle being taught by Jesus in Matthew 20:25-28 as follows:

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

In teaching this principle to His disciples, Jesus used two important illustrations. He pointed out to them what the greatest leaders should be like and then used Himself as an example for them to emulate.

First, Jesus taught that great leaders must be humble in order to serve others. Jesus had already seen how His disciples had argued over who would be the greatest and first among them. So Jesus gathered them together and taught them a simple, but vital lesson on humility that hitherto had totally escaped their notice. Jesus taught them that, contrary to the practices of the world, great leaders are not measured by their positional status, or by the power and authority they wield. Rather, the true mark of the great leaders is seen in the humbleness with which they serve others. Jesus warns His disciples not to exercise the same worldly misconceptions about leadership practiced by the rulers and officials who lord their corrupt power over the people.

³⁵J. C. Ryle, *Mark: Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*, Crossway Classic Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993), 83.

The contrast contained in His teachings is clearly found in the phrase “Not so with you.” Michael Wilkins remarks on this phrase by writing, “Jesus gives a different, and shocking, sort of ambition that must be the chief value among his disciples.”³⁶ This teaching shocked Jesus’ disciples, because they thought the greatest leaders among them should have commensurate titles and authority to rule over people. They thought the greatest and first among them should be served by the others, not serve others. The contradictory teachings of Jesus on this leadership principle completely astounded them.

D. A. Carson states, “In the pagan world humility was regarded, not so much as a virtue, but as a vice. Imagine a slave being given leadership! Jesus’ ethics of the leadership and power in his community of disciples are revolutionary.”³⁷ Why does Carson argue this teaching of Jesus was revolutionary? It was revolutionary, because this teaching on leadership was not only new to His disciples, but it was completely new to the world as well. In order for them fully to accept, adopt, and begin to practice this new teaching principle from their Master, they first needed to alter radically their way of thinking about themselves as they related to others. The nagging sin of personal pride needed to be dealt with before any real change could come about.

Jesus taught, “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave” (Matt 20:26-27). Wilkins explains another important reason Jesus taught them this, “Jesus’ disciples have the ambition to be greatest (18:1) and to be first (20:21), so Jesus gives them the means by which they can do so according to the values of the kingdom of God. They must arrange

³⁶Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew: From Biblical Text—to Contemporary Life*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 669.

³⁷D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 432.

their lives with the goal of giving themselves for the benefit of others.”³⁸ Jesus showed His disciples that humbling themselves in service to others is the true meaning of being a great leader. Therefore, if anyone aspires to be a truly great leader, and desires to be counted among the first in God’s kingdom, he or she must first divorce themselves from the world’s concepts of greatness and take up a new mindset—one of humility and giving themselves in service for the benefit of others.

Last, Jesus is the greatest of all leaders. As He taught His disciples this new notion of what constitutes true leadership, he gave Himself as an example for them to emulate, saying, “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt 20:28). Jesus not only instructed them verbally to apply this new leadership principle, but He also presented Himself to them as the greatest of all living examples. At that time, through observing His life, the disciples all knew that Jesus was a model of service to others. Craig L. Blomberg confirms, “Jesus himself provides the perfect example of servant leadership” (v. 28a; cf. esp. John 13:1-17).³⁹

Jesus is God, but he is also a very humble man and a humble leader. He did not come to be served, but to serve. Accordingly, He was willing to lower Himself to serve others. He always thought of others before Himself. D. A. Carson remarks that Jesus presents Himself as the Son of Man as the supreme example of service to others.⁴⁰ After witnessing firsthand the great example of their Master, the Lord Jesus, the disciples learned and applied this leadership principle very effectively. The Apostle Paul is a good

³⁸Wilkins, *Matthew*, 669.

³⁹Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 308.

⁴⁰Carson, *Matthew*, 432.

case in point. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul writes, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” Gordon Fee states that, in this case, Paul most likely refers to both the example and the teaching of Christ.⁴¹

To be considered successful leaders in the kingdom of God, the disciples must be humble to serve others just as Jesus was. John Maxwell states, “Leaders add value by serving others.”⁴² According to Jesus’ teaching, leaders must lead by serving others humbly, and the lower they are willing to go to serve, the greater they are. Surely this teaching principle from Jesus must apply to all leaders within God’s kingdom as well as within the local church.

The Teachings of Paul on Leadership

Paul is the greatest missionary in the history of Christianity. The New Testament indicates that the teachings of Paul on leadership are very important for those aspiring to lead and to serve in the kingdom of God. The principles on leadership taught by Paul are critical to the spreading of the Gospel and for growing the church. In this section, I will discuss three teachings of Paul on leadership found in Second Timothy. Those three teachings on leadership are that a leader needs to produce other leaders, endure hardship like a good soldier, and fulfill all of his or her duties.

Although Paul writes the book of Second Timothy to instruct the young preacher Timothy regarding leadership, he did not intend to teach Timothy alone. Paul used the occasion of teaching Timothy as an opportunity to provide guidance and instruction to all local church leaders to follow throughout the generations. Therefore, in

⁴¹Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 187.

⁴²John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You*, rev. and updated (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 50.

this discussion, I will use the word “leader” in a singular form, but I intend to include all leaders of the local church as well.

A leader needs to produce other leaders. The first teaching of Paul that to be discussed is that a leader needs to produce other leaders. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” In this verse, Paul teaches Timothy that a leader needs to reproduce himself or herself in the sense that subsequent leaders may continue to spread the Gospel. Paul challenges Timothy to focus on producing leaders for future generations. Sanders states, “With these words Paul presses home a leader’s responsibility to train others to lead.”⁴³ A leader who is not producing other leaders is an unsuccessful leader. A successful leader reproduces by training others to lead.

In “the Law of Explosive Growth,” Maxwell remarks, “to add growth, lead followers—to multiply, lead leaders.”⁴⁴ According to this Law of Maxwell, if Christian leaders just want to add growth, they will focus on leading followers. However, if leaders desire to multiply the numbers in the church, they need to focus on training others to lead. Following this principle, when Paul taught Timothy that a good leader needs to produce other leaders, Paul was not merely looking to add a few more to the church, but rather to bring about an explosive multiplication of saved souls.

The apostle Paul knew that he would soon be leaving this world. He wanted Timothy to focus on producing future leaders to ensure the Word of God would spread through them and be passed down by them, from generation-to-generation. Pham states in one of his class lectures that, in 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul mentioned four generations of

⁴³Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 147.

⁴⁴Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 245.

potential leaders within the church, resulting directly from his instruction of Timothy.⁴⁵ Looking closely at this verse, one can see that Paul trained Timothy, Timothy trained faithful men, and those faithful men trained others, a total of four generations of trained leaders—indeed, just as Pham stated in his lecture.

A leader desiring to be productive and effective needs to train others how to lead. When Paul wrote to Timothy, telling him that he should “entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim 2:2b), one might wonder what Paul meant by that expression. Paul taught Timothy not only to pass on the Gospel message, but also to train up men who could be relied upon to be faithful to the Word and to transmit it to the next generation. John Stott states, “The men Paul has in mind must be primarily ministers of the word, whose chief function is to teach.”⁴⁶ Paul was very careful in his instructions to Timothy on this point. In this teaching, Paul made it clear that Timothy should not place his primary focus on the training of followers, but, rather, on the training of leaders. In other words, Paul showed Timothy the necessity of training leaders who, in turn, would be able to teach others to lead and teach.

Paul’s most urgent teaching for Timothy was about producing other leaders who can teach still more leaders. MacArthur argues, “The first metaphor is that of a teacher teaching a teacher, who, in turn, teaches other teachers, who then teach still other teachers. Although Paul mentions only four generations of teachers, the idea is that of a continuing process.”⁴⁷ While MacArthur uses the word “teachers,” the same principle

⁴⁵An Van Pham, “Biblical and Theological Issue in Evangelism and Church Growth Course 80512,” lecture delivered during D.Min. Program Seminar, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, April 23, 2014.

⁴⁶John R. W. Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), 51.

⁴⁷John MacArthur, *2 Timothy, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 39.

applies in the training of leaders as well. Thus, MacArthur's argument can be restated thusly: the main thrust of Paul's instruction for Timothy is that a productive leader must reproduce himself or herself, producing still other reproductive leaders.

A productive leader assists future leaders in the development of their gifts and potentials to the highest level for the benefit of the entire church. This point is clearly seen in Paul's teaching to Timothy. Paul not only intended for Timothy to train men to lead, but also to aid them in the development of their God-given talents and abilities. By so doing, he would further facilitate the establishment of a line of church leaders stretching from generation-to-generation. If Timothy had not followed Paul's teaching to produce and train other leaders, the spread of the Gospel throughout much of the world might very well have come to an abrupt end after Paul and Timothy passed away.

A leader needs to endure hardship like a good soldier. The key second teaching of Paul on leadership is that an effective leader needs to endure hardship like a good soldier. Paul writes to Timothy, "Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer" (2 Tim 2:3-4). The main idea in this teaching is that Paul is telling Timothy that he needs to endure hardship to satisfy the Lord who enlisted him.

The ability to endure difficulty and hardship is a significant mark of a true leader and an attribute which Paul required of Timothy in order to please Christ Jesus. Such steadfast endurance is profoundly important and must not be overlooked by the individual who aspires to become a successful leader. Once again, Paul's own Christian life of hardship serves as a great illustration of this point. In discussing the point, Paul compares the image of a faithful soldier with a leader who is serving Jesus Christ. John MacArthur remarks, "Paul not only calls Timothy to serve the Lord as a soldier, but as a

good soldier of Christ Jesus.”⁴⁸ MacArthur goes on to explain that a good soldier “does not simply do minimum duty for his Lord, Christ Jesus, but serves Him with everything he is and has. The first mark of a good soldier that Paul mentions is the willingness to suffer hardship.”⁴⁹

One might correctly think that being a true follower of Christ can be difficult at times, because it requires the Christian to walk a narrow path. However, it is frequently more difficult for a Christian leader to remain steadfastly a good soldier of Christ, because he must endure endless hardships. When faced with hardship, the average worldly leader most often will seek a way entirely to avoid the situation. However, a good soldier of Christ Jesus must be willing to suffer, endure, and persevere through the hardship, no matter what the circumstances he or she may face. Philip Towner notes the call to Timothy to “join in suffering” is a requirement of his faithful service.⁵⁰ Thus, like a good soldier, a Christian leader needs to endure hardship and must be willing to completely dedicate his or her life to serve the Lord, even to the point of death. In other words, having both the ability and the willingness to endure hardships must be components of a Christian leader’s character.

Paul was a very skilled teacher. In order to help a leader fully understand and appreciate what enduring hardship means, Paul used the image of an active soldier for added emphasis. Paul writes, “No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer” (2 Tim 2:4). Through the use of the focused verb “serving,” Paul is showing that enduring hardship means that a soldier must

⁴⁸MacArthur, *2 Timothy*, 43.

⁴⁹MacArthur, *2 Timothy*, 43.

⁵⁰Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 492.

be totally dedicated and committed to his military duties. While he is on active duty, he cannot have two loyalties, one to civilian life and another to the military. When a soldier goes into a battle, he subjugates his natural thoughts of personal safety to thoughts of doing his duty and his desire to please his commanding officer. Towner explains, “The picture of the ‘soldier’ in v. 4 expands on the military imagery already in mind from v. 3. Of the many things that the metaphor might serve to emphasize in such a teaching context, Paul extracts the quality of single-minded devotion to duty.”⁵¹

Just as an army soldier must give up his preoccupation with civilian life to please his commanding officer, similarly a good soldier of Christ must also be prepared to give up the worldly pursuits of the flesh and even to suffer hardships for the sake of the Master, Christ Jesus. Through this comparison, Paul teaches that a good leader cannot serve the Lord faithfully if he or she maintains a primary focus on his or her own life and goals. Paul himself was a role model for Timothy to emulate. He did not call Timothy to endure hardship alone. Rather, Paul called Timothy to come alongside and become a fellow laborer for the Lord and to endure hardship together with him. Paul had already proven himself to be a good soldier of Christ through his endurance of countless hardships. In that same way, Paul taught that a leader who wants to be a good soldier of Christ also must be prepared to endure countless hardships for the sake of Christ’s Kingdom, just as he had.

A leader needs to fulfill all of his or her duties. The third teaching of Paul on leadership is that a leader needs to complete successfully all the tasks set before him or her by the Lord. Paul wrote to Timothy, “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry” (2 Tim 4:5). The New International Version uses the word “discharge,” but it literally

⁵¹Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 492.

means the same as the word “fulfill.” In this teaching, Paul points out several things on which a leader needs to focus. However, one of the most important things Paul taught is that it is vital for a leader to fulfill all of his or her duties—to accomplish the assigned mission. MacArthur explains that the word “fulfill” “carries the basic idea of giving full measure or bringing a thing to completion. In relation to a person’s work, it also carries the idea of eagerness and wholeheartedness.”⁵²

When the Lord calls a leader, He does not call him or her merely to take up space and occupy a position. No, instead, the calling is to fulfill the duties given to him or her. Tom Wright remarks, “You have received a particular calling; get on with it. Keep your balance. It may be difficult or painful at times, but you didn’t sign on in order to have an easy life. Go on to announcing Jesus as Lord. What is required is not success, as the world regards success, but loyalty and perseverance.”⁵³ Wright points out clearly that when a leader accepts a calling from the Lord, he or she does not sign on to relax and take it easy, but rather to complete the tasks set before him or her. Further, the Lord does not measure success as the world measures success. He requires a leader to have loyalty and perseverance in the fulfillment of all his or her duties.

Going further, Paul teaches that in order for a leader to be successful, he or she must remain calm and in control, trusting in the Lord in all situations. What did Paul mean by the phrase “keep your head in all situations” (v. 5a)? The New American Standard version translates this phrase as “be sober in all things.” Philip Towner explains, “In some contexts (or perhaps in all at least obliquely), the thought of sobriety in the sense of avoiding drunkenness may be intended. However, the chief sense here is the

⁵²MacArthur, *2 Timothy*, 186.

⁵³N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone, The Pastoral Letters: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 2004), 127.

figurative one of mental and spiritual alertness that comes from the practice of self-control.”⁵⁴ Towner emphasizes that avoiding drunkenness may be intended in one sense, but the chief sense is that a good leader must, at all times, be in control of his or her own emotions, such as anger, fear, resentment, and the like.

As a sound teacher, Paul wanted Timothy to keep his head clear and his focus on the Lord in all situations. Paul taught Timothy that he was to maintain his composure not in “some,” but “all” circumstances. When Paul wrote this advice to Timothy, he knew that he did not have much time remaining in his life. An Van Pham states that Paul wrote Second Timothy while he was in prison in Rome for the second time, and not long before he was martyred.⁵⁵ Given his dire circumstance, Paul certainly understood that a good leader could only fulfill his or her duties if he or she stayed sober in all situations. Thus, whatever Paul had learned and experienced in his past as a Christian leader, he made every effort to pass on to Timothy, a future leader of the church. Central to that effort was Paul’s admonishment to Timothy that, as a leader, he would need to fulfill all of the duties the Lord called him to perform.

Those who are called by the Lord to leadership positions must always remain both mentally and spiritually alert and aware of what is going on around them. A good Christian leader must also be confident of his or her calling and what tasks the Lord has set before him or her. Such assurance will help a leader to understand why their tasks are important and help get the job done. For the Christian leader, the old saying is especially true: “Nothing succeeds like success.” However, if a leader does not understand the rationale behind his or her calling and merely goes about the rote motions of fulfilling his or her duties, that leader will have failed right from the beginning.

⁵⁴Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 606.

⁵⁵An Van Pham, *Tan Uoc Nhap Mon* (Atlanta: Atlanta Baptist Theological Center Press, 1994), 236.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I can confidently affirm that leadership training is both vitally important and urgently required to break the stagnation presently extant within the VBCJ. Moreover, such training will help build up faith within the church and help the body to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ which He intends for us. Leadership training is fully consistent with and wholly supported by the Bible's teachings. God's methods remain unchanged. If God wants to accomplish a purpose, He will call and equip men and women to bring His purpose to fruition and completion. As the leader of the VBCJ, one of my primary responsibilities is to train potential leaders. I view a great challenge in this task. However, as a faithful servant, I have to obey the commandments of Jesus to make disciples by training believers to become disciples. I rest assured in the knowledge that this project will bring great benefits to the potential leaders who are willing to respond to God's call and to make a commitment to leadership training. Additionally, I am equally convinced that profound benefits will accrue to the entire church as a result.

CHAPTER 3

A STUDY OF THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Vietnam boasts a long history of approximately four thousand years.

According to archaeologists, in 2000 B.C., North Vietnam was the center of an extensive Bronze Age civilization, specifically located in Dong Son, south of present-day Hanoi.¹ During these long years, Vietnamese people have been influenced by many religious beliefs and cultures. The study of the religious beliefs and cultural background of the Vietnamese people will effectively help in leading among the Vietnamese people. In this chapter, I will discuss various aspects of Vietnamese religious beliefs and culture that have taken root in their world views and which still influence their daily lives today.

Religious Beliefs of the Vietnamese People

Vietnam was a country with many religions. Living in the land of various religions, most Vietnamese people do not consider themselves to be purely of one religion. Some of their beliefs are not recognized to be part of a religion for they neither worship any god, nor follow any doctrines. However, these beliefs have had a profound impact on their minds and their culture. In this section, I will discuss three major religious beliefs that I think have the most influence among the Vietnamese people.

¹Duong Cao Pham, *Lich Su Dan Toc Viet Nam* (Fountain Valley, CA: Truyen Thong Viet, 1987), 38.

Cult of Ancestors

The Cult of Ancestors seems to be considered a cultural belief more than a religious belief. It is just a simple way of expressing thankfulness to the ancestors. George Braswell states, "For many religions there is no difference between religion and culture, between religion and politics, or between religion and a way of life."² During their long occupation of the country, the Chinese introduced the Cult of Ancestors to Vietnam. It was about two hundred years before the birth of Christ.³ This belief continued to be passed down from generation to generation.

In most Vietnamese homes, one would find wooden tablets on the little family altar, each for a different deceased ancestor, down to the fifth generation. The purpose of this manner of Cult Ancestor worship is to express gratitude to the ancestors, the deceased parents, and grandparents. The children express their devotion and gratitude to the past generations who have nurtured and brought them up. The Vietnamese believe that death does not mean annihilation. After death, the soul wanders like an exile in space. The descendants' duty is to return the souls to their families, to welcome them at the ancestral altars and to worship them.⁴ In a village, the deceased are often buried right in the backyard in order for the Vietnamese people to live close to their relatives, both living and dead.

According to the Vietnamese people's beliefs, the dead intervene all the time in the life of the living. After death, the souls of the dead wander from place-to-place until

²George W. Braswell, Jr., *Understanding World Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Islam* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 6.

³Haivenu, "Ancestor Worship," accessed August 27, 2015, <http://www.haivenu-vietnam.com/vietnam-religion-ancestors.htm>.

⁴Tung Van Tran, *Vietnam* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), 46.

they find a resting place provided by their living descendants.⁵ In addition, they believe that life after death is somewhat similar to life on earth; therefore, the living descendants are required to respond to the needs of the dead by offering them food, clothing, and money. As a result, the souls of the dead may protect and assist the living on earth.⁶ Moreover, they also believe that the dead are invisible, yet present in their lives. Through the cult, a close relationship still exists between the living and the dead. In other words, the cult is the medium in which the dead and the living meet and mutually communicate.

Vietnamese people rank filial piety as the most important of all virtues. Since early childhood, Vietnamese children must memorize the following verses: "*Công cha như núi Thái Sơn, nghĩa mẹ như nước trong nguồn chảy ra. Một lòng thờ mẹ kính cha, cho tròn chữ hiếu mới là đạo con* (The father's merits are high as the mountain of Thai Son, the mother's love is like spring water flowing endlessly. Venerate your mother and honor your father in order to be a filial child)." Children must keep this filial piety as the most fundamental ethical principle in their lives. This ethical principle is not limited to the children serving their parents while they are living, but even after they die.

Filial piety is always associated with ancestor worship as a way to express filial piety for the dead. Under Confucian influence, the Vietnamese have been taught that "when parents are alive, serve them according to ritual. When they die, bury them according to ritual and sacrifice to them according to ritual."⁷ The Vietnamese believe filial piety is to maintain the worship of ancestors. Even though the Cult of Ancestors

⁵Phu Hoang Le, "A History of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam" (Ph.D.diss., New York University, 1972), 41.

⁶Anh Toan, *Tin Nguong Vietnam* (Ho Chi Minh: Nha Xuat Ban Thanh Pho Ho Chi Minh, 1992), 24.

⁷Confucius, and Arthur Waley, *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Book, 1938), 89.

seems more of a cultural belief than a religious belief, it has been the most dominant religious belief in Vietnam.

Since Christianity was first introduced in Vietnam, ancestor worship is a kind of idol worship in the eye of the Western missionaries. This negative aspect has impacted many Vietnamese people to come to accept Christianity, for they think that Christianity is a religion that teaches against their beliefs, and is not honoring their ancestors. If one who looks closely at a different view, one can see that ancestor worship also has a positive aspect, such as its expressions of filial piety between the children and the parents.

While examining filial piety from the Vietnamese beliefs, it seems their belief has some teaching in line with biblical teaching. The Bible teaches to "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you" (Exod 20:12). According to this teaching, God commands the children to honor their parents when the parents are still living. This requirement is followed by the promise from God that they will live long on earth if they obey His command. In parallel with this teaching, even though the Vietnamese people do not know the Bible, they also believe that if they honor and take good care of their parents, they may receive a reward. To minister to the Cult of Ancestors worshipers, using God's command to "honor your parents" is the first positive aspect that can be used to connect with them. Christians need to convince the Vietnamese that the Bible does not teach against their filial piety, but that it helps them to practice truly honoring their parents as they live on this earth, since Cult of Ancestors worshipers only trace back to the fifth generation, but Christianity can trace back to all generations, to the Creator who has created all mankind. For worshiping the true and living God is truly to fulfill honoring one's ancestor, the Creator.

The Bible forbids Christians to worship men, but does not forbid Christians to honor men or kings. In 1 Peter 2:17, Peter writes, "Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king" (NAS). According to this verse, Peter calls believers to honor

all men including the king, but fear God. The term “fear God” does not mean the same as the term “honor” as Thomas R. Schreiner explains:

“Peter did not place God on the same plane as the others mentioned in this verse, for fearing God is fundamental and primary and hence cannot be equated with the honor due to all. Peter specifically distinguished one’s attitude toward God (“fear”) from one’s attitude toward the emperor (“honor”). The verbs “honor,” “fear,” and “love” simply does not mean the same thing.”⁸

According to Thomas R. Schreiner’s explanation, Peter permitted Christians to honor men and kings, but not to fear them. God is the only one they need to fear. Leonhard Goppelt affirms that fear “is due, however, only to God. This is so because God alone determines existence and non-existence.”⁹ Therefore, Christians are allowed to honor men and kings, but to worship only the true and living God. It is necessary to study this religious belief in order to know how to minister effectively amongst the Vietnamese people.

Caodaism

Cao Dai is a "Vietnamese home-grown" religion based in the city of Tay Ninh, in southern Vietnam. It is about 100 kilometers from Ho Chi Minh City. Caodaists consider the founder of Caodaism to be Chieu Van Ngo. In 1919, Chieu Van Ngo, an administrator for the French in Indochina, received messages from a spirit called Duc Cao Dai whom he believed to be God. From then on, he became the prophet of the new Cao Dai religion, which was founded in 1926.¹⁰ The term "Cao Dai" is the Vietnamese

⁸Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 132.

⁹Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on 1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1993), 190.

¹⁰Gabriel Gobron, and Thai Xuan Pham, *History and Philosophy of Caodaism; Reformed Buddhism, Vietnamese Spiritism, New Religion in Eurasia* (Saigon: Tu-hài, 1950), 19.

word which literally means "High Tower, the place where God reigns."¹¹ The Cao Dai religion is a syncretistic blend of Asian and Western religions.

The sources of Caodaism teachings derive from doctrines of several religions, including Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Phu Hoang Le affirms that all the teachings in Caodaist tenets include: the Confucian doctrines of "Tam Cuong (three principal precepts)," "Ngu Thuong (five constant virtues)," "Trung Dung (the Way mean)"; the Buddhist concepts of Karma, Dukka, and Eightfold Way; The Taoist ways of "soul and body improvement" and "perfecting of character," and the Christian teachings of love, tolerance, humility, and faith of Christianity.¹² Cao Dai religion intends to combine all religions into a universal religion. Anh Toan confirms that Caodai is an attempt to unite all religions into one body. According to its believers, a universal harmony of religions is necessary for the progress of humankind.¹³

Caodaists believe in a Sovereign Lord who is the Creator of all beings. This is the One who is depicted as omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent over all the universe, perfectly good, greatly merciful, invisible, and everlasting. This is the One who has many names. Caodaism venerates all saints, including Christ, Buddha, and other religious figures, plus great men and women down through history, such as Victor Hugo.¹⁴ Caodaists are willing to accept many different levels of practice, and are open to many different traditions. Observing this new indigenous religion, Phu Hoang Le writes,

¹¹Tuy Ngoc Trinh, *A Brief Introduction to Caodaism* (San Jose, CA: Lay Dignitaries Caodai Internation, 2014), 6.

¹²Le, "A History of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam," 90.

¹³Anh Toan, *Tin Nguong Viet Nam* (Ho Chi Minh City: Nha Xuat Ban Thanh Pho Ho Chi Minh, 1992), 145, 264. (Toan Anh. *Nếp cũ tín-ngưỡng Việt-Nam* [Lancaster, PA: Xuân Thu, 1980], 145, 264).

¹⁴Gobron, and Pham, *History and Philosophy of Caodaism, New Religion in Eurasia*, 51-58.

The first Protestant missionaries in Vietnam found a deeply religious people who were eager to learn of new concepts of metaphysics and ethics to cope with the rapidly changing society of their time. This relative openness of mind made the encounter between religious representatives of most faiths more or less smooth and productive, especially during the first two decade of the Protestant presence in the country.¹⁵

The Caodaist faith has spread rapidly and has made significant advances, because it strongly appeals to the animist-oriented people in Southern Vietnam and emphasizes relief work to the poor.¹⁶ Moreover, this is a religion which upholds the unity of all humankind of every period—the living and the dead as well. Although some criticize Cao Dai as a religion with many objects of worship, it is necessary to remark that this is a religion generated from a generous conception in fact embedded in the Vietnamese thought. The Cao Dai Religion has manifested in Vietnam and is currently spreading throughout the four continents of Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia. Today, over six million Caodaists and counting live across the planet.¹⁷

Even though Caodaists have no problem accepting other religions beliefs, it is difficult for them to convert to Christianity. This is because the Cao Dai religion suggests that their sacred mission is to bring peace and harmony to humanity and to unite the “God within” with the Great Divine Being in order to achieve true enlightenment and liberty. They can adapt the Christian faith, but they cannot give up their belief in Caodaism. This is why many Caodaists cannot make a commitment in Christ alone. At the same time, they can attend a Christian church to worship God, but they also go to the Cao Dai temple to worship their own god, for they think both the Christian's God and Cao Dai's god is the same god.

¹⁵Le, "A History of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam," 96.

¹⁶Ibid., 95.

¹⁷Trinh, *A Brief Introduction to Caodaism*, 6.

To minister to the Caodaists would take more time and patience. The reason is most of them are not truly converted to Christianity at first. According to Holly Pivec, many of the Caodaists who came to the United States as refugees were sponsored by Christian churches. As a response of gratitude, some of them converted to Christianity, but now they are being drawn to Cao Dai to reaffirm their Vietnamese identity or reconnect with their family faith.¹⁸ For this reason, church leaders need to pay more attention and closely watch Caodaists who are newly converted to Christianity. Christians need to continue to help the new converts truly understand that there is only one way to salvation through Jesus Christ, and that they must worship only the true and living God.

