

Your Top Leadership Needs

Part 2



Asia Leaders Learning Community

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Introduction

This book is intended as a leadership resource for Christian leaders who are at any point of their leadership journey – from those just starting out to seasoned leaders.

Our recommendation is that you not necessarily read this book from front to back as you might a traditional book. Instead, we encourage you to consider the 10 leadership topics that this book covers and pick one or more topics that currently interests you or that you would like some assistance with. Read the articles associated with that topic (or topics), pray into the suggestions they offer, and immediately apply what you can.

History of this Book:

In 2015, a leadership survey was sent to hundreds of current and emerging YWAM leaders across Asia, asking them to consider 49 leadership competencies and to choose which of them they most needed to personally improve in. 473 leaders responded to the survey in six different languages. At the end of 2016 the ALLC published our first book of articles focused on the top 10 greatest leadership needs from the survey. If you don't already have a copy of that book entitled "Your Top Leadership Challenges – 2016", go to www.allc.asia and download a free electronic copy.

Interestingly, the survey results actually showed a very high level of need and interest in at least 20 leadership areas.

Therefore, this book represents the next 10 of the greatest leadership needs from the survey. The percentage next to each item represents the percentage of people who indicated that item as a personal developmental need.

1. Strategic Thinking (33%)
2. Team Leadership (33%)
3. Developing Community (33%)
4. Leading with Courage (32%)
5. Delegation (32%)
6. Self-Development (32%)
7. Practicing Spiritual Disciplines (31%)
8. Having a Biblical Worldview (30%)
9. Being Spiritually Led (30%)
10. Defining Roles (30%)

Looking at the percentages above, chances are that you would like help in at least one of the areas above, too!

We pray that this book serves as a helpful resource for you over the years ahead. Be blessed!

- Jay Bransford (on behalf of the ALLC Core Team)

Strategic Thinking

Strategic Thinking Overview

Nike impacted the world in 1988 with its inspirational slogan “Just Do It!” Chances are that if you’ve never owned a piece of clothing with those words on it, you know several people who have owned one. Nike’s slogan is a powerful call to action. And it’s surely encouraged countless people to get off their couches and get moving. But is success in life really just a result of action or busyness? Of course not! Generally, taking action or being busy is not difficult to accomplish. However, there is great wisdom in thinking before you act. Wise leaders may in fact prefer a slogan contrary to Nike’s which says, “DON’T just do something, sit there and think!” That slogan represents the heart and soul of strategic thinking. How often do we sit back to think and pray, brainstorm with God and others, and plan out a logical course of action that will help guide us in the direction of our end goals? The following articles focus on how to be a Strategic Thinker.

Joseph's 14-Year Plan

by Phil Porter



I once read that most leaders don't take the time to plan 10-20 years in advance. But of the few who do, most of them assume that the state of the world then will be the same as it is today, without factoring in potential changes that will affect those plans. Dr. Patrick Dixon, author of "The Future of (Almost) Everything", reminds us to "Take hold of the future or the future will take hold of you. You may have the greatest strategy on the planet, but if the world changes unexpectedly, you just travel even faster in the wrong direction."

In my attempt to lead YWAM Thailand well, I began seeking God about priorities and what to focus on. This eventually led to a 3-part template that continues to guide my decision-

making. Those 3 elements include “**Signposts**”, “**Prophetic Words**” and “**Our Part**”.

SIGNPOSTS

Signposts are the things we can observe that represent our present reality and may point to an opportunity or something God is doing. They may include a political situation, economic developments, the state of the church, etc.

PROPHETIC WORDS

Prophetic words refer to those key prophetic words regarding our nation or city, or our mission, which have been repeated or highlighted, but are still waiting to be fulfilled.

OUR PART

And then there’s “**our part**”. Based on the signposts we are observing and the key prophetic words, what is OUR part in seeing God’s plans fulfilled? Landa Cope reminds us in her book, “The Old Testament Template”, “Jesus . . . did not think that everything was his responsibility. He knew what the Father had sent him to do, and he knew when he had completed it. We can learn much from this in our own lives and callings. What has God called us to do?”

By paying attention to these three factors, and reviewing them periodically, it can help us to stay focused on the priorities God has for us during this season of our leadership.

We can see an example of this in the story of Joseph in Egypt interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. (Genesis 41) The signposts were three-fold: Pharaoh, although the supreme ruler, was deeply troubled by his dreams and needed a wise advisor. Joseph, a prisoner, had proven his prophetic gift and his faith in the midst of trials. And a cupbearer, who knew Joseph from prison, had now gained the trust of Pharaoh. The prophetic words came in the form of Pharaoh's troubling dreams – 7 years of plenty plus 7 years of famine – but also in Joseph's dream years before of his brothers bowing down to him. Joseph's part in co-laboring with God then became to create a 14-year plan for the entire nation, using the authority and opportunity he had been given. This required storing grain, forming a national distribution system, and preparing well in advance for a situation that would look very different from what anyone could see presently.

Joseph could have used his new leadership influence to attempt many great things. But he recognized that his number one priority was to use his gifts and trust in God to develop and follow through a 14-year plan to save Egypt, and neighboring nations, from famine. Otherwise, the other things God wanted to do in Egypt, and for Israel, could not be accomplished.

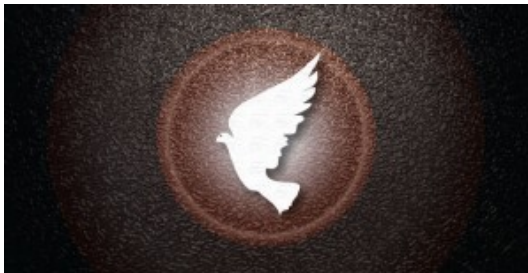
Take a moment to consider your nation, your city and your ministry:

1. What are the signposts?
2. What are the key prophetic words?
3. And what is your part in seeing God's plans fulfilled?

May you be surprised with new clarity and strengthened in faith to pursue the long-term strategies God has for you and those you lead.

Strategic Leadership: Planning and Spirit Styles

by Harry Ho



THE PLANNING STYLE

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it” (Luke 14:28). That bible passage suggests the following planning process:

1. Sit down.
2. Estimate the cost.
3. Check if the resources / assets are sufficient.
4. Build tower or don't built the tower.

That kind of leader engages in strategic planning based on considering the desired outcome, and the necessary tasks and resources required to achieve it. Typically this is not really a widespread YWAM leadership style.

THE SPIRIT-LED STYLE

YWAMers usually do their strategic planning and leadership based on the leading of the Holy Spirit, such as:

- Pray and receive the Word from the Lord.
- Consult and pray with their peers, team members and elders to seek confirmation through scriptures, a sense of peace and other biblical ways.
- Assess the financial risk and level of faith needed to start the project.
- Trust Jehova Jireh to provide finances, resources and staff for each phase of the project at the right time.
- Start to build the tower.
- Pray continuously, intercede for the project and seek the Word of the Lord for each phase of the project.

What if we were to bring together both the “Planning Style” and the “Spirit Led Style”? I guess both have strengths and weaknesses, both are based on scripture, and both do not exclude the other.

I think of all the different needs our YWAM staff have...

Some of them can only raise up to their full potential once their leaders provide them with frequent communication, clarity, vision, resources, strategies and goals. Others can only raise up to their full potential when given a chance to hear Gods voice and the freedom to implement what they hear, in relation to the project.

Both are needed, and both are taught in YWAM schools, in particular leadership training schools like the LTS and LDC. I want to encourage all YWAM leaders to practice and

implement both styles of strategic leadership, the “Planning Style” and the “Spirit-Led Style”.

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses in planning how to accomplish ministry goals?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses in being led by the Spirit in order to take action?
- What steps can you take today to become more balanced between the two?

Thinking Strategically about Outreach Teams

by Phil Porter



Some years ago, Jon Stevens, who helped us create what we now call the Outreach Teams Department (OTD) of our YWAM Thailand National Office, began asking how we could be more strategic with outreach teams. With the help of Paw Pan, a Thai staff, and Chris Lenty, an American, they formed a ministry team that would focus on facilitating the outreach teams nationwide. Today, YWAM Thailand regularly hosts more than 120 outreach teams per year. How were we able to create and sustain that momentum? And how does that impact the nation? Here are a few things we've discovered along the way.

VALUE TEAMS

Our OTD staff love outreach teams. Our goal is to facilitate a fruitful and smooth outreach from start to finish. Before leaving their home country, the team leader can find all the info needed on our website, including a list of more than 100 local churches and ministries who would like to host a team,



their vision, and a description of what an outreach would consist of. See:

<http://www.ywamthai.org/outreach/>

We ask all teams to come through our “front door” by contacting the OTD first, and then arrive at one of 3 locations where they can receive an orientation on language, culture, and YWAM Thailand. This gives each team member an opportunity to see the bigger picture, as well as where and how they might could serve if God calls them back to the nation after outreach. Transportation and a translator are provided, along with a mobile phone, if necessary, in order to follow up regularly.

VALUE THE LOCAL CHURCH

Although we don’t tell teams where to go, our goal is to help each team find the host that best matches their needs, and vice versa. So we solicit ministry descriptions from each local church, matching expectations from both parties. Paw Pan also follows up regularly by phone with local pastors to minimize cultural misunderstandings and unmet expectations.

NETWORKED COORDINATORS

By forming a network circle of outreach team coordinators, we can share information to collate contacts, experiences and targets together. This allowed us to reach the goal of having sent one outreach team to every omega zone in

Thailand. It also allows us to show inquiring teams a list of outreach opportunities based on need, ministry focus or geography. <http://www.ywamthai.org/outreach/locations/>

DATA

Information is powerful. By collecting data on each team, we now report annually to national church leaders how we are contributing to Thailand's National Plan of Evangelism, which local churches received a team, etc. This is both encouraging to national pastors, but has given us much favor with the national church as well. We also report to the government how foreign volunteers are serving the needs of the country. And the data shows us which YWAM bases around the world regularly target Thailand, which then has enabled us to form strategic partnerships with those bases that go much deeper than outreach teams – including sending long-term staff, joint training, collaboration online, etc.

TRAINING LOCALS

One of the most impacting, yet least visible results, of the OTD ministry has been the number of young Thais who have been trained in new skills by serving the outreach teams. By partnering with our local YWAM campus ministry, Thai students are employed part-time to serve as translators, drivers, receptionists, and hospitality staff at the center where teams are received. This gives them sought-after job skills and greater confidence, as well as fluency in English.

But most of them also develop a desire to do a DTS and eventually become full-time YWAM staff. Several of our key Thai leaders started out as one of these young students.

“GLOCAL” LEADERSHIP

One of the secrets to our success has been the combination of Thai and foreign leadership. Paw Pan speaks minimal English, but is able to relate best to the local pastors and his crew of part-time Thai students. His right-hand person, for most years, has been a foreigner who did speak some Thai, but related best to the foreign outreach teams. This combination provides optimum ability to communicate and facilitate.

SHARING WHAT WE’VE LEARNED

In the early years, there were various teams and YWAM bases who resisted the request to integrate with our system. They wanted to jump straight to their local contact, robbing the team members of the opportunity of seeing and participating in the bigger picture and long-term strategy of what God was doing in Thailand, and usually creating more headaches for themselves and calling us for help later. But as more teams experienced the hassle-free outreach we could provide, we began to get requests to train YWAM in other nations about how to facilitate outreach teams. We have since both facilitated training in Bangkok and gone to visit YWAM bases elsewhere to share what we’ve learned with more than 10 other nations.

SUMMARY

Short-term outreaches are an integral part of the YWAM culture. But they are often seen as an end in themselves, with little long-term strategic effect. I would suggest that, with some strategic planning and intentionality, the ministry of outreach teams can have a national impact on multiple levels, including pre-DTS discipling, job-training, the local church, national church leadership, and the government – all simultaneously! Don't underestimate the potential of these waves of young people, which can extend far beyond their few weeks on outreach.

If you would like to learn more and make a greater impact in your nation with outreach teams, feel free to contact us at outreach@ywamthailand.org.

Team Leadership

Team Leadership Overview

What's the difference between "leading a team" and having "team leadership"? Team Leadership means leadership responsibilities are distributed within a team. The Harvard Business Review¹ discusses research that shows how teams that share leadership rather than rely on the leadership of one individual can be very effective. They even go so far as to suggest that shared leadership is a model that is needed across all levels in the contemporary business world. The following articles consider questions like:

- What does it look like to have a team serving as the leaders of a ministry?
- What are the benefits of "team leadership" compared to having just one overall leader?
- What does the bible tell us about sharing leadership?

Enjoy exploring the immensely effective and empowering concept of team leadership and how it can help take you, your staff and your ministry to the next level of fruitfulness for the Kingdom.

¹ <https://hbr.org/2016/05/how-shared-leadership-changes-our-relationships-at-work>

Team Leadership in Action

by Jay Bransford



In order to explain the concept of “team leadership” better, I interviewed a good friend of mine who co-leads a YWAM ministry in Southeast Asia which operates based on a team leadership model. For security purposes, I’ll refer to her as Amy. Keeping in mind that there are numerous unique ways to express team leadership within a ministry, the following dialogue between Amy and me will hopefully give you some ideas about what it could look like on your team. Enjoy!

AMY, CAN YOU BRIEFLY TELL ME ABOUT YOUR MINISTRY?

Amy: The purpose of our ministry is to bring freedom, transformation, restoration, and Jesus to a highly at-risk community in our city. We have an amazing and diverse team of 18 people who all serve in various key ministry roles. We’re involved in a wide variety of activities ranging

from providing homework help, English teaching, and baking, to such things as counseling, career coaching, weekly prayer/intercession, and bible storying.

AWESOME! HOW DID THIS MINISTRY COME ABOUT?

Amy: Our ministry is totally a result of prayer. About 4 years ago a large group of people from our local mission organization gathered together to intercede on behalf of people who are tricked into being sold as slaves. As a result of that prayer time, a smaller group of people decided to meet regularly and continue to pray into that topic. A few months later two of us felt like God was calling us into action – to be His feet on the ground to help make a difference and help those in need. About eight others rallied around us and the ministry was birthed.

SO COOL. SO HOW DOES YOUR TEAM FUNCTION?

Amy: We knew from the start that we wanted to operate as a team, and we wanted everyone to have a strong voice about what kind of ministry we were involved with and how we would do things. We also knew that we wanted our team to eventually be made up of at least 50% nationals, and over time transition the ministry fully into the hands of nationals. So we have always been careful to make sure to involve our entire team in any and all ministry planning activities, as well as problem solving and decision

making. We also immediately established a leadership team, rather than relying on just one leader.

INTERESTING. SO TELL ME MORE ABOUT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO INVOLVE YOUR TEAM WITH PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING.

Amy: From the onset of this ministry, we got everyone together to pray about what God wanted us to be doing as a ministry team. Each person on the team had the opportunity to directly hear from God on behalf of the team, and each person was able to suggest their own ideas. It took time to process through all that God was telling us, but over the course of a few months our vision, mission, end goals, and strategies became clear. This is the same process that we continue to use as we plan and make decisions.

WHY DO YOU FEEL THE NEED TO INVOLVE ALL OF YOUR STAFF IN THE PLANNING AND ENVISIONING PROCESS?

Amy: First and foremost, we believe that we are all equal in the eyes of God, that God speaks to each of us, and that as a team we are stronger and more effective when we come together in unity toward our common purpose. Therefore, it only makes sense that each of us should have a part in defining the team's common purpose as well as the strategy to achieve it. In addition, we believe that teams are immeasurably more effective when every person on the

team is valued and given a voice to express their thoughts and opinions. We have found that when the ideas for ministry come from our staff (as opposed to from the 'leaders'), that those staff tend to be 120% committed to following through and doing all they can to achieve the goal. If you want hard working, committed staff, who are likely to stick with the ministry for the long run, you absolutely must involve them in planning and decision making.

IT SEEMS LIKE MAKING PLANS AND DECISIONS AS AN ENTIRE TEAM WOULD BE SLOW AND DIFFICULT. WHAT HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED?

Amy: That's a bit of a loaded question! Yes, making plans and decisions as a team takes more time than if you made the plans and decisions yourself. And yes, we don't always 100% agree on everything. However, rarely is our goal to make a fast decision. Nor do we ever want to find ourselves only considering just one person's perspective on an issue before making a final plan or decision. We feel strongly that BECAUSE we take the time necessary to get input from each of our staff about important team plans or decisions, regardless of how much slower this method is, that we make far better decisions than we would have otherwise. There is definitely wisdom in teams – but you have to tap into that wisdom by involving people in the process. Not to mention that when many people bring ideas and solutions, the end

solution is much better than just one person's ideas and ways. God made us all different, and together, we're more like Him.

ANY OTHER ADVICE FOR THOSE OF US WANTING TO SHIFT INTO THE IDEA OF TEAM LEADERSHIP?

Amy: Yes! Team leadership is hard. It takes more time and energy and patience than the traditional hierarchical model of leadership where the boss makes all the plans and decisions, and the staff do what they are told. Some days you will want to speed things up by putting your foot down and barking out orders. But resist that temptation. And then stand firm and keep resisting. It takes a LOT more time in the short-run but is worth it in the long-run. Two final words of wisdom...

“All of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.” – 1 Peter 3:8

“How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1

What Kind of Team?

by Stephe Mayers



A well known acronym for TEAM is “Together everyone achieves more”. Well not necessarily. It depends on a lot of factors. What kind of team is it, what style of leadership is being used, what kind of task is the team working on, what skills are being called for, etc. We are in a season where team is more than a value, it’s the in thing, it’s in vogue. You not only have a team, you have a team leadership, team building, team strategy, team profile and team you-name-it. The most important thing seems to be that you are called ‘team,’ whether it’s a functioning team or not.

How many teams are you on?

For me personally, my first priority team is with my wife – the marriage team. Depending on the context, she leads or I lead the team. We know one another’s strengths pretty well and so go with the flow and make room for one another. Here in Alhaurin de al torre, I have a local team for the retreat centre, then a regional team for western Europe, a

core team of 4 as an executive from the regional team, a field team with the other European regional leaders, a church leadership team in our local town, an LDC school team and on and on it goes. Perhaps someone will start a new competition for facebook – how many teams are you on?

THE MODEL TEAM

Where did all this team stuff start? Yes you guessed it, in the beginning was God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All three have one essence, holding the same values, the same qualities, the same skills and knowledge and the same vision and desire. Our God is one being, yet three personalities. Three in one – a mystery. A unity so close that it merges together. If you know me, said Jesus, you know the Father. The trinity is the ultimate model of team. They are totally committed to one another, ready to serve one another, and submit to each other. To see how this team functioned in the greatest recovery plan of all time, is just amazing.

Each of the trinity had their role – one wasn't more important than the other – but they understood there were functions to be fulfilled and they were ready to step up to see the plan succeed. Jesus volunteered to be the operational guy who came to earth, and as Philippians tells us, didn't grasp on to his position but humbled himself to the point of death. Holy Spirit, agreed to be the 'paraclete', the encourager, the one who came after Jesus to empower each believer, to reveal truth to each heart and convict of sin and

a bunch of other stuff. Father, kept them in his embrace and gave resources and help at any moment. He took the role of leader for this assignment of the redemption for man. There was a functional submission to one another.

Their roles weren't statements of value or importance but jobs that needed to be done – they are team. We pray to the father in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. And yet if we receive Jesus as our Lord, we also receive the Father. However then we ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit. So it seems there is a protocol here. We don't have to be worried about getting our words right as God does understand our hearts and interprets what we are asking. However they are responsible for different things. Holy Spirit gives glory to Jesus, and Jesus gives honour to the Father and the Father tells us to listen to Jesus, and Jesus tells us to wait for the Holy Spirit!! Are you following?

JESUS' TEAM

Jesus started a team as he began his earthly ministry. It wasn't a leadership team as they weren't leading anything yet. It was a discipling or training or internship team. Many were ready and wanting to be on the team but Jesus just chose twelve men, plus some key women who seemed to be with them quite often. (When crisis hits, you get to know the best members of your team, which included Mary, Mary Magdalene and John at the crucifixion). Jesus was the pioneer leader of the team and identified some potential

leaders for succession as he knew he wasn't going to be around too long. He seemed to spend more time with this 'core team of 3 – Peter, James and John' sometimes with the addition of Andrew. Peter was a real spokesperson and natural leader and perhaps is seen as the leading elder (perhaps the British parliament took this model having a 'prime minister' – the first among equals of all the members of parliament – the leader of the core team in the parliament, called the cabinet). James and John, the sons of thunder obviously had some strong gifts too.

THE APOSTLES' TEAM

When Jesus returns to the Father, we see a leadership team forming. They call themselves elders, and the issues of the emerging church are part of their job description. When a dispute occurs among the hellenistic Jews, the apostles delegate responsibility and authority to a new team of deacons – those involved in practical help (however they are obviously doing more than just practical work as we hear their members are involved in signs and wonders). It would appear that perhaps Stephen is the leading elder among them. Who do the Pharisees target when they want to put pressure on the church – you got it – Stephen. When there is interest in the gentiles, God gives Cornelius a dream to ask for Peter to come. When a question arises from Ephesus, Peter and John are sent away to sort it out. Obviously more are added to the 12 because when Antioch needs help in the emerging church there, they send the apostle Barnabas.

Barnabas forms a team of teachers, prophets and pastors and brings in Saul who becomes Paul. Where does Paul go when he has questions and wants to check out his ministry philosophy? Back to Peter and the elders. When the authorities want to challenge the local church in Jerusalem they arrest James. Hey wait a minute, why not Peter? Maybe he is away on business? No it seems that the local leading elder is James. He is also the presiding elder in the Acts 15 assembly when they discuss the move of God among the Gentiles and what guidelines they are to pass on. So there are lots of teams. They seem to be modelled on the trinity. They are not big on position, status, power but come together for agreement in major decisions. They multiply themselves out geographically and there is a functional submission to one another. Paul and Barnabas maintain a network of relationships in the early church development through building their team and through making missionary journeys to oversee, encourage, appoint leaders, and then send letters of wisdom to deal with disputes and help to foster a community of love and prayer together.

We all know where there is lasting fruitfulness in ministry, generally there is a good team functioning behind the scenes to support growth, keep relationships in unity and keep the task, the team and the individuals all flowing nicely together.

THE WORLD'S TEAMS

Let me throw in an observation as I watch how leaders and

leadership teams function around the world. We grow up in a family, a nation and a culture where there is a history of how leaders lead. We are socialised into an understanding of what leadership is. We interpret the word by watching the leaders around us. So we often take on board the national government style of leadership, which is passed on to the church. Look at the Church of England. The Arch Bishop of Canterbury has the equivalent of a parliament with the bishops and there is a line leadership structure down to vicars of churches in local towns.

YOUR NATION'S MODEL OF TEAM

Look at the nation you are living in and see how much the Christian leaders follow the model of the government. There are huge cultural issues for us to be aware of and we all obviously have blind spots. This is why it is so important for us to uphold the value of being international in our teams. This way we can come against the cultural biases (hopefully) or challenge one another at least. The big challenge for us is to create a biblical culture and develop biblical teams – teams like the trinity.

Somehow in our human nature there is a desire to take charge and be on top, and make the decisions with little process, consultation or consensus for the real important stuff.

Can I make a few suggestions?

1. Ted Engstrom shares that, “Often when people talk about team leadership its in reaction to a directive leader. Now we have a team leadership, often meaning that no one has any overall authority.” So let’s talk more about Shared Leadership, rather than Team leadership. Shared leadership gives more the understanding that a leadership role takes a lot of gifts that one person doesn’t have by themselves. So instead of having one person take the whole role of the leader, it is shared by a number of leaders with complementary gifts who are able to reduce the stress level and possible burnout of the one leader style. They still need a prime minister, leading elder, principal leader, facilitator, or whatever you want to call them but he or she doesn’t hold unilateral decision making power. Every team needs a leader or chairperson to guide, bring together, clarify process, help bring to conclusion, etc.
2. Having replaced the one leader with 2, 3 or more leaders, don’t stop there. The leadership team should involve more than just the one leader, that now is shared between a few leaders. A base leadership team that replaces their one leader with say 3, shouldn’t necessarily cut out the rest of the team and make the leadership a team 3! Broaden and expand it, don’t cut it down.
3. We have new eldership type teams growing. My definition would be; leaders who have come off the top of the chart or been in line leadership but now stepped

into more of an influence role in leadership. These leaders are either full time in YWAM or who still consider themselves YWAM with a YWAM heart and have maintained good relationships with YWAM over the years. I would encourage these elder or council teams to have a different identity from line leadership teams. They can overlap, be involved with, have input into but maintain a separateness. This allows younger leaders to emerge with more room on the team and a separation of the kind of decisions that leaders and elders will have involvement with.

In conclusion let's take a look at Moses. Moses seemed to have no problems or miscommunications going on but had different teams. He had 70 elders who he met with and prophesied with. There seemed to be a core team of Moses, Aaron, Hur with the addition of Miriam at different times. Then he had a line leadership over the tribes through Joshua, who was his captain of the army. So these teams can work together.

God's Idea of Shared Leadership

by Jay Bransford



A common traditional concept of a leader is one of a chief or captain who has big dreams and ideas, makes all of the plans and decisions, solves problems, and directs his people around accordingly. However, as we study God's word and some of the most influential people in the bible, we see a very different type of leadership that emerges. It is a shared leadership style. What does that mean and what can we learn about shared leadership from the bible?

MOSES SHIFTS TO SHARED LEADERSHIP

In Exodus 18 we read the story of Jethro, who was Moses' father-in-law, coming to visit Moses. At the time, Moses was serving as the one and only judge for all of Israel. For hundreds of thousands of Israelites, Moses was the only person who could seek God's will or settle disputes for people. It seems that Moses was taking a traditional view of leadership where the leader makes all decisions and is in

total control of everything. Jethro, however, immediately saw a problem with this approach. In verse 17 he said to Moses, “What you are doing is not good... you will wear yourself out... the work is too heavy for you. You cannot handle it alone.” Jethro then went on to give Moses advice. He told Moses to share the leadership workload by appointing capable men to serve as officials and judges over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.

1. **In what areas are you holding on to too much leadership responsibility, control or power?**
2. **Who on your team has the potential and character to step up into greater levels of leadership responsibility?**
3. **What leadership responsibilities are you willing to delegate to others?**

JESUS SHARES AUTHORITY

Hopefully, we are all already familiar with the fact the God himself functions as a shared leadership team that we refer to as the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each of those persons of God has its own unique purpose and roles. For now, let's focus in on Jesus. How did Jesus lead? Did he keep to himself all power and authority to accomplish the Father's purposes? Or did he share that authority with others? We clearly see in scripture that Jesus not only shared his power and authority, but he freely GAVE his power and authority to others. In Mark 3:13-15 we read a brief passage about Jesus appointing the twelve disciples:

“Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.”

Now read that again and take note of the verbs used in the passage. These verbs give us some insights about how to share leadership. Jesus **CALLED** people that he **WANTED** to serve in leadership with him. Those people **CAME** and responded to Jesus’ invitation, presumably by their own choice. Jesus didn’t force them into leadership positions, but gave them a choice. Jesus then **APPOINTED** the 12 as leaders (apostles). Jesus gave the apostles opportunities to **BE WITH** him, which certainly provided them with opportunities to learn from him. And Jesus **SENT** them out to preach and **HAVE AUTHORITY** to drive out demons.

- Who do you WANT to serve in leadership with you?
- Have you CALLED those leaders out?
- Have you given them a chance to COME to you in response to serve in leadership?
- How can you officially APPOINT people into leadership roles and responsibilities?
- How can you give people opportunities to BE with you and learn from you?
- In what ways can you SEND leaders out and GIVE them leadership AUTHORITY?

TEAM LEADERSHIP OF THE EARLY APOSTLES

The early apostles utilized the concept of Shared Leadership to quickly spread the Good News through Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and beyond. We see examples throughout the book of Acts of various apostles sharing leadership responsibilities to successfully grow the early church among both the Jews and the Gentiles. In Acts 8 the apostles sent Peter and John to the believers in Samaria, that they might all receive the Holy Spirit. Peter and John then returned to Jerusalem together, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages. In Acts 11: 22 we see that the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to encourage their hearts. As a result he saw a great number of people brought to the Lord. Barnabas later sought out Saul to bring him back to Antioch where they served together for a year teaching great numbers of new believers.

By chapter 12 of Acts we see that Barnabas and Paul took John Mark with them as a ‘trainee’ or ‘emerging leader’ whom they mentored. As Paul and Barnabas traveled through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch they appointed Elders in each church and committed them to the Lord (Acts 14:23). In Acts 15 we see that the church in Jerusalem formed a leadership “Council” made of up apostles and Elders who shared in making leadership decisions such as whether the Gentiles needed to be circumcised. We also see evidence that through these gatherings of apostles/elders/leaders, that they were able to encourage,

challenge, and inspire one another on to greater things, as well as make group decisions. In these examples we see elements of what Shared Leadership can look like on the mission field, such as:

- Forming leadership teams (2 or more leaders travelling/working together)
- Mentoring the next generation of leaders by giving them opportunities to learn, serve alongside and lead
- Appointing other leaders to take on leadership roles
- Holding group discussions to make decisions together as leaders

SHARED LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE:

- 1. To what degree is your ministry functioning with Shared Leadership principles?**
- 2. Who can you share more leadership responsibilities with?**
- 3. What are 3 things you could start doing this week to shift more into a Shared Leadership style of leading your ministry?**

Developing Community

Developing Community Overview

How is your community life? In YWAM, we often talk about ourselves as a tribe or a community of people who live life together toward a common purpose of 'Knowing God and Making Him Known'. Developing community requires a leader who can attract and motivate people to desire to serve together as a community, strengthen one another, take collective action, and generate solutions to common problems. Developing a sense of community requires a leader to create a feeling of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to one another. The following articles explore the concept of Christian community and how we, as leaders, can create healthy and effective communities of world changers.

How is Your Community Living?

by Stephe Mayers



Have you ever thought about time travel? Ever since the film, “Back to the future,” I have dreamed of going back in time and being a fly on the wall. If I had the chance I would love to be in the boat when Peter walked on the water, or in the crowd when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. But perhaps most of all I’d like to travel back to the community of Acts 2.

“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple

each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved."

What an amazing time of history – the start of the early church, when things were multiplying at an incredible rate and community life was rich, deep and very meaningful.

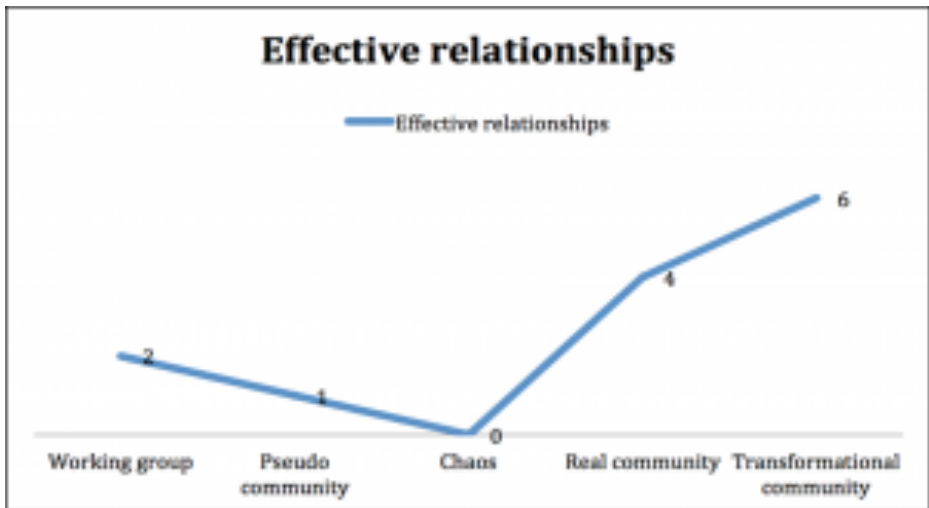
Ever experienced community like that? The challenge came to the early church when Ananias and Sapphira decided they wanted to look good in the community and gave money to the apostles to use but lied about the amount they had given. No longer were there pure motives of sacrifice, generosity and love for one another. Something ugly had emerged and it had the potential of polluting this fresh expression of community.

Of course there are so many different types of community, but in this letter, I am thinking more about the quality of relationships, rather than the community setting itself. Let's take a look at some aspects of community life:

What we often call community is actually a working group.

This is where a bunch of individuals come together on the basis of a task to be performed. There are no expectations of closeness of relationships (from the leaders anyway). People

join to fulfill the vision that has been shared and the whole purpose is to see the goal accomplished. Communication is generally about the task that you are involved with and there can be very good working relationships established. It's only when you have left the group, that you realise the relationships you had experienced were "working relationships", because you have no further communication happening. Conflicts between people do happen in this setting, but the focus is on task and so individuals generally live with them or if they feel too hurt, they leave.



What does a real community look and feel like? A real community is: a safe place, with a positive atmosphere, where the presence of God dwells, with an opportunity for depth of relationship, where you can make mistakes, share your opinions freely, be totally honest with each other, relax,

have fun, forgive, support, encourage and affirm one another, have conflicts but work them through in a healthy process, receive vision and have ownership of it as a group... and on and on the list could go.

Paul encouraged the believers in Ephesus to live in community in such a way to:

“Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.” Ephesians 4:2-3

When friction occurs in community, there are two theories. The first theory believes that, “time heals and so you do nothing.” The second theory believes that any outstanding issue needs to be followed through until reconciliation takes place.

Ephesians 4:26 commands us to: *“not let the sun go down on your wrath.”* Galatians 6:1 encourages *“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.”* Matthew 5:23 instructs us that *“If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right.”*

So although it seems very clear what we are to do, we often fall into the “do nothing” approach.

Pseudo community! Scott Peck shone a spotlight on the difference between participating in genuine community and experiencing what he called “pseudo community”. He said, “If community involves serving, being, celebrating, forgiving, then most relationships are constantly devolving into pseudo community.” In Pseudo community we tolerate too much. We make excuses why we don’t follow the biblical commands. We find ourselves not quite telling the truth, not quite trusting, not so thoughtful towards each other that we know we could be. We do figure of eights around delicate issues, we accommodate each other, we make sure we don’t upset the applecart or make waves and settle for calm and harmony. Survey’s have shown that up to 1 in 3 feel they are settling for pseudo community!

The real issue here is that we are calling something community but not functioning with relationships as a high goal and therefore living something else. People have joined the community with certain expectations of closeness, and living out the one another’s of scripture and when they don’t happen, there is a growing dissatisfaction and frustration that things aren’t going as they could do.

What is needed is a dose of humility and vulnerability and a reality call that says, “This is where we are at. This is where we want to go. Let’s move towards it.” In this way we are able to live in integrity, knowing we are not perfect, have not arrived, but are moving towards a vision of unity and community.

The tunnel of chaos. Between pseudo and genuine community lies a tunnel of chaos. Someone has blown the whistle and said, ‘as far as I can tell, we’re not experiencing real community’. Things have now got messy, awkward, sometimes scary and difficult to deal with. Now that the truth is out, we have to do something about it. Having aired the situation, at first it feels worse. The truth is sometimes hard to handle.

Salvador Dali has a painting called “Civil war”, where a body is fighting itself. It is very ugly and even grotesque. It hardly looks like a body at all. The various parts of the body aren’t responding to one another and functioning together but in conflict together. It’s possible for our relationships, in a similar way, to get pulled out of shape and to become dysfunctional. The way through this messy time is to come back to the vision of genuine community and recognise how far the community has drifted away from the biblical picture of unity.

Time is required, but all it needs is for someone take the risk of confessing their failings, their short comings and their sorrow over what has taken place. Others often will then follow. Things begin to be put right in relationships. Repentance starts to flow, apologies are given and there is a movement towards forgiving and affirming one another. The road to genuine community has begun.

I am reminded of the first community my wife and I began soon after we were married. I spoke about it some months back in a previous letter on pioneering. We had an incredible mix of people, many of us dysfunctional and working all kinds of issues through. However, there were real relationships emerging and God was touching our lives. Amidst all the difficulties we had to face, we had the joy of having a taste of real community.

Transforming community. The real goal is to become a people who together have an influence. As Jesus said in John 13, “This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other.” This kind of community sees each member growing in relationship and finding room for their gifts to function effectively. The community has an impact. Synergy is taking place. People are enjoying life. They have conflicts but walk them through. They live in reality and bring an encouragement and accountability for everyone to continue to develop.

So back to our starting verses in Acts 2 – “they enjoyed the goodwill of all the people. Each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”

So how is your community? Where are you on the graph?
Pray and ask the Lord what you are to do, to see a move
towards being more of a transforming community.

Building Y Community in a City

by Simeon



The Greatest Commandment calls us into deep and loving relationship with God and others. As God's people, loving God and loving others is 'be'-ing a community. Thus, community is a relational outcome of living out this Love Commandment.

Community however does not happen naturally. In cities where there are multiple Y teams and ministries, they face challenges of becoming a community. Why is that so? Here are some of my thoughts on what may be necessary for building a Y community in a city. And when one or more of these are missing or lacking, the sense of community may also suffer.

Obviously, **the key players** in a city are the:

1. City Convener and
2. Leaders of teams, bases, and ministries

A couple of key ingredients include:

- Commitment to relationship
- Willingness to allocating time, and finances to gather with the rest of the Y family

In our present Y designation, a **convener** is one who gathers... whose priority is in the building of a Y community. A convener in a given city needs to be passionate about the value of community. He/she sees great value and necessity for the Y family in coming together – on regular basis, for times of communication, celebrating friendship, prayer and worship, and corporate hearing from God.

Team, base and ministry leaders are usually focused in what they are doing. And rightly so. It would be great if all these leaders are similarly passionate and committed to the wider Y family in their city. Community would likely happened quickly and powerfully.

However, this is not always the case. There may be leaders who feel that activities outside of their focus are distractions, inconveniences and even burden.

To build commitment to relationship, a wise convener necessarily looks beyond his/her own immediate team to serve the broader Y family in the city. He/she takes

initiative and invest in visiting and building relationship with other leaders. He/she uses patience as he/she knows that it may take a longer time to win some leaders over. But over time, through humility and persistence, a convener builds trust and strong friendship with fellow leaders in the city.

The cost of time and finances. All of us know that relationship takes time to build. It will also cost us financially. It is the willingness to pay the price that will eventually build strong relationship among leaders and produce a strong connected and related community.

The Psalmist declared that when God's people dwell in unity, He commands his blessings! May our Y family in every city become great communities all across Asia living out the Greatest Commandment of Love!