Buddhism

The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama. He was born as a royal prince in sixth century B.C. in a place called Lumbini, which was originally in northern India, but is now part of Nepal. In his early years, he lived as a prince in his royal palace, married princess Yasodhara, and had a child, but was still restless.¹⁹ George W. Braswell Jr. states that "Buddha saw four sights which caused him deep concern. He saw an old man, a dying man, a dead man, and a holy man. The sight of age and death alarmed him, and the Hindu sage intrigued him, and he left his family to begin a life of spiritual pilgrimage in the forest."²⁰ He left home to the forest, where he followed a spiritual life of meditation when he was about twenty-nine. After six years, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya, India.

¹⁸Holly Pivec, "CaoDai" accessed August 28, 2015, <http://www.equip.org/article/caodai/>.

¹⁹Pham, "A Missiological Strategy for Korean-American Church Growth in Georgia," 38.

²⁰Braswell, *Understanding World Religions*, 46.

Buddha's doctrine is based on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. The main teaching of this doctrine is that all life is suffering. For example: birth, decay, illness, death, the presence of objects we hate, the separation from objects we love, and the inability to obtain what we desire are all forms of suffering. To overcome this suffering, one needs to follow the Eightfold Path, which consists of the right beliefs and resolves, the moral life, and mystical or meditative life. Moreover, there is no reliance upon external help; one should work out one's own salvation.²¹

Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam from India in the mid or late-second century.²² Buddha's doctrine taught Vietnamese people a way to free themselves from misery they had suffered for generations. His doctrine called for mercy, corresponding to the wishes of people afflicted with bad luck and sorrow. For this reason, Buddhism quickly took root and flourished in Vietnam.²³ Vietnamese Buddhism is very similar to Chinese Buddhism and, to some extent, reflects the structure of Chinese Buddhism after the Song Dynasty. Vietnamese Buddhism has a symbiotic relationship with Taoism, Chinese spirituality, and the native Vietnamese religion. Buddhism in Vietnam is practiced mainly according to the Mahayana tradition. According to An Van Pham, "Mahayana Buddhists believe man is not alone, but involved with others. They base their faith on Buddha's life of compassion and believe he is a savior."²⁴ Buddha has been considered as a god who has a great magic power, and who always appears to help the good-doers as well as punish the evil ones.

²¹Braswell, *Understanding World Religions*, 53-54.

²²Ronald J. Cima, *Vietnam: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989), 128.

²³Thu Tai Nguyen, *History of Buddhism in Vietnam*, ed. Thu Tai Nguyen (Hanoi: Khao Hoc Xa Hoi, 1992), 3.

²⁴Pham, "A Missiological Strategy for Korean-American Church Growth in Georgia," 38.

Buddhists believe that people are born again and again and again, in human and animal forms. A good person will continue being born again into better lives, and eventually they will reach nirvana. Based on this belief, when witnessing to Buddhists, Christians need to explain clearly what being "born again" really means, not letting Buddhists confuse "born again" and reincarnation from one life to the next. Witnessing to followers of Buddha will be the most effective when a trusting relationship has been established with the individual, family, or group. This will lead to trust, bringing freedom to ask about life and spiritual issues, as well as openness in listening to the entire Gospel message.

Cultural Background of the Vietnamese American People

Leading the Vietnamese Americans in a local church today is a challenge, because of the various generations and cultures present. In order to lead them effectively, leaders not only need to know their religious belief backgrounds, but they also need to understand their cultures as well. In this section, I will discuss the cultures of first and second-generation Vietnamese Americans.

The Culture of First-generation Vietnamese Americans

Those who were born in Vietnam and who were above twenty years of age at the time they left Vietnam are considered to be first-generation Vietnamese Americans. Those people fled their country with their families to the United States for resettlement after South Vietnam fell to communism in 1975. While living in a new land, they had to deal with their difficult lives by adapting to their new environments. The chief issue they were dealing with was the culture. In this section, I will discuss both family culture and learning culture.

Family culture. Most of the first generation of Vietnamese Americans found it very difficult to adapt to a new culture, because their own culture had taken root deep in their hearts. Even though the Vietnamese people fled from their country to the United States in 1975, which was forty years ago, they still hold very tightly to their own family culture. Tricia Springstubb affirms, "Although the Vietnamese as a whole have adapted to their new country with great success, they have never abandoned their old culture."²⁵

Like other Asians, the Vietnamese emphasize maintaining great parental power within their families. According to the first generation people of traditional Vietnamese culture, parents are the decision-makers of the family, especially the father or the husband. As the head of household, the father always has the final decision in all matters, although he might consult with his wife or children. His wife and children must obey the husband or father's decision. This family culture becomes a problem for most of the Vietnamese churches that have a family where the mother and children are believers, but the father is not a believer. For the church to minister to the family is difficult if the father is an unbeliever and also adamant to adhering to the conservative Vietnamese family culture. According to Huong Tran, a wife and mother of children of a family whose husband is still an unbeliever, regularly attending church to worship God is not always possible.²⁶ She and her children can only go to church if her husband permits.

Another potential challenge is visiting church members who have unbelieving parents. According to the Vietnamese family culture, children must always obey and submit to the parent as long as they are still living in the home. Children who desire to convert to another religion are not permitted to do so without their parent's approval. In

²⁵Tricia Springstubb, *The Vietnamese Americans* (San Diego: Lucent Books, 2002), 11.

²⁶Huong Tran, interview by the writer, Jonesboro, GA, February 28, 2016.

2015, a member of the VBCJ brought his stepsister to the church. She attended church regularly without any restrictions from her mother as long as no conversion occurred. After a few months of attending church and Bible study, she became a Christian without her mother's notice, and was still attending church without any problem. However, one day she desired to join the choir in the First Baptist Church of Jonesboro (FBCJ). Not being familiar with the Vietnamese culture, the FBCJ sent deacons to visit her family. They met her mother as they arrived at the house. After the visit, according to her stepbrother, the mother forbade her daughter from attending church.²⁷

According to family culture at home, children should show respect to their parents. This is expressed through obedience in words and action. Respect is part of the concept of filial piety. After the parents have made a final decision, family members should follow without asking any questions. Understanding the Vietnamese family culture and exercising it well would be an effective tool in ministering to the Vietnamese people. In order to win the Vietnamese family, church leaders need to identify the decision-maker in the family and attempt to make good connections with him or her. If church leaders win the decision-maker in the house, they could win the entire family.

Learning culture. According to the Vietnamese traditional culture of education, teachers must always be older than their students. This might show the students that the teachers have something to offer. Teachers who are younger than their students are often not respected by the students, for they may have less experience in life in the eyes of the students. The teacher's role in Vietnam was to be a very strict authority figure. Out of respect, students rarely questioned a teacher.²⁸ This is why students in

²⁷Quan Chau, interview by the writer, Jonesboro, GA, February 14, 2016.

²⁸Springstubb, *Vietnamese Americans*, 61.

Vietnam always had to listen and follow a teacher's teachings; however, in America. This is not always the case.

In teaching to the older Vietnamese people, always teachers must show respect to them. Many Vietnamese people are never successful, because they think they are too old to learn. To get them to learn, finding motivations would be a strategy to help them to continue to go a long way. For some people, a few times of repeating these motivations is needed to help them make their decisions.

Vietnamese students usually keep quiet in the classroom or in discussion. Instead of volunteering to answer the questions asked by the teachers that they might know, they would rather wait for their names to be called. This often makes instructors misunderstand, thinking that the students are either passive or possess an uncooperative attitude. To encourage others to participate in answering or discussion, teachers must call on them or begin with someone else in the class to answer the questions. As they answer and the discussion ensues, others will feel more comfortable in getting involved. Keeping quiet in class is part of the culture of the Vietnamese people, because it shows a respect for the teachers. Being talkative, interrupting, and challenging the teacher is not typical of the Vietnamese culture. For this reason, if teachers desire students to ask questions during their lectures, they must repeat this option several times to the students and allow them the opportunity to ask.

The Culture of Second-generation Vietnamese Americans

The second generation of Vietnamese Americans was considered to be the children born in the United State or who arrived in the country prior to the age of five as they came with their families. According to Min Zhou and Carl Bankston, the Vietnamese-American second generation is the largest group of refugee children as they

have experienced growing up American.²⁹ For the second Vietnamese American to adapt the Vietnamese culture to living in the United States is not easy. In this section, I will discuss their broken family culture and learning culture in the second Vietnamese generation.

Family culture. It is sad that the Vietnamese family culture has been broken amongst the second-generation Vietnamese Americans. Many of the second generation Vietnamese Americans could not adapt well to their Vietnamese family culture. The reason was because they never really experienced or actually studied any of it. They only observed or were taught a little through their parents about the culture. This leads them to experience conflict between the traditional Vietnamese family values of their parents and the influences of growing up in American society, according to Peter Do.³⁰ The second-generation Vietnamese American family culture was formed from mixing between the Vietnamese and American cultures. It always adds the conflicting pressures of assimilation and demands between the two cultures. The two most influential reasons why second-generation Vietnamese Americans could not adapt to the Vietnamese family culture are the lack of communication and the language barrier.

First of all, lack of communication in a family is the greatest reason for causing the Vietnamese family culture to break in the second Vietnamese generation. In Vietnam, most of the women stayed home to take care of the children and run their homes; only the men of the families held outside employment. However, when the first Vietnamese

²⁹Min Zhou and Carl L. Bankston, *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998), 1.

³⁰Peter Van Do, "Between Two Cultures: Struggles of Vietnamese American Adolescents" (paper presented at the National History Honor Society Conference, University of Maryland, 2002), 4.

generation came to the United States, woman began to take jobs outside the home. Springstubb affirmed, “This was a major role change, and initially it caused considerable upheaval within families.”³¹ In many Vietnamese families, the husband and wife both work, and they often take more than one job at a time. Because both parents have to work, they have less time to communicate with their children, leaving little opportunity to see their children on a daily basis. This lack of communication has caused their culture to become broken and has even caused families to fall apart.

Second, the language barrier is another reason for causing the first Vietnamese culture to break into the second generation of Vietnamese Americans. In her article, Janie Har stated that "those who work with immigrant families agree that the absence of a common language in the home can cause serious problems."³² Most of the second Vietnamese generation are unable to speak fluent Vietnamese or even understand their parents completely. Language barriers have always been a problem for communication between the parents and children within a family. Most of the time, the parents prefer to speak mainly Vietnamese at home, but children prefer to talk in English. It is because the parents could only speak and understand well in Vietnamese, and in the opposite way, the children could only speak and understand well in English. For this reason, parents often speak to the children in Vietnamese, and the children answer back in English. This causes the family culture to fall apart as the parents and children cannot understand each other very well.

Lack of communication and the language barrier amongst the Vietnamese family has broken the bond between the first and second Vietnamese generations. This is

³¹Springstubb, *Vietnamese Americans*, 60.

³²Janie Har, "When Words Fail: Some Children of Immigrants Face Language Barriers in Their Own Homes" August 1998, accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.csus.edu/owl/index/read/sacbee/wrds_fail.htm.

not only a problem in the family, but it is a problem in the church as well. Many church leaders do not recognize that the children who regularly attend church are still not being born again. This is why the children of the second Vietnamese generation start leaving church as soon as they leave home or go to college. Most of the time, they sit in church, but they cannot understand because of cultural and language barriers. Understanding the culture and language problem of the second Vietnamese generation will help church leaders know how to minister to them in an effective manner.

Learning culture. A problem that is prevalent in not only second-generation Vietnamese Americans, but also in Americans is that their age is a lack of focus. This is most likely due to an increase in the usage of the Internet and of mobile devices. A constant stream of information is flowing into their minds. They might attempt to take it all in, but they cannot keep up with it and are always jumping from one topic to another. Jonathan Duong, the second-generation Vietnamese American, stated that "to keep them invested in the lesson; their attention has to be grabbed in the beginning and constantly refreshed. Otherwise, they might grow bored and start complaining, whether they do it out loud or in their minds."³³ Lessons should not draw out too long and silent air should be kept to a minimum, because it is in these situations that their minds start to wander away from the lesson.

A second-generation Vietnamese American typically questions everything like any other student their age would. If they bring up a point or question, they expect an answer from the teacher. These questions should not be dismissed or skipped, because it is vital to keep the students engaged. It also helps the students, because it might clear up any misconceptions that they will have from the start. Sometimes they might even disagree to the teacher, but the teacher must be prepared to backup his or her own point.

³³Jonathan Duong, interview by the writer, Jonesboro, GA, August 2, 2015.

If these points feel weak in anyway, the student might view the teacher as inexperienced, and the lessons might have less of an impact. It is essential that a teacher is prepared—not only for his or her own lesson plan, but also for any potential questions that a student might have. They must also be able to explain in different ways in the case that a student does not understand the first explanation.

Second-generation Vietnamese Americans generally learn best in a small group. They are more likely to connect with the teacher and each other. If they have any questions, they may be more open to the teacher in a small group, than if the teacher was teaching with a bigger group. This is because the teacher is able to pay more attention to individual students in a small group. Second-generation Vietnamese-American students have had the opportunity to learn in an environment similar to this during elementary school, so it is what they prefer. In a small group, the teacher is more invested in the students, so, in turn; the students are more invested in learning. They learn better if they know the teacher genuinely desires to help them, and this is difficult to show in a big group. If a teacher wants to teach a second-generation Vietnamese American effectively, they have to be available to answer any questions the student may have, and know what they are teaching well enough to explain through using multiple methods.

Conclusion

Fifteen years ago, the VBCJ began to plant and spread the Gospel message to the Vietnamese people in Jonesboro and the surrounding areas. Hundred of Vietnamese people came to know the Lord, but many still do not know who Jesus Christ is. The VBCJ has not made strides in the past in reaching out to the Vietnamese people, and the church has failed to train new leaders who could help the church grow. Church growth will be the responsibility not just to the church leaders, but to every member of the church as well. The church will not allow these failures in the past to stop the church from growing, but it will help strengthen the church in the years to come. Studying

Vietnamese religious beliefs and cultural background will provide a better way for church leaders or anyone who seeks and desires to bring the Gospel to the Vietnamese people or equip others to do God's work in the future.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROJECT

The implementation of the leadership training project for the VBCJ began on August 9, 2015. However, three months prior to the project, details were announced and posted on the church bulletin board for the information of church members. During these three months, I invited potential church leaders to come to my home twice a month to study the Bible. All the Bible study lessons were focused on the teachings of Jesus and Paul regarding leadership, which was discussed in chapter 2 of this project. I intended to fulfill two purposes with this Bible study. First, I continued to encourage them to take on the role of a leader in the church to serve God through the VBCJ. Second, all the potential church leaders have never gone through training before, so I used this opportunity to prepare them to be ready ahead of time for the twelve weeks of leadership training by helping them faithfully attend Bible study class at my home. Following this chapter, I will provide details on how the project was implemented.

Invitation to the Project

On Sunday, August 9, 2015, I preached a sermon entitled “To be Involved in Building up the Church,” taken from Ephesians 4:11-13:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

I explained to the VBCJ that, according to Paul, God gives various gifts to those who have been saved, and everyone has at least one gift. The purpose of these gifts is to

prepare the recipients for service within His body, to build it up in the faith, and to ensure the full and complete attainment of all that Christ can bestow on them.

I further explained that in order for the VBCJ to grow, each member should be responsible for exercising the gifts he or she receives from God, according to the motivation of the Holy Spirit. If any individual member does not utilize his or her gifts from the Lord, the VBCJ cannot reach its fullest and greatest potential. In the event that many fail to do so, the VBCJ will inevitably remain stagnant. At the end of the sermon, I promoted the leadership training project to the entire church and called them to participate by filling out the Leadership Training Registration Card.¹ In total, ten people including youth, young adults, and elders filled out the Leadership Training Registration Card. I asked the ten of them to return to the church for orientation that same day at 6:00 P.M.

Orientation to the Project

The leadership training orientation session was held on August 9, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. All ten of the people who registered in the morning returned, in addition to three more people who just wanted to observe. In opening the orientation, I gave words of welcome and briefly shared the verse in John 12:26, “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.” I motivated them by saying that God will honor those who serve Him, and this is the greatest blessing from God to men. After the short message, I addressed the purpose of the project.

The project contained three areas of training. The first training topic contained four lessons, which dealt with leaders and teaching the Bible. This training sessions assured each participant would know how to prepare and teach a Bible study class. The

¹See appendix 1.

second training topic contained four lessons, which dealt with leaders and sharing the Gospel. At the conclusion of this training session, each participant had the opportunity to go out with me to share the Gospel with the community. Additionally, they invited their friends to attend an evangelistic service at the end of the leadership training program. Similar to the two topics above, the last training topic had four lessons and dealt with leaders and discipleship. After this training session ended, each participant took a written exam to measure his or her level of knowledge in discipleship.

Next, I asked them to complete the leadership survey.² I told them that the purpose of this survey was to benefit me and also benefit them in the leadership training program. They all agreed and cooperated in completing the survey. The last part of the orientation discussed the schedule of the leadership training program. I proposed the training program would take place weekly for a total of fifteen weeks; however, a little problem occurred. The problem was that they could not attend weekly training, but they could attend twice a month. After discussing the problem, the group attempted to do the training on the second week and fourth week of the month. The project training was taught in Vietnamese, and followed by eight months of endurance.

Leader and Teaching the Bible Training Sessions

From August 23, 2015 to October 11, 2015, church leaders received four training sessions from me (appendixes 6-9). These four training sessions dealt with the same topic regarding teaching the Bible, but from different aspects. The first training session discussed the seven requirements for a Bible teacher. The second training session discussed the basic doctrines for teaching the Bible. The third training session discussed four basic steps for preparing the Bible lesson. The fourth training session discussed the

²See appendix 2.

Basic Techniques for Leading a Bible Study. Each of the training sessions took an average of an hour and fifteen minutes.

Session 1: The Requirements for a Bible Teacher

The first training session was held on August 23, 2015 (appendix 6). I explained to the potential leaders the seven requirements for a Bible teacher, according to the Word of God. To be an effective Bible teacher, one must pay close attention to these seven requirements. The seven requirements for the Bible teacher include (1) Obligation to the Word. In obligation to the Word, one must keep and defend the Word. (2) High Sense of Responsibility. This includes diligence and striving in teaching. (3) Cultivate Learning. In order to cultivate learning, one must increase knowledge by reading the Bible and books, and learning from others. (4) Focus on Building Up. This includes building up others in faith and in the body of Christ. (5) Being Careful in Teaching. This means they must first teach themselves, and then teach others. (6) Avoid being scorned. In order to avoid being scorned, they must pay attention to their lifestyles and their teaching styles. (7) Reliance on the Holy Spirit. The reasons for leaning on the Holy Spirit are because the Holy Spirit is the Counselor and the Spirit of Truth. At the end of the lesson, I challenged them to keep meditating on these seven requirements in order to become excellent Bible teachers.

Session 2: The Basic Doctrines for Teaching the Bible

The second training session was held on September 13, 2015 (appendix 7). In this lesson, I explained to the potential church leaders the two basic doctrines that would help them in Bible teaching. These two basic doctrines were aimed at the doctrine of God and the Word. I taught that these two basic doctrines are very important for the Bible teacher.

In the first part of this training session, I taught that, in order to teach others the truth, they should know clearly about God. They must recognize that “God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.”³ In addition, they should know and understand the characteristics of God. The five characteristics of God pointed out to them were: (1) God is Holy, (2) God is Love, (3) God is Omnipotent, (4) God is Omnipresent, and (5) God is Omniscient. Clearly knowing these five characteristics of God enables Bible teachers to encourage others to draw near to God and trust Him completely.

In the last part of the training session, I taught that the Bible is the Word of God, for “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16). The Word of God is living and powerful and can change any man who is willing to study it. Moreover, the purpose of the Word of God is to save men, as John writes in John 20:30-31, “Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” At the end of the training session, I encouraged them to continue to keep on reading the Word, so that they would live according to the Word and teach others to do the same.

Session 3: Four Basic Steps for Preparing the Bible Lesson

The third training session was held on September 27, 2015 (appendix 8). This training session focused on four basic steps for preparing a Bible lesson. The first step I taught was praying. Though very important, praying is often overlooked in preparing a Bible lesson. Praying would help the Bible teacher to gain a deep understanding of the

³Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 226.

Word. Preparation was the second step discussed. In this step, the Bible teacher needs to choose, read, study, and set the goal for the Bible lesson. In addition in this step, a preparer can choose a title for the Bible lesson. Choosing a title aids the preparer to focus on the goal and also helps students to remember the theme of the Bible lesson.

Analyzing the text was the third step discussed. This step should go deeply into the text by studying the event, the meaning, and the applications. Developing the lesson was the last step. In this step, I taught them how to build the outline, details, and the application. Always important in the Bible lesson, application helps students apply the Word in their daily lives. This session ended with questions-and-answers, and then dismissal.

Session 4: Basic Techniques for Leading a Bible Study

The fourth training session was also held on October 11, 2015 (appendix 9). Session 4 dealt with the basic techniques for leading a Bible study. In this session, first, I discussed with them the importance of keeping the time. A Bible teacher needs to come to class at least fifteen minutes early to prepare things like the classrooms, tables, and chairs. Arriving on time is considered late for a Bible teacher. Additionally, it should conclude at about ten minutes before time is up to allow time to pray for that which they just learned.

The second part of the session dealt with the role of the teacher in leading the Bible lesson. I pointed out five things they needed to pay attention to when teaching: first, asking questions for others to answer, and also not to answer the questions that they themselves pose. Second, practice listening to answers from others. Third, keep the Bible lesson in focus. Allow plenty of time for the points. Keep the discussion flowing, and do not delve too much into the extra points. Fourth, when dealing with questions from others for which they do not know the answers, the teacher should just be honest and tell the

students that he or she does not know rather than attempting to answer it wrongly. In addition, the teacher can promise the students that he or she will study or ask the pastor and answer in the following session. Last, summarize the main points of the lesson. The teacher should emphasize the point of application and the specific ways of practicing it, and challenge participants to apply the Word of God in their lives.

I ended the session by allowing participants to discuss and ask questions. Then, I asked them to practice what they learned in these training sessions by preparing a Bible lesson in the coming week. They seemed pleased with the new things they had learned. After I prayed, some of them went home, but others stayed a little while for fellowship.

Leader and Sharing the Gospel Training Session

From October 25, 2015 to December 27, 2015, church leaders received the next training sessions from the fifth to the eighth sessions (appendixes 10-13). These next four training sessions dealt with the same topic regarding sharing the Gospel. The fifth training session discussed the reasons for sharing the Gospel. The sixth training session discussed the basics of the Gospel. The seventh training session discussed the requirements for sharing the Gospel. The eighth training session discussed the techniques of sharing the Gospel. Each of the training sessions took an average of an hour and fifteen minutes.

Session 5: The Reasons for Sharing the Gospel

The fifth training session was held on October 25, 2015 (see appendix 10). Session 5 dealt with the reasons for sharing the Gospel. In this session, I discussed with the church leaders three main reasons for sharing the Gospel. First, Jesus is the role model, and He commands Christians to share the Gospel. Second, sinners need the Gospel. Without sharing the Gospel with them, they cannot know how to be saved. Third, only Christians were chosen to share the Gospel. Sharing the Gospel would bring

blessings to Christians, for they will receive more joys when sharing the grace of God to others, especially to their loved ones. At the end of this training session, discussion and questions-and-answers ensued, followed by the closing prayer.

Session 6: The Basics of the Gospel

According to the schedule, the sixth training session was supposed to be held on November 8, 2015; however, it was delayed to the week of November 22, 2015. The reason was that after I taught the Bible training lessons, the church leaders requested hands-on instruction in the preparation of a Bible lesson. Therefore, I used the three weeks from November 1 to November 15 to help the church leaders with hands-on preparation to teach Bible lessons. On November 22, 2015, the class returned to the sixth training session (appendix 11). Session 6 dealt with the basics of the Gospel. In this session, I discussed with the church leaders the definitions, the essentials, and the results of the Gospel message. I taught that the Gospel message is very important and that every church leader needs to know and understand it clearly. At the end of this training session, discussion, questions, and answers were followed by the closing prayer.

Session 7: The Requirements for Sharing the Gospel Effectively

The seventh training session was held on December 13, 2015 (appendix 12). Session 7 dealt with the requirements for sharing the Gospel in an effective manner. In this session, I discussed with the church leaders three very important requirements for sharing the Gospel. First, church leaders must have experienced the power of the Gospel changing them from being sinners to believers, and becoming witnesses. Second, for church leaders to believe in the power of the Gospel is essential. This includes the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, the power of Jesus through the sacrifice of His body once and for all, and the power of the Holy Spirit, so that whoever comes in faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but rather on God's power with deep

conviction. Third, church leaders must use the Bible for sharing the Gospel, for it has power to change life. At the end of this training session, discussion, questions, and answers were followed by the closing prayer.

Session 8: The Techniques of Sharing the Gospel

The eighth training session was held on December 27, 2015 (appendix 13). Session 8 dealt with the techniques of sharing the Gospel. In this session, I shared with the church leaders four basic techniques for sharing the Gospel. First, is sharing by audience, and it depends on who their audience is. When sharing the Gospel, always explain and give proof of the subject of being introduced to the audience. Second is sharing with acquaintances. This includes relatives, friends, and neighbors. Third is sharing in the mission field. This technique includes going out in pairs, praying for themselves, leaning on the Holy Spirit, and taking advantage of all opportunities, being patient, being willing to listen, asking good questions, and continuing to maintain good relationships. In addition to this, I prepared them on how to answer common questions regarding the Cult of Ancestors, Caodaism, and Buddhism. Finally, I shared with them a sample of how to share the Gospel. At the end of this training session, a good discussion ensued with questions and answers, followed by the closing prayer.

After the second training session, the class took a three-week break from the training, from the week of January 3 to January 17, 2016, before continuing to the last training session. Participants used these three weeks to go out into the community for evangelism. First, I asked them to share with their friends, someone they already knew, and then go to the community later. They scheduled appointments with their friends before going to share the Gospel to them. Participants had learned how to share the Gospel in theory and practiced in the classroom; however, when actually sharing the Gospel hands-on, they seemed to experience a little trouble. They needed a little help

from me, but I thought they were doing very well as new learners. I told them “practicing will make perfect,” and encouraged them to continue to share the Gospel with others.

Leader and Discipleship Training Session

From January 24, 2016 to March 13, 2016, church leaders received the last set of training sessions from the ninth session to the twelfth session (appendixes 14-17). These next four training sessions dealt with the same topic regarding discipleship. The ninth training session discussed the basic principles of discipleship. The tenth training session discussed the basic assurances of doctrines of discipleship. The eleventh training session discussed the basic strategies of discipleship. The twelfth training session discussed the basic practices of discipleship. Each of the training sessions took an average of an hour and fifteen minutes.

Session 9: The Basic Principles of Discipleship

The ninth training session was held on January 24, 2016 (appendix 14). Session 9 dealt with the basic principles of discipleship. In this session, I shared with the church leaders three basic principles of discipleship. The first part discussed was the definitions of discipleship, according to Gary McIntosh, J. Oswald Sanders, and from the Bible. The second part discussed the purposes of discipleship. These included developing to the fullness of Christ and glorifying God. The third topic discussed the requirements of discipleship. In this part, I shared with them six requirements that Jesus demanded from His disciples. These requirements are carrying the cross, giving up desires, and holding onto His teachings, abiding in Him, loving others, and bearing fruits. At the end of this training session, the group had discussion, questions, and answers, followed by individual prayers from each participant.

Session 10: The Basic Assurances of Doctrines of Discipleship

The tenth training session was held on February 14, 2016 (appendix 15).

Session 10 dealt with the basic assurances of the doctrines of discipleship. In this session, I shared with the church leaders four basic assurances of the doctrines of discipleship. The four basic assurances of the doctrines discussed were the assurance of dealing with sin, the assurance of dealing with redemption, the assurance of dealing with conversion, and the assurance of dealing with justification. The purposes of these four assurances of the doctrines are to help church leaders to be sure about what they should believe, and also to help others live effective Christian lives. At the end of this training session, a few questions were raised dealing with justification and whether losing salvation after being saved is possible. After answering the questions, I closed the training session with prayer.