Are you Leading a Tribe?

by Stephe Mayers



A few years ago, according to Seth Godin, we began to enter a new era that is all about “Tribes” – he wrote a book by the same name. I would like to share with you some of his thoughts, mixed with a few of my own. A tribe is defined as a group of people that have something in common that they are passionate about. Godin tells us that a tribe needs only two things – a shared interest and a way to communicate. Well maybe three – it takes leadership as well. You can’t be a tribe without a leader and you can’t be a leader without a tribe. Human beings can’t help it, we need tribes to belong to. As it turns out, we want to belong not just to one tribe, but to many.

Tribes used to be geographical but the internet has eliminated geography. There are now far more tribes – small tribes, influential tribes, horizontal and vertical tribes, tribes

you work with, tribes you travel with, tribes you buy with, tribes in fact for everything. However, some tribes are stuck. These are the ones that embrace the status quo and drown out any tribe member who dares to question authority and the accepted order. Big charities, tiny clubs, struggling organisations – they’re tribes and they’re stuck. We aren’t going to talk about these kind of tribes though!

In YWAM, we actually have a ministry called “the tribe” – it’s run by Matt Whitlock, and is a network for YWAM alumni and friends to gather together to be missional communities all over the world and work out the Great Commission in their spheres of society. With our new terminology in YWAM, we are referring to networks as circles but perhaps this term “tribe” is a little more descriptive. Last September I was at a YWAM family gathering in Townsville, Australia and as I was talking with a couple of other YWAM leaders, we realised that we needed to bring a group of leaders together to talk about the refugee crisis. I chatted with perhaps 6 or 7 people and organized a time to get together. 40 turned up! As a result, a refugee circle or tribe formed and created a Facebook group to continue communicating. These type of tribes can form so easily around all kinds of themes and have the opportunity of mobilizing, encouraging and developing ministry in a wonderful way.

TRIBES ARE ABOUT FAITH – ABOUT BELIEF IN AN IDEA AND IN A COMMUNITY.

They are grounded in respect and admiration for the vision and leadership and the tribe members themselves. We could have so many more tribes but there is a vast shortage of leaders – people who are ready to put their neck out, do something, initiate, take responsibility and push their passion and vision.

Great leaders create tribes by empowering them to hear from God for themselves and to communicate from the grassroots. They establish the foundation for people to make connections, as opposed to commanding people to follow them. This is how skype spread around the world. Co-founder Niklas Zennstrom understood that overthrowing the tyranny of the phone companies was too big a project for a small company. But if he could empower the tribe to do it themselves, to connect to one another and to spread the word, he would be able to incite a movement.

Malcolm Gladwell wrote about the fall of the Berlin wall and it involved much the same dynamic. The collapse of east Germany wasn't the work of one hardworking activist. Instead, it was the gradual but inexorable growth of the tribe, a loosely coordinated movement of activists that gained in force until it couldn't be stopped.

I started a tribe with a few friends over twenty years ago

now. Barry Austin had been my DTS leader and we worked in the same leadership team for years. So as we talked we recognised similar values and got our heads together to create the leadership development course (being inspired by Floyd McClung too). The first course had twelve students and we were encouraged. We continued to run a course each year and the numbers of students and courses began to grow. Our values were clarified and although there was pressure to conform to the international 3-monthly-way to run schools, we resisted and kept to our 6 weeks or 40 day model. We also stood firm in creating a model of the staff of each school carrying the teaching and training. This meant, staff leaders were modelling what they were speaking about – do and then teach! Now all these years later, there is a tribe of LDCers around the world. Schools don't need brochures because the tribe invite their friends. Tribes like this are fun to be a part of.

So leaders can help increase the effectiveness of the tribe and its members by:

1. Transforming the shared interest into a passionate goal and desire for change
2. Providing an environment to allow members to communicate and form community
3. Investing in the tribe to encourage it to grow and gain new members

Most leaders focus on the third tactic, to grow a bigger tribe

which in their mind equals better. But the first two tactics almost always lead to more impact.

The American automobile association has millions of members, but it arguably has far less impact on the world than do the two thousand people who go the TED conference each year. One is about big and the other is about change.

THE BEST ENVIRONMENT FOR A TRIBE TO GROW...

is where this shared interest or passionate goal is tangible and can be experienced. We have a fairly small staff working at our retreat centre but our goal is to provide an environment for European YWAMers and beyond to experience encounters with God where transformation will take place. We like to go the extra mile and create a sensorial experience for people with great food, a peaceful environment, structured creative input and interactive space where people can receive the help they need. What we have found is, that people keep looking for excuses to come back the second and third and maybe more times. We seek to treat people as valuable and special and it goes a long way to involving them in the tribe. We try to do away with anything that will begin to feel like an institution. That takes some work but it pays off!

Leaders of tribes focus on the tribe and only the tribe. They're generous. They exist to help the tribe find something,

to enable the tribe to thrive. That takes bravery and standing up for something and speaking up. Its easy to hesitate when confronted with the feeling that maybe you're getting too much attention. Great leaders are able to reflect the light onto their teams, their tribes. Great leaders don't want the attention, but they use it. They use it to unite the tribe and to reinforce its sense of purpose.

DO YOU WANT TO ESTABLISH A TRIBE?

Then you will need to answer these four questions:

1. What is the story you want to tell about who you are as a tribe?
2. What is the future you're envisaging and want to build?
3. What connections do you want to make and how will the tribe communicate?
4. What are you going to do? – the fewer limits the better.

The YWAM DTS is a tribe. You can go anywhere in the world and start talking to someone and as soon as you become aware that you have both experienced a DTS, there is a stronger connection and you are suddenly on the same page. You have a common interest. You have had similar experiences. You are part of a common tribe. Where sometimes a tribe like this falls short is that the second question above isn't answered satisfactorily. We may have a goal for the actual school or event but are we thinking beyond the school to where these students can give their time and energy. DTS is a means to an end. So for the tribe

to have greater effectiveness, every member needs to recognise what the end goal is! What is the aim of a DTS? – To impact every sphere of society, to establish missionaries to reach every omega zone, to be ruined for anything less than a radical life of faith? The goal needs to be shared on a regular basis to keep it in the minds of all those involved.

So if tribes reward innovation... and if initiators are happier...then why doesn't everyone do it? Good question. Leadership is scarce because of fear. All kinds of fears – fear of failure, fear of criticism, fear of blame, fear of what others think, ...fears that paralyse. Leadership is also scarce because few people are willing to go through the discomfort required to lead. It is uncomfortable to step out into the unknown. It is uncomfortable to propose an idea that might fail. It is uncomfortable to challenge the status quo. It is uncomfortable to resist the urge to settle. If you're not uncomfortable in your work as a leader, it's almost certain you're not reaching your potential as a leader.

Through your actions as a leader, you attract a tribe that wants to follow you. That tribe has a worldview that matches the message you're sending. For example the LDC tribe has common values and an understanding of shared leadership and team that is inclusive, servant leadership and spending time with individuals to invest in them to see potential released, sensorial leadership and an approach to training that uses symbols and story and hands on activities

that help the movement of information from head to heart, and so on through its seven values.

LEADERSHIP OF TRIBES REQUIRES BRAVERY

Maintaining the status quo doesn't. Changing things, encouraging growth and creating a future that doesn't exist yet requires courage. Ordinary thinking and ordinary effort are almost never enough to generate the leadership required for the establishment of a dynamic tribe.

Zig Ziglar says, "Reacting is what your body does when you take the wrong kind of medicine. Reacting is what politicians do all the time. Reacting is intuitive and instinctive and usually dangerous. Responding is a much better alternative. You respond to external stimuli with thoughtful action. Organisations respond to competitive threats. Individuals respond to colleagues or to opportunities. Response is always better than reaction."

But both pale in comparison to initiative. Initiating is really and truly difficult and that's what leaders do. They see something others are ignoring and they jump on it. They cause the events that others have to react to. They make change. The secret of tribal leadership is simple – do what you believe in. Paint a picture of the future. Go there and people will follow.

Albert Einstein said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” Leaders create things that didn’t exist before. Leadership comes when your hope and your optimism are matched with a concrete vision of the future and a way to get there. People won’t follow you if they don’t believe you can get to where you say you’re going. But leaders are able to stick with the dream for long enough to see it really happen.

So to sum it up:

- Leaders have an extraordinary curiosity about the world they want to influence and change.
- Leaders receive vision from God that give courage to challenge the status quo
- Leaders communicate their vision and commitment
- Leaders create a culture around their goal and involve others in that culture

Leaders connect their followers to one another and create a tribe.

Leading with Courage

Leading with Courage Overview

Let's start with an honesty challenge. The question is, "What are you afraid of?" Think about your current life situation – a strained relationship, a difficult challenge or decision you're facing, a roadblock in life, or perhaps a dream, passion or calling that you just keep pushing aside. Stop.... Think.... And pick one fear that is holding you back.

John Piper defines Christian courage as "the willingness to say and do the right thing regardless of the earthly cost, because God promises to help you and save you on account of Christ." The following articles strive to help you in developing the courage needed to overcome any fears you may have that are holding you back from all that God has for you. So be strong and courageous, and read on!

Be Strong and Courageous

by Phil Porter



When I was appointed the national leader of YWAM Thailand, a scripture verse was given to me from Joshua 1:6 which became my guiding word from that day forward. “Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.”

At the time, I didn’t fully understand, but only had a glimpse of what God seemed to be describing. On one hand, it pointed to a beautiful vision of the future for all of the YWAM Thailand family. But I knew it was also a significant word for me, personally, in my new leadership role. Why? Because He knows me. He knows all my insecurities, my fears, my worries about not performing well enough or meeting others’ expectations.

Taking on a leadership role at a national level was a daunting

task. Although I had vision and hopes and dreams for YWAM Thailand, and felt certain that God and others had confirmed that I was in the right role at the right time, there was still so much I didn't know how to do. There were so many expectations I didn't know how to fulfill. There were decisions to make which significantly affected others' lives. What if my decisions were a disappointment to others? What if I missed an opportunity? What if I couldn't handle the pressure?

My only option was to seek the Lord and His help to “be strong and courageous”. At one point, I stumbled on an internet article that claimed there were 365 “do not fear” verses in the Bible – one for every day of the year. That was inspiring! So I determined to read every single verse, one per day, that reminded me to be strong and courageous, and to not be afraid. It turns out that there probably are not 365 verses (at least I didn't find that many). But there are a LOT – probably at least 150, depending on how you count them. This is such a strong reminder of a key message God is constantly communicating to us. “Do not fear. I am with you.”

This process of daily reading the next “do not fear” verse, and writing it in my journal, renewed my courage each day. It reminded me of the presence of the Lord, that He was the One who had called me, and that He was WITH me. I even combined Joshua 1:6 and Mark 6:50 to write a scripture song to take this message deeper into my own heart.

Did God repeat this message of “do not fear” in scripture so often because He expects us to reach a state of not being afraid of anything? Or did He repeat it because He understands our human frailty, and knows we just need to be reminded over and over to bring our fears to Him? My experience has been the latter. Paul said, “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

**SO BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS . . . IN THE MIDST OF
YOUR FEARS AND WEAKNESS. THAT IS LEADING WITH
COURAGE!**

7 Ways to Overcome Doubt as a Christian

by K. Jelfa



At some point we all experience doubt in our life. Even those of us that grew up their entire lives in a Christian environment, like myself.

Some of the questions that come to us in times of doubt: “Is God real or is God in my imagination?” or, “Why doesn’t God answer my prayers?”

Even with a bible in our hands, there is no roadmap for having these questions answered in our heart. But it might be the right time for God to strengthen our foundations, even in seasons of doubt.

So, take a deep breath and stop for a moment.

1. REMEMBER WHO GOD IS

Realign yourself to God's nature and character. He is holy, loving, tender and kind. Remember He is our ultimate Father who wants to pour out His love on His sons and daughters. His plans are always best and He will never harm us. He is the King of Kings. He is our provider. His intention is to always bring something good for us out of hardship.

Romans 8:28 says: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

2. REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE IN HIM

God created us in His love. Genesis 1:27 says "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." From the beginning God created this world because of His love so we can rule and nurture the world. God sent Jesus to set us free from our sin, so we won't perish.

God DESIRES to reconcile us to Himself. He wants to save us from destruction. We belong to Him. How much more He wants to pour out His love on each one of us.

The devil is the father of lies. He wants to steal, kill and to destroy. When we understand this, we can stand up and reject all his lies.

3. RECOUNT THE GOODNESS OF GOD

In other words, give thanks for the good things that God has given in your life. Instead of taking things for granted we should rather give thanks.

Give thanks even only for small things like the air you breathe or the house you live in. Give thanks for your family and your friends. What He has already done is the proof of how much He loves us.

4. DO THINGS THAT EASILY GET YOU CONNECTED TO HIM

Use your talents, abilities, and skills to connect with God. If you like to draw, then draw with God, let the drawing be a conversation. If you like to run and exercise, do it with God. Talk to him as you move.

5. LOOK BACK ON YOUR JOURNAL

Look over things that you've written such as your journal and words and promises He has spoken to you. There might be things that you have forgotten.

Reading over these words again will remind you of what God has already spoken to you so you can hold on to it.

6. SHARE TO OTHERS YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE WITH

Remember that God uses people around you to comfort you and to show you who He is. Share your struggles with others

you trust and don't hold back.

Sharing with others will bring things to the light. And God can bring revelation to you through the conversation.

7. STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

Last but not least, study scripture. We all know that reading our Bible is a good habit. But by studying it you can go deeper. Look at its context. Look up the original Hebrew and Greek meaning of words. This way, a whole new dimension to the Word of God will open up to you helping you to be grounded in your faith even more.

We worship the invisible God yet He is real. He is an infinite God immeasurable by human knowledge or wisdom. In the presence of God we find an everlasting peace and life that sustains us.

One Psalmist says "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I go to flee from your presence?" (Psalm 139:7).

As much as our hearts tend to wander, there is a voice inside, the Holy Spirit. He is our guide and leads us on the right path.

Our responsibility is to choose to listen. What will your choice be?

Building Courage

By Jay Bransford



If you're like me, you've had a few fears in life and lacked the courage to face them. Life is uncertain. Life can be scary. And life requires a level of courage both to survive and to thrive.

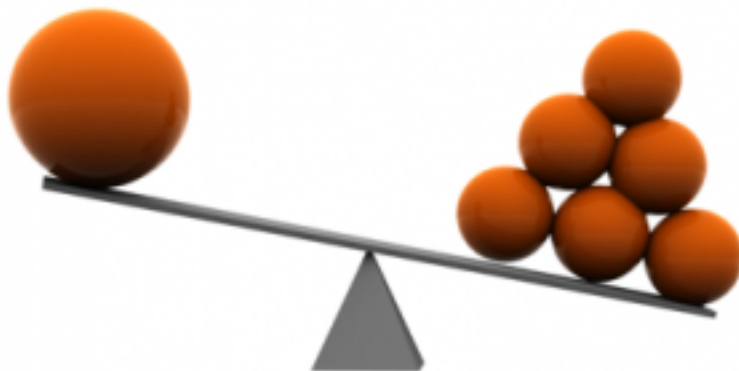
SO WHERE DOES COURAGE COME FROM? AND HOW CAN YOU GET MORE OF IT?

If only the answer could be found in drinking a can of Red Bull, a triple latte, pure caffeine powder (yes it exists!!), or simply by taking a box of special courage pills. Alas, there are no simple dietary supplements that build up our courage muscles or strengthen the altruistic courage centers of our brain.

Courage requires action. That action can be demonstrated through the words you speak, the prayers you pray, and the things you do. But in order for you to have the courage to

take action, that courage must first exist within you. And your current level of courage to take action must be higher than your level of fear not to.

I think of courage and fear as being at the two opposite ends of a seesaw (see image below).



Whichever side has more weight or influence will decide what action (or inaction) you take.

SO WHERE DO FEAR AND COURAGE COME FROM?

Let's start with a non-exhaustive list of where courage comes from:

1. Your pride
2. People cheering you on and encouraging you
3. Strong emotional feelings of love, care, or concern

4. A strong sense of calling or purpose
5. Trust in God's character and leading

From which of the five items above would you want your courage to come and which would you want to avoid? Hopefully you quickly identified pride as an unhealthy source of courage. But what about courage coming from people who encourage you and cheer you on? Well, as long as their encouragement is coming from a place of truth, then their encouragement is a wonderful thing. Is it OK for courage to come from strong emotional feelings of love, care and concern? Perhaps it's better to answer that question with another question. Where does love, care and concern for others come from? Do those feelings come from God or from the enemy? If as Christians we believe that God is love, then love should be an exceptional source of courage. And what about our sense of calling or purpose giving us courage? Did your calling and purpose come from God? Then have courage! And lastly, should we have courage based on God's character and leading? What has God asked you to do? Do you trust Him? How much? Do you trust Him more than the encouragement you've received, or the thoughts, feelings or experiences you've had? If so, what more reason to have courage do you need?

Some of you might be thinking, "What do I do with the fear I feel? Is all fear wrong?" Good questions! God created

humans with the ability to feel fear. And He created us perfectly. He made no mistakes. Proverbs 9:10 says that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.” So we know that it is good to fear the Lord – a fear that is based on our awe and respect for Him. In addition, it is good when our fears act as cautionary emotions guiding us toward wisdom. For example, it is generally wise to be weary of walking down dark alleys alone at night, getting in a car with a complete stranger, or lighting a firework in your hand and not letting go of it. However, there are other types of fears to avoid or resist. Examples of fears that do not lead to wisdom include the fear of man, the fear of not measuring up, and simply the fear of the unknown.

SO HOW DO WE TAKE COURAGEOUS ACTION IN LIFE AS WE EXPERIENCE THE FEARS AND COURAGE REPRESENTED ON OUR OWN RESPECTIVE SEESAWS IN LIFE?

Take all of your thoughts captive:

- What are your fears?
- Which of your fears are based on God’s wisdom?
- Which of your fears are not?

What is God speaking to you through:

- The input and encouragement of other Godly people
- Your emotional feelings of love, care and concern for others – and for what seems ‘right’
- Your calling and purpose

- His Word or the Holy Spirit

At the end of the day, God's voice should reign supreme in our lives. There is no one greater than our God. And thus there is no one for us to fear more or have greater courage in than Him. He is our hope and in Him we can always trust.

And remember that **“Perfect love casts out all fear.” (1 John 4:18)**. As you seek God and trust in His character and leading, He will drive out any worldly fears you may have, and He will give you the courage you need to move forward.

Delegation

Delegation Overview

Delegation is the ability to appropriately assign responsibility and authority to another person to carry out specific activities. Do you hoard tasks, keeping the good ones to yourself? Do you throw tasks at people without any overall plan or follow-up? Do you micromanage because you don't trust people will perform? Unless you can do the work of the team all by yourself, both performance and morale will suffer until you learn to delegate. The following articles discuss how and when to delegate and key aspects to consider when delegating.

Effective Delegation

by Jim Randall



DELEGATION is the empowering or giving someone the authority to act on your behalf. It is very important that the person you empower knows exactly what you want to accomplish because they are speaking and acting in your place.

Too many leaders are ineffective in achieving their goals because they are attempting to do everything themselves because they don't know how to effectively delegate their work to others. Effective delegation is one of the first lessons that a visionary leader must master in order to maintain growth that will accomplish his goals. "If you are not delegating, you are cheating and stealing from God and God's people by not allowing them to develop in God's plan."

FOUR LEVELS OF DELEGATION

Remember, a leader must always be training new people to achieve higher levels of performance. One way to do that is by giving them something to do that will stretch them.

The first level of delegation is give a job to someone that needs you to stand close by to guide them in the way you want it done. You do not do the work yourself but you work with them and guide them to do it. **Your primary role as a leader is to help others to succeed.** If they succeed, then you succeed.

The second level of delegation is to check on your team member occasionally to make sure they are succeeding or to give additional help as needed.

The third level is to check on people in the middle of the job and when they should be near the end of the job. Remember your job is to help them to succeed. By checking in the middle, they know that you are there to help but not telling them what to do. Checking near the end will provide you an opportunity to give them additional help if needed to finish well and on time.

The fourth level of delegation is to give them a job to do and tell them to report to you when they have finished. They have enough experience and expertise to do it without any further input or help from you. That is the level you are

trying to attain for all your staff.

5 STEPS TO EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

The following five simple steps will help you to become more effective in delegating to those God has sent to help you accomplish His work. You must tell them in detail the project you want them to complete and get the following from them:

1. **Understand** – Ask questions, don't tell them how to do it but make sure they clearly understand what you want done. You are giving it to them because they already know how to do it.
2. **Confirm** – they should be taking notes, if not, they are wasting your time. Ask questions.
 - “Relate back to me in detail what I have directed you to do.”
 - “What are you least clear about?”
3. **Commit** – Ask questions that will eliminate excuses.
 - “What are you least comfortable with?”
 - “Can you do this like we discussed?”
 - “What will you need to get this job done?”
 - “Can you foresee any problems?”
 - “What are you concerned about?”
 - Try to discourage them to make sure they really want to do the job. Give them an opportunity to say, “No” now, not later.
 - When they have committed to do the job, tell them the following:

“If anything should occur that would prevent you from completing this job the way I delegated it, the way you agreed to do it, in the time you agreed to do it, it is your responsibility to let me know IMMEDIATELY what you plan to do so that the job can be completed the way we planned.” Don’t let them make excuses. It is still their responsibility.

If they come to you with a problem, ask them what they plan to do about it. Let them come up with ideas. Teach them to think. Either confirm their idea or guide them to find answers by asking questions. Don’t tell them what to do. They need to learn to think things through and come up with solutions. You should guide them and teach them how to think through problems to find solutions for themselves, otherwise your people will be bombarding you with trivial problems they should be solving for themselves.

4. Evaluate Pre-Implementation – Before the project is launched.

- Meet again at the half way point and at the 90% point so you have time to fix any problems.
- Inexperienced people will need more evaluation.

Evaluate Post-Implementation – After the project is finished. Don’t ignore this very important step.

- Ask, “Did we accomplish what we intended? What was

supposed to happen, what actually happened and how do you account for the difference?”

- Learn from mistakes and failures so you will become more likely to succeed in the future. “A wise man learns from the mistakes of others. A normal man learns from his own mistakes but a fool learns from no one’s mistakes.”

5. **Develop Best Practices** – Learn what worked and remember to do it like that again.

Ministry is built through wisdom, established through knowledge. Get them to evaluate the success of the project so they will also teach others. (II Timothy 2:2).

To Delegate or Not to Delegate, That is the Question

by Jay Bransford



If you think back to all the leaders, teachers and coaches you've had in your life, you can probably remember times when a person delegated tasks well, refused to delegate anything, delegated the wrong things, delegated too much, or asked people to do things but failed to really trust them to do it. Some things in life should be delegated, and other things probably shouldn't. So how do you know the difference?

WHEN NOT TO DELEGATE

You Want Control

If you want full control over how and when a task gets done, and you want to make sure it gets done exactly the way you want, then there's a good chance you should do it

yourself. Just make sure to first ask yourself whether you really need to have full control over the task, or whether it is reasonable to have someone else do it. Hint: setting up the next coffee break probably doesn't qualify as something you need full control over. Don't be a control freak.

You Want the Glory

Do you want to receive credit for a project or event? This can sometimes be the unconscious motivation for people not giving up a role, title, task or responsibility. Perhaps part of your identity, purpose or value is tied up in a particular role or responsibility you have. Make sure to check your heart and your motivation for NOT wanting to delegate a task to someone else. Generally, wanting the glory or credit for something is a poor reason to choose to not delegate something.

You are a Perfectionist / You Fear Failure

What might happen if you delegate a task to someone else? What are you afraid might happen? Are your fears well-founded? How much of your fear is based on your tendency to seek perfection and insist that others do everything just as well as you? There are situations when a task needs to get done just right or there could be serious consequences. But those situations often aren't as common as we think.

You Don't Have Enough Patience

Delegation can require patience... Patience to wait for another person's timing to complete a task. Patience to watch someone perform a task in a way that isn't quite as efficient or effective as you. Patience to follow-up with the person and occasionally give them some feedback or encouragement along the way. Do you have the necessary patience to delegate a particular task? If not, you might drive that person (or yourself) crazy by delegating to them!

Absence of Anyone to Delegate to

Is there anyone else around who is capable and confident enough to perform one of your tasks? If not, don't set people up for failure. If people don't have the necessary skills or training to do something, you shouldn't delegate that task to them. And if people lack the courage or confidence to perform the task, you should coach them along the way.

You're the Right Person to Do it!

Just like the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, there are some tasks that are too cold for you, some that are too hot, and others that are JUST RIGHT. What is your job description? What kinds of tasks and responsibilities are you supposed to be taking on? What tasks best match your skills, giftings and passions? Those are the kinds of tasks you likely should be doing unless and until you're trying to transition, cross-train or raise up a future you.

Ok... so now you know some of the most common reasons NOT to delegate. However, you may have noticed that some of those reasons were a bit selfish, right? Controlling, glory seeking, perfectionism and lack of patience. Those descriptions aren't exactly the model résumé of a good leader. Be aware of your own reasons for not delegating things. It's important.

WHEN TO DELEGATE

To Grow Other's Commitment

Allowing others to take on significant aspects of a project or ministry has a tremendous impact on their felt level of ownership and commitment for the work. One of the quickest and easiest ways to build a strong sense of team unity and commitment is to delegate important aspects of the work to each person.

To Empower Others

People need opportunities to learn and grow and to discover their God-given strengths, giftings and passions. By delegating tasks to a person that you believe is capable, you help that person to refine and develop skills that prepare them for even greater impact and potential in the future.

To Encourage Others in their Abilities

Every time you delegate some of your work responsibilities to another person, you are sending them a clear message

that you believe in them, that you believe in their abilities, and that you trust them to carry out important tasks that you otherwise would have entrusted to yourself. Delegation can be an amazing way to encourage others by basically saying to them, “You’ve got this!” And sometimes a little encouragement like that is all people need in order to rise up the next level of competency and effectiveness in ministry and life.

To Work Toward Leadership Transition

We all go through seasons of transition from one place to another, or one role to another. Sometimes those transitions are expected and sometimes they sneak up on us. Regardless of how or when your next life transition will happen, beginning to delegate tasks and responsibilities NOW is an excellent way to both cross-train your staff to be able to fill in when necessary, and also to prepare yourself and others for future transitions of leadership. We should all be constantly striving to develop future generations who can not only replace us, but surpass us. Often times that starts with the willingness to delegate some of our responsibilities to others.

To Reduce Your Workload

Feel stressed? Overworked? Is it difficult to find time to get everything done in a day, including work responsibilities, family responsibilities, getting exercise, spending time with God and friends, while also having some fun? If so, it might

be time to look at your list of work responsibilities and think about which things you can and should delegate to others. You may even need to consider delegating (or releasing) some of your work back to God. Remember that we are not lone rangers, but instead we work as a team where God is our ultimate team leader. He wants what is best for you and your team.

To Offload Responsibilities You Shouldn't Be Doing

Some of your ministry responsibilities likely bring you much joy, energy and/or satisfaction. And if you're like most people, you likely also have a few responsibilities that are quite the opposite. Those would be activities that you dread, that drain your energy, and/or that you just don't feel very competent or gifted to perform. Careful now... I'm not talking about your YWAM work duties, your daily chores at home, having to brush your teeth, or any other of the unexciting responsibilities that we all need to do on an ongoing basis. I'm referring to those tasks and responsibilities that you have more of a choice about in determining WHO the right or ideal person is to perform them. If you have responsibilities that are not a good match with your giftings, skills or passions, then it's reasonable to stop and consider which of those things, if any, you should look at delegating to someone who is more qualified or interested.

WDJD (WHAT DID JESUS DO)

There is another great reason to delegate. Both God the Father and Jesus did. Can you think of any examples? God delegated the responsibility of naming all the animals to man. He entrusted Noah to build the ark. Jesus entrusted the 12 apostles with continuing His work (in fact doing even GREATER things) and spreading the Good News to the ends of the Earth. That's pretty important stuff He delegated, despite the fact that He could have done it much better and faster than us! In addition, Jesus qualified the types of people who we should delegate to in Luke 16:10-12 where it says, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much... so if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" Jesus' main message here is that we should delegate to people who have been proven faithful.

WWYD (WHAT WILL YOU DO?)

Take a reflective look at the tasks you commonly do and the responsibilities you have before you. Which of those things absolutely must be done by you? Which of your staff or colleagues are capable of performing some of your key tasks? What tasks could you delegate to others in such a way as to encourage, empower, and provide opportunities for them to develop and grow? Remember that delegation is an excellent way to develop future leaders. Be a proactive part of growing people, growing leaders, growing ministries, and growing the Kingdom!

Self- Development

Self-Development Overview

Self-development is the intentional process or effort one makes to continuously develop one's own character, knowledge, skills and abilities. Those who learn, grow and change continuously throughout their careers are the most successful. Whatever skills you have now are unlikely to be enough in the future. Acquiring new skills is the best insurance you can get for an uncertain future. Some of us won't face our limitations or we make excuses. Others are defensive and fight any corrective feedback. Some of us don't have time for development or simply don't know what to do. The following articles provide various approaches and perspectives on how to be a leader who exemplifies and encourages life-long learning.

Broadening and Deepening Your Options for Life-Long Learning

by Jay Bransford



For those of us blessed to have good access to education, many of us spend between 12 and 16+ years in school. When we think of our lives in terms of when we do the most learning we often think of those schooling years. While it's true that from the ages of 5 through 18 our primary purpose and focus tends to be on learning, it's quite fascinating to find out **WHEN** and **HOW** most of our learning in life actually occurs. And the more you know about **WHEN** and **HOW** learning in life occurs, the more intentional and effective you can be at successfully developing yourself.

FORMAL VS INFORMAL LEARNING

Learning scientists often divide learning into 2 categories: **formal learning** and **informal learning**. Formal learning occurs in a more traditional classroom context, while informal learning occurs in more spontaneous,

unplanned or unstructured environments throughout a day.

The human brain is constantly soaking in new information through our eyes, ears, smell, taste and touch – as well as through our spiritual senses. Everything that our senses experience is relayed to our brain for processing and storage. That constant flow of data to our brains serves to either reinforce knowledge and beliefs that we already possess or it creates new ideas, concepts, beliefs, and understandings of the world. The bottom line is that we, as humans, are constantly learning throughout the day, whether we realize it or not. Therefore, when trying to understand and maximize the potential of our own learning, we must consider what and how we learn in formal learning environments as well as in informal learning environments. Instead of only focusing on traditional learning methods (i.e. schools and universities), it is extremely helpful to look at the opportunities we have every day to informally, yet intentionally, learn from the world around us.

According to research conducted by the [LIFE Center](#), which exists to study human learning, between the ages of 5 and 18 the average American child spends 19% of their waking day learning in a formal learning environment (i.e at school). In contrast, those same school-aged kids spend a whopping 81% of their waking day learning in an informal environment. And as adults the percentage of time we

spend learning in an informal environment increases to well over 90%!

Take a moment and think about some of your achievements throughout life – both big and small. Perhaps you can start with how you learned to walk or talk, ride a bike, water ski, make a bed, be a good mom or dad, cook a meal, build something with a hammer and a nail, tie shoes, drive a boat, or use a smart phone. How many of those things did you learn through formal education versus through informal learning from others or on your own? The list of things we have all learned in life through an informal learning method is likely greater than we can imagine or count. As a matter of fact, [research](#) shows that nearly 70% of all learning that takes place at the workplace is via informal learning. But for some reason when most of us think of self development, we limit ourselves to thinking about formal learning options such as a school, university, seminar, workshop or certification program.

The point here is that if you are seriously interested in developing yourself, you need to broaden your options beyond only considering schools and seminars. Learning through traditional formal education is wonderful and necessary for some things in life. But remember that there are countless other ways you can intentionally be learning and growing in a more informal context. Here are some examples of informal ways you can learn about or get better

at something:

1. Discussions with your parents, family, friends, colleagues
2. Email or instant messaging to discuss or ask questions
3. Internet meetings or webinars
4. Phone conversations
5. Internet searches (i.e. Google)
6. YouTube videos
7. Books, magazines, articles
8. Blogs, podcasts
9. Facebook, Twitter and other social media
10. Mentors or coaches
11. Interest groups (in-person or online)
12. Special projects or teams to serve on
13. Self-reflection, evaluation, and application

What is a personal development goal that you have right now? What do you want to learn about or get better at? Once you have something in mind, then look back again at the list of informal learning methods listed above. Try to pick out several informal learning methods that you could use to make progress toward your personal development goal. For example:

- Who could you talk to, email, call, or online chat with to learn more?
- What books or articles could you read?
- What special assignments or roles could you volunteer for that would give you opportunities to observe, learn

and/or practice a new skill?

- What could you search on Google to learn more?
- Are there free YouTube channels or blogs or podcasts related to your focus area that you could watch or listen to?
- Do you know someone who is good at what you want to learn about and who could serve as a mentor to you?
- Would talking to a coach help you to set some concrete goals, determine how to move forward, and follow-up with your progress?

Remember that life-long learning primarily happens OUTSIDE of the traditional classroom. Just because you don't have easy access to formal education, or can't afford it, or don't have the time to devote full time to it, doesn't mean that you can't continue to develop your skills and abilities. In this amazing interconnected world that we live in, there are often many learning options available at your fingertips. It just may take some creative thinking on your part to identify them.

LEARNING STYLES

Another consideration when looking at options of how to develop yourself is your learning style. Have you ever attended a training event where you were sure that some great information was taught but you just can't remember any of it, let alone apply it? If so, there's a good chance that the information was not taught in a way that utilized your

preferred learning style. Good educators have been trained how to teach using a variety of learning styles. But you and I, as self-learners, also need to be aware of our preferred learning style and make sure we choose and design learning options that will allow us to learn in a way that is most effective for us personally.



There are four generally agreed upon learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic. The acronym “VARK” can be used to help remember them. Here is what they mean:

- **Visual:** visual learners prefer the use of images, maps, and graphics to better understand and remember new information

- **Auditory:** auditory learners best learn new content through listening and speaking. This could occur in situations such as lectures, group discussions, and through speaking new information outloud repeatedly.
- **Reading/Writing:** people with a strong reading/writing preference learn best through words. They make take copious notes or they may be avid readers, and they are often able to translate abstract concepts into words and essays.
- **Kinesthetic:** kinesthetic learners best understand new information through tactile learning with their hands. For example they might like to learn how a clock works by taking a clock apart and putting it back together.

What is your preferred learning style? If you're not sure, try this simple [self-assessment](#). (If you're actually reading and remembering this article, there's a decent chance that "reading/writing" is one of your preferred learning styles.)

Remember, when selecting an approach for how to accomplish one of your learning goals, think about which of your learning options best fits your learning style. It very well may make your learning experience more enjoyable, effective and rewarding.

MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF LEARNING

Whatever learning approach or approaches you end up

choosing, keep in mind that the goal of learning is more than simply to gain new knowledge. The goal of learning should be to effectively use new knowledge, information, understanding and/or skills within the context of our everyday lives. Valuable learning is when new knowledge or skills are applied in a timely and appropriate way in real life. This requires what is called “knowledge transfer” – or the ability for us to apply new knowledge or skills into our own day-to-day life situations.

Before we can transfer knowledge into our own context, we first must make sure that we remember and internalize what we just learned. The [Learning Pyramid](#) below is a helpful visual that describes the types of learning activities we can engage in to maximize the likelihood of us retaining and internalizing the things we learn.



Source: National Training Laboratories, Bethel Maine

In the diagram above, you will notice that within 24 hours of listening to a lecture alone, the average person only has a 5% retention rate. That means that within a day most of us will forget 95% of what we hear in a lecture. Whoah! That's not very effective learning, is it?

The good news is that most good teachers or presenters do NOT merely talk. They often also provide slides or handouts with words on them to reinforce what they are teaching. According to the Learning Pyramid, by providing reading materials the average person will remember 10% of the material. That's twice as good as a pure talking lecture alone.

If you add visuals to that learning experience, the retention rate doubles again to 20%. If a demonstration of the teaching is provided (such as an example, case study, or supporting story) the average retention rates go up to 30%.

Allowing people to discuss the new learning jumps retention rates to 50%. Giving people practice applying the learning to a real problem increases retention to an amazing 75%. And by challenging people to teach others what they have learned, the average retention rates go up to 90%.

All of the methods of learning in the Learning Pyramid can be incorporated into a formal or informal learning

environment. But it does take intentional effort to do so. Therefore, regardless of what formal or informal learning approaches you choose for your self-development goal, remember to shoot for maximizing your learning retention and your ability to transfer that new knowledge or skill into your everyday life. The more you engage in the learning activities at the bottom of the Learning Pyramid, the more likely you will succeed in truly achieving value-added learning and personal growth.

On that note... take time right now to set a learning goal, decide what method(s) would be best for you to develop yourself, and then go and find someone to talk to and tell them what you learned from this article. Perhaps you'll remember and apply 90% or more of it!

Are You on Target?

By Jay Bransford



Have you ever gone to a firing range and shot a gun? If not, have you ever wondered WHY someone would do such a thing? What's the point? Why would someone pay money to go shoot holes in a piece of paper? It's not like the game of darts where you're competing with others. So why bother?

This article is not intended to encourage people to go out and shoot guns. In fact, there are entire cultures and indeed many Christians in certain parts of the world who do not support the use of guns. Putting that aside for the moment, there is a logical reason why people go 'target shooting'. And it's directly related to self-development. People go to a firing range because they have a goal to develop their skills to accurately shoot a gun. Again, that may not be a goal that personally interests you, and that's just fine. But there is a very important lesson that we can all learn about self-

development from the practice of target shooting. That lesson relates to the powerful concept of “**feedback**”.

Picture in your mind a shooting range. What do you see? Likely you envision a person standing behind a line, wearing protective ear muffs, and shooting a gun toward a target at a distance. After they fire off a number of rounds, what do they do next? Usually, they look closely at the target they were shooting at and see how good their aim was. Why do they do that? Because they want feedback about their skills and accuracy that will hopefully help them to adjust their shooting approach and further improve their skills. Going to a shooting range is a way to both practice a skill and get critical **feedback** SO THAT a person can continue to develop his/her skill.

How does this apply to you? Very simply, if you want to develop your skills at anything in life, you absolutely must find a way to receive **feedback** about your performance SO THAT you can make the necessary adjustments to continue to improve.

8-STEP FEEDBACK PROCESS

Here’s a way that’s almost guaranteed for ANYONE to utilize feedback from other people to improve. It is an **8-step process** adapted from Marshall Goldsmith, who is one of the top leadership coaches in the world. The feedback steps are:

1. Ask
2. Listen
3. Think/Pray
4. Thank
5. Respond
6. Involve
7. Change
8. Follow-up

Case Study:

Let's use a simple example to help us understand and apply Marshall's 8-step feedback process. Let's assume that you are a ministry leader and want to get better at delegating. Below we'll see how you could apply the steps of the feedback process to that personal development goal...