Session 11: The Basic Strategies of Discipleship

The eleventh training session was held on February 28, 2016 (appendix 16).

Session 11 dealt with the basic strategies of discipleship. In this session, I shared with church leaders four basic strategies that help leaders be effective in dealing with discipleship. First, leaders need to identify their adversaries who prevent them from living an effective life for Christ. These enemies include the world, our sinful nature, and Satan. Second, after identifying the enemies, leaders need to equip their weapons to fight against their adversaries. These weapons are described by Paul in Ephesians 6. Third, the leaders need to know truly about God who changes their hearts, overcomes the world, empowers their lives, and also fights for their victory. Finally, leaders need to trust in God's power and allow God to work in their lives. After discussing and answering the questions, the training session ended with everyone taking a turn to pray.

Session 12: The Basic Practices of Discipleship

The twelfth training session was held on March 13, 2016 (appendix 17).

Session 12 dealt with the basic practices of discipleship. In this session, I shared with the church leaders five basic practices that help leaders be effective in dealing with discipleship. First, leaders need to take part in worshipping God. Worshipping God must be a priority in the life of the leaders; moreover, the leaders need to help and encourage others to worship the Lord as well. Second, leaders need to practice praying. Praying is to help the leaders stay connected with God and with others. The purpose of prayer is not intended to change God's will, but rather to change the person praying. Third, leaders need to practice studying the Bible. Studying the Bible will help the leaders live with right purpose and to grow spiritually. Fourth, leaders need to practice stewardship. Stewardship will help leaders be careful with and responsible for the resources with which God has entrusted them. Finally, leaders need to practice the assimilation of new believers. The purpose of assimilation is to keep new believers in the local church, meet their needs, and make the church grow. At the end of the training session, the class had discussion, answered the questions, and everyone had a chance to take part in prayer.

Celebration, Discipleship Training Exam, and Post-project Survey

Upon completion of the training project, the celebration, discipleship training exam, and post-project survey were held the following week.

Celebration

On Sunday, March 20, 2016, the church leaders and I conducted the celebration worship service. In this worship service, I preached to leaders and the VBCJ a sermon entitled "The Work In the Lord is not in Vain," using 1 Corinthians 15:58 as his text: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord." In this sermon, I

encouraged the leaders and the church to continue abounding in the work of the Lord, because that would be the best choice. Whatever they do for this world will go away, but anything they do for the Lord, even giving a cup of water to others in His name, will remain forever as the Lord has promised in Matthew 10:42. After the service, participants enjoyed a very good fellowship meal prepared by the leaders. After the fellowship meal, I administered the discipleship training exam to the church leaders.

Discipleship Training Exam

The discipleship training exam was held after the fellowship meal on Sunday, March 20, 2016. Of the ten who registered at the beginning, only nine faithful leaders took the discipleship training exam. The exam contained twenty-five questions, including multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and two multiple-choice questions with explanations to the answer they chose (appendix 18). The exam lasted forty minutes. Then after they finished the exam, I asked them to exchange their papers for review. The purpose of the review was to help them recognize what was right and what was wrong with their answers.

Post-project Survey

After a five-minute break, the leaders came back for the post-project survey. This post-project survey was the same as the leadership survey that I asked them to do before the training project (appendix 2). The purpose of this survey was to benefit both the trainer and the trainees in gaining knowledge by comparing the answers between the pre-project and post-project surveys. After finishing the post-project survey, participants took turn in prayers, after which they were dismissed.

An Evangelistic Service

On Easter Sunday, March 27, 2016, the leaders and church united to conduct an evangelistic service. Participants invited ten prospective friends to come, but only four

showed up to the church, while the other six could not make it. I preached an evangelistic sermon entitled “The Hope in the Risen Lord,” in John 14: 6-7; 18-19. In this sermon, I demonstrated to the audience the comparison between the hope in religion, in miracles, and in the Risen Lord. I proved to the audience that religion could not bring hope to sinners, miracles could not endure hope to sinners, and only the Risen Lord could bring and endure hope to sinners. For He is the only way leading sinners to God, and because He lives, sinners who believe in Him will also live.

I ended the sermon by giving the invitation to the audience, and eight people made confessions of faith by placing their faith, not on the religion or miracles, but only in the Risen Lord. These eight people all are from long-time members of the church. They come to church regularly; however, perhaps their faith did not trust completely in Christ alone. Participants have paid more attention to their prospective friends, but none have made their decisions at this time. This is not something participants can control; only the Holy Spirit can work in the sinners’ hearts. Participants will continue to maintain connections with their prospective friends. Hopefully, God will win their hearts in coming days. Eventually, they were dismissed after eating a very good fellowship meal together.

Conclusion

The project design was intended to meet the needs of evangelism and church growth. Moreover, it attempted to break the stagnation within the VBCJ by training new leaders who will be involved in helping the church grow. This project took months in preparation and review, and was fully supported and aligned with the Bible’s teachings. In order to lead the church to move forward on the right path, church leaders need to be trained according to Bible teachings. Although creating church growth is difficult, I strongly believe that, with the power of God, plus the active obedience of His servants, the church will break the stagnation, and it will grow in the future.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

Introduction

The VBCJ was founded in October 1999. The church was founded for the purpose of reaching out to the Vietnamese people in Jonesboro and the surrounding areas. As the lead pastor, I have been challenged by the call of lead His church, fulfilling this purpose. In order for the VBCJ to fulfill this purpose, the leadership training program needed to be implemented, and the leaders needed to be trained. In this chapter, I will discuss the evaluation of the project's purpose, goals, strengths and weaknesses, as well as what I would do differently and my theological and personal reflections.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

In the past fifteen years since the church was planted, the VBCJ has never made an effort to initiate any form of leadership training. Because the church lacked leadership training, the pastor had to do most of the work alone, including teaching Sunday school, evangelizing, and ministering. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to develop a leadership training program to train church leaders for the VBCJ, Jonesboro, Georgia. In this training program, church leaders learned the importance and methods of how to prepare and teach a Sunday school class with confidence and with correct theology. In addition, church leaders learned how vital the work of evangelism is, and they were enabled to share the Gospel using different approaches. Moreover, church leaders learned the importance of discipleship and how it would first help them and then help others to grow in their faith.

The purpose of the project was to help church leaders biblically and theologically understand the foundation upon which the church was planted. Upon completion of the training, church leaders were asked to commit to leading the church to fulfill the purpose of the church by reaching out to the lost, bringing them into the church, and building them up in the faith. Moreover, the purpose of this training program was to serve as a tool to break the stagnation of the church and start moving the church to grow stronger in the future.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The project had four specific goals. The first goal was to recruit potential leaders who would participate in leadership training. The second goal was to train potential leaders to teach Sunday school classes. The third goal was to train potential leaders to be able to give a clear presentation of the Gospel message. The fourth goal was to increase the level of knowledge among the potential leaders in the areas of discipleship, mentoring, and assimilating new members into the congregation.

Goal 1

The first goal was to recruit potential leaders to participate in the leadership training. To complete this goal, fifteen potential leaders were contacted in person. I personally visited their homes and met them at the church. I shared my vision for the growth of the VBCJ in planning the fifteen-week leadership training program. After sharing the vision for the VBCJ, I encouraged them to get together at my house bi-weekly for Bible study. In the three months prior to beginning the project, I taught them the teachings of Jesus and Paul regarding leadership roles. When the time came for the announcement and the invitation to the church, ten potential leaders had registered to attend the leadership training program. The ten potential committed leaders included a

youth, six young adults, and three elders. In addition to the ten, three other people also attended the leadership training for observation purposes.

Soliciting involvement from the elders in the leadership training required patience, along with a few words of encouragement and time for them to make their decisions to be involved. The leader's target for this goal was to recruit at least seven potential leaders to commit themselves in the leadership training; however, God had prepared ten committed potential leaders for the training. This reminded me of the Word of God to Elijah, "Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him" (1 Kgs 19:18). Trusting in God was the key for the success of Goal 1.

Goal 2

The second goal was to train potential leaders to teach Sunday school classes. To accomplish this goal, I developed and implemented a four-session training program. This training session was both theological and practical in nature. The training sessions consisted of the requirements for a Bible teacher, basic doctrines for teaching the Bible, four basic steps for preparing a lesson, and techniques for leading the Bible lesson. All ten of the committed potential leaders who were being trained completed the training.

Upon the completion of this training, each one had to prepare a Bible lesson to teach the Sunday school class, according to the four-session training program on subsequent Sunday mornings. Additionally, the rubric was used as a tool to measure the Bible lesson through observation and subjective evaluation by me in conjunction with feedback from participants in the Bible study groups. Participants indicated that the Bible teachers carefully prepared all of the Bible lessons. The lessons were biblically and theologically sound.

The potential leaders indicated that this training session was helpful to them. They could read and understand the Bible as they now know how to analyze the text. In

addition, they shared that leading the Bible lesson was a little difficult, especially moving back to the lesson's goal when someone attempts to discuss outside of the lesson's points. Overall, this goal was considered successfully met as 90 percent of the evaluation criterion was exceeded or met.

Goal 3

The third goal was to train potential leaders to give a clear presentation of the Gospel message. To accomplish this goal, I developed and implemented another four-session training program. This training session was both theological and practical in nature. The training session consisted of the reasons for sharing the Gospel, what the Gospel message is, the requirements for sharing the Gospel, and the techniques of sharing the Gospel. All ten of the committed potential leaders who were being trained completed the training.

Upon the completion of this training session, participants went out into the community with me to witness to their friends and others. Some of the participants went home to share the Gospel with their family members and invited them to the church. Even though none of the lost was converted during this witnessing period, participants gained confidence through their experiences of practicing sharing the Gospel with their friends and relatives.

They indicated that the training session helped them understand that sharing the Gospel with others was vitally important. Sharing the Gospel was not something that only pastors can do, but rather, something every believer can be trained to do. Overall, this goal was considered successfully met when participants were given opportunities to witness to the lost.

Goal 4

The fourth goal was to increase the level of knowledge among potential leaders in the areas of discipleship, mentoring, and assimilating new members into the congregation. To accomplish this goal, I developed and implemented the last four sessions of the training program. The training sessions were based on both theological and biblical foundations. In these training sessions, potential leaders learned the principles of discipleship, the assurances of the doctrines of discipleship, the strategies of discipleship, and the practices of discipleship.

Potential leaders shared that this last four-session training program was helpful to them. Before taking this training, they did not know for certain how to deal with sins, redemption, conversion, and justification, but now they do. Not just that, but they also felt confident in helping others to grow and live self-assured lives in the faith. Upon completion, nine of the ten faithful participants completed a written exam to measure the attainment of the desired level of their discipleship knowledge. The exam contained a total of twenty-five questions in the written exam. In the nine potential leaders who took the written exam: two scored 98, one scored 97, one scored 95, two scored 94, one scored 92, one scored 91, and one scored 90. As a result, this goal was considered successfully met when all of the participants scored 90 percent or above.

Pre-training Survey and Post-training Test Survey

Pre- and post-training surveys were utilized to gauge participants' understanding and knowledge of leadership training before and after the training. A t-test for dependent samples was utilized to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed in the pre- and post-training scores. The leadership training program made a statistically significant difference for potential church leaders, resulting in the increase of their knowledge ($t_{(9)} = 2.306, p < .0166$) from the pre-training scores to the post-training scores.

Strengths of the Project

The first strength of the project was the number of potential leaders recruited to commit to the leadership training program. A total of ten participants registered instead of the target goal of seven. This group included all ages ranging from youth, young adults, and elders.

The second strength of the project was the completion rate among those who committed to the training program. Nine of the ten participants obtained faithful attendance and completed the entire leadership training program.

The third strength of the project was that it dealt with a significant need of the church. The church realized the pastor could not do all the work alone. Additionally, the church needs people involved in teaching the Bible, evangelizing the lost, ministering to new believers in order to make the church grow, and fulfilling the purpose of the church. The entire training program was focused on the specific needs of the church, such as teaching the Bible, evangelism, and discipleship. These are the needs for all believers who want to grow in faith and live to glorify the Lord.

The fourth strength of the project was that three church members who were unable to commit to the leadership training program instead joined in as observers. Although, they could not learn from all the training sessions, they understood the importance of the training program taking place in the church.

The fifth strength of the project was the schedule and the length of the training sessions. All of the training sessions took place in the evening at 6:00 p.m. after church. This allowed participants to have time for rest after church before returning for the training. In addition, each training session was an average of one hour and fifteen minutes, which proved not too long or too short.

The sixth strength of the project was potential leaders now feel more prepared and confident to commit in leading the church. Several potential leaders shared they felt

much more prepared for the work now than before the training, and that they are willing to get involved in serving the church wherever needed.

Weaknesses of the Project

The first weakness of the project was the duration of the training. Most of the potential leaders could only commit to bi-weekly training instead of weekly training; therefore, the training sessions could not continue on a weekly basis. In addition, it took about eight months to finish the project instead of the initial four months required.

The second weakness of the project was that the potential leaders were all relatively new believers ranging from 1 to 5 years. Their walks with the Lord had commenced not too long ago, and they had never gone through any previous form of training. Their level of biblical knowledge was limited, so it took more time for them to grasp the lessons. For example, after the training sessions about teaching the Bible, I had to use three more weeks to work with them on how to prepare a Bible lesson. In most of the cases, I had to work with each participant one-on-one in helping them prepare the Bible lesson.

The third weakness of the project was that the evangelistic service schedule needed to be changed from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m. A large percentage of the Vietnamese people living in Jonesboro and the surrounding areas are involved in the nail salon business. They have to work on Sunday between 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The church scheduled the evangelistic service on Easter Sunday at 7:00 p.m.; however, the mother of two potential leaders, who is an unbeliever, had scheduled her wedding party on that evening with short notice.

The time of this wedding party conflicted with the evangelistic service, because most of the Vietnamese people attended the wedding festivities. Even the two participants who were involved in the evangelistic service were unable to attend the service, because they were required to go to their mother's wedding. In addition, their

invited unbeliever relatives could not attend unless the evangelistic service was changed to 11:00 a.m., for they were also required to go to their mother's wedding.

It was a difficult decision to choose between keeping the schedule and changing the schedule of the evangelistic service. If the evangelistic service was changed to 11:00 a.m., for certain, I knew that at least four prospective friends who had previously promised to come would actually attend. If the schedule was kept unchanged, it was uncertain if any others would come. Eventually, the evangelistic service was changed to 11:00 a.m. The four prospective friends showed up to the service, but the rest could not make it. If the schedule had not been rescheduled to 11:00 a.m., due to the conflict with the wedding party, I believe more people might have attended the evangelistic service.

What I Would Do Differently

The first change I would implement in this project would be to change the terms of the training program. A leadership training program seems too big for the church members of the VBCJ. Even though the project was created for all members of the church, some of the church members thought that this training was just for the leaders of the church. They did not realize they too could be part of this training program. I believe changing the terms of the leadership training program to something like developing a Christian's life through discipleship training program could encourage more people to become involved in the initial training.

The second change I would implement in this project would be to modify lesson three of the four training sessions on "Leaders and Teaching the Bible." The third lesson of the "Four Basic Steps for Preparing the Bible Lesson" was about developing the Bible lesson. This lesson seemed a little difficult for the participants to grasp. Even though this lesson entailed just the basic steps, it was difficult for them to prepare each Bible lesson for teaching due to their low levels of biblical knowledge. I believe participants can learn and lead the Bible lesson well if there is a prepared lesson for them

to teach. Therefore, instead of teaching them only how to prepare their own Bible lessons, in the future, I would also teach them how to prepare a Bible lesson in conjunction with using Sunday school literature.

Theological Reflections

The reflection of this project theologically convinced me of how vital, important, and necessary church growth was. Church growth requires all members to be involved, not just the pastors. I can clearly see that leadership training program was important and necessary in two very specific and related areas. In this session, I will discuss theological reflections on evangelism and leadership training.

Evangelism Training

In the process of developing lesson one “Reasons for Sharing the Gospel,” one of the four training sessions of “The Leader and Sharing the Gospel,” as I studied more deeply into the letters of Matthew and Romans, I became convinced of the importance of evangelism training and its role in saving sinners.

Evangelism training is the key to fulfilling the Great Commission. After Jesus’ resurrection, and before leaving this world to return to the Father, He came to the disciples and imparted to them His final instructions, as recorded in Matthew 28. R. T. France states, “Jesus’ final words in this gospel are often referred to as ‘the Great Commission.’”¹ In his gospel, Matthew records that Jesus commands the following: “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” (Matt 28:18-20). Through this Great

¹R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1109.

Commission, Jesus commands His disciples that they are not simply to take His Gospel message to the world to lead people to believe. Rather, it goes beyond that. By doing evangelism training, the disciples were to make disciples—that is, obedient practitioners of the Master’s teachings. If this mindset of evangelism training can be first priority in all churches, then the completion of the Great Commission could truly be fulfilled, and the kingdom of God would expand to the ends of the age.

Evangelism training is also the key for saving sinners. Paul wrote in Romans 10:13-15, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?” The Bible affirms that sinners will be saved when they call upon the name of the Lord. However, they cannot call unless they believe in the Lord, and they cannot believe in the Lord unless they hear about Him, and they cannot hear about the Lord unless someone shares the Lord to them, and who would share the Lord to them if no one is sent? In order for someone to be sent out, Christians need to be trained in evangelism. Therefore, evangelism training is an important factor in involving Christians in reaching out and saving the lost.

Leadership Training

Regardless of the size of the church, leadership training is the key for growth within the church. The more churches are actively involved in leadership training, greater are the opportunities for them to grow. I had reflected a great deal on Paul as the greatest missionary in the history of Christianity. Having learned well from his Master, Jesus Christ, Paul faithfully followed Jesus’ instructions in training the next generation of church leaders, such as Timothy and Titus. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul writes, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” Gordon Fee states that, in this case, Paul

most likely refers to both the example and the teaching of Christ.² In his letters, Paul followed Christ's example by often discussing the importance of leadership training.

As I conducted deep Bible study in 2 Timothy 2:2 for writing chapter 2, I became more convinced that leadership training is vitally important for the churches to grow at all times. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." In this verse, Paul asked Timothy to focus on training leaders for future generations. The Apostle Paul knew he would soon be leaving this world. He wanted Timothy to focus on training future leaders to ensure the Word of God would spread from that generation to future generations, and on and on, until the day of Jesus' return. As the leader of the church, I realized that the church Jesus has built needs to continue growing, but in order for the church to continue to grow, leadership training is the key factor in fulfilling this purpose.

Personal Reflections

Before engaging in the Doctor of Ministry program at Southern Seminary, my biggest concerns were whether I could finish the program and how the project could be implemented in the church. However, when getting this far, I knew God had used many people, including my family, professors, and friends to help and support me. From my personal reflections, I will briefly share my reflections on the Doctor of Ministry program and Doctor of Ministry project.

Doctor of Ministry Program

Throughout the work of the Doctor of Ministry program at Southern Seminary, my leadership skills have greatly improved. I had the opportunity to work and come in

²Gordon D. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 187.

contact with all aspects of my leadership style and grew significantly in my skill levels of education, team building, and leadership development. This experience has helped me to become a better leader.

The four large seminars, reading textbooks, writing research papers, and developing the twelve leadership training lessons for the project served as a tool to help me improve my educational level. In addition, through about two years of working with my cohorts, I also learned from them about team-building and supporting, which gave me a vision in helping other people, especially in helping my potential church leaders climb to the next level of leadership. Last, in every seminar I took made a great impact on my leadership development. As the lead pastor at the VBCJ, I have also learned how to be humble and patient with the church members, so that I could make a greater impact on their lives, and then from their lives impact other people.

Doctor of Ministry Project

Through my personal reflection, I witnessed that the church needed more training in evangelism. The training was necessary so that every church member would be able to attend and be equipped in bringing the Gospel to his or her family members, friends, and neighbors. For the church to fulfill the Great Commission, every church member needs to know the basics of sharing the Gospel message with others. In order for this to occur, evangelism training should be available at least twice in each calendar year.

The project has brought many blessings to the church and to me as well. As I had the opportunity to prepare and implement the project, my teaching improved. My leadership skills moved to the next level. Throughout the eight-month duration of the project, I was blessed to see lives changing amongst the leadership-training participants. Several potential church leaders indicated the impact the project had on their lives. I was encouraged to see that the potential leaders were stepping up to take on the role of

leadership in the church. I realized God is fully working in their lives to help them discover their gifts, so they could use their gifts for serving His church.

Conclusion

I was blessed to complete the project for the sake of the Gospel and for the purposes of the church. Although the training program was quite long, the participants remained faithful. Even though the resulting number of participants within this timeframe was not that great, I believe the long-term impact will be beneficial. I learned to depend and completely trust in God alone as I worked through this project.

I believe this project is sufficiently significant in bringing about powerful and profoundly positive changes in my leadership and in the lives of the participants who committed to the leadership training program. This project reinforced within the participants the knowledge of what God has done in their own lives. I also believe that this project was the initial starting point in helping the church move forward in the right direction.

As the lead pastor, my responsibility is to help potential leaders and church members begin from wherever they are spiritually to move to the next level to live for God's glory. They might not need to know a lot of verses from the Bible in order to get involved in church ministry or begin to evangelize. However, they should need to know how God has loved them, how He has saved them, and how Jesus Christ has changed their lives. My responsibility is to help them to discover these things, but God is the One who moves them, as Timothy K. Beougher affirmed, "A man only moves as God moves him. Psychologically the man is doing something, but theologically God is doing

it.”³ I believe God has used this project to serve as a tool for helping them move to the next level in their spiritual lives, and I am convinced that this will continue to impact their lives in the long run.

³Timothy K. Beougher, *Richard Baxter and Conversion: A Study of the Puritan Concept of Becoming a Christian* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2007), 67.

APPENDIX 1

LEADERSHIP TRAINING REGISTRATION CARD

Full Name: _____

By filling out and completing this card, I hereby commit to attend and participate in the VBCJ's Leadership Training Program, a fifteen-week course of instruction in Christian Leadership. May my Lord Jesus Christ help me to fulfill this commitment.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PHIẾU GHI DANH HUẤN LUYỆN LÃNH ĐẠO

Họ và Tên: _____

Khi điền tên vào phiếu ghi danh này, tôi cam kết sẽ tham dự và góp phần vào chương trình mười lăm tuần huấn luyện lãnh đạo tại Hội Thánh Báp-tít Việt Nam Jonesboro. Cầu xin Đức Chúa Trời chứng kiến và giúp tôi hoàn tất chương trình huấn luyện lãnh đạo để phục vụ Ngài kết quả hơn.

Ký Tên: _____

Ngày Ký Tên: _____

APPENDIX 2

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding and practices of leadership training program of the participant. This research is being conducted by Dung Duong for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

_____ Please enter a four digit number of your own choosing on the line provided to give me the means of comparing your two surveys while still concealing your identity. The same number will need to be recorded on both the pre- and post-surveys.

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

Part 1

1. Do you consider yourself a Christian?

A. Yes

B. No

2. Have you repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation?

A. Yes

B. No

3. Please write on a line below how many year have you been a Christian?

_____years.

4. Please write on a line below how long have you been a member of the VBCJ?

_____years.

5. What is your age?

Directions: Answer the following questions: (1) Place a check by the multiple-choice questions. (2) Some questions ask you to give your opinion using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, NO = no opinion, DK = don't know, A = agree, SA = strongly agree; please circle the appropriate answer.

Part 2

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 6. I am confident in my ability to teach a Bible study class effectively. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 7. The Bible is just a book of history. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 8. I truly believe that Jesus is the only way to God. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 9. I am confident in my knowledge of theology to lead a Bible study class. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 10. I feel confident in being able to help others apply the Bible to their specific struggles. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 11. God can speak to man through studying the Bible. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 12. I believe that the Bible is not completely accurate, nor is it the true word of God. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 13. I believe that every Christian needs to share the gospel with the lost. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 14. I believe that only the pastor can mentor new believers. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 15. I believe that effective discipleship can help the church to grow. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 16. I am confident that I can be an effective leader if I am properly trained. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |
| 17. An effective technique for becoming a good leader is to learn from good leaders. | SD | D | NO | DK | A | SA |

18. How frequently do you read the Bible? (check only one)

- A. more than once per day
- B. once per day
- C. several times per week
- D. once per week
- E. several times per month
- F. once per month
- G. several times per year
- H. not at all

19. If you checked item "H" in the previous question, what keeps you from reading the Bible, or from reading it for longer periods of time, or from reading it more often? (check all that apply to you)

- A. I don't have time
- B. I don't understand what I read
- C. I don't know where to begin
- D. I don't like reading Bible
- E. I don't learn anything when I read it

20. When you read the Bible, on average, how much time you spend reading the Bible during each session? (check only one, leave blank if you do not read the Bible at all)

- A. 0-5 minutes
- B. 5-10 minutes
- C. 10-15 minutes
- D. 15-20 minutes
- E. 20-30 minutes
- F. 30 or more minutes

21. How frequently do you pray? (check only one)

- A. more than once per day
- B. once per day
- C. several times per week
- D. once per week
- E. several times per month
- F. once per month
- G. several times per year
- H. not at all

22. If you checked item "H" on the previous question, what keeps you from praying? (check all that apply)

- A. I don't have time
- B. I don't know how to pray
- C. I don't enjoy praying
- D. God never answer my prayers
- E. I don't believe in praying

23. Do you have a specific time set aside for prayer?

- A. Yes
 B. No

24. I most often pray for (check only one)

- A. myself
 B. family
 C. friends
 D. other

25. I most often pray (check only one)

- A. at church
 B. at home
 C. while traveling
 D. at work
 E. other

Directions: Answer the following questions: (1) Place a check by the multiple-choice questions. (2) Some questions ask you to give your opinion using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, NO = no opinion, DK = don't know, A = agree, SA = strongly agree; please circle the appropriate answer.

Part 3

26. I consider myself as a leader of the church. SD D NO DK A SA

27. I consider myself to be an effective leader of the church. SD D NO DK A SA

28. I desire to lead my church well. SD D NO DK A SA

29. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be the leader of my church. SD D NO DK A SA

30. I believe my spiritual condition impacts my ability to lead the church. SD D NO DK A SA

31. Leadership training is the key for church growth. SD D NO DK A SA

32. Effective leaders can help others serve the Lord productively. SD D NO DK A SA

33. I am confident in my ability to teach someone how to follow Jesus. SD D NO DK A SA

True or False Questions:

34. God is love, so He can't send people to hell.

- a. True
- b. False

35. Christian leaders are in a position to tell others how to live and act, but they don't have to live that way themselves.

- a. True
- b. False

36. Children are automatically saved if their parent is a born-again Christian.

- a. True
- b. False

37. I am responsible for witnessing to my family.

- a. True
- b. False

38. People who lead a moral life can be saved without believing in Jesus Christ.

- a. True
- b. False

39. The gospel is telling about the Baptist Church.

- a. True
- b. False

40. The purpose of telling the gospel is to bring people to church.

- a. True
- b. False

41. The gospel is all about the Jewish man named Jesus.

- a. True
- b. False

42. The ultimate goal of believing in God is to have a prosperous life in this world.

- a. True
- b. False

43. Evangelism is something that only the pastor can do.

- a. True
- b. False

44. Studying the Bible convicts me to share the gospel.

- a. True
- b. False

45. In current time, people can be saved without hearing the gospel.
 a. True
 b. False

46. I believe that in addition to Jesus, there are other ways to heaven.
 a. True
 b. False

Multiple Choice: Check all that apply.