ASK:

Feedback can come from many sources. And one of the most helpful sources of feedback is the people around you. So if you want to know how you can improve on something, ASK other people how well you're doing and what you could improve on.

In our case study this might look like walking up to each of your staff members individually and asking them, "In what ways could I improve my delegation skills with you?"

If you ask enough people, you are sure to get a bunch of

suggestions. Asking is the first step of the feedback process. It's really quite easy.

LISTEN:

Here's where you might feel challenged. How well do you really listen to people when they give you input? Do you politely smile and nod your head and abruptly forget everything they said? Here's a suggestion... **WRITE IT DOWN!** Even if you think it's a stupid idea – write it down anyway. At a minimum it will communicate to that person that you listened and valued their input. At best, they may have just given you an amazing idea.

For our case study, let's assume that you wrote down the following suggestions from people about how to delegate better:

- “Don't give me more than I can handle.”
- “Make sure to explain to me what your expectations are.”
- “Give me a timeframe to complete the task.”
- “Let me know what my financial budget is.”
- “Don't micro-manage me by checking on my status every day.”
- “Ask me if I'm comfortable with the task.”

THINK/PRAY:

Once you have a list of suggestions from various people about how you can improve, it's time to think and pray

about it. What is God saying to you about all of this feedback? What do you feel you should try doing? You don't have to commit to doing everything people suggest. But as a good leader you should at least commit to asking for people's input and prayerfully considering it.

For our case study on delegation, let's say we decided to focus on the following 2 things:

- Be clear about expectations (timeframe, cost, outcomes)
- Ask what their comfort level is with the task

THANK:

Everyone likes to be thanked. It's good for morale. And it helps to ensure that people will be willing to give you more feedback the next time you ask. Make sure you thank people for their feedback. Try to think of feedback as a gift, whether you like or agree with the feedback or not.

A simple example of thanking people might be, "Thank you for your suggestions about how I can delegate better. I really appreciate your input."

RESPOND:

Once you've thought and prayed about the feedback and decided what actions you're going to take to further your development, it's helpful to respond to people and let them know what you decided. By telling them that, it helps to hold you accountable for following through.

A response for our case study might sound like this, “I have taken time to think and pray about all the feedback I received about how to delegate better. And at this time I really want to focus on the following 2 things...”

INVOLVE:

You may find that some of your action items involve certain people. Ask for their involvement in following through on your action items. Is it ok if you try these new approaches with them? Will they help to remind you if you forget?

In our case study involving others might sounds like, “Hey Kathy, I’d really like to be more clear with you when I delegate things to you in the future. Would you be open to helping me remember to do so and even giving me ongoing feedback?”

CHANGE:

This may sound like a no-brainer. But you do need to actually take the actions you told people you were going to take. It’s kind of hard to improve if you just talk about doing things, but never actually do them! So make sure to follow-through on your action items.

For our case study an example of implementing our action items might be delegating clearly by saying, “I’d like you to lead up our marketing efforts for our upcoming school by

designing/printing brochures and making a Facebook campaign in the next 2 weeks. Let's keep the cost under \$100 USD. How comfortable are you with all of that?"

FOLLOW-UP:

The last step of the feedback process is to follow-up with people again and ask for ongoing feedback. You're not likely to perfectly attain your goal the first time you try. Most things take time, practice, and ongoing feedback. (Like continuously going back to the firing range to improve your shooting skills.)

Here is what follow-up might look like in our case study example. "Hi, Kathy. As you know I've been trying to improve my delegation skills. How have I been doing over the past month? What additional ideas do you have for me?"

APPLICATION:

In what ways is God challenging you to develop yourself? Pick something this week and try working through the 8-step feedback process above. It is not a difficult process and it doesn't even take much time. But it does require a focused, intentional effort on your part to seek out and respond well to feedback. Try it today and you'll be amazed at the results!

6 Predictors of Success for Self Development

by Jay Bransford



While it is true that we all continuously learn throughout life, the concept of self-development implies an intentional effort to develop oneself to achieve a specific goal. So if you want to successfully develop yourself, you obviously first need a goal. But what affects the likelihood of you actually achieving your personal development goal? That's what we want to look at here: the predictors of success for self-development.

I find it encouraging to remember that even Jesus developed himself, and thus so should I. "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" – Luke 2:52. But did Jesus really have to try to develop himself, or did it just happen? I would suggest that Jesus demonstrated key characteristics of people who are effective at developing themselves. Let's take a look at 6 such characteristics that

serve as excellent predictors of successful self-development:

1. BE HUMBLE/TEACHABLE

Jesus was humble and teachable, looking to his Father as his ultimate source of wisdom and direction. “Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do: for whatsoever things He does, these also does the Son likewise.’” (John 5:19) Jesus did not exalt himself. He exalted the Father. Likewise, Jesus didn’t claim to have all of the answers, but instead looked to his Father as the one He would emulate and “learn” from.

God wants us to be humble and teachable so that He can continue to mold and shape us. How is this possible? In John 14:26 Jesus says, “But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” So the Holy Spirit teaches us. HOW do we go about allowing the Holy Spirit to teach us? Or another way to ask it is, “How do we have a teachable spirit?” The bible suggests a number of ways, such as:

Listen to our Elders: “Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” – 1 Peter 5:5

Accept Discipline: “Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.” – Proverbs 12:1

Seek Wisdom: “Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth.” – Proverbs 4:5

Read Scripture: All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” – 2 Tim 3:16

Listen to Faithful Men/Women: “And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” – 2 Tim 2:2

Listen to the Spirit: And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. 1 Cor 2:13

2. ASK QUESTIONS/BE CURIOUS

What do you think the relationship is between “asking questions” and “having knowledge”? That sounds like a pretty obvious question, doesn’t it? The more questions we ask, the more opportunities we have to learn something

new. The bible is full of examples of people asking questions in order to learn something. Abraham received a picture of God's grace when he asked God, "How am I to know that I shall possess it [the land]?" (Genesis 15:8). Many of the Psalms begin with a question, such as Psalms 3; 10; 13; 15; 22; 58; 74. The entire book of Habbakuk is based upon questions that Habbakuk asked of God. After the Holy Spirit descended with power on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, Peter's great sermon started from questions asked by the crowds. And Jesus loved questions! He commended the disciples for asking about the meaning of his parables (Mark 4:10,11). Jesus got angry at the Pharisees when they stopped asking him questions (Mark 3:5). And Jesus gave us an important glimpse into his view of the importance of asking questions when he said, "ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks, receives" (Matt 7:7-8).

3. USE YOUR LEARNING STYLE

Effective learners know how they learn best. What teaching and learning methods work well for you to remember and understand things? Do you more easily remember visuals/graphics/charts? Can you remember words that you read or repeat out loud? Do you easily remember things you hear? Or do you need to get involved with and/or DO the things you're learning about in order to really understand it well? Each of those options represents a different learning

style: visual, reading/writing, auditory, and kinesthetic. The more you can find learning opportunities that match your preferred learning style, the more likely you are to receive something of value out of those learning opportunities. For example, if you are an auditory learner, you may want to look for opportunities to listen to books on audio or listen to podcasts. Or if you are a reading/writing learner you may prefer to read books and articles, or take lots of notes.

We see examples of these various learning styles being used throughout the bible. God encourages the Israelites to use visuals to remember his words in Deut 11:18, “Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.” The Israelites translated this into the use of Phylacteries which are small leather boxes the men would strap onto their left arm and forehead. Today’s Christians utilize many symbols such as the cross, dove, fish, and others to remind us of biblical truths and stories about God. Jesus loved to tell stories, which utilized an auditory learning style for people to learn and soak in truth. The Holy Scriptures were written on scrolls, and the ten commandments were written on stone tablets – allowing people to learn and remember via written words. And the feeding of the 5,000 is a powerful example of how Jesus gave his disciples a kinesthetic learning opportunity to experience first-hand God’s faithfulness and miraculous provision.

4. BE PERSISTENT

“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized.” – Hebrews 6:11

Learning can be hard work! It often takes a significant amount of time and effort to gain the skills and competency you want to achieve. Whether you are focused on gaining mastery through practice (such as Malcolm Gladwell’s 10,000-hour rule of achieving expert-level skills) or if you are simply persisting at something until you reach that breakthrough moment (such as the moment you were suddenly able to ride your bike for the first time), successful self-development takes focus and determination. Jesus is perhaps the best role model we could ever imagine as he demonstrated persistence until death in pursuit of his end goal.

5. INTEGRATE

Jesus’ parable of the sower teaches us a key predictor of success for self-development. That key relates to the integration of new knowledge into our lives. The parable of the sower talks about different types of soil or ground that the sower throws seeds on. The seeds that were thrown on the path, the rocky places and the thorns were all unsuccessful in growing deep roots and achieving long term healthy growth. However, the seeds that were thrown on good soil produced crops that were a hundred, sixty and

thirty times what was sown.

How does this relate to our self-development? You can think of new knowledge you gain as “seeds of knowledge” that are thrown out into the vast expanse of your brain. Sometimes we gain new seeds of knowledge by attending a class or reading a book, only to find that soon thereafter those seeds of knowledge have scattered, withered or blown away. We don’t remember a thing. Sometimes we find that our new seeds of knowledge never get a chance to get rooted or applied to new behaviors, and thus they gradually fade away, never to have an impact on our growth or development.

That kind of knowledge is called ‘inert knowledge’ or information that we know but fail to successfully apply in our lives when appropriate. It’s like trying to grow a seed in the absence of any dirt, oxygen or water. Inert knowledge is nearly useless – except for impressing your friends with how much knowledge you have (or how many seeds you have). Self-development is about personal learning in order to affect change in our lives for the better. If we don’t integrate and apply new learning into our lives, which is evidenced through new & changed behaviors, thoughts and attitudes, then we aren’t really developing ourselves. We’re just collecting more seeds by gaining more knowledge. The necessary ingredients for seeds of knowledge to take root and grow are personal reflection, practice, and application

into one's own life. That describes the process of the integration of knowledge. So as soon as you learn something, make sure you reflect on its potential relevance to your life and immediately start applying it to situations in your life. The more times you apply it, the more likely that seed will grow and develop and become a new integrated habit in your life.

6. SHARE AND TEACH OTHERS

Perhaps the ultimate way to develop and master your knowledge, skills and competencies as a leader is to teach others what you know. Have you ever been humbled as you tried to explain something to another person, only to find out that your explanation was totally confusing? Teaching requires us to organize our thoughts, knowledge, and wisdom in such a way that is easily understood by others. The process it takes for us to organize and logically structure our explanations forces us to wrestle with what we've learned and make sure we truly and clearly understand it. Learning researchers have actually found that of all the learning methods that exist, teaching others is the most effective method to ensure that you (the teacher) best understand and remember the topic. It's also generally one of the last things that a learner typically does in the learning process in order to really drive the learning home.

Indeed, we are all blessed by God in numerous and wonderful ways in order to be a blessing to others. Sharing

and teaching others what God has taught us is one such way to pass on those blessings – or to “pay it forward” in today’s Starbuck’s generation. “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38). “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16).

APPLICATION

Considering these 6 predictors of success with self-development, what is your likelihood of achieving your developmental goals? What is ONE thing you could start doing today that will increase your chances of intentionally learning and growing as a leader?

Practicing Spiritual Disciplines

Practicing Spiritual Disciplines Overview

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." – Ephesians 6:12.

We are in a constant spiritual battle. Sometimes we are aware of it, and sometimes we are not. But it's there. As leaders, we must make a proactive effort to nurture and develop our spiritual life. Failing to do so allows the enemy a foothold to pull us down and minimize our leadership authority. The following articles focus on various spiritual disciplines that we can put in place in our lives that will help us to continue to develop and grow in our relationship with Christ, and that will enable us to spiritually thrive on the mission field.

Journeying Towards Spiritual Maturity: Disciples are Disciplined

by Garth Gustafson



“Discipleship means discipline... without discipline we are not disciples... In an undisciplined age when liberty and license have replaced law and loyalty, there is greater need than ever before that we be disciplined to be His disciples.”
– C.S. Lewis

What C.S. Lewis pointed out decades ago is even truer for us today. One of the last words that would describe our current generation today is disciplined. As Christians we claim to want to be disciples, but if someone talks about spiritual disciplines, many of us write it off as legalism or religiosity. The reality is that true maturity as a disciple means applying spiritual disciplines.

How many spiritual disciplines can you name off the top of your head? (See the end of the article for the answer, just

like a crossword puzzle.)

JESUS MODELED SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” – Mark 1:35

WWJD... What Would Jesus Do?... yes, I know it is old school, but it is what it means to be a disciple. A disciple literally wants to do what Jesus would do. Several years ago I was on a trip in Israel and I watched a Rabbi being followed by his disciples. Literally the disciples tried to replicate every step the Rabbi took, stepping in each place and every rock his foot trodden, finally to the point where the Rabbi jumped into a pool at En Gedi and all the disciples followed.

Disciples are disciplined to do what their master Rabbi does, even if it means jumping into a pool fully clothed in Jewish Rabbi garb. What did Jesus do? He woke up early, spent time with the Father, He had solitude, silence, prayer, study, simplicity, worship... He lived out spiritual disciplines. As disciples what should we do? WWJD... we should live out spiritual disciplines.

Most of us couldn't even list what spiritual disciplines are, let alone actually apply them consistently. This isn't a critical statement, but rather an honest observation about the state of the body of Christ. We are a generation that has more

resources than ever before but often lack the motivation to actually seek God, come into His presence and live out spiritual disciplines while contending for the dreams in God's heart.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES INDIVIDUALLY AND CORPORATELY

Early on in my journey following Jesus into full-time missions and ministry God spoke clearly to a team I was serving with to fast, pray and contend for the dreams of God. We obeyed and for the next 3 years our whole team fasted weekly. At the same time God took me on a personal journey of fasting for long stretches of time. It was painful. It was not fun. But, it created depth in my relationship with God.

I believe that this season of practicing the spiritual discipline of corporate fasting and prayer laid the foundation for the next 10 years of our ministry, which has been incredibly fruitful. I share that because in my journey I look back and see seasons that I practiced spiritual disciplines individually, and times when I didn't and that directly impacted my spiritual health and my fruitfulness. I believe this truth is accurate for us individually, as well as corporately, that the healthiness and fruitfulness of a person and a ministry is directly correlated with the application of spiritual disciplines.

MATURITY IS MASTERING THE BASICS

As Christians we often talk about becoming spiritually

mature. It is a classic mistake to think that maturity has something to do with age or how long we have been a Christian. Spiritual maturity has nothing to do with years and age, but everything to do with application of God's word and obedience to Jesus.

Maturity means mastering the basics. Over time, spiritual disciplines wore on our community and we preferred comfort and our own desires, instead of diligence and perseverance. Now God is currently calling our community back to spiritual disciplines, to return to the simplicity of maturity, which means mastering the basics and applying spiritual disciplines.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES BEAR FRUIT

Spiritual disciplines aren't easy but they are worth it. Spiritual disciplines are painful, but they are fruitful. Spiritual Disciplines are what disciples do. The question that we must ask is "Am I really a disciple? Am I really spiritually mature?" Even after 15 years in full-time ministry, when I honestly evaluate these questions, I see in myself many areas where I still need to grow.

For me I am still pursuing to be a spiritually mature disciple, applying spiritual disciplines and putting off the generational-norm. This practically means rejecting the desires of my flesh and dying to the comforts of the world for the sake of the Gospel. How are you doing with being a

disciple, walking in spiritual maturity and practicing spiritual disciplines?

****For more reading on this topic check out Richard Foster's classic book "Spiritual Disciplines" which lists the following categories and practices as Spiritual Disciplines:**

- 1) Inward Disciplines: Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, Study
- 2) Outward Disciplines: Simplicity, Submission, Study, Service
- 3) Corporate Disciplines: Confession, Worship, Guidance, Celebration

The Pathway of Transformation to a Christ-like Life

by Jeff Romack



For followers of King Jesus the practice of spiritual disciplines is the essential and God-appointed way to becoming the kind of person that God intends for us to be. When we speak about “becoming” we are talking about change. In this article we’ll consider how change happens and the essential role of the spiritual disciplines in that change.

Three things are necessary for change to take place in our lives. Magic is not one of them, neither is luck. To the contrary, all transformation, all change, happens as the result of the convergence of three things; **vision**, **intention** and **means** (*the spiritual disciplines*).

Vision is where Jesus began his own ministry. His vision of the Kingdom of God set the agenda for all that he did and taught. Vision is where change begins for us. Simply put,

vision is a new idea of what this world or what my life could be like if.... All change begins with a new vision. **Be Visionary!**

Vision is a wonderful and absolutely necessary ingredient for change but without a second ingredient it remains just that, a beautiful vision, a wish for what might possibly be. The necessary second ingredient to change is **intention**. I must actually intend to live into my vision. I must plan for and be prepared to take the actions necessary to see my vision realized. I must be prepared to do what only I can and must do. **Be intentional!**

The third and final piece required for change is to know and use the necessary **means**. These are the practices necessary, the means that must actually be used, in order to achieve my vision. With a compelling vision, intention, and use of the right means, change is assured. **Practice spiritual disciplines!**

In the case of every disciple who is learning from Jesus how to live in the Kingdom of God, **the practice of spiritual disciplines** is the means to our ongoing transformation into the likeness of Christ. We must have both a vision for this transformation (to become more and more like Jesus) and we must desire and have the intention to live into the Jesus kind of life. And finally, we must practice the practices of spiritual discipline that Jesus taught his followers.

The term “spiritual disciplines” might seem to be something of an oxymoron. That is, spirituality is one thing while discipline seems to be something very different. But with only a little reflection we understand that all spiritual formation happens while we are living in a body for which discipline is also necessary and formative. Therefore discipline is paramount in forming and re-forming our lives as Jesus’ followers.

The spiritual disciplines that Jesus both practiced and taught are well known. They have been practiced and taught by Christians throughout the ages. Some of the disciplines are essential for everyone. Some are more helpful than others depending on our individual situation at any point in time. All of the disciplines are valuable. In practicing spiritual disciplines we will actually find ourselves living into many of our YWAM values.

Any list of the spiritual disciplines will include **meeting together with God regularly and often**. And, by the way, **let God run the meeting!** It all begins here.

Other spiritual disciplines include:

Prayer	Giving
Meditation	Solitude
Worship	Silence
Confession	Service
Fasting	Study

With a little thought you'll be able to identify others. Remember, we practice spiritual disciplines not as an end in themselves but as a means to a beautiful end, transformation into the likeness of Christ. To think that we can grow in likeness to Jesus without actually practicing the disciplines as Jesus himself did is an illusion. Transformation won't happen by magic. It won't happen by luck. And, it won't happen by getting zapped by the Holy Spirit apart from practicing the disciplines.

Remember; all change begins with a compelling vision. Intention to live into the vision is essential but we must also acknowledge that no one is perfect. We all fall short from time to time. Just get up again and keep showing up every day. And, work the practices, the spiritual disciplines. What was difficult or impossible for you in the beginning will in time become possible if you practice the disciplines. **Keep going!**

One of the most valuable things leaders can do for one another is to point out helpful resources that can propel us onward in following Christ. There are two books dealing with the practice of spiritual disciplines that have shaped my thinking and helped me greatly in practical ways. I want to recommend to you:

1. *“Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice; Experiment in Spiritual Transformation.”* by Dallas Willard, Navpress, 2002. This is a short and more accessible version of the original, *“Renovation of the Heart.”* Both are recommended. The Vision, Intention, Means pattern of change mentioned earlier was first suggested by Willard.
2. *“Celebration of Discipline; the Path to Spiritual Growth.”* By Richard J. Foster, Harper, 2002. This book is considered the modern classic on the spiritual disciplines.

Turning Aside

by Steve Cochrane



“THIS IS THE FIRST AND WISEST THING I KNOW: THAT THE SOUL EXISTS AND IS BUILT ENTIRELY OUT OF ATTENTIVENESS.” – MARY OLIVER

The spiritual discipline/practice of “turning aside” seems very simple but needs to be intentionally cultivated.

“Turning aside” is another way to say “paying attention” to people, events or details of life right in front of us. It seems so easy to practice, yet often we are busy and miss out on great treasures.

In Exodus 3:1-6 Moses, after forty years in the wilderness, was in his normal routine of daily “keeping the flock” (vs. 1) of Jethro, his father-in-law. He had done it over and over again, learning humility and faithfulness, perhaps thinking this will be his lot in life for the rest of his days on earth. But

on this particular day, he sees a bush burning. Had Moses ever seen a bush on fire before? Probably many times. On this occasion, he paid attention, and instead of continuing on, said “I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” (vs. 3) Something was very different about this bush: it was burning, yet not consumed, and the Angel of the Lord appeared within. (vs. 2).

Moses could have kept going. The bush not consumed, even with an Angel present, was not enough to force him to stop. But Moses did stop, turn aside, and pay closer attention. The passage goes on: “When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’” (vs. 4)

Turning aside to look closer was the response that activated the Lord’s invitation to a new place of revelation and vocation. Though usually not as dramatic as seeing a burning bush, for us it is a similar pattern. We pause or stop to look closer, to pay attention, and new doors of awareness and grace open. These can be very small occurrences, or things that shape us for the rest of our lives.

On a beautiful summer day a few years ago in the Pacific NW of the USA, my oldest daughter was learning to drive on the highway for the first time. I sat in the passenger seat of the car, deeply aware that if she made a mistake, I had no ability to save us from a potentially serious accident. But as we

merged on the highway, I looked over at her again. In that moment, (perhaps my fear helped with focus), I saw her. I paid attention, looked closer, and saw a beautiful, poised, sixteen year old woman, not a little girl anymore. It was what some call a “transcendent” moment, that opens space for deeper reflection. Something more was going on beyond what was going on.

This **discipline of paying attention** is an important one to cultivate. Like any spiritual discipline, the more we practice it the more it will become a habit. So how do we cultivate this discipline? Here are five ways:

1. START THE DAY INVITING THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HELP YOU TO SEE.

Each morning, take a heart posture of surrender, by being available to see and pay attention to the people, circumstances and details of your day.

2. BE EXPECTANT FOR ANSWERS TO THAT AVAILABILITY.

It is not a dramatic prayer, but a simple expectation that God will answer in His own way, and you will in His grace be ready.

3. SLOW DOWN AS LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In what areas of your daily life can you cultivate a slower pace, a greater openness to seeing things you may not see moving faster?

4. REMOVE THE “CLUTTER” FROM YOUR LIFE

Some things that fill our life are not truly vital, whether material “stuff” or attitudes of resentment, jealousy or pride. What can we prune from our lives to create greater space for grace to activate?

5. CULTIVATE GRATEFULNESS AT THE END OF THE DAY

The discipline of gratefulness is the twin to paying attention, the other side of the same coin. As we pay closer attention, our hearts fill with thanks. We see in new ways, and in seeing we receive new perspectives, even perhaps on very difficult situations or people.

Practicing the discipline of turning aside leads to new revelation of God’s character, even as it did with Moses in Exodus 3. We become more grateful as a lifestyle, opening further space for a larger life of generous grace for ourselves and others.

Why not try it today.

What's Your Pathway

by Stephe Mayers



This month our retreat centre team enjoyed hosting a 'pathways to God' retreat. We had spent some months in preparation and each of us were able to explore new ways of relating and enjoying our relationship with God. We all have several pathways that we are used to, but there are others that we can discover that are able to bring a whole new level of intimacy with God. One of our team members, Wilrens Hornstra, put together the following summary from the book, 'Sacred Pathways' by Gary Thomas. I have added a few comments throughout.

Naturalist: For the naturalist, creation is as much a cathedral as any church building. Indeed, God's very first temple was a garden, in Eden, and his ultimate temple in Revelation 22 has features of a garden as well. In the mean time, "The earth is full of his glory" (Is. 6:3), so it must be possible to tap

into this as a bridge into his presence. Some of us, the naturalists, are better at this than others. They simply thrive in nature. Here are three different aspects of this pathway. Firstly, in creation, we see something of God's splendour and greatness. Second, creation teaches and illustrates many principles and truths. And finally, creation is a place to rest and recuperate – while praying, worshipping, and contemplating. This is the ideal pathway for me and daily walks with my dog become an open space for my spirit to engage.

Traditionalist: The traditionalist thrives on ritual and symbol. The obvious expression of this pathway is a traditional, liturgical church service and the use of ancient prayers and other ancient texts. But it is also possible to create our own rituals, prayers, and liturgies as well as our own symbols. The standardized words help us to focus our mind; the symbols serve as bridges on the deepest level of our soul and spirit.

One way to introduce some ritual into our lives is to observe the Christian holidays (holy-days!) of the church calendar. After all, ever since Moses (see Lev. 23), God's people have had some form of a ritual calendar. Every team would do well to establish some special celebrations, feasts, customs and rhythms through the year. This creates variety, expectation and seasons in the team life that can add stability.

Sensate: The sensate most readily meets God through the five senses, through things one can see (architecture, visual art, dance), hear (great music), smell (incense and fragrances), touch (an embrace, something to handle), or taste (Lord's Supper, a meal). Beauty and sensate experience enraptures this person. There is some overlap, therefore, with the naturalist pathway and also with the traditionalist one, although the sensate does not have to be outside and the activity does not have to be traditional.

The sensate also tends to enjoy connecting to God by initiating – not merely receiving – artistic, creative, and sensate experiences, that is, through *doing* and *making*: a painting, handicraft, a dance, a shape, an arrangement etc. Over recent years we have been more and more open to hands on experience in worship and in application of teaching. What took us so long!

Ascetic: The ascetic way is marked by discipline, austerity, abstinence, simplicity, and strictness. It is not that these earn merit; they are embraced in order to focus more fully on God by avoiding distraction. One form of abstinence is solitude; this is where the ascetic and the contemplative meet: they are both usually practiced in solitude, although this is not essential.

Obviously, any form of fasting (doing without or abstaining from something) fits well with the ascetic temperament.

Other activities listed in the book include: night watch, silence, obedience or submission, work, retreats, a simple lifestyle, and the endurance of hardship. There are times that we all need a touch of the ascetic in all our lives. How important it is for us to take time out for solitude in the midst of the crazy, busy lives we lead.

Activist: Activists are energized by confronting evil or injustice. It is in pursuing a cause that they experience connectedness with God. These are the warriors who thrive in battle and the evangelists who love to proclaim. They are more likely to enjoy praying when walking about or in a public procession or vigil than in the seclusion of their inner room. This sounds like the classic YWAM leader doesn't it? I know I have some of this!!

If you are an activist, you will probably need some of the other pathways and spiritual disciplines to keep your activism healthily connected to the True Source. You will also need others to keep you grounded. But don't let them put you in a box that does not fit. Your best way up is to mount your horse and ride out for justice or truth.

Caregiver: The pathway of the caregiver (servant, helper) is first of all outward bound, not upward. Still, it is easy to recognize the spiritual pathway to God in this pathway. As Gary Thomas puts it, serving is about "loving God by loving others". At the same time, in caring and serving we identify

with God and become his hands and feet in this world, which easily leads to real closeness between him and us. And last but certainly not least, we meet Jesus in the person we are serving.

Even though all of us are called to this in some ways, there are some of us who live this as their natural passion and pathway into God's presence. They feel most alive when doing something for someone else – especially if this is a person in need or unable to help themselves. Understanding this pathway can set some free to worship in a whole new way.

Enthusiast: This is the pathway for those of us who thrive on worship and celebration. Different from the ascetic and contemplative, it usually involves community, although one can of course worship in solitude as well. The enthusiast is also attracted to the miraculous, charismatic, supernatural, and to challenges or acts of faith. Again this would be a regular corporate form of worship for YWAMers. It's fun, faith building and energising. It is also a classic form of worship utilised by the streams of churches that are non-conformist. As an enthusiast myself, I do well in exploring new ways of worshipping and relating with the Lord.

Contemplative: In *Sacred Pathways*, this chapter is subtitled "Loving God through Adoration". It is about delighting in God and spending time in his presence for its (his) own sake:

“... contemplatives simply want to bath in the ocean of love God has for his children, while the rest of us seem sadly content to experience that love drop by drop” (p. 193).

Contemplation sounds like a form of thinking, but it is not intellectual thought, and includes a wide array of prayer forms, too. Simply put, it means to consider God and ‘look’ at him. The language of the contemplative is the language of love, relationship, and intimacy.

Intellectual: It is difficult for some enthusiasts and contemplatives to understand how powerfully some of us can be drawn to the Lord through a stimulated mind. When intellectuals’ minds are awakened, when they understand something new about God or his ways with his children, then their adoration is unleashed.

The intellectual pathway leads to the worship of God through study and learning. Gary Thomas lists a number of theological disciplines (such as church history, biblical studies, systematic theology), but other fields of science and scholarship could also be included.

It is reminiscent of Gordon Fee’s passionate claim in his book ‘Listening to the Spirit in the Text’ that “the proper aim of all true theology is doxology” (that is, giving glory, *doxos*, to God, or in other words: worship).

The last word: Having read through the summary of the 9 pathways, identify the ones you most relate to. There are often two or three that we feel comfortable with and tend to practice. Then ask the Lord if there are some new expressions that you could add into your life through the exploration of other pathways. Recently I have found the addition of an Ignatious daily 'examen' both challenging and stimulating for my spiritual life. It involves a series of positive and challenging questions to debrief my day, and to remember where, when and how I encountered the Lord. Other additions have included speaking out breath prayers throughout the day. (simple prayers you can pray in one breath), and the lectio divina, a form of meditation that is powerful in moving truth from your head to your heart.

In order to develop our relationships in general, it takes intentionality, time and effort. It is the same with the Lord. So take a few moments and take some initiative over these coming months to add a new dimension to your life with God.

Having a Biblical Worldview

Having a Biblical Worldview Overview

To what extent does your life demonstrate to others a correct biblical view of God and the bible? You might be surprised at how much your culture and the world around you have altered or adjusted your view of God, man, and creation in ways that are NOT based on God's word. As Christian leaders, we have a huge responsibility to accurately represent Christ in all that we say and do. Our lives are a living testimony to those around us. "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" (Ephesians 4:1-2). In Mark 7 Jesus warned the Pharisees, who were the church leaders of the day, that they were teaching the commandments of men as biblical doctrines. Jesus told them to beware of confusing the traditions of men with the commandments of God. This remains as a major challenge for the church to this day. We are all shaped by our cultures and traditions. But we must beware NOT to confuse the thinking and patterns of this world with the thinking and patterns of the Kingdom of God. The following articles explore the topic of Biblical Worldview and how this affects our ability to lead well.

Restoring our Broken Worldview

by Garth Gustafson



Your worldview will shape your life and determine your destiny more than anything else. Every person everywhere has a worldview. Most of us don't realize what our worldview is, how it came to be, or how it influences everything we do literally every moment of everyday.

THE LENSES OF OUR LIVES

A person's worldview is like lenses through which we view the reality of the world and make sense of it. These lenses have been shaped by our family, community, culture and life experiences. For most of us our worldview will lie subconsciously underneath all decisions that we make, determining and dictating how we live, think, act, what we spend money on and what we actually care about without us ever giving it much thought. *Our worldview is extremely powerful, incredibly dangerous and yet seldom considered.*

What we believe is what becomes our decision-making process and drives us in our life and therefore, is core for our being and our destiny. Because of the implications of our worldview, these lenses influence every aspect in our lives including our financial practices, political views, family values, ethics and theology.

At the same time our worldview is constantly developing, morphing and evolving as we continue to take in new information, encounter new experiences and deal with new levels of the brokenness in our world. Often times our worldview can lie dormant, not seeming very relevant until we encounter situations that shock us into actually evaluating what we believe and why we believe it.

My prayer is that we would all have our worldview shocked into a place of re-evaluation.

MY WORLDVIEW TRAIN-WRECK

My worldview was unexpectedly train-wrecked in 2002 when two things intersected in one moment, an understanding of the Gospel and the poverty of the streets of India. As I sat in an air-con coffee shop in Calcutta, India watching businessmen read the New York Times in their three-piece suits and drink cappuccinos, I should have felt at home since I come from the State of Starbucks (Washington). Instead, I could not dismiss the street kids that sat on the

other side of the wall-sized window in 120-degree heat, covered in filth.

Being an American who thinks (or thought) he could solve the problems of the world, I took action and went to invite some of them in for a sandwich, cold beverage and relief from the hellish heat. That was until I was informed that even if I was paying for them, they were not allowed into the building because they were from too low of a caste. At that moment Jesus completely train-wrecked my worldview.

BROKEN WORLDVIEW = BROKEN WORLD

Our world is broken because our worldview was broken.

When sin entered the world sin began to distort, contort and eat-away at how God wanted us to see the world, which is through the lenses of His ultimate truth and which is His intention for our worldview. Unfortunately because our worldview has been with us for our whole lives, most of us don't ever think about it. It took me 23 years before I ever considered my worldview and how it would impact the rest of my life. But after being shaken to the core by this worldview train-wreck, I had to deal with this question: *If I really believe the Gospel, then how could I possibly even consider not spending my whole life responding to the extreme brokenness of the world with the truth, love and hope of Jesus?*

That is exactly what Jesus did, He poured out His life to

respond to the brokenness of the world and to come to restore our broken worldviews so that we can do the same.

DO I HAVE A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW?

The following are questions to help us evaluate if we have a Biblical Worldview (*Based on a survey by George Barna*):

1. Do absolute moral truths exist?
2. Does the Bible define what is truth?
3. Is God an All-powerful and All-knowing Creator of the Universe and remains as the God-King today and forever?
4. Did Jesus live a sinless life? Died on the cross and conquered satan, sin and death through resurrection?
5. Is salvation a gift from God that cannot be earned?
6. Do you believe that satan is real and that there is a spiritual war going on continually?
7. As a Christian do you have a responsibility to share your faith through proclamation and practice?
8. Is the Bible accurate in all its teachings?

Did you say yes to these questions? Only 9% of “born-again” believers did.

Monkeys and Fish: Worldview in Cross-Cultural Missions

by Garth Gustafson



In the book ***Cross Cultural Connections***, Duane Elmer tells a story of a typhoon and the responses of a monkey and a fish in order to save their lives. The monkey found a safe place to wait until the raging waters stopped, while sitting there the monkey saw the fish swimming against the current and being kind-hearted tried to save the fish. The monkey snatched the fish from the water and brought it back to the safe shelter on dry ground. At first the fish was very excited and then it eventually settled down to a peaceful rest.

The monkey was satisfied with how he successfully saved another creature that was endangered and considered himself courageous, noble and having a great heart. His lack of understanding caused him to assume that what was dangerous for him was dangerous for the fish and this

actually ruined everything. Because the monkey could only see the worldview through his own lenses of life it caused him to make decisions that were detrimental for the fish. The end result was that the monkey caused more damage than good.

As Christians in cross-cultural missions we can easily be like the monkey who is trying to help the fish, but in the end because we do not recognize our own worldview, we think we have saved the fish, but in actuality we have caused more damage.

DISSECTING WORLDVIEWS

As a missionary I often dissect the worldview of the people group that I am reaching out too with the love of Jesus, in order to be most effective. This is wisdom for all that would work cross-culturally. Unfortunately, I recognize that for most of us, including myself, we live in great contradiction because we have never actually sat down to dissect the brokenness of our own worldview. We quickly identify all the differences of other cultures, the strengths, weakness, beauty and brokenness. But we rarely are able to see this clearly about our own cultures and ourselves because our worldview is so ingrained in us. Our worldview or our “monkey-ness” tends to be such a part of us that we often don’t even realize how much it deeply affects us. It is like a pair of contacts that has permanently been implanted into our eyes, shapes how we see every day and yet it never

crosses our mind to take them out and get God's perspective.

BATTLE OF BELIEFS

Globalization is very real today and it is affecting every culture's worldview, whether they like it or not. As missionaries or indigenous leaders, we have to realize that for us to have God's worldview we must recognize that we are in a battle for what we believe. We are constantly bombarded by a secular worldview through almost every means possible: media, technology, entertainment, academia, whether Hollywood or Bollywood, Facebook or Instagram... you name it and it most likely bombards you with an un-Biblical worldview.

For thousands of years most people grew up in one location with no access to travel, information or exposure outside of their immediate hometown. Because of this, their worldview was very controlled simply because of the consistency and simplicity of their world. Therefore their worldview tended to be very limited and unchanging.

In our world today for the monkey and the fish the battle over our worldview has the potential to be much more broad and yet it is much more complex. Think about how over the last decade the internet and smartphones has impacted our worldview. Fifty years ago a parent would be primarily influencing their child by teaching them almost everything. Now the internet and devices typically have

superseded in teaching, training and shaping our children's worldviews.

In today's world we are a generation that is inundated with more information through technology than ever before. In our battle of belief for a Gospel worldview, both monkeys and fish must be deeply grounded in our Bibles, so that it becomes a grid and the lenses in which we filter the rest of the world.

THE GOSPEL'S IMPACT ON BOTH THE MONKEY AND THE FISH'S WORLDVIEW

Both the monkey and the fish must realize that their worldview is not perfectly correct but is inherently broken. They must take off their lenses and choose to take on the Creator's lenses to see His truth for both the monkey, the fish and the rest of creation. *The Gospel alone restores our broken worldview and the Gospel alone can restore our broken world.* To put our hope in anything else to restore the world is simply an un-Biblical worldview that puts hope in something or someone that cannot deliver.

For centuries the world has hoped that more education, technology and development will restore our world. But the more educated our world is, the more technology we have and the more advances in development we take, the more our world is unraveling from the inside out.

When we look to ourselves to restore the world it falls apart, but when we look to the Creator of the world and apply His truths to our worldview, His worldview restores everything to being beautiful again.

Being Spiritually Led

Being Spiritually Led Overview

Striving to be spiritually led by God is both a choice and a lifestyle. With every conscious choice we make in life and ministry, we can intentionally acknowledge and involve God or not. One of the core values within YWAM is ‘Hearing God’s Voice’. As such, we are committed to creating with God through listening to Him, praying His prayers and obeying His commands in matters great and small. We are dependent upon hearing His voice as individuals, together in team contexts and in larger corporate gatherings. This is an integral part of our process for decision making as leaders and as fellow Christians. The following articles explore the critical leadership topic of being spiritually led by God and what this might look like in your context.

God Speaks, We Respond

by Linda Herrmann



It was a YWAM location meeting. Lots of people there, ones I knew, ones I didn't.

Deep in the depths of worshipping God, I felt Him say, “the man in the row in front of you.” I opened my eyes, and sure enough, there was a man, one I didn't know. Inside, I asked ‘what Lord?’ and He gave me a picture of him trying to change the direction of part of a railroad track. I asked for more, and the Holy Spirit widened the picture and gave me a promise for the man.