47. The reasons that I don't share the gospel are because:
 a. I don't know how
 b. I am not a pastor
 c. I am not a deacon
 d. The Bible does not tell me do so
 e. I am not being trained
 f. It is not my job
 g. People don't want to listen

48. According to your belief, what does it really mean to be saved?
 a. Believe in the prayer that the pastor taught me
 b. Go to church every Sunday
 c. Be faithful to give 10 percent of my income to the church
 d. Believe that prayer and baptism will wash away your sin
 e. Believe in only Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of your life
 f. None of the above

49. How would you rate your personal devotional life? (check only one)
 a. Poor
 b. Below average
 c. Average
 d. Above average
 f. Excellent

50. The most important function for the believer is: (check only one)
 a. To live a godly life
 b. To not offend the beliefs of others
 c. To help people to feel good about themselves the best way you can
 d. To glorify God

CÂU HỎI THĂM DÒ HUẤN LUYỆN LÃNH ĐẠO

Bạn sắp chuẩn bị đóng góp trả lời những câu hỏi thăm dò về huấn luyện lãnh đạo. Mục đích của việc đóng góp này là nhằm tìm hiểu và xác định sự hiểu biết cũng như việc áp dụng trên lãnh vực huấn luyện lãnh đạo. Dự án này sẽ được thực hiện bởi Dương Dũng với mục đích thu thập dữ liệu cho quá trình huấn luyện. Bạn sẽ trả lời những câu hỏi tương tự trước và sau khi kết thúc chương trình huấn luyện. Bất kỳ thông tin của bạn cung cấp sẽ được giữ kín và không tiết lộ vì bất cứ lý do nào. Việc góp phần trả lời những câu hỏi thăm dò là hoàn toàn tự nguyện và bạn có quyền thu hồi bất cứ lúc nào. Sau khi hoàn tất trả lời câu hỏi, bạn chấp thuận cho sử dụng các câu trả lời của bạn trong việc nghiên cứu.

_____. Xin vui lòng điền vào bốn số làm ký hiệu trên hàng gạch này để giúp so sánh hai lần trả lời những câu hỏi thăm dò, và cũng nhằm giữ kín tên tuổi của bạn. Bốn số này sẽ được sử dụng cả hai lần trước cũng như sau trong việc nghiên cứu.

Hướng Dẫn: Trả lời những câu hỏi dưới đây bằng cách đánh dấu (X) vào câu trả lời Có hoặc Không.

Phần 1

1. Bạn có cho rằng bạn là Cơ Đốc Nhân không?

- A. Có
 B. Không

2. Bạn đã xưng tội và tiếp nhận Chúa Giê-xu làm Cứu Chúa của bạn chưa?

- A. Có
 B. Không

3. Bạn tin Chúa bao lâu?

_____ năm.

4. Bạn là thành viên của Hội Thánh Báp-tít Việt Nam Jonesboro bao lâu?

_____ năm.

5. Bạn bao nhiêu tuổi?

Hướng Dẫn: Trả lời những câu hỏi sau đây bằng cách: (1) Đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất ở những câu hỏi theo cách chọn lựa. (2) Có những câu, hỏi về quan niệm của bạn thì xin khoanh tròn vào chỗ bạn đồng ý nhất theo thứ tự như sau: RĐY = rất đồng ý, ĐY = đồng ý, KYK = không ý kiến, KB = không biết, KĐY = không đồng ý, RKĐY = rất không đồng ý.

Phần 2

- | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|-----|----|-----|------|
| 6. Trong khả năng của chính mình, tôi tin có thể dạy một lớp học Kinh Thánh rất hiệu quả. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 7. Tôi nghĩ rằng Kinh Thánh chỉ là cuốn sách chép về lịch sử. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 8. Tôi thật sự tin rằng Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ chính là con đường duy nhất dẫn đến Đức Chúa Trời. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 9. Tôi tin rằng tôi có đủ sự hiểu biết về thần học để hướng dẫn một lớp học Kinh Thánh không sai lạc. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 10. Tôi tin rằng có thể giúp người khác áp dụng Kinh Thánh vào những trường hợp khó khăn của họ. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 11. Đức Chúa Trời có thể nói chuyện với con người qua việc học Kinh Thánh. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 12. Tôi nghĩ rằng Kinh Thánh không hoàn toàn chính xác cũng như không thật sự là Lời của Đức Chúa Trời. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 13. Tôi tin rằng mỗi Cơ Đốc Nhân cần phải chia sẻ Tin Lành cho người hư mất. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 14. Tôi tin rằng chỉ một mình mục sư mới có thể khai đạo cho người mới tin. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 15. Tôi tin rằng việc đào tạo môn đệ cách hiệu quả có thể giúp Hội Thánh phát triển. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 16. Tôi tin rằng tôi có thể trở thành một người lãnh đạo hiệu quả nếu tôi được huấn luyện tốt. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐY |
| 17. Một trong các phương pháp hiệu quả để trở thành người lãnh đạo giỏi là học hỏi từ những người lãnh đạo giỏi khác. | RĐY | ĐY | KYK | KB | KĐY | RKĐ |

18. Bạn thường xuyên đọc Kinh Thánh như thế nào? (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- A. Hơn một lần mỗi ngày
- B. Một lần mỗi ngày
- C. Vài lần mỗi tuần
- D. Một lần mỗi tuần
- E. Vài lần mỗi tháng
- F. Một lần mỗi tháng
- G. Vài lần mỗi năm
- H. Không có đọc

19. Nếu bạn đánh dấu vào câu trả lời "H" ở trên, xin cho biết lý do gì khiến bạn không đọc Kinh Thánh, không thích đọc lâu, hoặc không thường đọc? (đánh dấu vào hết những câu đúng với lý do của bạn)

- A. Tôi không có thời gian
- B. Tôi không hiểu khi đọc
- C. Tôi không biết bắt đầu từ đâu
- D. Tôi không thích đọc Kinh Thánh
- E. Tôi không học được gì khi đọc

20. Thường mỗi khi đọc Kinh Thánh, bạn dành trung bình bao nhiêu thời gian cho mỗi lần đọc (chỉ đánh dấu một câu, nếu không bao giờ đọc Kinh Thánh thì để trống)

- A. 0-5 phút
- B. 5-10 phút
- C. 10-15 phút
- D. 15-20 phút
- E. 20-30 phút
- F. 30 phút hoặc hơn

21. Bạn có thường cầu nguyện không? (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- A. Hơn một lần mỗi ngày
- B. Một lần mỗi ngày
- C. Vài lần mỗi tuần
- D. Một lần mỗi tuần
- E. Vài lần mỗi tháng
- F. Một lần mỗi tháng
- G. Vài lần mỗi năm
- H. Không bao giờ cầu nguyện

22. Nếu bạn đánh dấu vào câu "H" ở trên, xin cho biết lý do gì bạn không cầu nguyện? (đánh dấu vào hết câu đúng với hoàn cảnh của bạn)

- A. Tôi không có thời gian
- B. Tôi không biết cầu nguyện
- C. Tôi không thích cầu nguyện
- D. Chúa không bao giờ trả lời cầu nguyện của tôi
- E. Tôi không tin vào sự cầu nguyện

23. Bạn có thì giờ nhất định mỗi ngày để cầu nguyện không?

- A. Có
 B. Không

24. Tôi thường cầu nguyện cho (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- A. Chính tôi
 B. Gia đình
 C. Bạn bè
 D. Các vấn đề khác

25. Tôi thường cầu nguyện (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- A. Ở nhà thờ
 B. Ở nhà
 C. Khi có chuyến đi xa
 D. Ở sở làm
 E. Ở những trường hợp khi gặp nguy hiểm

Hướng Dẫn: Trả lời những câu hỏi sau đây bằng cách: (1) Đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất ở những câu hỏi theo cách chọn lựa. (2) Có những câu, hỏi về quan niệm của bạn thì xin khoanh tròn vào chỗ bạn đồng ý nhất theo thứ bậc như sau: RĐY = rất đồng ý, ĐY = đồng ý, KYK = không ý kiến, KB = không biết, KĐY = không đồng ý, RKĐY = rất không đồng ý.

Phần 3

26. Tôi cho rằng tôi là người đang lãnh đạo Hội Thánh. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

27. Tôi tin rằng tôi là người lãnh đạo hội thánh hiệu quả. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

28. Tôi mong muốn được lãnh đạo hội thánh hiệu quả. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

29. Tôi tin có khả năng lãnh đạo hội thánh hiệu quả nếu được huấn luyện. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

30. Tôi nghĩ tình trạng thuộc linh của tôi sẽ ảnh hưởng tốt cho việc lãnh đạo hội thánh. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

31. Tôi tin huấn luyện lãnh đạo là chìa khóa cho việc phát triển hội thánh. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

32. Người lãnh đạo hiệu quả có thể giúp người khác phục vụ kết quả cho Chúa. RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

33. Tôi tin tưởng vào khả năng của tôi có thể dạy người khác làm sao để theo Chúa.

RĐY ĐY KYK KB KĐY RKĐY

Trả Lời Theo Câu Hỏi Đúng Hoặc Sai:

34. Đức Chúa Trời là Đáng Yêu Thương, vì thế Ngài không thể bỏ con người vào địa ngục.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

35. Người lãnh đạo thuộc linh chỉ cần dạy người khác sống và thực hành đúng theo Lời Chúa, nhưng họ thì không cần phải sống và thực hành đúng như vậy.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

36. Nếu cha mẹ thật sự tin Chúa thì con họ sẽ tự động được cứu.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

37. Tôi có trách nhiệm làm chứng về Chúa cho gia đình của tôi.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

38. Những người có đời sống đạo đức tốt có thể được cứu mà không cần phải tin Chúa.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

39. Sứ điệp của Tin Lành là nói về Hội Thánh Báp-tít.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

40. Mục đích của việc chứng đạo là đem người ta đến nhà thờ.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

41. Sứ điệp của Tin Lành là nói về một người đàn ông Do-thái có tên là Jêsus.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

42. Mục Đích tối hậu của việc tin vào Đức Chúa Trời là để được đời sống thịnh vượng tại trần gian.

- a. Đúng
 b. Sai

43. Chỉ có mục sư mới có thể làm chứng về Chúa.

- a. Đúng
- b. Sai

44. Việc học Kinh Thánh thuyết phục tôi cần phải làm chứng cho Chúa.

- a. Đúng
- b. Sai

45. Thời hiện nay, người ta có thể được cứu mà không cần nghe đến sứ điệp Tin Lành.

- a. Đúng
- b. Sai

46. Tôi tin rằng ngoài Chúa Jêsus, còn có con đường khác vào thiên đàng.

- a. Đúng
- b. Sai

Trả lời câu hỏi theo cách lựa chọn: Đánh dấu vào tất cả câu mà bạn nghĩ là đúng.

47. Lý do tôi không làm chứng đạo là bởi vì:

- a. Tôi không biết cách làm chứng
- b. Tôi không phải là mục sư
- c. Tôi không phải là người chấp sự hoặc người lãnh đạo hội thánh
- d. Kinh Thánh không bảo rằng tôi cần phải làm chứng đạo
- e. Tôi chưa được huấn luyện chứng đạo
- f. Đây không phải là việc của tôi
- g. Người ta không thích nghe về Chúa

48. Theo như bạn thì cần phải làm gì để biết mình thật sự được cứu?

- a. Tin và lập lại lời cầu nguyện mà mục sư đã dạy
- b. Đi nhà thờ mỗi Chúa Nhật
- c. Trung tín dâng phần mười cho nhà thờ
- d. Tin vào lời cầu nguyện xưng tội và làm báp-tem để được rửa tội
- e. Chỉ tin vào một mình Chúa Jêsus là Chúa và là Chủ cuộc đời bạn
- f. Tất cả điều sai

49. Bạn đánh giá đời sống thuộc linh của bạn ra sao? (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- a. Yếu
- b. Dưới trung bình
- c. Trung bình
- d. Trên trung bình
- f. Rất tốt

50. Mục đích quan trọng của người tin Chúa là: (chỉ đánh dấu một câu)

- a. Sống tin kính Chúa
- b. Đừng đụng chạm đến niềm tin của người khác
- c. Dùng mọi cách giúp người khác hài lòng về chính họ
- d. Làm sáng danh Chúa

APPENDIX 3

BIBLE TEACHING EVALUATION RUBRIC

Leadership Training Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
Bible Teaching Evaluation					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The lesson is clearly relevant to the issue of the Text.					
The material is faithful to the Bible's teaching.					
The material is theologically sound.					
The lesson aim (s) is clearly stated.					
The points of the lesson successfully communicate the lesson aim (s).					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clearly presented.					

BẢN LƯỢNG GIÁ DẠY KINH THÁNH

Bản Lượng Giá Chương Trình Huấn Luyện Lãnh Đạo					
Lượng Giá Dạy Kinh Thánh					
1= Kém 2=Cần quan tâm 3= Đạt tiêu chuẩn 4=Rất tốt					
Tiêu Chuẩn	1	2	3	4	Nhận Xét
Bài dạy phù hợp với phần Kinh Thánh trích dẫn.					
Các điểm rõ ràng nhắm đến trọng tâm của bài dạy.					
Nội dung bài dạy theo đúng nền tảng Thánh Kinh.					
Nội dung bài dạy theo đúng nền tảng thần học.					
Cách đặt câu hỏi tốt, rõ ràng giúp học viên suy nghĩ trả lời, không bị thụ động.					
Bài dạy có các điểm áp dụng thực tế rõ ràng.					
Bài dạy đạt tiêu chuẩn, các điểm được trình bày cách thấu đáo.					
Nhìn chung, bài dạy rõ ràng, dễ tiếp thu.					

APPENDIX 4

EVANGELISM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Leadership Training Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
Evangelism On Hand Evaluation					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The greeting is appropriate.					
The sharing material is faithful to the Bible's teaching and training.					
The explanation of a message is theologically sound.					
The gospel message is clearly stated.					
The points of the sharing clearly support the gospel message.					
The message contains points of practical application.					
The sharing is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the gospel message.					
Overall, the message is clearly presented.					

BẢN LƯỢNG GIÁ THỰC HÀNH CHỨNG ĐẠO

Bản Lượng Giá Chương Trình Huấn Luyện Lãnh Đạo					
Lượng Giá Thực Hành Chứng Đạo					
1= Kém 2=Cần quan tâm 3= Đạt tiêu chuẩn 4=Rất tốt					
Tiêu Chuẩn	1	2	3	4	Nhận Xét
Chào hỏi thích hợp.					
Phần chia sẻ Phúc Âm phù hợp với nền tảng của Thánh Kinh.					
Phần giải thích Phúc Âm phù hợp với nền tảng thần học.					
Các điểm trình bày Phúc Âm theo đúng bài huấn luyện.					
Các điểm giải thích rõ ràng cũng cố cho bài chia sẻ Phúc Âm.					
Bài chia sẻ Phúc Âm có các điểm áp dụng thực tế.					
Bài chia sẻ Phúc Âm đạt tiêu chuẩn, các điểm được trình bày cách thấu đáo.					
Nhìn chung, bài chia sẻ Phúc Âm rõ ràng, dễ hiểu.					

APPENDIX 5

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING EXAM

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

1. Discipleship is a:

- a) Short-term process
- b) Long-term process
- c) None of the above

2. The purpose of discipleship is:

- a) Developing Christians to the Fullness of Christ
- b) Glorifying God and yourself
- c) Developing Christians to the fullness of the parent
- d) All of the above are correct

3. Sin:

- a) Makes men more intelligent
- b) Makes men more prosperous
- c) Separates man from God
- d) All of the above are correct

4. A sinner is saved by:

- a) Tithing
- b) Going to church
- c) Going to church and tithing
- d) Trusting in Jesus Christ

5. The enemies of Christians are:

- a) World, neighbor, and Satan
- b) Satan, flesh, and communists
- c) World, flesh, and Satan
- d) All of the above are incorrect for Christians should not have any enemies

6. The best way for Christians to defeat the devil is:

- a) By relying on their own efforts
- b) By equipping nuclear weapons
- c) By relying in the strength of God
- d) By making friends with the world

7. The purpose of studying the Bible is:

- a) To prove to others your knowledge of the Bible
- b) To prevent God's punishments

- _____c) To live according to God's purpose
- _____d) All of the above are correct

True or False Questions:

8. There is no sin for those who know the good that they ought to do and don't do it.
_____a) True
_____b) False
9. The solution for Sin is doing good works.
_____a) True
_____b) False
10. In addition to Jesus Christ, there are other ways to heaven.
_____a) True
_____b) False
11. God only wants for some people to be saved.
_____a) True
_____b) False
12. God only justifies a sinner once.
_____a) True
_____b) False
13. Christians should only worship God in church but not worship God in their own homes.
_____a) True
_____b) False

Fill in the blank

14. Discipleship is the process of finding and _____ the lost, folding them into a _____ church, and building them up in the _____.
15. The Requirements of Discipleship are:
a) Carrying the _____
b) Giving-up the _____
c) Holding _____ teachings
d) Abiding in _____
e) Loving _____
f) Bearing _____
16. Justification relies on God's _____ alone.
17. Praying is to _____ with God. Moreover, it is like the _____ of our spiritual life as air is to our physical life. Prayer is not intended to _____ God's will, but rather to _____ us.
18. The purpose of prayer is:

- a) Developing a/an _____ with God.
- b) Confessing for _____ to forgiveness.
- c) Resisting the devil's _____.

19. Jesus always prays:

- a) In the _____
- b) At times of _____
- c) Before making _____

20. Ways to assimilate new believers are:

- a) Through _____
- b) Through _____
- c) Through _____ groups
- d) Through _____ engagement

21. Stewardship is being _____ with and _____ for the resources with which God has _____ in each Christian.

22. Worshiping God must be a _____ in the life of a leader. Moreover, the leader also needs to help and encourage _____ to worship the Lord as well.

23. Matching the questions (1-6) with the answers (A-F):

QUESTIONS

- _____ 1) Truth
- _____ 2) Breastplate
- _____ 3) Gospel of Peace
- _____ 4) Faith
- _____ 5) Salvation
- _____ 6) Sword of the Spirit

ANSWERS

- A) Shoes
- B) Shield
- C) Righteousness
- D) Belt
- E) Word of God
- F) Helmet

Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer. Please explain if your answer is Yes or No.

24. Can the God of Love send someone to hell?

- _____ a) Yes

Explain _____

- _____ b) No

Explain _____

- _____ c) Don't know

25. Can someone lose his/her salvation after being saved?

- _____ a) Yes

Explain _____

- _____ b) No

Explain _____

- _____ c) Don't know

BÀI TRẮC NGHIỆM HUẤN LUYỆN MÔN ĐỒ HÓA

Hướng Dẫn: Đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất.

1. Môn đồ hóa là tiến trình:

- a) Ngắn hạn
- b) Dài hạn
- c) Tất cả điều sai

2. Mục đích của môn đồ hóa là:

- a) Phát triển đời sống giống Chúa
- b) Làm sáng danh Chúa và sáng danh mình
- c) Phát triển đời sống giống cha mẹ
- d) Tất cả điều đúng

3. Tội lỗi làm:

- a) Con người khôn ngoan hơn
- b) Con người thanh vượng hơn
- c) Con người xa cách Đức Chúa Trời
- d) Tất cả điều đúng

4. Tội nhân được cứu bởi:

- a) Dâng tiền
- b) Đi nhà thờ
- c) Dâng tiền và đi nhà thờ
- d) Đặt trọn niềm tin vào Đấng Christ

5. Kẻ thù của Cơ Đốc Nhân là:

- a) Thế gian, người hàng xóm, và ma quỷ
- b) Ma quỷ, xác thịt, và cộng sản
- c) Thế Gian, xác thịt, và ma quỷ
- d) Tất cả điều sai, vì Cơ Đốc Nhân không nên có kẻ thù

6. Cách tốt nhất để Cơ Đốc Nhân đánh bại ma quỷ là:

- a) Nhờ cậy vào sự cố gắng của chính mình
- b) Trang bị vũ khí hạt nhân
- c) Nương nhờ sức Chúa
- d) Làm bạn với thế gian

7. Mục đích học Kinh Thánh là:

- a) Để người khác biết mình giỏi Kinh Thánh
- b) Để không bị Chúa phạt
- c) Để sống đúng mục đích
- d) Tất cả đều đúng

Hướng Dẫn: Đánh dấu (X) vào câu trả lời Đúng hoặc Sai.

8. Biết điều lành mà không làm thì cũng không có tội gì.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

9. Cách giải quyết tội lỗi là làm việc thiện.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

10. Ngoài Chúa Jêsus, còn có nhiều con đường khác để vào thiên đàng.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

11. Đức Chúa Trời chỉ muốn cho một số người được cứu.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

12. Đức Chúa Trời chỉ Xung Nghĩa tội nhận một lần.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

13. Cơ Đốc Nhân chỉ nên thờ phượng tại nhà thờ mà không nên thờ phượng tại nhà riêng.

_____ a) Đúng

_____ b) Sai

Hướng Dẫn: Điền vào chỗ trống.

14. Môn Đồ Hóa là tiến trình của việc tìm kiếm, chia sẻ _____ cho _____, đem họ vào _____ địa phương, và giúp xây dựng _____ của họ lớn lên.

15. Những đòi hỏi cho môn đồ hóa là:

a) Mang vác _____

b) Từ bỏ _____

c) Giữ _____ Chúa dạy

d) Nói kết với _____

e) Yêu thương _____

f) Sản sanh _____

16. Sự xưng nghĩa chỉ dựa vào _____ của Đức Chúa Trời.

17. Cầu nguyện là _____ với Chúa. Hơn thế nữa, cầu nguyện được ví sánh như _____ của đời sống tâm linh. Cầu nguyện không phải để thay đổi ý Chúa, mà để _____ chính chúng ta.

18. Mục đích của cầu nguyện là:

- a) Phát triển mối _____ với Chúa.
- b) Xung tội để _____.
- c) Chống lại sự _____.

19. Chúa Jêsus cầu nguyện:

- a) Mỗi _____
- b) Lúc _____
- c) Trước _____

20. Phương cách hội nhập tín hữu mới là:

- a) Qua mỗi _____
- b) Qua sự _____
- c) Qua các nhóm _____
- d) Qua việc liên kết _____ vụ

21. Quản lý là biết _____ cũng như chịu _____ với những tài sản mà Đức Chúa Trời đã _____ cho mỗi Cơ Đốc Nhân.

22. Thờ phượng Chúa phải là _____ trong đời sống của người lãnh đạo. Không những thế, người lãnh đạo cần phải giúp và khuyến khích _____ thờ phượng.

23. Chọn câu trả lời (A-F) cho phù hợp với câu hỏi (1-6) sau đây:

Câu Hỏi

- _____ 1) Lẽ Thật
- _____ 2) Áo Giáp
- _____ 3) Tin Lành Bình An
- _____ 4) Đức Tin
- _____ 5) Sự Cứu Chuộc
- _____ 6) Gương Cửa Đức Thánh Linh

Câu Trả Lời

- A) Giày dép
- B) Thuần
- C) Sự Công Bình
- D) Dây Nịt Lung
- E) Lời Đức Chúa Trời
- F) Mão Trụ

Đánh dấu vào câu trả lời đúng nhất. Xin giải thích nếu trả lời Có hoặc Không.

24. Đức Chúa Trời Yêu Thương có thể bỏ con người vào địa ngục không?

_____ a) Có

Giải thích _____

_____ b) Không

Giải thích _____

_____ c) Không biết

25. Một người thật sự tin Chúa thì có thể bị mất sự cứu rỗi không?

_____ a) Có

Giải thích _____

_____ b) Không

Giải thích

_____c) Không biết

APPENDIX 6

REQUIREMENTS FOR A BIBLE TEACHER (TIÊU CHUẨN CHO NGƯỜI DẠY KINH THÁNH)

I. Bảy Tiêu Chuẩn Theo Thánh Kinh (Seven Requirements According to the Bible)

1) Bồn Phận Với Lời Chúa (Obligation to the Word)

a) Hằng Giữ Lời Chúa (Keep the Word)

"Hằng giữ đạo thật y như đã nghe dạy" (Tít 1:9a).

b) Bảo Vệ Lời Chúa (Defend the Word)

"... hầu cho có thể theo đạo lành mà khuyên dỗ người ta và bác lại kẻ chống trả" (Tít 1:9b).

"Dùng cách mềm mại mà sửa dạy những kẻ chống trả, mong rằng Đức Chúa Trời ban cho họ sự ăn năn để nhìn biết lẽ thật" (2Tim. 2:25).

2) Tinh Thần Trách Nhiệm Cao (High Sense of Responsibility)

a) Siêng Năng Dạy (Diligence in Teaching)

"Ai được gọi đến làm chức vụ, hãy buộc mình vào chức vụ; ai dạy dỗ, hãy chăm mà dạy dỗ" (Rôm. 12:7).

b) Chuyên Tâm Dạy (Striving in Teaching)

"Hãy chuyên tâm cho được đẹp lòng Đức Chúa Trời như người làm công không chỗ trách được, lấy lòng ngay thẳng giảng dạy lời của lẽ thật" (2Tim. 2:15).

3) Trau Giỏi Sự Học Hỏi (Cultivate Learning)

a) Gia Tăng Kiến Thức (Increasing Knowledge)

"Về phần anh em, phải gắng hết sức thêm cho đức tin mình sự nhân đức, thêm cho nhân đức sự học thức" (2Phi. 1:5).

"Hãy chăm chỉ đọc sách, khuyên bảo, dạy dỗ, cho đến chừng ta đến. Đừng bỏ quên ơn ban trong lòng con, là ơn bởi lời tiên tri, nhân hội trưởng lão đặt tay mà đã ban cho con vậy. Hãy săn sóc chuyên lo những việc đó, hầu cho thiên hạ thấy sự tấn tới của con" (1Tim. 4:13-14).

b) Học Hỏi Người Khác (Learning from Others)

"Hãy bắt chước tôi, cũng như chính mình tôi bắt chước Đấng Christ vậy" (1Côr.11:1).

4) Chú Tâm Sự Gây Dựng (Focus on Building up)

a) Gây Dựng Đức Tin Lẫn Nhau (Building up Others in Faith)

"Mỗi người trong anh em hãy lấy ơn mình đã được mà giúp lẫn nhau, khác nào người quản lý trung tín giữ các thứ ơn của Đức Chúa Trời" (1Phi. 4:10).

"Vậy thì anh em hãy khuyên bảo nhau, gây dựng cho nhau, như anh em vẫn thường làm" (1Tê. 5:11).

b) Gây Dựng Thân Thể Đấng Christ (Building up the Body of Christ)

"Ấy chính Ngài đã cho người này làm sứ đồ, kẻ kia làm tiên tri, người khác làm thầy giảng Tin lành, kẻ khác nữa làm mục sư và giáo sư, để các thánh đồ được trọn vẹn về công việc của chức dịch và sự gây dựng thân thể Đấng Christ" (Êph. 4:11-12).

5) Khéo Léo Trong Dạy Đồ (Being Careful in Teaching)

a) Dạy Chính Mình Trước (First Teach Yourself)

"Vậy người dạy đồ kẻ khác mà không dạy đồ chính mình người sao!" (Rôm. 2:21).

"Tôi đãi thân thể tôi cách nghiêm khắc, bắt nó phải phục, e rằng sau khi tôi đã giảng dạy kẻ khác, mà chính mình phải bị bỏ chãng" (1Côr. 9:27).

b) Dạy Kẻ Khác Sau (Then Teach Others)

"Hãy giữ chính mình con và sự dạy đồ của con; phải bền đỗ trong mọi sự đó, vì làm như vậy thì con và kẻ nghe con sẽ được cứu" (1Tim. 4:16).

6) Tránh Đề Bị Khinh Thường (Avoid being Scorned)

a) Qua Cách Sống (Through Lifestyle)

"Chớ để người ta khinh con vì trẻ tuổi; nhưng phải lấy lời nói, nét làm, sự yêu thương, đức tin và sự tinh sạch mà làm gương cho các tín đồ" (1Tim. 4:12).

b) Qua Cách Dạy (Through Teaching Style)

"Hãy lấy mình con làm gương về việc lành cho họ, trong sự dạy đồ phải cho thanh sạch, nghiêm trang, nói năng phải lời, không chỗ trách được, đừng kẻ nghịch hổ thẹn, không được nói xấu chúng ta điều chi" (Tít 2:7-8).