OK, what would you do then? It's in the middle of a meeting, in the middle of a worship time, a man you don't know. What do you do?

You obey God.

If Jesus cares enough to show by His Spirit something about someone I don't even know, it means He wants me to tell that person. He wants to love them, show them He is real, He is with them, for them.

What a privilege to be a life messenger for Jesus! That's really what Hearing the Voice of God is all about. It's not for you alone... it's to give to a hungry hurting world, believers and non-believers, the reality that God lives, He loves, He listens to even the quietest cry. He is called Immanuel, 'God with us', because He is. It's the truth.

LESSONS LEARNED:

After 30 years of leaning into the heart of God and hearing His voice, I've learned a few things:

1. you can ask Him for more
2. obey what He says (delayed obedience is disobedience)
3. don't worry about your reputation
4. you don't have to understand the Word He gives you for someone, just give it
5. it's for everyone – the kid sniffing glue, the lady next to you on the bus, the businessman you're having a meeting with.

YOUR CHALLENGE:

When was the last time you got a rhema word from God's heart for someone you didn't know – and gave it to them? The man in the meeting? I briefly told him my name, asked

his, and asked if I could give him a word I believed God gave me for him. He said 'yes', so I did. He cried. In the middle of the meeting, in the middle of worship, tears flowed down his cheeks. God met him, told him truth, gave him His direction. That day, in that meeting, God interrupted me 4 times to give words to people. Each time, they were straight from His heart to their need. Specific. Things only they and God knew. Life-giving. From the only One who IS life.

Hearing the voice of God – Do it. Live it. Be it.

Let Him touch you today, and let him speak through you to others. It's what we were made for.

Faith and the Road Less Traveled

by Jay Bransford



How many times in life have you found yourself standing at a crossroad, wondering which path you should take next? Should I do a DTS? Should I leave my homeland and join a particular ministry or base? How should I respond to my current ministry challenge, problem or opportunity? Should I go back to school, change roles, or return home? Where are you on the path of your life's journey? What decisions are you facing? And how are you being led along the plethora of twists, turns and decision points along the way?

When I think of life decisions, I fondly remember one of my favorite poems I studied in High School. It is called "[The Road Not Taken](#)" by Robert Frost. The poem is about a person who needs to make a decision but struggles to decide. He is afraid that no matter what path he chooses, he

will later regret it. In the end, he chooses to take “the road less traveled.” Looking back later he proclaims, “and that has made all the difference.”

Many experts assert that Frost’s intent was to make light of people’s tendency to be indecisive, second guess themselves and live life with regret about the decisions they could have made differently. Others believe that Frost was suggesting we should rise above the pressures to simply follow what the rest of the world does and instead use our own good judgment in choosing our life’s direction, even if it ends up being a path most people don’t choose.

I believe that the challenge Frost presents in this poem parallels incredibly well the life journey of every Christian – and indeed every human. Life is full of decisions – many thousands per day actually! The decisions we face can range from being huge, impactful, complex, or risky all the way down to decisions that seem trivial, simple, obvious or not even worth taking time to think about. In reality, however, there’s no real way for any of us to be able to predict the impact or result of any decision we make in life, even from those seemingly insignificant decisions. Indeed, all of our life’s choices have consequences – both good and bad.

With every decision we face in life, we could choose to be frozen in fear about the possible outcomes and risks, like Frost’s poem expresses. Or we could plunge down the path

that the world tells us is right. “There is a way that seems to be right unto man, but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 14:12). Or another option is that we can seek and trust God in the process.

Where do “Faith” and “The Road Less Traveled” meet?

In Frost’s poem, the man takes his time to contemplate and analyze the two paths before him. He describes what the paths look like, how far he can see down the paths, and how difficult the paths might be to walk down. The man seems to be rational and logical in considering his options. And yet he is still stuck and indecisive about his final choice. In reality, we don’t know how this man made his final decision. We don’t even know if he made the best or right choice. The truth is, every choice we make eventually requires faith of some kind – something we are trusting or believing in. When you make decisions, in what are you trusting or having faith? Where does God come into the picture?

For those of us who are Christians, we know and trust that God is ultimately in control, and that His plans for us are good. That’s always a great starting point when facing a decision and wanting to be led by God. It’s also helpful to remember that all knowledge and truth comes from God. So everything we know to be true is of God. Therefore, it is not UN-SPIRITUAL to put faith in things we know to be true, such as things we can see, hear, taste, smell, and touch. God

created all of those things. And He can speak to us through them. God has given us a sense of sight, smell, taste and touch so that we can make wise decisions. For example, if you are swimming in a lake and then see/hear lightning and thunder, you probably have the good sense (from God) to get out of the water.

Where does “spiritual leading” from God factor in?

It is important to acknowledge that God can guide us in many ways. Sometimes people have a tendency to over-spiritualize things and believe that for God to have truly led them they must audibly hear the voice of God speak to them. While that is a possible way that God can speak, guide and lead us, it also tends to be the least common way. As we face our life decisions, we can look to God and trust God to potentially lead us in numerous ways, none of which should necessarily be considered more or less spiritual than others. For example, God can lead us through:

1. His Word in the bible
2. Prayer
3. His Spirit (directly to us)
4. Nature and God’s creation using our senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, sound)
5. Our knowledge and experience
6. Input from other believers
7. Circumstances

What’s interesting is that with any of these ways we have

the potential to make mistakes. We are human and we don't always interpret things the way we should. For example, it is possible to misinterpret or misapply God's word, especially when we take it out of context. Similarly, it is possible for our senses to mislead us (such as optical illusions) or for our knowledge and experience to be less than perfect. It is even possible to pray, read the bible, and feel like God may have spoken something directly to our spirit but for some reason we still get it wrong. Yikes! Where does this leave us with Faith and being led on the Road Less Traveled?

The good news is that God sees our hearts. He knows when we're trying to make a concerted effort to know His will. And, in general, God will honor our efforts. However, if we always seem to rely on just one or two of those ways above to be led by Him, it might be the case that we are depending more on those specific approaches than we really are on God himself. Admittedly, I have a tendency to rely more on my senses, circumstances, and knowledge and experience. Others may have a tendency to read the bible, pray and wait on God (which is wonderful!) but rarely think about what God may be trying to make abundantly clear to them through their situation, knowledge, or input from others. Thus, it is probably good to try to be open to how you allow God to lead you. And it's good to have some checks and balances in how you are led by God – meaning that you might want to slow down your decision making

process if you notice that you are getting conflicting input about what seems right. You can also rest assured that God will not ask you to do something that is in opposition to the truths, principles and commandments found in His word.

Being led by God through the roads less traveled in life requires a well-rounded faith, where we trust and believe God to guide us in any way He chooses, not just the way we prefer or expect.

So a challenge for you to consider is:

- Which of these ways of being led by God do you already do well?
- In which of these ways of being led by God do you need to intentionally put more time and emphasis?
- What new habits can you start to build today to work toward this?

The Tripod of Being Spiritually Led

by Jay Bransford



The bible makes it clear that Christians are meant to be led by God's spirit. Romans 8:14 says, "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God." In John 10:27 it describes how being led by God works, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." This highlights two main responsibilities we have as followers of Christ:

- Hear God's voice, and
- Follow or obey what He says

A common challenge that we face as Christians is knowing WHEN it is actually God who is speaking to us so that we can have faith and confidence to obey.

Loren Cunningham, YWAM's founder, identified three pillars that I am referring to as the "tripod" for being spiritually led. Loren originally identified these three things as key

elements for seeing apostolic growth. But they also apply well to our own processes of learning as leaders how to be led by God. The three legs of the tripod are:

- Freedom in the Spirit
- Spiritual Eldership
- Relationship

FREEDOM IN THE SPIRIT

Every person, regardless of age, should have freedom in the Spirit to hear from God and obey. This means giving people a chance to receive revelation from God, interpret that revelation, and apply what they understand. However, it can be dangerous to do this in a vacuum (without involving others). Healthy spiritual leadership encourages us not to live, think, and make our decisions independently. This leads us to...

SPIRITUAL ELDERSHIP

Spiritual Elders have a generally recognized depth of Christian experience and maturity. As such, they are submitted to the Lordship of Jesus and to being servant leaders. Involving spiritual elders in your decision making process means inviting them to pray about the things you believe God is speaking to you (or your team) and allowing them to test those words against scripture.

RELATIONSHIP

God represents to us the perfect example of unity in relationship. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The 3-person Godhead (or Trinity) works in perfect relationship in speaking, listening, and doing. This mirrors well the relationship that we should seek with our team and respected elders as we desire to be spiritually led. We should strive to avoid complete autonomy and independence, and as elders we should avoid clenching onto absolute control. Decisions should first and foremost be based upon honoring and respectful relationships – trusting that God can and does speak to each one of us.

Where to Start in Being Led by God

**Note: The following is not meant to be a process to follow, but rather to be helpful principles and practices to try to incorporate into your life.*

- Awareness. Be aware of the times when you are making a decision and choose to invite God into the process.
- Bible reading and reflection. Choose a section or chapter of scripture to read. What was the meaning of the passage? How might it apply in your current life situation? What words or phrases seem to be standing out to you? What may God be trying to say to you through that?

- Prayer. Talk to God, tell Him how you're feeling, ask Him questions, and listen.
- Involve others. Who needs to be involved with this decision? Whose input should you consider? Talk with other respected, Godly people about what you believe God is speaking to you. Ask them to pray with you and for you. Consider their input and take it back to God.
- Process. Take time to process all that you feel God may be speaking to you and/or to the group you are making the decision with. Is there anything that seems out of alignment with the word or character of God? What do you feel God is saying in all of it? Are you and your team (or key stakeholders) in agreement? What else, if anything, might you need to do, ask, research or pray about before making a final decision?

Two things to help you on your journey of learning to be spiritually led:

- Keep practicing. Just like anything in life, the more you practice a skill, the better you get at it. The same thing is true for developing your ability to be spiritually led.
- Accept that you will make mistakes. Realize that no one hears perfectly from God 100% of the time. It's OK to make mistakes. Keep developing your discernment to hear from God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Defining Roles

Defining Roles Overview

Leadership requires vision being put into action. And since YWAM values working in teams (foundational value #10), turning vision into action usually means that we must successfully distribute ministry roles and responsibilities across a group of people. How well do you understand the key roles necessarily to fulfill your ministry vision? What unique skills and giftings does your ministry need to be successful? How well have you defined and filled those key roles on your team? The following articles explore the critical leadership skill of defining roles in order to see vision realized through the actions of people and with the power of God.

The Necessity of D-T-R

by Garth Gustafson



After eleven years of seeing a ministry grow and become more fruitful than we had ever imagined, I was on the verge of wanting to give up. Why you ask? I had about twenty leaders of ministries coming to me as direct reports and it was about to kill me and annoy them. We had continued to grow as a community and an organization, but lacked the structure and clarity of roles to continue to sustain it.

Healthy ministries grow. Just like in nature from trees to animals, when things are healthy they grow bigger, multiply and spread. By God's grace if a ministry is healthy and grows a major challenge for us as leaders is to continue to recreate structures and this requires redefining leadership roles.

THE D-T-R TALK...

In high school when a girl and a guy seemed like they liked each other more than as friends, eventually one of them

would initiate a D-T-R. Someone had to take the leap and Define The Relationship.

Defining Roles is kind of like a D-T-R, you need to figure out who is thinking what, how are we going to move forward and what the heck are we going to do. Just like all relationships the more clarity we can bring to defining our roles, the more healthy the relationship will be, the more effective we will be in our roles, and the more fruitful the ministry will be.

In our context, as the ministry had grown we had outgrown our structure. We had been working hard on a new model, but we needed to get the right people in the right place and in a volunteer organization that isn't always easy. Finally, after over a year we had not only a plan, but also the right people in the right places to take on the new structure with new roles.

KNOW YOUR NUMBER AND STAY ON IT

As a leader one of the keys for defining roles is that we know the strengths, weaknesses, skills and spiritual gifts of our team, as well as our own. When we have clarity around this then we are not only able to get the right people in the right role, but we are able to have conversations that enable us to define how we can work together to make them successful in these roles. As we clarify roles or “our numbers” and we can work together, then we stay on those numbers to avoid

confusion so we can function effectively.

Eventually over time we will need to recreate the structure and redefine the roles because of greater growth. Because healthy ministries grow it will be normal that as leaders we will consistently be restructuring and defining roles to continue to steward what God continues to build and so being able to D-T-R is a critical skill that we as leaders must grow in.

TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION TO A D-T-R

“Leadership and followership are ideas linked by a trust that puts everyone at peace with ineluctable risk.” Max De Pree, Leadership Jazz

If you have a D-T-R it will be taking a risk and so without trust as a foundation, it will not go well. The necessity of trust in a D-T-R was true in high school, it is true in a family and it is true in ministry. I have seen and experienced a number of leadership appointments, leadership transitions, and organizational restructuring. When there is not a deep foundation of mutual trust between those who are defining roles, the leaders, their direct reports, as well as the community, no matter how well we D-T-R, without trust undergirding the relationships in ministry the role defining will most likely fail.

In our case one reason our recent D-T-R has been successful

is we invited mentors into this process who helped us to intentionally clarify what our roles were, where they overlapped and how we would process these areas. We used a simple tool called a RACI Matrix which helped us agree upon what leadership areas we had responsibility or accountability and what areas we wanted to be consulted on or informed on. This process continued to build the trust as we walked into our new roles with clarity and unity.

R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is/will be doing this task?• Who is assigned to work on this task?
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accountable<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who's head will roll if this goes wrong?• Who has the authority to take decision?
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consulted<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone who can tell me more about this task?• Any stakeholders already identified?
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informed<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone whose work depends on this task?• Who has to be kept updated about the progress?

(Here are a few websites you can use as resources for RACI Matrixes and for using them in the ministry context:
<http://backstagepastors.org/the-raci-matrix-for-project-management/> & <http://racichart.org/>)

In our recent transition the responsibilities that I was overseeing were basically divided and a friend, co-laborer and local indigenous leader took oversight of the day-to-day leadership. Yesterday we hung out and after almost a year we both consider it to be a wildly successful D-T-R and all of our leadership and community agree! I feel like he and I should have a couple's picture holding hands here. 😊

Why has this D-T-R worked? One word, trust... we deeply not only trust, but respect and love each other. There is no sense of jealousy, competition or power struggle. Instead we know each other well, trust each other deeply, continue to clarify with one another, as well as with our community.

KEYS TO HAVING A GOOD D-T-R:

As we consider having D-T-R's, here are a few keys to help us have successful ones because as anyone who has had a D-T-R knows, an awkward D-T-R is no fun!

1. Trust must always be the foundation for a successful D-T-R.
2. Know Each Others Strengths, Weaknesses, Skills and Spiritual Gifts.
3. Clarify roles, responsibilities, accountability and expectations with your direct report.
4. Make sure as you define roles that any structure or defining of roles must serve the ministry and guard against the ministry starting to serve the structure.
5. Communicate with clarity to others about the roles of

leaders.

6. Continue to communicate with one another and others as the roles continue to evolve and develop.

A FINAL WARNING ON THE D-T-R: REMEMBER THE CONTEXT

As a volunteer movement for nearly 60 years we have learned over the decades what we are and what we are not. To Define the Roles (DTR) it is critical that the roles fit the context. After many attempts as a movement to be more organizational, more corporate and more structured, God has made it very clear that our DNA is to function as a family. When we have started to define roles and structure using organizational models and trying to be more corporate we have seen that we do not function as God has called us to relate as a movement.

As a movement we are called to function first and foremost as spiritual fathers and mothers, big brother and sisters, championing one another in the call of God. It is critical that as we D-T-R, that we continue to remember that our first role is as a part of a family and that we relate to one another as a family and not out of titles or roles.

May we continue to grow as a movement in ministries around the globe. May we continue to restructure, raise up more leaders and therefore redefine roles. May we D-T-R on the foundation of trust, knowing our gift sets and with great

clarity. And as all of our roles get defined and redefined, may we continue to relate first and foremost as a family looking to our Father to continue to lead us forward for His glory!

Questioning Your Clarity

by Jay Bransford



Has the following ever happened to you?... There is an important project or event coming up that you're in charge of. You plan out WHAT needs to get done, you assign people to different tasks and responsibilities, and you seem to have everyone's agreement and commitment. But as times goes by you see that some people don't follow through with what you were expecting. Either the work doesn't get done, or you have to step up and do it yourself. You are frustrated with your team and don't understand why things aren't getting done or aren't getting done correctly.

If you're like most people, you have experienced this kind of situation more than once in your life. Perhaps you were the frustrated leader. Or perhaps you were a frustrated staff member who inadvertently frustrated your leader by not fulfilling his or her expectations. It happens far too often.

The reality of life is that the successful achievement of goals requires constant 2-way communication. And one of the key elements of communication is clarifying people's unique roles on the team. A question you should always ask yourself is, "How clear am I being about what I'm asking people to do and how could I improve?"

8 Factors in Defining Roles

Whether you are a team leader or a team member, there are certain elements of defining roles that will help you minimize the likelihood and frustrations of unmet performance expectations. Below are 8 factors to consider any time you are defining a role. You'll see a general description, a bible reference from the book of Nehemiah that demonstrates the point, as well as questions to ask yourself and to clarify with the person to whom you are considering giving the role.

1. GOAL/SUCCESS

Often times people need or want to know the bigger picture about what they are being asked to do and why. By describing the goal or what you're asking of them, and defining what successful achievement of that role would look like, you help people to more clearly understand what you are expecting of them and why. (Nehemiah 2:1-5)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- How would you define the goal of what you're asking the person to do?
- Why is this role necessary? Of what value is it?
- How does this role fit in with the bigger picture or goal?
- What would success in this role look like? How would you measure it?

2. PROCESS

Sometimes it makes sense to allow people to determine for themselves how best to complete a task or responsibility. Other times it is best to have consistency in how things get done, and thus a process may be developed that helps ensure both the consistency and the quality level for how things get done. If you have any expectations about HOW a role or responsibility should be done, make sure to clarify that with people up front. (Nehemiah 4:7-23)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- How would you like this work to get done?
- Is there (or should there be) a process for completing any of the required tasks?
- What inputs are generally required in order to complete the work? (i.e. information, money, resources, documents, approvals, etc)
- Who should be involved in the process and how?
- What are the expected outputs of the process? (i.e. information, documents, products, feedback, etc)

3. TASKS/RESPONSIBILITIES

Whether is it necessary to define any processes or not, oftentimes it is helpful to clarify the specific tasks or responsibilities you are expecting someone to perform. Make sure to clearly communicate **WHAT** you are expecting people to do. (Nehemiah 3)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- What are the key responsibilities involved with this role?
- What specific tasks or steps should the person definitely complete?
- What would you be unhappy about if the person did NOT do it?

4. TIMING

People need to know the timelines of **WHEN** you expect them to do things or complete things. If it's important, make sure to clarify when you expect someone to start an activity, when you expect them to give updates about their progress with that activity, and when you expect them to complete certain tasks or activities. (Nehemiah 4:15-16 and 21-23)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- When should they start important tasks or responsibilities?
- When should they complete each important task or responsibility?

- When and how should they give you updates about their progress?

5. SKILL

At times people fail to fulfill our expectations because we have asked them to do something that they are not sufficiently skilled to do. As a leader, it is your responsibility to gauge people's skill levels and assign them roles and responsibilities that are in reasonable alignment with their skills. (Nehemiah 7:1-3)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- What do I believe this person is capable of doing?
- What evidence do I have that this person is capable of doing it?
- How can I confirm if the person has the needed skills or not?
- What aspects of what I'm assigning this person to do I need to keep a closer eye on, to make sure they indeed have the needed skills to successfully complete it?