7) Nương Nờ Đức Thánh Linh (Lean on the Holy Spirit)

a) Đấng Dạy Đồ (The Counselor)

"Nhưng Đấng Yên-ủi, tức là Đức Thánh Linh mà Cha sẽ nhân danh ta sai xuống, Đấng ấy sẽ dạy đồ các ngươi mọi sự, nhắc lại cho các ngươi nhớ mọi điều ta đã phán cùng các ngươi" (Gi. 14:26).

b) Thần Lẽ Thật (The Spirit of Truth)

"Ta còn có nhiều chuyện nói với các ngươi nữa; nhưng bây giờ những điều đó cao quá sức các ngươi. Lúc nào Thần lẽ thật sẽ đến, thì Ngài dẫn các ngươi vào mọi lẽ thật; vì Ngài không nói tự mình, nhưng nói mọi điều mình đã nghe, và tỏ bày cho các ngươi những sự sẽ đến" (Gi. 16:12-13).

II. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions and Answers)

APPENDIX 7

THE BASIC DOCTRINES FOR TEACHING THE BIBLE (THẦN HỌC CĂN BẢN ĐỂ DẠY KINH THÁNH)

I. Thần Học Về Đức Chúa Trời (The Doctrine of God)

"God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God. Đức Chúa Trời hiện hữu qua ba thân vị, Đức Chúa Cha, Đức Chúa Con, và Đức Chúa Thánh Linh, và mỗi thân vị đều là Đức Chúa Trời, và chỉ có một Đức Chúa Trời."¹

1) Đức Chúa Trời Chỉ Có Một (There is only one God)

"Đức Giê-hô-va phán: Các ngươi là kẻ làm chứng ta, và là đầy tớ ta đã chọn, hầu cho các ngươi được biết và tin ta, và hiểu rằng ta là Chúa! Chẳng có Đức Chúa Trời nào tạo thành trước ta, và cũng chẳng có sau ta nữa" (Ê-sai 43:10).

"Ta là Đức Giê-hô-va, không có Đấng nào khác, ngoài ta không có Đức Chúa Trời nào khác nữa. Dầu ngươi không biết ta, ta sẽ thắt lưng ngươi, hầu cho từ phía mặt trời mọc đến phía mặt trời lặn họ được biết rằng không có Đức Chúa Trời nào khác ngoài ta. Ta là Đức Giê-hô-va, không có Đấng nào khác" (Ê-sai 45:5-6).

"Vả, sự sống đời đời là nhìn biết Cha, tức là Đức Chúa Trời có một và thật, cùng Jê-sus Christ, là Đấng Cha đã sai đến" (Gi. 17:3).

"...chỉ có một Đức Chúa Trời mà thôi, là Đức Chúa Cha, muôn vật bởi Ngài mà ra, và chúng ta hướng về Ngài" (1 Cô-r. 8:6a).

2) Đức Chúa Trời Ba Ngôi (God in Three Persons)

Thần học về Đức Chúa Trời Ba Ngôi là một thần học khó hiểu nhưng thật quan trọng của niềm tin Cơ Đốc. Mặc dầu từ ngữ "ba ngôi" không tìm thấy trong Thánh Kinh, nhưng ý niệm về Đức Chúa Trời Ba Ngôi được đề cập nhiều nơi trong Thánh Kinh cả Cựu Ước lẫn Tân Ước.

a) Cựu Ước Dạy Về Đức Chúa Trời Ba Ngôi (Old Testament teaches the Trinity)

"Đức Chúa Trời phán rằng: Chúng ta hãy làm nên loài người như hình ta và theo tượng ta, đặng quản trị loài cá biển, loài chim trời, loài súc vật, loài côn trùng bò trên mặt đất, và khắp cả đất" (Sáng 1:26).

"Giê-hô-va Đức Chúa Trời phán rằng: Nay, về sự phân biệt điều thiện và điều ác, loài người đã thành một bực như chúng ta" (Sáng 3:22a).

"Đoạn, tôi nghe tiếng Chúa phán rằng: Ta sẽ sai ai đi? Ai sẽ đi cho chúng ta?" (Ê-sai 6:8a).

¹Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 226.

b) Tân Ước Dạy Về Đức Chúa Trời Ba Ngôi (New Testament teaches the Trinity)

"Vậy, hãy đi dạy dỗ muôn dân, hãy nhân danh Đức Cha, Đức Con, và Đức Thánh Linh mà làm phép báp-têm cho họ" (Mat. 28:19).

"Vả, có các sự ban cho khác nhau, nhưng chỉ có một Đức Thánh Linh. Có các chức vụ khác nhau, nhưng chỉ có một Chúa. Có các việc làm khác nhau, nhưng chỉ có một Đức Chúa Trời, là Đấng làm mọi việc trong mọi người" (1Côr. 12:4-6).

"Nguyên xin ơn của Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ, sự yêu thương của Đức Chúa Trời, và sự giao thông của Đức Thánh Linh ở với anh em hết thầy!" (2Côr. 13:13).

"Theo sự biết trước của Đức Chúa Trời, là Đức Chúa Cha, và được nên thánh bởi Đức Thánh Linh, đặng vâng phục Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ và có phần trong sự rỗi huyết Ngài: nguyên xin ân điển và bình an thêm lên cho anh em!" (1Phi. 1:2).

3) Những Đặc Tính Của Đức Chúa Trời (The Characteristics of God)

a) Thánh Khiết (Holy)

"Vì ta là Đức Giê-hô-va, Đấng đã đem các ngươi ra khỏi xứ Ê-díp-tô đặng làm Đức Chúa Trời của các ngươi; các ngươi phải nên thánh, vì ta là thánh" (Lê 11:45).

"Hãy tôn cao Giê-hô-va Đức Chúa Trời chúng tôi, và thờ lạy trên núi thánh Ngài; vì Giê-hô-va Đức Chúa Trời chúng ta là thánh!" (Thi 99:9).

b) Yêu Thương (Loving)

"Ai chẳng yêu, thì không biết Đức Chúa Trời; vì Đức Chúa Trời là sự yêu thương" (1 Gi. 4:8).

"Chúng ta đã biết và tin sự yêu thương của Đức Chúa Trời đối với chúng ta. Đức Chúa Trời tức là sự yêu thương, ai ở trong sự yêu thương, là ở trong Đức Chúa Trời, và Đức Chúa Trời ở trong người ấy" (1 Gi. 4:16).

c) Toàn Năng (Omnipotent)

"Này, ta là Giê-hô-va, Đức Chúa Trời của mọi xác thịt; có sự gì khó quá cho ta chẳng?" (Giê. 32:27).

"Đức Chúa Jêsus ngó môn đồ mà phán rằng: Điều đó loài người không thể làm được, song Đức Chúa Trời làm mọi việc đều được" (Mat. 19:26).

d) Toàn Tại (Omnipresent)

"Tôi sẽ đi đâu xa Thần Chúa? Tôi sẽ trốn đâu khỏi mặt Chúa? Nếu tôi lên trời, Chúa ở tại đó, ví tôi nằm dưới Âm phủ, kìa, Chúa cũng có ở đó. Nhược bằng tôi lấy cánh hừng đông, bay qua ở tại cuối cùng biển, tại đó tay Chúa cũng sẽ dẫn dắt tôi, tay hữu Chúa sẽ nắm giữ tôi" (Thi 139:7-10).

"Con mắt Đức Giê-hô-va ở khắp mọi nơi, xem xét kẻ gian ác và người lương thiện" (Châm 15:3).

e) Toàn Tri (Omniscient)

"Có lời Đức Giê-hô-va phán cùng tôi như vậy: Trước khi tạo nên ngươi trong lòng mẹ, ta đã biết ngươi rồi; trước khi ngươi sanh ra, ta đã biệt riêng ngươi, lập ngươi làm kẻ tiên tri cho các nước" (Giê. 1:4-5).

"Vì nếu lòng mình cáo trách mình, thì Đức Chúa Trời lại lớn hơn lòng mình nữa, và biết cả mọi sự" (1 Gi. 3:20).

"Vì lời chưa ở trên lưỡi tôi, kìa, hỡi Đức Giê-hô-va, Ngài đã biết trọn hết rồi" (Thi 139:4).

II. Thần Học Về Lời Đức Chúa Trời (The Doctrine of the Word of God)

1) Thánh Kinh Là Lời Của Đức Chúa Trời (The Bible is the Word of God)

Thánh Kinh là Lời của Đức Chúa Trời cho con người. Nói cách khác, mỗi Lời của Thánh Kinh đều là sứ điệp của Đức Chúa Trời gửi đến cho nhân loại. Thánh Kinh giúp con người biết nguồn gốc, mục đích sống, cũng như kết cuộc đời người sẽ đi về đâu.

a) Đức Chúa Trời Soi Dẫn Thánh Kinh (God inspires His Word)

"Cả Kinh thánh đều là bởi Đức Chúa Trời soi dẫn, có ích cho sự dạy dỗ, bẻ trách, sửa trị, dạy người trong sự công bình" (2 Tim. 3:16).

b) Đức Chúa Trời Phán Qua Con Người (God speaks through Men)

"Vi chẳng hề có lời tiên tri nào là bởi ý một người nào mà ra, nhưng ấy là bởi Đức Thánh Linh cảm động mà người ta đã nói bởi Đức Chúa Trời" (2 Phi. 1:21).

2) Thần Quyền Của Lời Đức Chúa Trời (The Authority of the Word of God)

a) Lời Sống Và Quyền Năng (Living and Powerful)

"Vi lời của Đức Chúa Trời là lời sống và linh nghiệm, sắc hơn gươm hai lưỡi, thấu vào đến đổi chia hồn, linh, cốt, tủy, xem xét tư tưởng và ý định trong lòng" (Heb 4:12).

b) Không Sai Lầm (Without Error in any Part)

"Các lời Đức Giê-hô-va là lời trong sạch, dường như bạc đã thét trong nồi dót bằng gốm, luyện đến bảy lần" (Thi 12:6).

c) Không Thay Đổi (Never Changing)

"Trời đất sẽ qua, nhưng lời ta nói chẳng bao giờ qua đi" (Mat. 24:35).

3) Mục Đích Của Lời Đức Chúa Trời (The Purpose of the Word of God)

a) Giúp Biết Rồi Đức Chúa Trời (Helps to know God)

i) Ngài Là Đấng Tạo Hóa (He is the Creator)

"Ban đầu Đức Chúa Trời tạo nên trời đất" (Sáng 1:1).

"Giê-hô-va Đức Chúa Trời bèn lấy bụi đất nắn nên hình người, hà sanh khí vào lỗ mũi; thì người trở nên một loài sanh linh" (Sáng 2:7).

ii) Ngài Là Đấng Cứu Chuộc (He is the Redeemer)

"Còn tôi, tôi biết rằng Đấng cứu chuộc tôi vẫn sống, đến lúc cuối cùng Ngài sẽ đứng trên đất" (Gióp 19:25).

"Thật Ngài là Cha chúng tôi, đầu Áp-ra-ham chẳng biết chúng tôi, Y-sơ-ra-ên cũng chẳng nhận chúng tôi; hồi Đức Giê-hô-va, Ngài là Cha chúng tôi, danh Ngài là Đấng Cứu chuộc chúng tôi từ trước đời đời" (Ê-sai 63:16).

iii) Ngài Là Đấng Phán Xét (He is the Judge)

"Hồi kẻ trẻ kia, hãy vui mừng trong buổi thiếu niên, khá đem lòng hơn hờ trong khi còn thơ ấu, hãy đi theo đường lối lòng mình muốn, và nhìn xem sự mất mình ưa thích, nhưng phải biết rằng vì mọi việc ấy, Đức Chúa Trời sẽ đòi người đến mà đoán xét" (Truyền 11:9).

"Vi Đức Chúa Trời sẽ đem đoán xét các công việc, đến nỗi việc kín nhiệm hơn hết, hoặc thiện hoặc ác cũng vậy" (Truyền 12:14).

b) Giúp Biết Rồi Con Đường Cứu Rồi (Helps to know the Way to Salvation)

i) Chúa Jê-sus Là Con Đường Cứu Rồi Duy Nhất (Jesus Christ is the only way to God)

"Vậy Đức Chúa Jê-sus đáp rằng: Ta là đường đi, lẽ thật, và sự sống; chẳng bởi ta thì không ai được đến cùng Cha" (Gi. 14:6).

"Đức Chúa Jê-sus đã làm trước mặt môn đồ Ngài nhiều phép lạ khác nữa, mà không chép trong sách này. Nhưng các việc này đã chép, để cho các người tin rằng Đức

Chúa Jêsus là Đấng Christ, tức là Con Đức Chúa Trời, và để khi các người tin, thì nhờ danh Ngài mà được sự sống" (Gi. 20:30-31).

ii) Tội Nhân Được Cứu Nhờ Ân Điển Bởi Đức Tin (Sinners are saved by grace through faith)

"Vả, ấy là nhờ ân điển, bởi đức tin, mà anh em được cứu, điều đó không phải đến từ anh em, bèn là sự ban cho của Đức Chúa Trời. Ấy chẳng phải bởi việc làm đâu, hầu cho không ai khoe mình" (Êph. 2:8-9).

iii) Tin Nhận Chúa Jêsus Sẽ Được Cứu (Believing in Jesus Christ will be saved)

"Vậy nếu miệng người xưng Đức Chúa Jêsus ra và lòng người tin rằng Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến Ngài từ kẻ chết sống lại, thì người sẽ được cứu; vì tin bởi trong lòng mà được sự công bình, còn bởi miệng làm chứng mà được sự cứu rỗi" (Rôm. 10:9-10).

c) Giúp Sống Đúng Mục Đích (Helps to live with a right purpose)

i) Mọi Vật Được Tạo Dựng Cho Sự vinh Hiển Chúa (Everything was created for God's glory)

"Vì muôn vật đều là từ Ngài, bởi Ngài, và hướng về Ngài. Vinh hiển cho Ngài đời đời vô cùng! A-men" (Rôm. 11:36).

"Vì muôn vật đã được dựng nên trong Ngài, bất luận trên trời, dưới đất, vật thấy được, vật không thấy được, hoặc ngôi vua, hoặc quyền cai trị, hoặc chấp chánh, hoặc cầm quyền, đều là bởi Ngài và vì Ngài mà được dựng nên cả" (Côl. 1:16).

ii) Cơ Đốc Nhân Sống Để Làm Sáng Danh Chúa (Christian lives to glorify God)

"bởi sự thương yêu của Ngài đã định trước cho chúng ta được trở nên con nuôi của Ngài bởi Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ, theo ý tốt của Ngài, để khen ngợi sự vinh hiển của ân điển Ngài đã ban cho chúng ta cách nhưng không trong Con yêu dấu của Ngài!" (Êph. 1:5-6).

"Vậy, anh em hoặc ăn, hoặc uống, hay là làm sự chi khác, hãy vì sự vinh hiển Đức Chúa Trời mà làm" (1 Côr. 10:31).

III. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 8

FOUR BASIC STEPS FOR PREPARING THE BIBLE LESSON (BỐN BƯỚC CĂN BẢN SOẠN BÀI DẠY KINH THÁNH)

I. Bước Một: Cầu Nguyện (Step One: Praying)

Cầu nguyện là bước đầu tiên để chuẩn bị soạn bài dạy Kinh Thánh. Bạn cần Chúa giúp hiểu rõ mục đích cũng như tầm quan trọng của Lời Chúa có thể thay đổi chính bạn là người dạy và những học viên mà bạn sẽ hướng dẫn. Sự cầu nguyện nhắc nhở bạn cần phải được Chúa dạy bảo trước khi bạn có thể dạy lại cho người khác. Nên nhớ cầu nguyện không phải chỉ là bước đầu, mà bạn cần phải cầu nguyện xuyên suốt thời gian soạn bài dạy Kinh Thánh để Đức Thánh Linh luôn hướng dẫn, dạy dỗ những kinh nghiệm mới mẻ. (Prayer is the first step in preparing a Bible lesson. You need God's help in clearly understanding the purpose and the importance of the Word of God that can change you as the teacher and the students that you will teach. Prayer reminds you that you need to be taught by God before you can teach others. Remember that you don't just pray in the beginning, but you pray continually as you prepare the Bible lesson so the Holy Spirit can guide you and teach you new experiences.)

1) Cầu Nguyện Để Được Hiểu Thánh Kinh (Praying for Understanding the Word)

"Trước hết, phải biết rõ rằng chẳng có lời tiên tri nào trong Kinh Thánh lấy ý riêng giải nghĩa được" (2Phi. 1:20).

"Ấy là điều người đã viết trong mọi bức thư, nói về những sự đó, ở trong có mấy khúc khó hiểu, mà những kẻ dốt nát và tin không quyết đem giải sai ý nghĩa, cũng như họ giải sai về các phần Kinh thánh khác, chúc lấy sự hư mất riêng về mình" (2Phi. 3:16).

2) Cầu Nguyện Để Đức Thánh Linh Soi Dẫn (Praying for a Guiding from the Holy Spirit)

"Vì chẳng hề có lời tiên tri nào là bởi ý một người nào mà ra, nhưng ấy là bởi Đức Thánh Linh cảm động mà người ta đã nói bởi Đức Chúa Trời" (2Phi. 1:21).

"Lúc nào Thần lễ thật sẽ đến, thì Ngài dẫn các người vào mọi lẽ thật; vì Ngài không nói tự mình, nhưng nói mọi điều mình đã nghe, và tỏ bày cho các người những sự sẽ đến. Ấy chính Ngài sẽ làm sáng danh ta, vì Ngài sẽ lấy điều thuộc về ta mà rao báo cho các người" (Gi. 16:13-14).

II. Bước Hai: Chuẩn Bị Bài Dạy (Step Two: Preparation)

1) Chọn Kinh Văn (Choosing the Text)

Tránh chọn phần Kinh Văn dài có quá nhiều ý hoặc quá ngắn không đủ ý. Nên chọn phần Kinh Văn đủ ý để phát triển thành một bài học Kinh Thánh từ 30 đến 45 phút. (Avoid choosing long passages that have too many points or short passages that have too

little. Choose passages with enough points to be made into a Bible lesson from 30 to 45 minutes.)

2) Đọc Kinh Văn (Reading the Text)

Bạn cần đọc qua ít nhất 7 lần để hiểu rõ ý chính của phân đoạn Kinh Thánh đã chọn. Trong lúc đọc, để ý những từ ngữ hoặc ý được lặp đi lặp lại nhiều lần. Bạn có thể đọc thêm những bản dịch khác để tham khảo. (You have to read the Bible passage at least 7 times in order for you to understand it clearly. While reading, pay attention to words or points repeated multiple times. You can also read other translations for reference.)

3) Học Kinh Văn (Studying the Text)

Bạn cần học và suy gẫm phần Kinh Văn để khám phá ra những sự dạy dỗ cho bạn trước khi chia sẻ lại cho người khác. Phần này sẽ đề cập đến nhiều hơn trong phần khai triển bài dạy ở bước 3. (You need to learn and meditate on the Scripture to discover lessons for yourself before you share it with others. This will be discussed further in Step 3.)

4) Đặt Mục Tiêu (Setting the Goal)

Bạn cần biết hướng đi chính của bạn trong bài dạy là gì, để khi kết thúc bài dạy, học viên có thể hiểu và nắm vững ý chính của bài học để áp dụng. (You need to know the goal of the lesson, so when you conclude the lesson, the students can understand and grasp the main idea of the lesson and apply it.)

5) Chọn Đề Mục (Naming the Lesson)

Chọn đề mục có nhiều mục đích. Trước hết, đề mục có thể giúp bạn biết rõ mục tiêu của bạn là gì. Hơn nữa, nó giúp bạn tập trung vào ý chính mà bạn muốn khai triển trong bài học. Cuối cùng, đề mục giúp học viên dễ nhớ bài học Kinh Thánh. (Selecting a title has many purposes. First, a title can help you clearly know what your goal is. It also helps you focus on the main idea that you want to develop in the lesson. Finally, it helps the students to remember the Bible lesson.)

III. Bước Ba: Khai Triển Bài Dạy (Step Three: Analyzing the Text)

Để phát triển bài dạy tốt, bạn cần phải phân tích sự kiện, ý nghĩa và bài học áp dụng. Càng chịu khó phân tích, bạn sẽ càng tìm ra nhiều bài học hữu ích. (To develop a good lesson, you need to analyze the facts, meanings, and applications. The more effort you put in analyzing, the more useful lessons you'll find.)

1) Tìm Hiểu Sự Kiện (Studying the Event in the Text)

a) Nhân Vật? (Who are the main Characters?)

Ai là nhân vật chính trong câu chuyện? Bạn biết gì về nhân vật chính này? Đặc điểm chính và phụ của họ là gì? (Who are the main Characters in the story? What do you know about them? What are their main and side features?)

b) Hành Động? (What is it happening?)

Họ hành động như thế nào? Liệt kê những hành động theo thứ tự trong câu chuyện. (What are they doing? List the actions in the order they appear in the story.)

c) Vị Trí? (Where is it happening?)

Câu chuyện xảy ra ở đâu? Tìm vị trí trên bản đồ nếu có thể. Bạn biết gì về địa điểm này? (Where is the story happening? Find the location on a map if possible. What do you know about this place?)

d) Thời Gian? (When is it happening?)

Câu chuyện xảy ra khi nào? Tìm kiếm từ ngữ liên hệ đến thời gian như: Sáng sớm, trưa, chiều, tối, ngay lập tức, tức thì, sau đó, và vân vân. (When is it happening? Search for terms related to the time frame: morning, noon, afternoon, night, immediately, afterwards, and so forth.)

e) Hoàn Cảnh? (How is it happening?)

Hoàn cảnh câu chuyện xảy ra như thế nào? Liệt kê những hoàn cảnh trong câu chuyện theo thứ tự. (What are the circumstances in the story? List the circumstances in the story in order.)

f) Nguyên Nhân (Why is it happening?)

Nguyên Nhân của câu chuyện là gì? Liệt kê bối cảnh lịch sử của các nhân vật trong câu chuyện mà bạn biết đến. (What is the cause of the story? List any historical context of the story you may know about.)

2) Tìm Hiểu Ý Nghĩa (Studying the Meaning)

a) Định Nghĩa? (Definitions?)

Ý của từ ngữ này có nghĩa gì? Tìm hiểu nghĩa bóng lẫn nghĩa đen. (What do the terms mean? Learn the literal and figurative meanings.)

b) Mối Liên Hệ? (Relationships?)

Những nhân vật trong câu chuyện có mối liên hệ như thế nào, và có liên hệ gì đến chúng ta ngày nay không? (How are the characters related in the story, and are they related to us today?)

c) Mục Đích? (Purpose?)

Mục đích của câu chuyện là gì? Mục đích của những nhân vật hành động trong câu chuyện mang lại sự dạy dỗ gì? (What is the purpose of the story? What lesson can be gained from the actions in the story?)

d) Tầm Quan Trọng? (Significances?)

Câu chuyện có tầm quan trọng như thế nào? (What is the significance of the story?)

e) Kết Quả Và Hậu Quả? (Results and Consequences?)

Kết quả và hậu quả của câu chuyện là gì? (What is the result of the story?)

3) Tìm Hiểu Để Áp Dụng (Studying for Application)

a) Mệnh Lệnh? (Commands)

Chúa có đưa ra mệnh lệnh gì để vâng theo không? (Does God give out any commands?)

b) Gương Tốt? (Good examples to follow)

Có gương tốt nào cần noi theo không? (Are there any good examples to follow?)

c) Gương Xấu? (Bad examples to avoid)

Có gương xấu nào cần phải tránh không? (Are there any bad examples to avoid?)

d) Tội Lỗi? (Sins to avoid?)

Có tội nào cần phải từ bỏ và tránh xa không? (Are there any sins to avoid?)

e) Lời Hứa? (Promises?)

Có lời hứa nào của Chúa cho chúng ta không? (Are there any promises God gives to us?)

f) Thần Học? (Doctrines?)

Có ý thần học gì ở đây không? (Are there any theological doctrines?)

IV. Bước Bốn: Xây Dựng Bố Cục Bài Dạy (Step Four: Developing the Lesson)

Xây dựng bố cục là phần nội dung của bài dạy. Bước này được thực hiện sau khi bạn đã bỏ nhiều thời gian nghiên cứu trong bước ba. Trong phần này, bạn sẽ xây dựng bố cục tổng quát, bố cục chi tiết, và phần áp dụng. (Develop the body of the lesson. This step is done after you have spent many hours studying in step three. In this section, you will build an outline, add details, and make applications.)

1) Xây Dựng Bố Cục Tổng Quát (Building an Outline of the Lesson)

Xây dựng bố cục tổng quát là xây dựng cái sườn, trong đó gồm những ý chính của bài dạy. Những điểm chính phải được rút ra từ phần Kinh Văn mà bạn đã phân tích trong bước ba. Hơn nữa, những điểm chính phải có liên hệ đến đề mục của bài dạy mà bạn đã chọn. (Developing the outline is to build the general framework, which includes the main ideas of the lesson. The main points need to be drawn from the Scripture that you studied in step three. Moreover, the points need to be related to the goal of your lesson.)

2) Xây Dựng Bố Cục Chi Tiết (Building the details of the Lesson)

Sau khi xây dựng bố cục tổng quát là những ý chính, bạn tiếp tục khai triển ý chính bằng cách dùng những ý phụ để làm rõ nét ý chính. Điểm phụ phải ngắn, và nhiệm vụ của nó là giúp đỡ chứ không phải thay thế cho ý chính. Không nên phân tích quá nhiều trong ý phụ mà bỏ đi những ý chính quan trọng. (After developing the outline, continue to develop the main idea using details to support it. The details should be short and its purpose is to help the main idea, not replace it.)

3) Xây Dựng Phần Áp Dụng (Building the Application)

Phần áp dụng là phần rất quan trọng trong cả bài dạy Kinh Thánh. Nếu học Kinh Thánh mà không có phần áp dụng thì bài học kể như vô ích.

Kết thúc bài giảng trên núi Chúa Jêsus phán: "Vậy, kẻ nào nghe và làm theo lời ta phán đây, thì giống như một người khôn ngoan cất nhà mình trên vàng đá. Có mưa sa, nước chảy, gió lay, xô động nhà ấy; song không sập, vì đã cất trên đá" (Mat. 7:24-25).

Mục đích chính của việc học Kinh Thánh không phải kiếm thêm kiến thức mà biết rõ lời dạy của Chúa để áp dụng.

(The application is very important in a Bible lesson. If you study the Bible without any application, the lesson is useless.)

At the end of the sermon on the mount, Jesus said: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock." (Matthew 7:24-25).

The primary purpose learning the Bible is not for more knowledge, but to understand God's teaching for application.)

Xây dựng phần áp dụng là lúc tóm lược lại những ý chính trong bài học và đưa những ý này vào cuộc sống thực tế hằng ngày để khuyến khích học viên áp dụng. Một bài học Kinh Thánh có phần áp dụng tốt sẽ giúp học viên có nền tảng vững chắc trong việc bước đi với Chúa mỗi ngày.

Trong phần xây dựng áp dụng này, người soạn cần đề ý đến những vấn đề trong phần 3 của bước 3 như: Mệnh lệnh của Chúa cần phải vâng phục, gương xấu cần phải tránh, gương tốt cần noi theo, những tội lỗi cần tránh, và có những lời hứa của Chúa cần phải tin cậy.

(Developing the application is to summarize the main points in the lesson, and putting the idea in an everyday perspective to encourage the students to apply it. A Bible lesson with a good application section will help the students have a better way to walk with God everyday.

In developing the application section, the teacher must pay attention to section 3 of step 3 like: The Lord's commands to serve, bad examples to avoid, good examples to follow, sins you need to avoid, and the promises of God that we must trust in.)