6. CONFIDENCE

Sometimes people fail to complete tasks because they lack the self-confidence to take action. Certain things in life require confidence to do well. Think about speaking in front a group of people and the role that self-confidence plays. Think about the impact of a lack of self-confidence when playing sports, or singing, or playing an instrument. Don't set people up for failure by asking them

to do things that they lack sufficient confidence to do. (Nehemiah 4:12-14)

Question to ask and clarify:

- What level of confidence is needed for this role?
- Is this person sufficiently confident to take on this role or responsibility?
- Who has the confidence to do this well?
- How could this person's self-confidence be boosted?

7. COMMITMENT

By the grace of God, we have been given free-will. This means that people can choose for themselves what they want to do, when they want to do it, where, how, and with whom. Remember that just because you ask someone to do something, and even if you know it's a really important or valuable role, that person still may not have a high level of excitement or commitment to fulfill the role. Confirming true commitment is key. High levels of commitment often equal a timely and high quality final outcome. (Nehemiah 5:14-19)

Questions to ask and clarify:

- To what degree does the person understand the importance and value of the role?
- How motivated is the person to fulfill the role?
- How can you determine the person's commitment level to the role?

- What might increase the person's level of commitment?
- What competing priorities does the person have and what can be done about it?

8. SUPPORT/FEEDBACK

Even with the best of intentions, sometimes people fail to perform well due to a lack of feedback and support along the way. People need to know if they are on track. They need encouragement. They need prayer. And sometimes they need practical help. (Nehemiah 4:15-22 and 5:8-12)

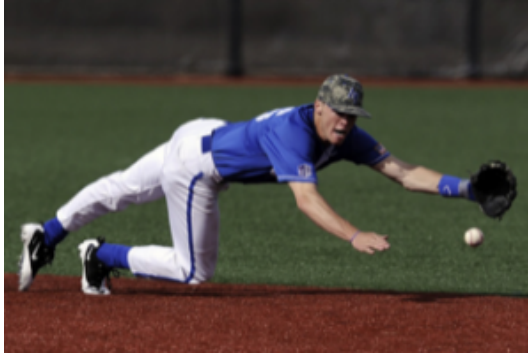
Questions to ask and clarify:

- What kind of support does the person need to be successful?
- How does the person like to be encouraged? How often?
- What feedback can you give along the way? How often?
- Where can the person go for help or to ask questions?

Clearly defining key roles is critical to effectively working in teams. It is a 2-way communication process that requires ongoing dialogue until the tasks or role is complete. Try using the 8 factors in defining roles above and watch as the productivity of your team increases, the morale of your team improves, and your team relationships strengthen.

Who's On First?

by Jay Bransford



In the 1930s two men created one of the most famous comedy skits of all time. Abbott and Costello were the comedian's names. The skit involves one comedian trying to explain to the other comedian the nicknames of the players of a particular baseball team. The challenge is that each player's nickname is actually a question word (think "Who, What, Where, When, Why?"). Basically, a man named "Who" plays on first base. A guy named "What" plays second base. And a man named "I Don't Know" plays third base. The conversation between the comedians is hilarious and can only be truly experienced by watching an [original clip](#). (Note: this 70+ year-old video currently has 11.7 million views on YouTube!)

So what does a famous comedy skit have to do with the topic of defining roles? You might be surprised to find out!

Defining roles is all about clarifying the “who, what, why, when and how” of your ministry activities SO THAT you and your team members can effectively work together to achieve the ministry’s overall purpose end goals. Imagine what would happen if you sent out a group of players onto a baseball field without telling them what their individual roles were. For those of you who aren’t familiar with baseball, it’s probably even easier for you to imagine the confusion. You would likely be asking questions such as:

- Where am I supposed to stand on the field?
- What am I supposed to do once I get there?
- If a ball comes to me, what do I do with it?
- How do I know if I’m doing a good job?
- What are the rules and expectations?
- How do I know when to come off the field?

The reality is that no sports team coach would ever send players into a game without the players first having a clear understanding of what their role was. Not doing so would be disastrous to the team.

How often do we make this mistake and fail to clarify roles within our ministry teams? How often do we assume that everyone knows what’s expected of them, only to later realize that those expectations were not always correct? It’s a common occurrence. And it leads to unnecessary

frustration, hurt feelings, conflicts, broken trust, withdrawal from the team, underperformance, and failure to reach goals.

Baseball, and virtually any team sport, can be a great example of how to clearly define roles. Any well trained sports team will ensure that each member of the team understands the following:

- **What are the key positions (or roles) on the team?**
- **Who is assigned to each position or role?**
- **What actions and behaviors are expected of each position?**
- **What skills are needed for each position?**
- **When is an action supposed to be performed?**
- **How long should each action typically take?**
- **What do I need in order to perform my action? (i.e. shoes, hat, glove, ball)**
- **What is the end result expected of me? (i.e. throwing the ball to the first baseman before the runner gets to the base)**

Your first step in defining roles as a ministry leader is to identify the key roles on your team. Another way to identify roles is to ask yourself, “What are the main types of work that need to get done?” For a baseball team that list of roles would be:

- First baseman
- Second baseman
- Shortstop
- Third baseman
- Catcher
- Pitcher
- Left Fielder
- Mid Fielder
- Right Fielder

On your ministry team, those roles would obviously be quite different. You might have roles that include things such as: English teacher, financial accountant, administrator, event planner, pastor, hospitality, social worker, counselor, communications, or tech specialist.

Your next steps are to determine WHAT activities each role requires, HOW and WHEN those activities should be completed, and WHO should do them. You can capture this information in a table format or in a simple document where each table column or section of the document refers to one aspect of the role (i.e. what, how, when, who). Here's an example of what it might look like for defining the role of a first baseman on a baseball team. To keep it simple, we'll only look at 2 of the first baseman's basic responsibilities:

ROLE: First Baseman

WHO: Lou Gehrig

WHAT Responsibilities:

1. Catch fly balls.

How: Use the baseball glove to catch the ball.

When: When a batter hits a ball in the air near the first baseman without the ball first hitting the ground.

2. Receive throws.

How: Use the baseball glove to catch the ball. Have one foot touching first base when you catch the ball.

When: When a teammate throws a ball to you and there is an opponent running to 1st base after the opponent hits a ball.

You might be thinking that defining roles sounds like a very structured, boring and non-spiritual activity. And you might be wondering, “Is this really something that Christians need to do? Is there any biblical basis for taking time to define roles on a team?” The answer is a definite ‘yes’. The bible clearly defines a number of important roles in life including the role of a(n):

- Husband – 1 Tim 5:8, Col 3:19, 1 Pet 3:7, Eph 5:25
- Wife – Titus 2:3-5, 1 Peter 3:1-4, 1 Tim 3:11
- Elder – 1 Tim 5:17, Titus 1:9, 1 Tim 4:13, Jam 5:14, Acts 15:6
- Deacon – 1 Tim 3:8-12
- Priest/Levite – Numbers 18:1-7

CHALLENGE:

Defining roles is not just for sports teams. It's for all of us. God uniquely designed and created every one of us. And He has a special purpose and role for you to play in His Kingdom right now! Your purpose may become more clear over time, and your roles may change over the years. But rest assured that God has a special and important role for you and for each of your team members. Spending time thinking and praying about it, and writing down those roles is crucial to living out your purpose. If God took time to write down important roles in the bible, then we should do the same in our ministry contexts. Make it a priority this week to clarify your role and the roles of your team members. Say goodbye to the confusion of not knowing "Who's on first, what's on second, and I don't know is on third." And start communicating your expectations with clarity, allowing your team members to rise to their fullest potential.

Vital Roles on a Leadership Team

by Jay Bransford

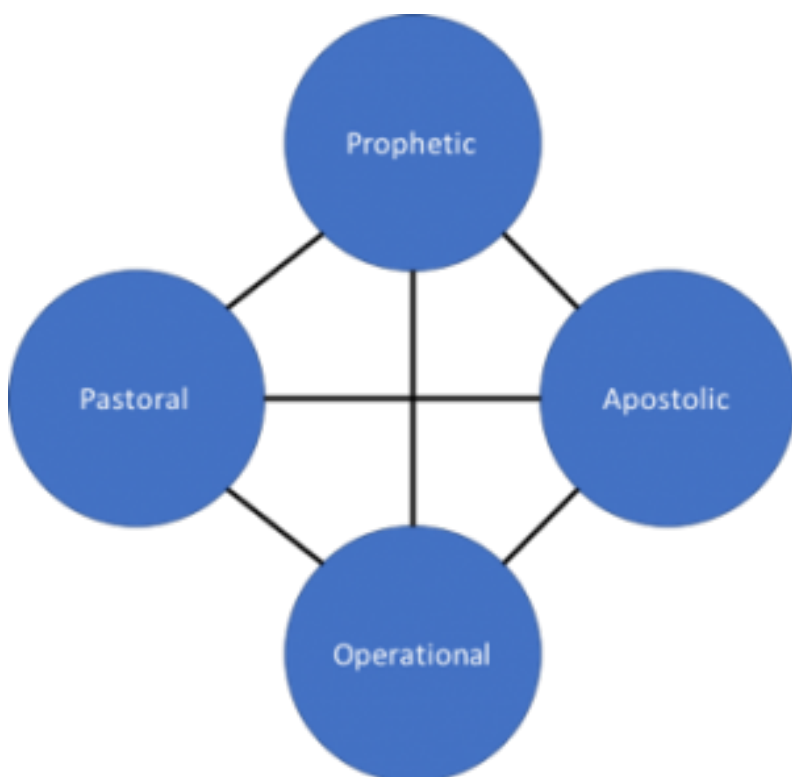


With the exception of Jesus, the perfect leader does NOT exist. Every leader has his or her own strengths and weaknesses as a leader. This is one important reason why YWAM highly encourages the concept of “shared leadership”. While any one person generally fails to represent all the strengths necessary to lead a ministry well in the long-run, a team of people who share various leadership roles and responsibilities can.

4 VITAL LEADERSHIP ROLES

YWAM’s 6-week Leadership Development Course (LDC) emphasizes four vital giftings or roles that should ideally be represented on any ministry team, especially within the leadership team itself. Those giftings or roles on a leadership team are:

- **Prophetic** – a special anointing to hear from God, challenge the status quo, and be a spiritual stimulator and intercessor
- **Apostolic** – a special anointing to pioneer, be visionary, envision new possibilities, initiate action, and inspire others
- **Operational** – a special anointing to plan, implement, organize, schedule, and manage tasks or events
- **Pastoral** – a special anointing to care for, shepherd, nurture, disciple and encourage others



BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

It is fascinating to reflect on how God, as the trinity, represents these 4 vital leadership roles so perfectly:

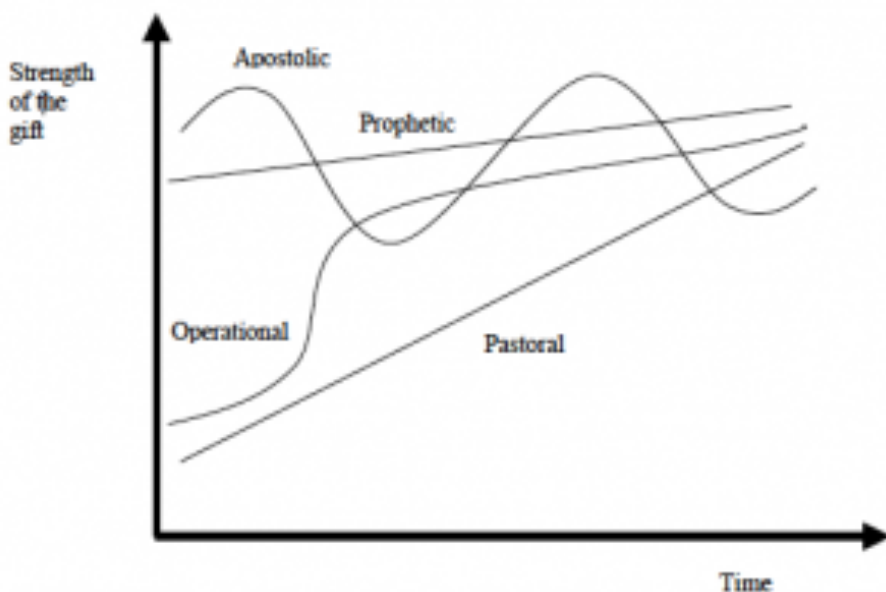
- **Prophetic:** God the Father is the inspiration for all the prophetic writings in the bible. In addition, Jesus was prophetic throughout his 3 years of ministry.
- **Apostolic:** God the Father had an inspiring vision for the world and He is the constant overseer of it.
- **Operational:** Jesus put into action the vision and will of the Father. He did exactly what needed to happen for the redemption of the human race through his life, death, and resurrection.
- **Pastoral:** The Holy Spirit comes alongside his sheep and brings care, understanding and new levels of equipping for their role in the Kingdom of God.

APPLYING THE 4 ROLES TO MINISTRY

You may find that the need for each of these roles changes over time as a ministry develops. For example, it is common for new ministries to be birthed by someone receiving a prophetic word from God. This may come to someone who has a special prophetic anointing. It is also common for ministries to be started by leaders who have an apostolic gifting, who have a strong and inspiring vision they communicate to others. As a ministry gets established it often discovers the need for operational giftings in order to better organize and plan out what the ministry does and

how. And as more team members join the ministry there is naturally a higher need for pastoral care from leadership.

But as the ministry develops and grows it will never outgrow the need for all 4 of these leadership giftings/roles. If you remove any one of them from the picture, the ministry will eventually begin to decline. We must continuously hear new and afresh from God (Prophetic). We must continue to be visionary and inspired to take action (Apostolic). We must be organized enough to be able to translate vision and strategy into action (Operational). And we must take care of our team/flock if we intend for the team to remain healthy and intact in the longer run (Pastoral).



It is quite possible for someone to have multiple leadership giftings and thus play multiple leadership roles. For example, a single leader might be gifted both as an Apostle and as a Prophet. However, it is very unusual for any one person (or leader) to be strong in all four of the leadership giftings/roles discussed above. Therefore, as you develop your ministry team, it is extremely helpful to think about these 4 particular roles and who is best suited to hold those roles on your team.

CHALLENGE:

- Of these four roles, what are your strongest leadership giftings?
- In which of these areas are you weak?
- What could be the long-term impact to your ministry in the absence of having all 4 of these leadership giftings?
- Who on your current team could fill any of these key leadership roles?
- What type of person do you need to pray for, look for, and recruit to better round out the leadership giftings on your ministry team?

Describing a Learning Community

by Sim S – ALLC Elder and Co-Founder

To me, the expression ‘learning community’ that the ALLC is using is an expression of our desire to generate intentionality to develop one’s leadership character, ministry skills and capacity, and connectedness among our leaders. The ALLC utilizes both formal and informal approaches to learning.

The formal approaches include specific training times and events (such as what we are doing with the DNA Seminar, the annual Asia Leadership Summit, leadership training schools/courses, and various leadership workshops) that the ALLC coordinates and/or promotes.

We also know that development is more than just training programs – that learning in leadership is more than just top down teaching. It’s also about applying what we learn, learning through doing, and learning from one another in everyday life. Much learning comes through being with and watching our leaders – how they live and how they serve. This is informal learning. Most of us cannot live where our emerging leaders are living, and they cannot live where we are. We can however plan to visit them, and/or for them to spend a time with us in specific training. Here, the ‘teacher’ elders, and staff of the training would be able to spend deliberate time (hanging out) with ‘students.’ So

the opportunities for them to watch us and be with us is present.

We hope that over time, through a myriad of training opportunities, and intimate times with other emerging leaders and elders together, that interpersonal friendships among our leaders (elders, current and emerging leaders) will grow, and communities of learning leaders will develop throughout Asia & the Pacific.

About the Authors

Garth Gustafson started working with YWAM in 2002 and in 2005 founded YWAM / University of the Nations Battambang, Cambodia, where he serves as the Executive Director. Garth also serves as an Elder for the YWAM Movement in Asia helping to serve and support over 1,200 in Southeast Asia. He has a Masters Degree in Biblical Studies and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry with Fuller Theological Seminary. Garth and his wife Caroline have two children, Lyla and Gunner.

Harry Ho is the founder of several counseling and member care centers in China and Thailand. He has a Masters degree in Chinese Studies from Free University Berlin and is a licensed intercultural Conflict Mediator and Coach. He has 22 years of experience in China, is a father to 3 TCKs, and the husband of a counselor. His main life calling to invest into startup ministries & help revive malfunctioning ones. Harry lives in China.

Jay Bransford has been serving with YWAM in Chiang Mai, Thailand since 2006. With a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership and years of experience as a corporate consultant specializing in organizational development, he has served in YWAM as a mission's coach/consultant, city coordinator, regional Elder, and as the overall facilitator of the ALLC.

Jeff Romack has been involved in YWAM, church planting, leadership training and community development since 1981. Jeff and his family have spent 20 years working in Micronesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Cambodia. He has served as Indochina Regional Director for YWAM and as a member of YWAM's Global Leadership Team (GLT). Jeff is currently working on his doctorate at Christian Theological Seminary.

Jim Randall has a PhD in Leadership and Management with 40 plus years of practical experience. He has served the Lord in full time Christian service since 1973. He has ministered in more than 30 countries on four continents including 14 years in Japan. Jim loves to teach and consult with church planters and businessmen starting Business As Missions projects. He now lives in S.E. Asia but also travels to Australia and Africa training leaders.

Kezia Jelfa is from Indonesia. She has been serving with YWAM Bali, Indonesia since 2014. Her passion is for training and church planting.

Linda Hermann has been in YWAM since 1982, first in Cambodian refugee camps, then Bangkok slums, then leading a Thai foundation for 10+ years. For Linda, it's all about Jesus, and loving people to Him, one heart at a time. God has been taking all He taught her in those years to help leaders get to the dream He has given them.

Phil Porter has served in YWAM Thailand for over 25 years with his wife, Cindy. He has served as the National Director for Thailand for 8+ years and continues to serve as a national convenor. He leads the ALLC core team and is passionate about leadership development in an Asian context and partnering with the national church to see the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Sim is Asian. He was a student church-planter in the latter 1970s, a base pioneer in the 1980s, a mission student and SOFM leader in the 1990s, a conference chairperson in the 2000s, and a convening elder for Y in the 2010s. Currently, Sim serves as an Elder for the ALLC and East Asia.

Stephe Mayers has been in YWAM for over 40 years and been involved in various leadership roles and in leadership development all of those years. Along with Barry Austin, he has pioneered the LDC with courses in all the main regions of the world. He lives in Spain with his wife Rite and has three adult children.

Steve Cochrane has been serving with YWAM in South Asia for the past 35 years. He has a passion for leadership development, and especially deepening leaders in having daily practices that contribute to ongoing formation. Steve has a PhD in the history of Christian-Muslim relations, and presently is based in India as well as the USA.

Larger waves of Asian Christians are coming... are we ready? We must raise up the next generation of leaders!

ALLC stands for the Asia Leaders Learning Community. As the name implies, the ALLC exists to see leaders in Asia growing, thriving and multiplying as they serve together as a community of learners.

Join the ALLC community today! Everyone is encouraged to be a part of the ALLC – both as a learner and as a collaborator willing to serve and develop future leaders. Let's multiply ourselves, our ministries and the Kingdom!

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