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 9

BASIC TECHNIQUES FOR LEADING A BIBLE STUDY (PHƯƠNG PHÁP CĂN BẢN HƯỚNG DẪN HỌC KINH THÁNH)

I. Chú Ý Đến Thời Gian (Keeping the Time)

1) Đến Trước Giờ Học (Coming early to Bible study)

Cần đến trước giờ học Kinh Thánh ít nhất mười lăm phút để chuẩn bị các thứ như xem lại phòng học, bàn ghế. Đến đúng giờ xem như đã trễ cho người hướng dẫn học Kinh Thánh. (You need to come to Bible study at least 15 minutes early to prepare the classroom like tables and chairs. Arriving on time is like arriving late for the Bible study teacher.)

2) Kết Thúc Đúng Giờ (Ending on time)

Nên kết thúc đúng giờ. Đừng kéo dài giờ học Kinh Thánh sẽ ảnh hưởng không tốt đến người tham dự. Cần kết luận trước năm phút để có thời gian cầu nguyện cho những gì học được. (You should end on time. Do not prolong the Bible study because it will badly affect the participants. You need to end 5 minutes early to have time to pray for what you've learned.)

II. Vai Trò Giáo Viên Trong Buổi Thảo Luận (The role of Teacher in leading the lesson)

1. Đặt Câu Hỏi Để Học Viên Trả Lời (Asking questions for others to answer)

a) Không nên tự trả lời chính câu hỏi do mình đặt ra. (Don't answer your own questions.)

b) Nếu học viên không hiểu, nên giải thích hoặc thay đổi câu hỏi khác rõ ràng hơn. (If the students don't understand, explain or change the question to make it clearer.)

c) Tránh giải thích, diễn thuyết hay giảng về khúc Kinh Thánh mà nên đặt câu hỏi tốt để học viên tự tìm ra câu trả lời. (Avoid explaining, lecturing, or preaching about passages, but make good questions so the students can find the answer themselves.)

d) Cho mỗi người có thời gian suy nghĩ để trả lời câu hỏi nhưng đừng để giờ chết quá lâu. (Give each person time to think to answer, but don't let dead time run long.)

e) Đừng dừng lại sau khi một người trả lời hoặc chia sẻ, nên khuyến khích người khác cho thêm ý kiến. (Don't stop after a person answers the question, but encourage others to give their own opinion.)

f) Đừng bắt học viên tìm kiếm câu trả lời mà người hướng dẫn nghĩ là đúng. Tốt nhất là để một vài câu trả lời trôi qua còn hơn là làm người học chán nản, không muốn góp ý kiến. (Don't force the students to find an answer that the teacher thinks is right. It is best to let a few questions pass than to discourage the students from adding their comments.)

2) Tập Lắng Nghe Học Viên Trả Lời (Practice listening to answers from others)

a) Ghi nhận câu trả lời của từng người. Người hướng dẫn nên cho họ biết là mình nghe và mong mỗi sự góp phần của họ. Khuyến khích họ giải thích thêm hoặc làm sáng tỏ vấn đề họ vừa chia sẻ. (Note the answers of each person. The teacher should let the students know that the teacher is listening and is hoping that each student contribute. Encourage the students to explain and clarify their opinions.)

b) Cố gắng dành cho mỗi người trong nhóm có cơ hội thảo luận. Đôi khi cần gọi tên một vài người để khuyến khích họ nói hoặc trả lời. (Try to give each person a chance to speak. It might be necessary to call on a few people to encourage them to participate.)

c) Nên xác nhận lại ý chia sẻ của học viên để giúp chính mình và những người khác cùng hiểu giống nhau. (Reconfirm the answers of each student to help yourself and the other students understand in the same way.)

3) Giữ Buổi Thảo Luận Không Xa Đề (Keeping the Lesson in focus)

a) Giữ những vấn đề thảo luận thích hợp với mục tiêu và đi sát với nhu cầu cả nhóm. (Keep the discussion relevant to the goal and focus on the needs of the group.)

b) Dành nhiều thì giờ cho điểm chính. Giữ cho buổi thảo luận trôi chảy, đừng đi vào điểm phụ quá nhiều. (Save a lot of time for the main point. In the discussion, do not go into the supporting points too much.)

c) Nhẹ nhàng kéo học viên trở lại với điểm chính nếu có ai đó đang đi xa đề. (Gently pull the students back to the main point if they stray away from it.)

4) Ứng Phó Với Câu Hỏi Từ Học Viên (Dealing with questions from others)

a) Tránh trả lời trực tiếp câu hỏi mà học viên hỏi người hướng dẫn, nên để cả nhóm có cơ hội trả lời câu hỏi đó trước. (Avoid directly answering any question the student might have for the teacher, but let the other students attempt to answer first.)

b) Đừng ngại nếu mình không trả lời được câu hỏi của họ, vì không ai biết tất cả mọi câu trả lời. (Don't be afraid if you can't answer their question because nobody has all the answers.)

c) Thành thật nói với họ là không biết còn hơn cố gắng trả lời sai. Hứa với họ là sẽ nghiên cứu hoặc hỏi Mục Sư Quản Nhiệm rồi trả lời trong buổi học kế đến. (Being honest about knowing is better than the try and answer wrongly. Tell them you will research or ask a pastor and answer the question in the next lesson.)

5) Tóm Lược Lại Những Điểm Trong Bài Học (Summarizing the main lesson)

a) Tóm lược lại những điểm chính mà nhóm đã tìm ra. (Summarize the main ideas that the group has found.)

b) Nhấn mạnh những điểm áp dụng và cách thực hành cụ thể của buổi học. (Emphasize the application and specific scenarios in the lesson.)

c) Thách thức học viên áp dụng Lời Chúa để được phước và danh Chúa được vinh hiển. (Challenge the students to apply the Word of God and glorify God's name.)

IV. Cầu Nguyện Kết Thúc Buổi Học (Ending by praying or asking someone to pray)

1) Cầu nguyện cho những điều đã học được qua Lời Chúa hầu có thể áp dụng trong cuộc sống. (Pray the things learned through the Word of God so that it can be applied in their lives.)

2) Từng học viên nên cầu nguyện ngắn cho chính những gì họ học được để áp dụng. (Each student should have a short prayer for the things they learned so they can apply it.)

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 10

THE REASONS FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL (LÝ DO CẦN CHIA SẺ PHÚC ÂM)

I. Chúa Jêsus (Jesus Christ)

1) Làm gương (He Set an Example)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đi khắp các thành, các làng, dạy dỗ trong các nhà hội, giảng tin lành nước Đức Chúa Trời, và chữa lành các thứ tật bệnh" (Mat. 9:35).

"Ngài phán: Chúng ta hãy đi nơi khác, trong những làng xung quanh đây, để ta cũng giảng đạo ở đó nữa; vì đây là cốt tại việc đó mà ta đã đến" (Mác 1:38).

2) Truyền Lệnh (He Commanded)

"Ngài phán cùng các sứ đồ rằng: Hãy đi khắp thế gian, giảng Tin lành cho mọi người" (Mác 16:15).

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đến gần, phán cùng môn đồ như vậy: Hết cả quyền phép ở trên trời và dưới đất đã giao cho ta. Vậy, hãy đi dạy dỗ muôn dân, hãy nhân danh Đức Cha, Đức Con, và Đức Thánh Linh mà làm phép báp-têm cho họ, và dạy họ giữ hết cả mọi điều mà ta đã truyền cho các ngươi. Và này, ta thường ở cùng các ngươi luôn cho đến tận thế" (Mat. 28:18-20).

"Nhưng khi Đức Thánh Linh giảng trên các ngươi, thì các ngươi sẽ nhận lấy quyền phép, và làm chứng về ta tại thành Giê-ru-sa-lem, cả xứ Giu-đê, xứ Sa-ma-ri, cho đến cùng trái đất" (Công Vụ 1:8).

II. Tội Nhân (Sinners)

1) Cần Đến Phúc Âm (Need the Gospel)

"Chẳng có sự cứu rỗi trong đáng nào khác; vì ở dưới trời, chẳng có danh nào khác ban cho loài người, để chúng ta phải nhờ đó mà được cứu" (Công Vụ 4:12).

"Vả, Đức Chúa Trời đã sai Con Ngài xuống thế gian, chẳng phải để đoán xét thế gian đâu, nhưng hầu cho thế gian nhờ Con ấy mà được cứu. Ai tin Ngài thì chẳng bị đoán xét đâu; ai không tin thì đã bị đoán xét rồi, vì không tin đến danh Con một Đức Chúa Trời"(Gi. 3:18).

2) Nghe Thì Mới Tin (Need to hear in order to believe)

Chưa nghe nói về Ngài thì làm thế nào mà tin? (Rôm. 10:14b).

3) Tin Mới Kêu Cầu (Need to believe in order to call in the name of the Lord)

"Nhưng họ chưa tin Ngài thì kêu cầu sao được?" (Rôm. 10:14a).

4) Kêu Cầu Mới Được Cứu (Need to call in the Name of the Lord in order to be saved)

"Vì ai kêu cầu danh Chúa thì sẽ được cứu" (Rôm. 10:13).

"Vậy nếu miệng ngươi xưng Đức Chúa Jêsus ra và lòng ngươi tin rằng Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến Ngài từ kẻ chết sống lại, thì ngươi sẽ được cứu" (Rôm. 10:9).

"Nhưng hễ ai đã nhận Ngài, thì Ngài ban cho quyền phép trở nên con cái Đức Chúa Trời, là ban cho những kẻ tin danh Ngài"(Gi. 1:12).

5) Cần Người Rao Giảng (Need someone preaching to them)

"Nếu chẳng ai rao giảng, thì nghe làm sao?" (Rôm. 10:14c).

III. Tín Nhân (Christians)

1) Được Chúa Chọn (Chosen by God to share the gospel)

"Nhưng anh em là dòng giống được lựa chọn, là chức thầy tế lễ nhà vua, là dân thánh, là dân thuộc về Đức Chúa Trời, hầu cho anh em rao giảng nhân đức của Đấng đã gọi anh em ra khỏi nơi tối tăm, đến nơi sáng láng lạ lùng của Ngài" (1 Phi. 2:9).

"Nhờ Ngài chúng ta đã nhận lãnh ân điển và chức sứ đồ, để đem mọi dân ngoại đến sự vâng phục của đức tin, vì danh Ngài, trong các dân ấy anh em cũng đã được gọi bởi Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ" (Rôm. 1:5-6).

"Đức Chúa Trời đã làm cho chúng ta nhờ Đấng Christ mà được hòa thuận lại cùng Ngài, và đã giao chức vụ giảng hòa cho chúng ta" (2 Côr. 5:18).

2) Vì Yêu Chúa (For their love of God)

"Vì tình yêu thương của Đấng Christ cảm động chúng tôi, và chúng tôi tưởng rằng nếu có một người chết vì mọi người, thì mọi người đều chết, lại Ngài đã chết vì mọi người, hầu cho những kẻ còn sống không vì chính mình mà sống nữa, nhưng sống vì Đấng đã chết và sống lại cho mình" (2 Côr. 5:14-15).

3) Vì Người Thân (For their Family)

"Hãy về nhà người, nơi bạn hữu người, mà thuật lại cho họ điều lớn lao thể nào Chúa đã làm cho người, và Ngài đã thương xót người cách nào" (Mác 5:19).

"Vì bằng có ai không săn sóc đến bà con mình, nhưt là không săn sóc đến người nhà mình, ấy là người chối bỏ đức tin, lại xấu hơn người không tin nữa" (2 Tim. 5:8).

4) Vì Danh Chúa (For the glory of God)

"Bọn chẵn chiên trở về, làm sáng danh và ngợi khen Đức Chúa Trời về mọi điều mình đã nghe và thấy y như lời đã bảo trước cùng mình" (Lu-ca 2:20).

"Sự sáng các người hãy soi trước mặt người ta như vậy, đặng họ thấy những việc lành của các người, và ngợi khen Cha các người ở trên trời" (Mat. 5:16).

5) Thêm Niềm Vui (For more Joy)

"Chúng tôi lấy điều đã thấy đã nghe mà truyền cho anh em, hầu cho anh em cũng được giao thông với chúng tôi. Và, chúng tôi vẫn được giao thông với Đức Chúa Cha, và với Con Ngài là Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ. Chúng tôi viết những điều đó cho anh em, hầu cho sự vui mừng của chúng tôi được đầy đầy" (1 Gi. 1:3-4).

IV. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions & Answers)

APPENDIX 11

THE BASICS OF THE GOSPEL (NỀN TẢNG CĂN BẢN CỦA PHÚC ÂM)

I. Phúc Âm Là Gì? (What are the definitions of the gospel message?)

1) Định Nghĩa Theo Từ Ngữ (The definition according to the meaning of the word)

Từ ngữ "Phúc Âm" nghĩa là "Tin Mừng." Tin Mừng là sứ điệp của Đức Chúa Trời bày tỏ cho tội nhân biết và có thể nhận được sự tha thứ tội lỗi qua việc đền tội của Chúa Cứu Thế Jêsus. (The word "Gospel" means "Good News." The Good News is the message of God for sinners to understand and to be able to receive forgiveness of their sins through the atonement of Jesus Christ).

2) Định Nghĩa Theo J. D. Payne (The definition according to J. D. Payne)

"The gospel is about God's work to bring salvation to fallen humanity. Phúc Âm trình bày công việc của Đức Chúa Trời để mang sự cứu rỗi đến cho con người hư mất."¹

3) Định Nghĩa Theo Thánh Kinh (The definition according to the Bible)

"Hỡi anh em, tôi nhắc lại cho anh em Tin lành mà tôi đã rao giảng và anh em đã nhận lấy, cùng đứng vững vàng trong đạo ấy, và nhờ đạo ấy, anh em được cứu rỗi, miễn là anh em giữ lấy y như tôi đã giảng cho; bằng không, thì anh em dầu có tin cũng vô ích. Và, trước hết tôi đã dạy dỗ anh em điều mà chính tôi đã nhận lãnh, ấy là Đấng Christ chịu chết vì tội chúng ta theo lời Kinh thánh; Ngài đã bị chôn, đến ngày thứ ba, Ngài sống lại, theo lời Kinh thánh" (1Côr. 15:1-4).

"Vì Đức Chúa Trời yêu thương thế gian, đến nỗi đã ban Con một của Ngài, hầu cho hễ ai tin Con ấy không bị hư mất mà được sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 3:16).

"Vả, ấy là nhờ ân điển, bởi đức tin, mà anh em được cứu, điều đó không phải đến từ anh em, bèn là sự ban cho của Đức Chúa Trời. Ấy chẳng phải bởi việc làm đâu, hầu cho không ai khoe mình" (Ê-phê-sô 2:8-9).

II. Nền Tảng Căn Bản Của Phúc Âm Là Gì? (What are the essentials of the gospel message?)

1) Con người (Man)

a) Mọi Người Phạm Tội (All man are sinners)

"Vì mọi người đều đã phạm tội, thiếu mất sự vinh hiển của Đức Chúa Trời" (Rôm. 3:23).

b) Tội Nhân Phải Chết (Sinners must die)

¹J. D. Payne, *Evangelism: A Biblical Response to Today's Question* (Colorado Springs, CO: Biblica Publishing, 2011), 11.

"Vì tiền công của tội lỗi là sự chết" (Rôm. 6:23a).

2) Đức Chúa Trời (God)

a) Yêu Thương Tội Nhân (Loves Sinners)

"Vì Đức Chúa Trời yêu thương thế gian, đến nỗi đã ban Con một của Ngài, hầu cho hễ ai tin Con ấy không bị hư mất mà được sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 3:16).

b) Trừng Phạt Tội Nhân (Punishes Sinners)

Đức Chúa Trời "chẳng kể kẻ có tội là vô tội" (Xuất 34:7b).

"Này, mọi linh hồn đều thuộc về ta; linh hồn của cha cũng như linh hồn của con, đều thuộc về ta; linh hồn nào phạm tội thì sẽ chết" (Ê-xê. 18:4).

c) Lên Kế Hoạch Cứu Tội Nhân (Plans to save Sinners)

"Vả, Đức Chúa Trời đã sai Con Ngài xuống thế gian, chẳng phải để đoán xét thế gian đâu, nhưng hầu cho thế gian nhờ Con ấy mà được cứu" (Gi. 3:17).

"Nhưng khi kỳ hạn đã được trọn, Đức Chúa Trời bèn sai Con Ngài bởi một người nữ sanh ra, sanh ra dưới luật pháp, để chuộc những kẻ ở dưới luật pháp, và cho chúng ta được làm con nuôi Ngài" (Gal. 4:4-5).

3) Chúa Jêsus Christ (Jesus Christ)

a) Chết Thay Tội Nhân (Died for Sinners)

"Đấng Christ chịu chết vì tội chúng ta theo lời Kinh thánh" (1 Côr. 15:3b).

"Nhưng Đức Chúa Trời tỏ lòng yêu thương Ngài đối với chúng ta, khi chúng ta còn là người có tội, thì Đấng Christ vì chúng ta chịu chết" (Rôm. 5:8).

b) Làm Sự Giãng Hòa (Reconciled)

"Chỉ có một Đấng Trung bảo ở giữa Đức Chúa Trời và loài người, tức là Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ, là người" (1 Tim. 2:5b).

"Ta là đường đi, lẽ thật, và sự sống; chẳng bởi ta thì không ai được đến cùng Cha" (Gi. 14:6).

"Còn anh em ngày trước vốn xa cách Đức Chúa Trời, và là thù nghịch cùng Ngài bởi ý tưởng và việc ác mình, nhưng bây giờ Đức Chúa Trời đã nhờ sự chết của Con Ngài chịu lấy trong thân thể của xác thịt mà khiến anh em hòa thuận, đặng làm cho anh em đứng trước mặt Ngài cách thánh sạch không vết, không chỗ trách được" (Côl. 1:21-22).

III. Kết Quả Của Phúc Âm Là Gì? (What are the results of the Gospel?)

1) Tội Nhân Tin Chúa Jêsus Thì Được Cứu (Sinner believes in Christ to be saved)

"Nhưng hễ ai đã nhận Ngài, thì Ngài ban cho quyền phép trở nên con cái Đức Chúa Trời, là ban cho những kẻ tin danh Ngài" (Gi. 1:12).

"Vả nếu miệng người xưng Đức Chúa Jêsus ra và lòng người tin rằng Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến Ngài từ kẻ chết sống lại, thì người sẽ được cứu" (Rôm. 10:9).

"Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng các người, hễ ai tin thì được sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 6:47).

2) Chúa Jêsus Christ Ban Cho Tín Nhân Đời Sống Mới (Christ gives the believers new life)

"Vả, nếu ai ở trong Đấng Christ, thì nấy là người dựng nên mới; những sự cũ đã qua đi, nay mọi sự đều trở nên mới" (2 Côr. 5:17).

"Kẻ trộm chỉ đến để cướp giết và hủy diệt; còn ta đã đến, hầu cho chiên được sự sống, và được sự sống dư dật" (Gi. 10:10).

3) Đức Chúa Trời Tha Thứ Người Ăn Năn (God forgives those who repent)

"Còn nếu chúng ta xưng tội mình, thì Ngài là thành tín công bình để tha tội cho chúng ta, và làm cho chúng ta sạch mọi điều gian ác" (1 Gi. 1:9).

4) Đức Thánh Linh Giúp Đỡ Và Ẩn Chứng Cho Tín Nhân (Holy Spirit helps and anchors believers)

"Bởi đó, tôi tỏ cùng anh em, chẳng ai cảm Thánh Linh của Đức Chúa Trời, mà nói rằng: Đức Chúa Jêsus đáng nguyên rủa! Nếu không cảm Đức Thánh Linh, cũng chẳng ai xưng Đức Chúa Jêsus là Chúa!" (1Côr. 12:3).

"Anh em chớ làm buồn cho Đức Thánh Linh của Đức Chúa Trời, vì nhờ Ngài anh em được ẩn chứng đến ngày cứu chuộc" (Ê-phê-sô 4:30).

IV. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 12

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL EFFECTIVELY (NHỮNG ĐÒI HỎI CĂN BẢN ĐỂ CHIA SẺ PHÚC ÂM HIỆU QUẢ)

I. Phải Kinh Nghiệm Quyền Năng Phúc Âm (Must have experienced the Power of the Gospel)

1) Từ Tội Nhân (From Sinner)

"Si-môn Phi-e-rô thấy vậy, liền sấp mình xuống ngang đầu gối Đức Chúa Jê-sus, mà thưa rằng: Lạy Chúa, xin ra khỏi tôi, vì tôi là người có tội" (Lu-ca 5:8).

"Vì mọi người đều đã phạm tội" (Rôm. 3:23).

2) Đến Tín Nhân (To Believer)

"Si-môn Phi-e-rô thưa rằng: Chúa là Đấng Christ, Con Đức Chúa Trời hằng sống. Bây giờ, Đức Chúa Jê-sus phán cùng người rằng: Hỡi Si-môn, con Giô-na, người có phước đó; vì chẳng phải thịt và huyết tỏ cho người biết điều này đâu, bèn là Cha ta ở trên trời vậy" (Mat. 16:16-17).

"Nhưng hễ ai đã nhận Ngài, thì Ngài ban cho quyền phép trở nên con cái Đức Chúa Trời, là ban cho những kẻ tin danh Ngài, là kẻ chẳng phải sanh bởi khí huyết, hoặc bởi tình dục, hoặc bởi ý người, nhưng sanh bởi Đức Chúa Trời vậy" (Gi. 1:12-13).

3) Thành Chứng Nhân (Becoming a Witness)

"Nhưng khi Đức Thánh Linh giảng trên các người, thì các người sẽ nhận lấy quyền phép, và làm chứng về ta tại thành Giê-ru-sa-lem, cả xứ Giu-đê, xứ Sa-ma-ri, cho đến cùng trái đất" (Công Vụ 1:8).

"Bây giờ, Phi-e-rô đứng ra cùng mười một sứ đồ, cất tiếng nói với dân chúng rằng: Hỡi người Giu-đá, và mọi người ở tại thành Giê-ru-sa-lem, hãy biết rõ điều này, và lắng tai nghe lời ta... Chúng nghe bấy nhiêu lời, trong lòng cảm động, bèn hỏi Phi-e-rô và các sứ đồ khác rằng: Hỡi anh em, chúng ta phải làm chi? Phi-e-rô trả lời rằng: Hãy hối cải, ai nấy phải nhận danh Đức Chúa Jê-sus chịu phép báp-têm, để được tha tội mình, rồi sẽ được lãnh sự ban cho Đức Thánh Linh... Vậy, những kẻ nhận lời đó đều chịu phép báp-têm; và trong ngày ấy, có độ ba ngàn người thêm vào Hội thánh" (Công Vụ 2:14, 37-38, 41).

"Mọi điều đó đến bởi Đức Chúa Trời, Ngài đã làm cho chúng ta nhờ Đấng Christ mà được hòa thuận lại cùng Ngài, và đã giao chức vụ giảng hòa cho chúng ta" (2 Côr. 5:18).

II. Phải Tin Tưởng Quyền Năng Phúc Âm (Must Believe in the Power of the Gospel)

1) Quyền Năng Của Đức Chúa Trời Qua Phúc Âm (The Power of God through the Gospel)

"Thật vậy, tôi không hổ thẹn về Tin lành đâu, vì là quyền phép của Đức Chúa Trời để cứu mọi kẻ tin, trước là người Giu-đa, sau là người Gờ-réc, vì trong Tin lành này có bày tỏ sự công bình của Đức Chúa Trời, bởi đức tin mà được"(Rôm. 1:16-17a).

"Nhưng Đức Chúa Trời, là Đấng giàu lòng thương xót, vì có lòng yêu thương lớn Ngài đem mà yêu chúng ta, nên đang khi chúng ta chết vì tội mình, thì Ngài làm cho chúng ta sống với Đấng Christ - ấy là nhờ ân điển mà anh em được cứu - và Ngài làm cho chúng ta đồng sống lại và đồng ngồi trong các nơi trên trời trong Đức Chúa Jê-sus Christ" (Ê-phê-sô 2:4-6).

2) Quyền Năng Của Đức Chúa Jê-sus Qua Phúc Âm (The Power of Jesus Christ through the Gospel)

"Đây là ý muốn của Cha ta, phàm ai nhìn Con và tin Con, thì được sự sống đời đời; còn ta, ta sẽ làm cho kẻ ấy sống lại nơi ngày sau rốt" (Gi. 6:40).

"Ấy là theo ý muốn đó mà chúng ta được nên thánh nhờ sự dâng thân thể của Đức Chúa Jê-sus Christ một lần đủ cả" (Hêb. 10:10).

"Ấy là trong Đấng Christ, chúng ta được cứu chuộc bởi huyết Ngài, được tha tội, theo sự dư dật của ân điển Ngài" (Ê-phê-sô 1:7).

3) Quyền Năng Của Đức Thánh Linh Qua Phúc Âm (The Power of Holy Spirit through the Gospel)

"Bởi đó, tôi tỏ cùng anh em, chẳng ai cảm Thánh Linh của Đức Chúa Trời, mà nói rằng: Đức Chúa Jê-sus đáng nguyên rửa! Nếu không cảm Đức Thánh Linh, cũng chẳng ai xưng Đức Chúa Jê-sus là Chúa!" (1 Côr. 12:3).

"Lời nói và sự giảng của tôi chẳng phải bằng bài diễn thuyết khéo léo của sự khôn ngoan, nhưng tại sự tỏ ra Thánh Linh và quyền phép; hầu cho anh em chớ lập đức tin mình trên sự khôn ngoan loài người, bèn là trên quyền phép Đức Chúa Trời" (1 Côr. 2:4-5).

"Vả, đạo Tin lành chúng tôi đã rao truyền cho anh em, không những bằng lời nói thôi, lại cũng bằng quyền phép, Đức Thánh Linh và sức mạnh của sự tin quyết nữa" (1 Tê-sa. 1:5a).

III. Phải Sử Dụng Thánh Kinh Khi Chia Sẻ Phúc Âm (Must use the Bible for Sharing the Gospel)

1) Thánh Kinh Là Lời Đức Chúa Trời (The Bible is the Word of God)

"Cả Kinh thánh đều là bởi Đức Chúa Trời soi dẫn, có ích cho sự dạy dỗ, bẻ trách, sửa trị, dạy người trong sự công bình" (2 Tim. 3:16).

2) Thánh Kinh Bày Tỏ Về Chúa Jê-sus (The Bible explains about Jesus Christ)

"Đức Chúa Jê-sus đã làm trước mặt môn đồ Ngài nhiều phép lạ khác nữa, mà không chép trong sách này. Nhưng các việc này đã chép, để cho các người tin rằng Đức Chúa Jê-sus là Đấng Christ, tức là Con Đức Chúa Trời, và để khi các người tin, thì nhờ danh Ngài mà được sự sống" (Gi. 20:30-31).

3) Thánh Kinh Có Năng Quyền Biến Đổi (The Bible has power to change)

"Vì lời của Đức Chúa Trời là lời sống và linh nghiệm, sắc hơn gươm hai lưỡi, thấu vào đến đổi chia hồn, linh, cốt, tủy, xem xét tư tưởng và ý định trong lòng" (Hêb 4:12).

IV. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 13

THE TECHNIQUES FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL (NHỮNG PHƯƠNG CÁCH CHIA SẺ PHÚC ÂM)

I. Chia Sẻ Theo Đối Tượng (Sharing by Audience)

1) Đối Tượng: Giáo Sư Ni-cô-đem (Gi. 3:1-15) (Audience: Teacher Nicodemus)

a) Đề Cập Sự Tái Sanh (Introducing being born again)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus cất tiếng đáp rằng: Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng ngươi, nếu một người chẳng sanh lại, thì không thể thấy được nước Đức Chúa Trời" (Gi. 3:3).

"Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng ngươi, nếu một người chẳng nhờ nước và Thánh Linh mà sanh, thì không được vào nước Đức Chúa Trời" (Gi. 3:5).

b) Giải Thích Sự Tái Sanh (Explaining about born again)

"Hễ chi sanh bởi xác thịt là xác thịt; hễ chi sanh bởi Thánh Linh là thần. Chớ lấy làm lạ về điều ta đã nói với ngươi: Các ngươi phải sanh lại. Gió muốn thổi đâu thì thổi, ngươi nghe tiếng động; nhưng chẳng biết gió đến từ đâu và cũng không biết đi đâu. Hễ người nào sanh bởi Thánh Linh thì cũng như vậy" (Gi. 3:6-8).

c) Chứng Minh Sự Tái Sanh (Proving being born again)

"Chưa hề có ai lên trời, trừ ra Đấng từ trời xuống, ấy là Con người vốn ở trên trời. Xưa Môi-se treo con rắn lên nơi đồng vắng thế nào, thì Con người cũng phải bị treo lên đường ấy, hầu cho hễ ai tin đến Ngài đều được sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 3:13-15).

2) Đối Tượng: Đàn Bà Sa-ma-ri (Gi. 4:1-30) (Audience: Samaritan Woman)

a) Đề Cập Nước Hằng Sống (Introducing the Living Water)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Ví bằng ngươi biết sự ban cho của Đức Chúa Trời, và biết người nói: "Hãy cho ta uống" là ai, thì chắc ngươi sẽ xin người cho uống, và người sẽ cho ngươi nước sống" (Gi. 4:10).

b) Giải Thích Nước Hằng Sống (Explaining about the Living Water)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Phàm ai uống nước này vẫn còn khát mãi; nhưng uống nước ta sẽ cho, thì chẳng hề khát nữa. Nước ta cho sẽ thành một mạch nước trong người đó, văng ra cho đến sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 4:13-14).

c) Chứng Minh Nước Hằng Sống (Proving the Living Water)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus phán rằng: Ta, người đang nói với ngươi đây, chính là Đấng đó" (Gi. 4:26).

3) Đối Tượng: Đoàn Dân (Audience: The Crowd)

a) Đề Cập Bánh Hằng Sống (Introducing the Living Bread)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng các ngươi, các ngươi tìm ta chẳng phải vì đã thấy mấy phép lạ, nhưng vì các ngươi đã ăn bánh và được no. Hãy làm việc, chớ vì đồ ăn hay hư nát, nhưng vì đồ ăn còn lại đến sự sống đời đời, là thứ Con người sẽ ban cho các ngươi" (Gi. 6:26-27).

b) Giải Thích Bánh Hằng Sống (Explaining about the Living Bread)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng các ngươi, Môi-se chưa hề cho các ngươi bánh từ trên trời xuống; nhưng Cha ta ban cho các ngươi bánh thật, là bánh từ trên trời xuống. Bởi chưng bánh Đức Chúa Trời là bánh từ trên trời giáng xuống, ban sự sống cho thế gian" (Gi. 6:32-33).

"Tổ phụ các ngươi đã ăn ma-na trong đồng vắng, rồi cũng chết. Đây là bánh từ trời xuống, hầu cho ai ăn chẳng hề chết" (Gi. 6:49-50).

c) Chứng Minh Bánh Hằng Sống (Proving the Living Bread)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus phán rằng: Ta là bánh của sự sống; ai đến cùng ta chẳng hề đói, và ai tin ta chẳng hề khát" (Gi. 6:35).

"Quả thật, quả thật, ta nói cùng các ngươi, hễ ai tin thì được sự sống đời đời... Ta là bánh hằng sống từ trên trời xuống; nếu ai ăn bánh ấy, thì sẽ sống vô cùng" (Gi. 6:47, 51).

II. Chia Sẻ Cho Người Quen (Sharing With Acquaintances)

1) Gia Đình: Dẫn Đến (Relative: Bringing)

"Trong hai người đã nghe điều Giảng nói và đi theo Đức Chúa Jêsus đó, một là Anh-rê, em của Si-môn Phi-e-rô. Trước hết người gặp anh mình là Si-môn, thì nói rằng: Chúng ta đã gặp Đấng Mê-si (nghĩa là Đấng Christ). Người bèn dẫn Si-môn đến cùng Đức Chúa Jêsus" (Gi. 1:40-42a).

2) Bạn Bè: Mời Đến (Friends: Inviting)

"Phi-líp gặp Na-tha-na-ên, nói với người rằng: Chúng ta đã gặp Đấng mà Môi-se có chép trong luật pháp, và các đấng tiên tri cũng có nói đến; ấy là Đức Chúa Jêsus ở Na-xa-rét, con của Giô-sép. Na-tha-na-ên nói rằng: Há có vật gì tốt ra từ Na-xa-rét được sao? Phi-líp nói: Hãy đến xem" (Gi. 1:45-46).

"Kể đó, Đức Chúa Jêsus ra ngoài, thấy một người thu thuế, tên là Lê-vi, đương ngồi tại sở thu thuế. Ngài phán cùng người rằng: Hãy theo ta! Lê-vi bỏ hết mọi sự, đứng dậy đi theo Ngài. Lê-vi dọn tiệc trọng thể đãi Ngài tại nhà mình, có nhiều người thu thuế và kẻ khác cùng ngồi ăn đồng bàn" (Lu-ca 5:27-29).

3) Láng Giềng: Chia Sẻ Kinh Nghiệm Cá Nhân (Neighbors: Share personal experience)

"Người đàn bà bèn bỏ cái vò của mình lại và vào thành, nói với người tại đó rằng: Hãy đến xem một người đã bảo tôi mọi điều tôi đã làm; ấy chẳng phải là Đấng Christ sao? Chúng bèn từ trong thành ra và đến cùng Đức Chúa Jêsus" (Gi. 4:28-30).

III. Trên Cánh Đồng Truyền Giáo (Sharing in the mission field)

1) Lời Dạy Của Chúa Jêsus (The teachings of Jesus)

a) Đi Ra Theo Từng Đôi (Going out in pairs)

"Ngài bèn kêu mười hai sứ đồ, bắt đầu sai đi từng đôi" (Mác 6:7a).

"Chúa chọn bảy mươi môn đồ khác, sai từng đôi đi trước Ngài, đến các thành các chỗ mà chính Ngài sẽ đi" (Lu-ca 10:1).

b) Cầu Nguyện Cho Chính Mình (Praying for ourselves)

"Ngài bèn phán cùng môn đồ rằng: Mùa gặt thì thật trủng, song con gặt thì ít. Vậy, hãy cầu xin chủ mùa gặt sai con gặt đến trong mùa mình" (Mat. 9:37-38).

c) Nương Cậy Đức Thánh Linh (Leaning on the Holy Spirit)

"Song khi họ sẽ đem nộp các ngươi, thì chớ lo về cách nói làm sao, hoặc nói lời gì; vì những lời đáng nói sẽ chỉ cho các ngươi chính trong giờ đó. Ấy chẳng phải tự

các người nói đầu, song là Thánh Linh của Cha các người sẽ từ trong lòng các người nói ra" (Mat. 10:19-20).

d) Tận Dụng Mọi Cơ Hội (Taking advantage of all opportunities)

"Ngài phán cùng sứ đồ rằng: Hễ nhà nào các người sẽ vào, hãy cứ ở đó, cho đến khi đi. Nếu có chỗ nào, người ta không chịu tiếp các người, và cũng không nghe các người nữa, thì hãy đi khỏi đó, và phủi bụi đã dính chân mình, để làm chứng cho họ" (Mác 6:10-11).

2) Những Lời Khuyên Thông Thường (Common Advice)

a) Nhẫn Nại Với Thân Hữu (Be patient)

b) Lắng Nghe Thân Hữu Nói (Be willing to listen)

c) Hỏi Những Câu Hỏi Tốt (Ask good questions)

d) Tiếp Tục Giữ Liên Hệ Tốt (Continue to keep a good relationship)

3) Những Câu Hỏi Thường Gặp (Common Questions)

a) Thờ Cúng Ông Bà (Cult of Ancestors)

i) Đạo Tin Lành có phải bỏ ông bà không? (Does Christianity call us to abandon our ancestors?)

- Đạo Tin Lành không phải bỏ ông bà bởi vì Lời Chúa dạy trong Thánh Kinh là phải biết hiếu kính cha mẹ (Xuất 20:12). (Christianity does not call us to abandon them because the Word of God teaches in the Bible that we should honor our parents (Exodus 20:12).
- Tin Chúa và thờ phượng Ngài là làm trọn đạo hiếu kính ông bà, vì thờ kính ông bà chỉ giữ được đến năm đời, nhưng thờ phượng Đức Chúa Trời là giữ trọn đến tất cả. (Believing in God and worshiping Him is to honor all of our ancestors, because cult of ancestors can only go back about five generations, but worshiping God is to honor them from the beginning).

b) Cao Đài Giáo (Caodaism)

i) Đạo Cao Đài có giống như đạo Tin Lành không vì cũng thờ ông Trời? (Is Caodaism like Christianity because it also worships God?)

- Đạo Tin Lành không giống đạo Cao Đài vì ngoài Đức Chúa Trời, người Tin Lành không thờ một đấng nào khác. (Christianity is not like Caodaism because apart from God, Christians worship no one else).
- Đức Chúa Trời cấm người tin theo Ngài thờ phượng bất cứ ai ngoài chính Ngài (Xuất 20:3). (God forbid his followers to worship anyone other than himself (Exodus 20: 3).

c) Phật Giáo (Buddhism)

i) Tái sinh có phải là đầu thai không? (Does born again mean reincarnation?)

- Tái sinh không phải là đầu thai vào đời kế tiếp mà được sinh lại vào gia đình của Đức Chúa Trời khi người đó tiếp nhận Chúa Jêsus là Đấng đã chết trên thập tự giá để trả thay cho tội lỗi của họ. (Born again is not reincarnation in the next life, but born again is to be born in the family of God when someone accepts Jesus as Lord who died on the cross to atone for their sins).

IV. Phương Cách Chứng Đạo Mẫu (A sample of how to share the gospel)

Bạn nên nhớ ba điều trong phương cách chứng đạo là hỏi, lắng nghe, và chuyển cuộc trò chuyện sang việc chia sẻ niềm tin.

1) Tìm Hiểu Niềm Tin Của Thân Hữu (Learning their belief)

Có năm câu hỏi để tìm hiểu niềm tin của thân hữu:

- a) Anh/chị có tin vào đấng nào không?
- b) Anh/chị có tin là có thiên đàng và địa ngục không?
- c) Anh/chị nghĩ sau này mình sẽ đi vào nơi nào?
- d) Theo anh/chị thì Chúa Jêsus là ai?

e) Anh/chị có cho phép tôi vài phút chia sẻ về Chúa Jêsus và làm sao để được vào thiên đàng không?

2) Chia Sẻ Phúc Âm (Sharing the gospel)

Bạn phải tùy theo tình huống để bắt vào việc chia sẻ Phúc Âm. Cố gắng chia sẻ trọn nền tảng Phúc Âm mà bạn đã học ở bài hai. Nếu thân hữu có câu hỏi đang lúc bạn chia sẻ, cố gắng lắng nghe và ghi câu hỏi của họ xuống nhưng đừng trả lời câu hỏi của họ cho đến khi chia sẻ hết nền tảng căn bản của Phúc Âm. Bạn nên trả lời rằng: Câu hỏi của anh chị rất là tốt nhưng xin phép cho tôi được trình bày hết sứ điệp của Phúc Âm rồi tôi sẽ trở lại câu hỏi của anh/chị. Nhớ sau khi chia sẻ hết Phúc Âm thì đừng quên trả lời câu hỏi của họ mà bạn đã ghi xuống. Nếu không biết câu trả lời thì đừng ngại là nói không biết. Hứa sẽ nghiên cứu và trả lời cho họ lần sau.

3) Mời Gọi Tin Chúa (Invitation to accept Jesus Christ)

Có bốn câu hỏi quan trọng mà bạn cần phải hỏi thân hữu để mời gọi tin Chúa:

- a) Anh/chị có công nhận mình là một tội nhân không?
- b) Anh/chị có muốn tội lỗi của mình được Đức Chúa Trời tha thứ không?
- c) Anh/chị có tin rằng Chúa Jêsus đã chết trên thập tự giá để chuộc tội thể cho anh/chị không?

d) Nếu anh/chị đã tin như vậy thì anh/chị có sẵn lòng mời Chúa Jêsus vào tâm lòng để làm Chúa và làm Chủ đời sống của anh/chị không? Nếu họ đồng ý, hướng dẫn thân hữu cầu nguyện tin Chúa.

4) Hướng Dẫn Thân Hữu Cầu Nguyện Tin Chúa (Lead them to pray)

Lạy Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ là Cha Thiên Thượng. Con đã phạm tội với Chúa mà lâu nay con không biết. Bây giờ con cầu xin Chúa tha thứ cho con. Con tin rằng Chúa đã chết trên thập tự giá cho con và đã sống lại. Con xin mời Ngài vào đời sống của con để làm Chúa và làm Chủ. Con nguyện làm theo những gì Chúa dạy để làm vui lòng Ngài. Con xin cầu nguyện trong danh Chúa Jêsus Christ, A-men.

5) Mời Thân Hữu Đến Thờ Phụng Chúa (Invite to church next Sunday)

Sau khi hướng dẫn họ cầu nguyện tin Chúa, chúc mừng và mời họ đến thờ phụng Chúa vào Chúa Nhật đến.

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions, and Answers)

APPENDIX 14

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLESHIP (NỀN TẢNG CĂN BẢN VỀ MÔN ĐỒ HÓA)

Năng động trong việc dạy và thực hành Môn Đồ Hóa sẽ thúc đẩy đời sống của chính bạn cũng như những người bạn giúp đỡ giống Chúa Jêsus nhiều hơn. Môn Đồ Hóa là tiến trình dài hạn. Tiến trình này sẽ tiếp tục phát triển trong đời sống đức tin và hành động của bạn cho đến ngày mặt đối mặt với Chúa Jêsus. (Actively teaching and practicing Discipleship will promote your own life as well as those you help become more like Jesus. Discipleship is a long-term process. This process will continue to grow in the life of faith and action until the day you are face to face with Jesus).

I. Định Nghĩa Môn Đồ Hóa (The definitions of discipleship)

1) Định Nghĩa Theo Gary McIntosh (The definition according to Gary McIntosh)

"Discipleship is the process of finding and winning the lost, folding them into a local church, and building them up in the faith... Môn Đồ Hóa là tiến trình của việc tìm kiếm, chia sẻ Phúc Âm cho tội nhân, đem họ vào hội thánh địa phương, và giúp xây dựng đức tin của họ lớn lên."¹

2) Định Nghĩa Theo J. Oswald Sanders (The definition according to J. Oswald Sanders)

"The word disciple means "a learner"... As used by Him (Jesus) and by Paul, it means "a learner of pupil who accepts the teaching of Christ, not only belief but also in lifestyle"... In other words, it means learning with the purpose to obey what is learned. It involves a deliberate choice, a definite denial, and a determined obedience... Từ ngữ "môn đồ" nghĩa là "người học trò"... Được Chúa Jêsus và Pha-lô sử dụng, nó có nghĩa "người học trò phải thừa nhận những lời dạy dỗ của Đấng Christ, không phải chỉ tin nhưng còn phải áp dụng vào đời sống hằng ngày... Nói cách khác, nó có nghĩa là học với mục đích để làm theo những gì đã học. Nó bao gồm sự lựa chọn cần trọng, xác định từ chối, và quyết tâm vâng phục."²

3) Định Nghĩa Theo Thánh Kinh (The definition according to the Bible)

"Ấy chính Ngài đã cho người này làm sứ đồ, kẻ kia làm tiên tri, người khác làm thầy giảng Tin lành, kẻ khác nữa làm mục sư và giáo sư, để các thánh đồ được trọn

¹Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work with God to Build A Faithful Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 68.

²J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Discipleship: Principles of Following Christ for Every Believers* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 8.

ven về công việc của chức dịch và sự gầy dựng thân thể Đấng Christ, cho đến chừng chúng ta thấy đều hiệp một trong đức tin và trong sự hiểu biết Con Đức Chúa Trời, mà nên bậc thành nhân, được tầm thước vóc giặc trọn vẹn của Đấng Christ. Ngài muốn chúng ta không như trẻ con nữa, bị người ta lừa đảo, bị mưu chước dỗ dành làm cho lầm lạc, mà dạy động và dòi dôi theo chiều gió của đạo lạc, nhưng muốn cho chúng ta lấy lòng yêu thương nói ra lẽ chân thật, để trong mọi việc chúng ta đều được thêm lên trong Đấng làm đầu, tức là Đấng Christ" (Êph. 4:11-15).

II. Mục Đích Của Môn Đồ Hóa (The Purposes of Discipleship)

1) Phát Triển Đời Sống Giống Chúa (Developing a Christian's life to the Fullness of Christ)

"...cho đến chừng chúng ta thấy đều hiệp một trong đức tin và trong sự hiểu biết Con Đức Chúa Trời, mà nên bậc thành nhân, được tầm thước vóc giặc trọn vẹn của Đấng Christ" (Êph 4:13).

"Hầu cho anh em ở giữa dòng dôi hung ác ngang nghịch, được nên con cái của Đức Chúa Trời, không vít, không tì, không chỗ trách được, lại giữa dòng dôi đó, giữ lấy đạo sự sống, chiếu sáng như đuốc trong thế gian" (Phi. 2:15).

2) Làm Sáng Danh Chúa (Glorifying to God)

"Sự sáng các người hãy soi trước mặt người ta như vậy, đặng họ thấy những việc lành của các người, và ngợi khen Cha các người ở trên trời" (Mat. 5:16).

III. Đòi Hỏi Cho Môn Đồ Hóa (The Requirements of Discipleship)

1) Mang Vác Thập Tự (Carrying the cross)

"Còn ai không vác thập tự giá mình mà theo ta, cũng không được làm môn đồ ta" (Lu-ca 14:27).

2) Từ Bỏ Sở Thích (Giving-up the desires)

"Như vậy, nếu ai trong các người không bỏ mọi sự mình có, thì không được làm môn đồ ta" (Lu-ca 14:33).

3) Giữ Lời Chúa Dạy (Holding His teachings)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Nếu ai yêu mến ta, thì vâng giữ lời ta, Cha ta sẽ thương yêu người, chúng ta đều đến cùng người và ở trong người" (Gi. 14:23).

4) Nói Kết Với Chúa (Abiding in Him)

"Ta là gốc nho, các người là nhánh. Ai cứ ở trong ta và ta trong họ thì sinh ra lắm trái; vì ngoài ta, các người chẳng làm chi được" (Gi. 15:5).

5) Yêu Thương Người Khác (Loving others)

"Nếu các người yêu nhau, thì ấy là tại điều đó mà thiên hạ sẽ nhận biết các người là môn đồ ta" (Gi. 13:35).

6) Sản Sinh Bông Trái (Bearing fruits)

"Này, Cha ta sẽ được sáng danh là thế nào: Ấy là các người được kết nhiều quả, thì sẽ làm môn đồ của ta vậy" (Gi. 15:8).

IV. Thảo Luận và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions & Answers)

APPENDIX 15

THE BASIC ASSURANCES OF DOCTRINES OF DISCIPLESHIP (TÍN LÝ VỮNG CHẮC CHO MÔN ĐỒ HÓA)

Để có một đời sống theo Chúa hiệu quả, Cơ Đốc Nhân cần nắm vững các tín lý vững chắc về môn đồ hóa. (In order to live an effective in Christian life, basic assurances of Christian doctrines of discipleship need to be acknowledged).

I. Tín Lý Vững Chắc Khi Đương Đầu Với Tội Lỗi (The Assurance of Dealing of Sin)

1) Định Nghĩa Tội Lỗi (The Definitions of Sin)

a) Theo Wayne Grudem (According to Wayne Grudem)

"Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature. Tội lỗi là việc không tuân giữ luật đạo đức của Đức Chúa Trời trong hành động, quan điểm, hoặc tự nhiên"¹

b) Theo Thánh Kinh (According to the Bible)

Tội lỗi được mô tả là thiếu mất sự vinh hiển của Đức Chúa Trời. (Sin describes as falling short of the glory of God): "vì mọi người đều đã phạm tội, thiếu mất sự vinh hiển của Đức Chúa Trời" (Rôm. 3:23).

Tội lỗi là không làm những việc lành cần làm. (Sin is failure to do what is right): "Kẻ biết làm điều lành mà chẳng làm, thì phạm tội" (Gia. 4:17).

2) Tội Lỗi Làm Con Người Xa Cách Đức Chúa Trời (Sin Separates Man from God)

"Nhưng ấy là sự gian ác các người làm xa cách mình với Đức Chúa Trời; và tội lỗi các người đã che khuất mặt Ngài khỏi các người, đến nỗi Ngài không nghe các người nữa" (Ê-sai 59:2).

3) Hậu Quả Của Tội Lỗi Là Sự Chết (The Result of Sin is Death)

"Linh hồn nào phạm tội thì sẽ chết" (Ê-xê. 18:20a).

"Vì tiền công của tội lỗi là sự chết" (Rôm. 6:23a).

4) Cách Giải Quyết Tội Lỗi Là Đấng Christ (The Solution for Sin is Christ)

"Đức Chúa Trời đã làm cho Đấng vốn chẳng biết tội lỗi trở nên tội lỗi vì chúng ta, hầu cho chúng ta nhờ Đấng đó mà được trở nên sự công bình của Đức Chúa Trời" (2 Côr. 5:21).

"Khi anh em đã chết bởi tội lỗi mình và sự xác thịt mình không chịu cắt bì, thì Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến anh em sống lại với Đấng Christ, vì đã tha thứ hết mọi tội chúng ta: Ngài đã xóa tờ khế lập nghịch cùng chúng ta, các điều khoản trái với chúng ta nữa, cùng phá hủy tờ khế đó mà đóng đinh trên cây thập tự" (Côl. 2:13-14).

¹Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 490.

5) **Đề Tội Lỗi Được Tha Thứ Là Ăn Năn (The Forgiveness of Sin is Confession)**

Chúng ta cần ăn năn để tội lỗi được tha thứ. (We need to confess for forgiveness of sin): "Còn nếu chúng ta xưng tội mình, thì Ngài là thành tín công bình để tha tội cho chúng ta, và làm cho chúng ta sạch mọi điều gian ác" (1Gi. 1:9).

6) **Đức Chúa Trời Không Nhớ Tội Chúng Ta nữa (God Remembers Our Sin No More)**

Khi Đức Chúa Trời tha thứ tội cho chúng ta, Ngài không nhớ tội của chúng ta nữa. (As God forgave our sins, He will remember it no more).

"Ta sẽ chẳng còn nhớ đến tội lỗi gian ác của chúng nó nữa" (Hêb. 10:17).

"Phương đông xa cách phương tây bao nhiêu, thì Ngài đã đem sự vi phạm chúng tôi khỏi xa chúng tôi bấy nhiêu" (Thi 103:12).

II. **Tín Lý Vững Chắc Khi Đương Đầu Với Sự Cứu Chuộc (The Assurance of Dealing of Redemption)**

1) **Đức Chúa Trời Yêu Thương Tội Nhân (God Loves Sinners)**

"Vi Đức Chúa Trời yêu thương thế gian, đến nỗi đã ban Con một của Ngài, hầu cho hễ ai tin Con ấy không bị hư mất mà được sự sống đời đời" (Gi. 3:16).

"Nhưng Đức Chúa Trời tỏ lòng yêu thương Ngài đối với chúng ta, khi chúng ta còn là người có tội, thì Đấng Christ vì chúng ta chịu chết" (Rôm. 5:8).

2) **Đức Chúa Trời Muốn Mọi Người Được Cứu (God Wants Sinners to be saved)**

"Chúa không chậm trễ về lời hứa của Ngài như mấy người kia tưởng đâu, nhưng Ngài lấy lòng nhịn nhục đối với anh em, không muốn cho một người nào chết mất, song muốn cho mọi người đều ăn năn" (2Phi. 3:9).

3) **Chúa Jêsus Christ Là Sự Cứu Rỗi Duy Nhất (Jesus Christ is the Only Way)**

"Vậy Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp rằng: Ta là đường đi, lẽ thật, và sự sống; chẳng bởi ta thì không ai được đến cùng Cha" (Gi. 14:6).

"Jêsus này là hòn đá bị các ông xây nhà bỏ ra, rồi trở nên hòn đá góc nhà. Chẳng có sự cứu rỗi trong đấng nào khác; vì ở dưới trời, chẳng có danh nào khác ban cho loài người, để chúng ta phải nhờ đó mà được cứu" (Công 4:11-12).

4) **Tội Nhân Được Cứu Bởi Đức Tin Trong Đấng Christ (Sinners Are Saved by Faith in Christ)**

"Vậy nếu miệng ngươi xưng Đức Chúa Jêsus ra và lòng ngươi tin rằng Đức Chúa Trời đã khiến Ngài từ kẻ chết sống lại, thì ngươi sẽ được cứu" (Rôm. 10:9).

"Nhưng hễ ai đã nhận Ngài, thì Ngài ban cho quyền phép trở nên con cái Đức Chúa Trời, là ban cho những kẻ tin danh Ngài" (Gi. 1:12).

III. **Tín Lý Vững Chắc Khi Đương Đầu Với Sự Cải Đạo (The Assurance of Dealing of Conversion)**

"The word *conversion* itself means "turning"-here it represents a spiritual turn, a turning from sin to Christ. The turning from sin is called *repentance*, and the turning to Christ is called *faith*. Từ ngữ *cải đạo* có nghĩa là "đổi hướng", ý nghĩa này ở đây bày tỏ đến sự đổi hướng thuộc linh, xoay bỏ từ tội lỗi đến Đấng Christ. Từ bỏ tội lỗi được gọi là *sự ăn năn*, còn chạy đến với Đấng Christ được gọi là *đức tin*".²

²Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 709.

1) Định Nghĩa Về Sự Cải Đạo (The Definition of Conversion)

"Conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation. Cải đạo là quyền tự nguyện của chúng ta để đáp ứng đến tiếng gọi Phúc Âm khi chúng ta thật lòng ăn năn về tội lỗi và đặt niềm tin trong Đấng Christ cho sự cứu rỗi".³

2) Sự Cải Đạo Thật Phải Đến Từ Sự Ăn Năn Và Đức Tin (The True Conversion Must Come with Repentance and Faith)

"Tôi đã dạy anh em hoặc giữa công chúng, hoặc từ nhà này sang nhà kia, giảng cho người Giu-đa như cho người Gô-réc về sự ăn năn đối với Đức Chúa Trời, và đức tin trong Đức Chúa Jêsus là Chúa chúng ta" (Công 20:20b-21).

3) Sự Cải Đạo Thật Được Ấn Chứng Bởi Đức Thánh Linh (The True Conversion is sealed by the Holy Spirit)

"Anh em chớ làm buồn cho Đức Thánh Linh của Đức Chúa Trời, vì nhờ Ngài anh em được ấn chứng đến ngày cứu chuộc" (Êph. 4:30).

4) Sự Cải Đạo Thật Bày Tỏ Những Dấu Hiệu (The True Conversion is showed by Signs)

"Hãy coi chừng tiên tri giả, là những kẻ mang lột chiên đến cùng các ngươi, song bề trong thật là muông sói hay cắn xé. Các ngươi nhờ những trái nó mà nhận biết được. Nào có ai hái trái nho nơi bụi gai, hay là trái vả nơi bụi tật lê?" (Mat. 7:15-16).

"Hỡi anh em, nếu ai nói mình có đức tin, song không có việc làm, thì ích chi chăng? Đức tin đó cứu người ấy được chăng?" (Gia. 2:14).

a) Yêu Chúa Hơn Là Yêu Thế Gian (Loving God Other Than Loving the World)

"Hỡi bọn tà dâm kia, anh em há chẳng biết làm bạn với thế gian tức là thù nghịch với Đức Chúa Trời sao? Cho nên, ai muốn làm bạn với thế gian, thì người ấy trở nên kẻ nghịch thù cùng Đức Chúa Trời vậy" (Gia. 4:4).

b) Sanh Bông Trái Tốt (Bearing Good Fruit)

"Vây, hễ cây nào tốt thì sanh trái tốt; nhưng cây nào xấu thì sanh trái xấu. Cây tốt chẳng sanh được trái xấu, mà cây xấu cũng chẳng sanh được trái tốt. Hễ cây nào chẳng sanh trái tốt, thì phải đốn mà chụm đi. Ấy vậy, các ngươi nhờ những trái nó mà nhận biết được" (Mat. 7:17-20).

c) Giữ Điều Răn Của Chúa (Keeping God's Commandments)

"Này tại sao chúng ta biết mình đã biết Ngài, ấy là tại chúng ta giữ các điều răn của Ngài. Kẻ nào nói: Ta biết Ngài, mà không giữ điều răn Ngài, là người nói dối, lẽ thật quyết không ở trong người" (1Gi. 2:3-4).

d) Sống Chân Thật (Living Sincere)

"Nhưng sự khôn ngoan từ trên mà xuống thì trước hết là thanh sạch, sau lại hòa thuận, tiết độ, nhu mì, đầy đầy lòng thương xót và bông trái lành, không có sự hai lòng và giả hình" (Gia. 3:17).

IV. Tín Lý Vững Chắc Khi Đương Đầu Với Sự Xung Nghĩa (The Assurance of Dealing of Justification)

1) Định Nghĩa Sự Xung Nghĩa (The Definition of Justification)

³Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 709.

"Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight. Sự xưng nghĩa là công việc của Đức Chúa Trời thi hành ngay lập tức khi Ngài (1) nhìn thấy tội lỗi của chúng ta được tha thứ và sự công chính của Đấng Christ thuộc về chúng ta, và (2) tuyên xưng chúng ta công bình trong cái nhìn của Ngài."⁴

2) Sự Xưng Nghĩa Chỉ Dựa Vào Ân Sủng Của Đức Chúa Trời (Justification Replies On God's Grace Alone)

"Và, ấy là nhờ ân điển, bởi đức tin, mà anh em được cứu, điều đó không phải đến từ anh em, bèn là sự ban cho của Đức Chúa Trời. Ấy chẳng phải bởi việc làm đâu, hầu cho không ai khoe mình" (Êph. 2:8-9).

3) Sự Xưng Nghĩa Chấm Dứt Sự Đoán Phạt (Justification is No More of Condemnation)

"Cho nên hiện nay chẳng còn có sự đoán phạt nào cho những kẻ ở trong Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ" (Rôm. 8:1).

"Ai sẽ kiện kẻ lựa chọn của Đức Chúa Trời? Đức Chúa Trời là Đấng xưng công bình những kẻ ấy. Ai sẽ lên án họ ư? Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ là Đấng đã chết, và cũng đã sống lại nữa, Ngài đang ngự bên hữu Đức Chúa Trời, cầu nguyện thế cho chúng ta" (Rôm. 8:33-34).

4) Sự Xưng Nghĩa Được Bảo Đảm Vĩnh Viễn (Justification is Eternal Security)

a) Đức Chúa Trời Thi Hành Việc Xưng nghĩa (God Justifies Believers)

"Những kẻ Ngài đã định sẵn, thì Ngài cũng đã gọi, những kẻ Ngài đã gọi, thì Ngài cũng đã xưng là công bình, và những kẻ Ngài đã xưng là công bình, thì Ngài cũng đã làm cho vinh hiển" (Rôm. 8:30).

b) Đức Chúa Trời Làm Trọn Việc Xưng Nghĩa (God Will finish His Work)

Khi Đức Chúa Trời bắt đầu làm việc trong đời sống chúng ta, Ngài sẽ hoàn tất nó. (As God begins working in our life, He will finish its work).

"Tôi tin chắc rằng Đấng đã khởi làm việc lành trong anh em, sẽ làm trọn hết cho đến ngày của Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ" (Phi. 1:6).

c) Đức Chúa Trời Bảo Đảm Việc Xưng Nghĩa (God Will Guards Believers until the end)

Đức Chúa Trời chỉ một lần xưng nghĩa cho chúng ta. Một khi Ngài xưng nghĩa cho chúng ta, Ngài sẽ giữ cho đến cuối cùng. (God only justifies us once. As God justified us, He will keep us until the end).

"Ngài sẽ khiến anh em được vững bền đến cuối cùng, để khỏi bị quở trách trong ngày của Đức Chúa Jêsus Christ chúng ta" (1Côr. 1:8).

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions & Answers)

⁴Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 723.

APPENDIX 16

THE BASIC STRATEGIES OF DISCIPLESHIP (CHIẾN LƯỢC CĂN BẢN CỦA MÔN ĐỒ HÓA)

Chiến lược căn bản của môn đồ hóa là: Nhận diện kẻ thù, trang bị vũ khí, nhận biết Đức Chúa Trời, và nương dựa vào quyền năng của Ngài. (The basic strategies of discipleship are: Identifying our adversaries, equipping our weapon, knowing our God, and depending on God's power).

I. Nhận Diện Kẻ Thù (Identifying Our Adversaries)

Khi trở thành Cơ Đốc Nhân, chúng ta đối diện với ba kẻ thù lớn; thế gian, con người xác thịt, và ma quỷ. (When we become a Christian, we are opposed by three enemies; the world, our sinful nature, and Satan).

1) Thế Gian (The World)

Thế gian được ví sánh như một hệ thống suy nghĩ và những giá trị đi ngược lại với Lời của Đức Chúa Trời. (The world is described as a system of thinking and values that oppose God's truth).

"Chớ yêu thế gian, cũng đừng yêu các vật ở thế gian nữa; nếu ai yêu thế gian, thì sự kính mến Đức Chúa Cha chẳng ở trong người ấy. Vì mọi sự trong thế gian, như sự mê tham của xác thịt, mê tham của mắt, và sự kiêu ngạo của đời, đều chẳng từ Cha mà đến, nhưng từ thế gian mà ra" (1Gi. 2:15-16).

2) Con Người Xác Thịt (Our Sinful Nature)

Con người xác thịt được ví sánh như con người ở trong chúng ta luôn chống lại ý muốn của Đức Chúa Trời. (Our sinful nature is described as the nature within us that opposes God's will).

"Vì xác thịt có những điều ưa muốn trái với những điều của Thánh Linh, Thánh Linh có những điều ưa muốn trái với của xác thịt; hai bên trái nhau dường ấy, nên anh em không làm được điều mình muốn làm" (Gal. 5:17).

"Vì sự chăm về xác thịt nghịch với Đức Chúa Trời, bởi nó không phục dưới luật pháp Đức Chúa Trời, lại cũng không thể phục được. Và, những kẻ sống theo xác thịt, thì không thể đẹp lòng Đức Chúa Trời" (Rôm. 8:7-8).

3) Ma Quỷ (Satan)

Ma Quỷ là kẻ luôn chống lại luật của Đức Chúa Trời. (Satan is described as a spirit being who opposes God's rule).

"Hãy tiết độ và tỉnh thức: kẻ thù nghịch anh em là ma quỷ, như sư tử rống, đi rình mò chung quanh anh em, tìm kiếm người nào nó có thể nuốt được" (1Phi. 5:8).

II. Trang Bị Vũ Khí (Equipping Our Weapons)

"Vậy nên, hãy lấy mọi khí giới của Đức Chúa Trời, hầu cho trong ngày khôn nạn, anh em có thể cự địch lại, và khi thắng hơn mọi sự rồi, anh em được đứng vững vàng" (Êph. 6:13).

1) Dây Nịt Của Lẽ Thật (The Belt of Truth)

"Vậy, hãy đứng vững, lấy lẽ thật làm dây nịt lưng" (Êph. 6:14a).

2) Áo Giáp Của Sự Công Bình (The Breastplate of Righteousness)

"Mặc lấy giáp bằng sự công bình" (Êph. 6:14b).

3) Giày Của Tin Lành Bình An (The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace)

"Dùng sự sẵn sàng của Tin lành bình an mà làm giày dép" (Êph. 6:15).

4) Thuẫn Của Đức Tin (The Shield of Faith)

"Lại phải lấy thêm đức tin làm thuẫn, nhờ đó anh em có thể dập tắt được các tên lửa của kẻ dữ" (Êph. 6:16).

5) Mũ Của Sự Cứu Chuộc (The Helmet of Salvation)

"Cũng hãy lấy sự cứu chuộc làm mũ trụ" (Êph. 6:17a).

6) Gươm Của Đức Thánh Linh (The Sword of the Spirit)

"Cầm gươm của Đức Thánh Linh, là lời Đức Chúa Trời" (Êph. 6:17b).

7) Nhiều Sự Cầu Nguyện Khác Nhau (All Kinds of Prayers)

"Hãy nhờ Đức Thánh Linh, thường thường làm đủ mọi thứ cầu nguyện và nài xin. Hãy dùng sự bền đỗ trọn vẹn mà tinh thức về điều đó, và cầu nguyện cho hết thầy các thánh đồ" (Êph. 6:18).

III. Nhận Biết Đức Chúa Trời (Knowing Our God)

1) Đức Chúa Cha Biến Đổi Lòng Tín Nhân (The Father Changes the Believers' Hearts)

"Ta sẽ ban lòng mới cho các ngươi, và đặt thần mới trong các ngươi. Ta sẽ cắt lòng bằng đá khỏi thịt các ngươi, và ban cho các ngươi lòng bằng thịt. Ta sẽ đặt Thần ta trong các ngươi, và khiến các ngươi noi theo luật lệ ta, thì các ngươi sẽ giữ mạng lệnh ta và làm theo" (Ê-xê. 36:26-27).

2) Đức Chúa Con Đánh Bại Thế Gian (The Son Overcomes the World)

"Ta đã bảo các ngươi những điều đó, hầu cho các ngươi có lòng bình yên trong ta. Các ngươi sẽ có sự hoạn nạn trong thế gian, nhưng hãy cứ vững lòng, ta đã thắng thế gian rồi!" (Gi. 16:33).

3) Đức Thánh Linh Ban Năng Quyền Cho Tín Nhân (The Holy Spirit Empowers the Believers' Lives)

"Nhưng khi Đức Thánh Linh giáng trên các ngươi, thì các ngươi sẽ nhận lấy quyền phép, và làm chứng về ta tại thành Giê-ru-sa-lem, cả xứ Giu-đê, xứ Sa-ma-ri, cho đến cùng trái đất" (Công Vụ 1:8).

"Ấy chẳng phải là bởi quyền thế, cũng chẳng phải là bởi năng lực, bèn là bởi Thần ta, Đức Giê-hô-va vạn quân phán vậy" (Xa. 4:6).

4) Đức Chúa Trời Đánh Trận Cho Chúng Ta (God Fights for Our Victory)

"Hỡi các con cái bé mọn, phần các con, là thuộc về Đức Chúa Trời, đã thắng được họ rồi, vì Đấng ở trong các con là lớn hơn kẻ ở trong thế gian" (1Gi. 4:4).

IV. Tin Cây Vào Quyền Năng Đức Chúa Trời (Trusting in God's Power)

1) Nương Nhờ Sức Chúa (Be strong in the Lord)

"Và lại, anh em phải làm mạnh dạn trong Chúa, nhờ sức toàn năng của Ngài" (Êph. 6:10).

"Tôi làm được mọi sự nhờ Đấng ban thêm sức cho tôi" (Phi. 4:13).

2) Để Chúa Hành Động (Allow God to work in us)

"Và, Đức Chúa Trời, bởi quyền lực cảm động trong chúng ta, có thể làm trở hơn vô cùng mọi việc chúng ta cầu xin hoặc suy tưởng" (Êph. 3:20).

"Vì ấy chính Đức Chúa Trời cảm động lòng anh em vừa muốn vừa làm theo ý tốt Ngài" (Phi. 2:13).

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions & Answers)

APPENDIX 17

THE BASIC PRACTICES OF DISCIPLESHIP (THỰC HÀNH MÔN ĐỒ HÓA CĂN BẢN)

I. Thờ Phượng (Worship)

Thờ phượng Chúa phải là trung tâm trong đời sống của người lãnh đạo. Không những thế, người lãnh đạo cần phải giúp và khuyến khích người khác thờ phượng Chúa. (Worshipping God must be a central in the life of a leader. Moreover, the leader also needs to help and encourage others to worship the Lord as well).

Trước Giả Hê-bơ-rơ khuyên, "chớ bỏ sự nhóm lại như mây kẻ quen làm, nhưng phải khuyên bảo nhau, và hễ anh em thấy ngày ấy hầu gần chừng nào, thì càng phải làm như vậy chừng nấy" (Hêb. 10:25).

1) Lý Do Thờ Phượng (Reasons for worship)

a) Chúa Đáng Được Ngợi Khen (God is worthy to be praised)

"Vì Đức Giê-hô-va rất lớn, đáng được ngợi khen lắm lắm; Ngài đáng kính sợ hơn hết các thần" (Thi 96:4).

"Đức Giê-hô-va là lớn, rất đáng được ngợi khen trong thành của Đức Chúa Trời chúng ta, và tại trên núi thánh Ngài" (Thi 48:1).

b) Chúa Sáng Tạo Mọi Vật (God created all things)

"Đức Chúa Trời đã dựng nên thế giới và mọi vật trong đó, là Chúa của trời đất, chẳng ngự tại đền thờ bởi tay người ta dựng nên đâu. Ngài cũng chẳng dùng tay người ta hầu việc Ngài dường như có cần đến sự gì, vì Ngài là Đấng ban sự sống, hơi sống, muôn vật cho mọi loài" (Công 17:24-25).

"Lạy Đức Chúa Trời là Chúa chúng tôi, Chúa đáng được vinh hiển, tôn quý và quyền lực; vì Chúa đã dựng nên muôn vật, và ấy là vì ý muốn Chúa mà muôn vật mới có và đã được dựng nên" (Khải 4:11).

c) Chúa Cứu Chuộc Mọi Dân Tộc (God redeems all nations)

"Chúng hát một bài ca mới rằng: Ngài đáng lấy quyền sách mà mở những ấn ra; vì Ngài đã chịu giết, lấy huyết mình mà chuộc cho Đức Chúa Trời những người thuộc về mọi chi phái, mọi tiếng, mọi dân tộc, mọi nước" (Khải 5:9).

2) Nơi Thờ Phượng (The Places of Worship)

a) Thờ Phượng Chung Tại Nhà Thờ (Public worship at church)

"Tôi vui mừng khi người ta nói với tôi rằng: Ta hãy đi đến nhà Đức Giê-hô-va" (Thi 122:1).

"Phàm những người tin Chúa đều hiệp lại với nhau... Ngày nào cũng vậy, cứ chăm chỉ đến đền thờ" (Công 2:44, 46).

b) Thờ Phượng Riêng Tại Nhà (Private worship at home)

"Vì nơi nào có hai ba người nhân danh ta nhóm nhau lại, thì ta ở giữa họ" (Mat. 18:20).

3) Cách Thờ Phụng (Ways of worship)

a) Bằng Tâm Thần Và Lẽ Thật (By mind and soul)

"Nhưng giờ hầu đến, và đã đến rồi, khi những kẻ thờ phụng thật lấy tâm thần và lẽ thật mà thờ phụng Cha: Ấy đó là những kẻ thờ phụng mà Cha ưa thích vậy" (Gi. 4:23).

b) Bằng Dâng Thân Thể Sống (By offering the body as a living sacrifice)

"Vậy, hỡi anh em, tôi lấy sự thương xót của Đức Chúa Trời khuyên anh em dâng thân thể mình làm của lễ sống và thánh, đẹp lòng Đức Chúa Trời, ấy là sự thờ phụng phải lẽ của anh em" (Rôm. 12:1).

II. Cầu Nguyện (Prayer)

Cầu nguyện là nói chuyện với Chúa. Hơn thế nữa, cầu nguyện được ví sánh như hơi thở của đời sống tâm linh. Nếu đời sống thể xác phải cần thở để sống, thì đời sống tâm linh cũng cần phải cầu nguyện để được sống. Nên nhớ, cầu nguyện không phải để thay đổi ý của Đức Chúa Trời, mà để thay đổi chính chúng ta. (Praying is to communicate with God, and is like the breath of our spiritual life as air to our physical life. Without air, our physical would die, on order hand, without praying, our spiritual life become stagnant. Prayer is not intend to change God's will, but rather to change us).

1) Mục Đích Cầu Nguyện (Reasons for Prayer)

a) Phát Triển Môi Liên Hệ Với Chúa (Developing a relationship with God)

"Chúng nó sẽ kêu cầu danh ta, và ta sẽ nhậm lời nó; ta sẽ phán rằng: Ấy là dân ta đây. Và nó sẽ nói rằng: Đức Giê-hô-va là Đức Chúa Trời tôi" (Xa. 13:9b).

b) Cầu Xin Sự Khôn Sáng (Asking for Wisdom)

"Ví bằng trong anh em có kẻ kém khôn ngoan, hãy cầu xin Đức Chúa Trời, là Đấng ban cho mọi người cách rộng rãi, không trách móc ai, thì kẻ ấy sẽ được ban cho" (Gia. 1:5).

c) Trình Dâng Những Nhu Cầu (Presenting your requests)

"Chớ lo phiền chi hết, nhưng trong mọi sự hãy dùng lời cầu nguyện, nài xin, và sự tạ ơn mà trình các sự cầu xin của mình cho Đức Chúa Trời" (Phi. 4:6).

d) Xưng Tội Để Được Tha (Confessing for forgiveness)

"Tôi đã thú tội cùng Chúa, không giấu gian ác tôi; Tôi nói: Tôi sẽ xưng các sự vi phạm tôi cùng Đức Giê-hô-va; Còn Chúa tha tội ác của tôi" (Thi 32:5).

e) Chống Lại Sự Cám Dỗ (Standing against temptation)

"Hãy thức canh và cầu nguyện, kéo các người sa vào chước cám dỗ" (Mat. 26:41a).

2) Hình Thức Cầu Nguyện (Forms of Prayer)

a) Cầu Nguyện Chung (Praying together)

"Hết thầy những người đó bèn lòng đồng một ý mà cầu nguyện với các người đàn bà, và Ma-ri là mẹ Đức Chúa Jê-sus cùng anh em Ngài" (Công 1:14).

b) Cầu Nguyện Riêng (Praying individually)

"Song khi người cầu nguyện, hãy vào phòng riêng, đóng cửa lại, rồi cầu nguyện Cha người, ở nơi kín nhiệm đó; và Cha người, là Đấng thấy trong chỗ kín nhiệm, sẽ thưởng cho người" (Mat. 6:6).

3) Gương Cầu Nguyện Của Chúa Jê-sus (Examples of Praying from Jesus)

a) Mỗi buổi sáng (Every morning)

"Sáng hôm sau, trời còn mờ mờ, Ngài chờ dậy, bước ra, đi vào nơi vắng vẻ, và cầu nguyện tại đó" (Mác 1:35).

b) Lúc cần thiết (In times of need)

"Danh tiếng Ngài càng ngày càng vang ra, và một đoàn dân đông nhóm họp để nghe Ngài và để được chữa lành bệnh. Song Ngài lánh đi nơi đồng vắng mà cầu nguyện" (Lu-ca 5:15-16).

c) Trước quyết định (Before making decisions)

"Trong lúc đó, Đức Chúa Jêsus đi lên núi để cầu nguyện; và thức thâu đêm cầu nguyện Đức Chúa Trời. Đến sáng ngày, Ngài đòi môn đồ đến, chọn mười hai người gọi là sứ đồ"(Lu-ca 6:12-13).

III. Học Kinh Thánh (Studying Bible)

Nếu cầu nguyện là cầu hỏi ý Chúa, thì học Kinh Thánh chính là khám phá ý của Ngài. Trên một phương diện khác, nếu cầu nguyện là hơi thở cho đời sống tâm linh, thì học Kinh Thánh chính là thức ăn nuôi đời sống tâm linh lớn lên. (If praying is asking for God's will, then bible study is understanding God's will. In other words, if prayer is the breath for spiritual life, then bible study is food for spiritual growth).

1) Mục Đích Học Kinh Thánh (Reasons for bible study)

a) Giúp Sống Đúng Mục Đích (Helps live with the right purpose)

"Đức Chúa Jêsus đáp: Có lời chép rằng: Người ta sống chẳng phải chỉ nhờ bánh mà thôi, song nhờ mọi lời nói ra từ miệng Đức Chúa Trời" (Mat. 4:4).

"Vi muôn vật đã được dựng nên trong Ngài, bất luận trên trời, dưới đất, vật thấy được, vật không thấy được, hoặc ngôi vua, hoặc quyền cai trị, hoặc chấp chánh, hoặc cầm quyền, đều là bởi Ngài và vì Ngài mà được dựng nên cả"(Côl. 1:16).

b) Giúp Sống không lầm lạc (Helps live without being misled)

"Lời Chúa là ngọn đèn cho chân tôi, Ánh sáng cho đường lối tôi" (Thi 119:105).

"Vậy, kẻ nào nghe và làm theo lời ta phán đây, thì giống như một người khôn ngoan cất nhà mình trên vàng đá. Có mưa sa, nước chảy, gió lay, xô động nhà ấy; song không sập, vì đã cất trên đá. Kẻ nào nghe lời ta phán đây, mà không làm theo, khác nào như người dại cất nhà mình trên đất cát. Có mưa sa, nước chảy, gió lay, xô động nhà ấy, thì bị sập, hư hại rất nhiều" (Mat. 7:24-27).

c) Giúp Sống phục vụ Chúa (Helps live to serve God)

"Vậy, hỡi anh em yêu dấu của tôi, hãy vững vàng chớ rúng động, hãy làm công việc Chúa cách dư dật luôn, vì biết rằng công khó của anh em trong Chúa chẳng phải là vô ích đâu" (1 Côr. 15:58).

"Lại Ngài đã chết vì mọi người, hầu cho những kẻ còn sống không vì chính mình mà sống nữa, nhưng sống vì Đấng đã chết và sống lại cho mình" (2 Côr. 5:15).

2) Hình Thức Học Kinh Thánh (Forms of Bible Study)

a) Học Kinh Thánh Chung (Group Bible Study)

b) Học Kinh Thánh Riêng (Individual Bible Study)

IV. Quản Lý (Stewardship)

1) Định Nghĩa (Definition)

Quản lý là biết gìn giữ cũng như chịu trách nhiệm với những tài sản mà Đức Chúa Trời đã giao cho mỗi Cơ Đốc Nhân. (Stewardship is being careful with and being responsible for the resources with which God has entrusted in each Christian).

2) Thuộc Thể (Physical Body)

"Vâng, hỡi anh em, tôi lấy sự thương xót của Đức Chúa Trời khuyên anh em dâng thân thể mình làm của lễ sống và thánh, đẹp lòng Đức Chúa Trời, ấy là sự thờ phượng phải lẽ của anh em" (Rôm. 12:1).

3) Thuộc Linh (Spiritual Body)

"Anh em há chẳng biết rằng thân thể mình là đền thờ của Đức Thánh Linh đang ngự trong anh em, là Đấng mà anh em đã nhận bởi Đức Chúa Trời, và anh em chẳng phải thuộc về chính mình sao? Vì chung anh em đã được chuộc bằng giá cao rồi. Vậy, hãy lấy thân thể mình làm sáng danh Đức Chúa Trời" (1Côr. 6:19-20).

4) Thì Giờ (Time)

"Vâng, hãy giữ cho khéo về sự ăn ở của anh em, chớ xử mình như người đại dột, nhưng như người khôn ngoan. Hãy lợi dụng thì giờ, vì những ngày là xấu" (Êph. 5:15-16).

"Hãy lấy sự khôn ngoan ăn ở với những người ngoại, và lợi dụng thì giờ" (Côl. 4:5).

5) Tài Chánh (Finances)

"Bạc là của ta, vàng là của ta, Đức Giê-hô-va vạn quân phán vậy" (A-ghe 2:8).

6) Ta-lâng (Talent)

Ma-thi-ơ 25:14-30.

V. Hội Nhập Tín Hữu Mới (Assimilation of New Believers)

1) Mục Đích Hội Nhập Tín Hữu Mới (Reasons for assimilating new believers)

- a) Để Giữ Được Họ (To keep them)
- b) Đáp Ứng Nhu Cầu (To meet their needs)
- c) Hội Thánh Tăng Trưởng (To make the church growth)

2) Phương Cách Hội Nhập Tín Hữu Mới (Methods of assimilating new believers)

- a) Qua Mối Liên Hệ (Through Relationships)

"Assimilation begins right at the heart of our need for relationships. Many churches are inclusive in outreach, yet exclusive in fellowship. People can be reached, baptized, and brought into membership and not be incorporated into friendship structure of a church. Sự hội nhập là nhu cầu trung tâm hàng đầu cho mối liên hệ. Nhiều hội thánh rất quan tâm chứng đạo, nhưng lại bỏ qua việc thông công. Nhiều người có thể được chứng đạo, làm báp-tem, và trở thành thành viên nhưng không được hội nhập vào trong mối quan hệ thân thiết của hội thánh."¹

¹Gary McIntosh, and Glen Martin, *Finding Them, Keeping Them: Effective Strategies for Evangelism and Assimilation in the Local Church* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 75.

"Relationships create 'people connections' that strengthen a member's commitment to the local body of believers. Mỗi liên hệ tạo ra sự nối kết giữa mọi người để làm vững mạnh lòng cam kết của thành viên đối với Hội Thánh địa phương."²

b) Qua Sự Khích Lệ (Through Encouragement)

"Nhưng hằng ngày anh em hãy khuyến bảo lẫn nhau, đàng khi còn gọi là "Ngày nay," hầu cho trong anh em không ai bị tội lỗi dỗ dành mà cứng lòng" (Hêb. 3:13).

"Vậy thì anh em hãy khuyến bảo nhau, gây dựng cho nhau, như anh em vẫn thường làm" (1 Tê-s. 5:11).

c) Qua Các Nhóm Nhỏ (Through Small Groups)

Qua các nhóm nhỏ, mọi người có thể dễ dàng chia sẻ, học hỏi, cổ vũ, và phục vụ lẫn nhau (Through small groups, each person can easily share, learn, support, and service to each others.

d) Qua Việc Liên Kết Phục Vụ (Through Service Engagement)

Tạo cơ hội cho tín hữu mới cộng tác trong việc phục vụ sẽ giúp họ gắng bó với hội thánh tốt hơn.

"Có các việc làm khác nhau, nhưng chỉ có một Đức Chúa Trời, là Đấng làm mọi việc trong mọi người. Đức Thánh Linh tỏ ra trong mỗi một người, cho ai nấy đều được sự ích chung" (1 Cô-r. 12:6-7).

V. Thảo Luận Và Giải Đáp Thắc Mắc (Discussion, Questions & Answers)

²Charles E. Lawless, *Membership Matters: Insights from Effective Churches on New Member Classes and Assimilation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 49.

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE VIETNAMESE BAPTIST CHURCH OF JONESBORO, GEORGIA

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016
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Chapter 1 provides an introduction to this project by describing the purpose, goals, context of ministry, rationale, definitions, limitations, and research methodology.

Chapter 2 explores the biblical and theological foundation for leadership training. This chapter underscores that leadership training is extremely important through examples in mentoring in both Testaments, and through the teachings of Jesus and Paul.

Chapter 3 deals with the religious beliefs and cultural background of the Vietnamese people in leadership training. This chapter affirms that an understanding of the religious beliefs and cultural background of the Vietnamese people will effectively help in leading among the Vietnamese people.

Chapter 4 describes the implementation of the project that includes three major topics of training: (1) Leader and Teaching the Bible, (2) Leader and Sharing the Gospel, and (3) Leader and Discipleship. This section also provides brief explanations of each session's training objectives.

Chapter 5 describes the results of the project. This chapter includes evaluation of the project's purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. Theological and personal reflections upon the doctoral program's influence on this project are also included in this chapter.

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