MENTORING MEN TO BE SPIRITUAL LEADERS

AT WESTPORT BAPTIST CHURCH,

WESTPORT KENTUCKY

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

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by

Phillip DeWayne Sowell

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APPROVAL SHEET

MENTORING MEN TO BE SPIRITUAL LEADERS

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WESTPORT, KENTUCKY

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To Gail,

my best friend,

thank you for you

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PREFACE

When I trace my own spiritual development, I can readily identify important challenges issued by Sunday School teachers, pastors, camp counselors, and advisors. When a challenge was set in a children's Sunday School class to memorize Scripture, I was up for the task. During youth camp, I accepted a challenge for daily Bible study and set a goal to continue that discipline after I returned home. Working towards measureable spiritual goals has been invaluable to my Christian growth.

The seeds of this project were planted in my heart early in my first pastorate when I became burdened for the spiritual growth of that congregation. I longed for them to have the joys and rewards I had experienced from my personal efforts towards spiritual growth. I realized that they, too, might respond best to a formal challenge, much as I had. I prayed and sought counsel about how to implement these ideas in our congregation. With my wife's helpful input, I designed the first version of Press on to the Prize (POP), at that time a church-wide spiritual growth campaign.

I have endless gratitude for the people of Ewing Baptist Church and the work they did during our year-long challenge through POP. It was a time of great growth for the congregation and for me as a leader. I learned many valuable lessons as I reflected on the experience and sought to refine the program in my mind. Though I had many thoughts about improving the POP campaign to make it more effective for the participants, it had been such an intense undertaking that I knew it could not be repeated with that same congregation for quite some time.

When I was called to my second pastorate, I had already decided to work on my Doctor of Ministry degree. I knew from the start that God was pushing me to refine POP because it would be a valuable part of my ongoing ministry. As I got to know my

new congregation, I saw a groundswell of women praying earnestly for their husbands to be strong leaders of their homes and of our church. I am thankful to these women for their boldness and devotion as they reaffirmed my decision to focus POP mentoring on the men of our church.

I am thankful to my colleagues Debra Gorbandt and Keith Abrams for their willingness to serve as sounding boards as I worked through the planning stages of this project. Their support and encouragement helped me lay the groundwork for POP at Westport Baptist Church.

This project would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation of the seven men who served as the POP mentoring group. They devoted much time, energy, and effort to POP, providing detailed feedback and data whenever I needed it. I know they were able to benefit from their participation, but so was I. It is personally rewarding—and humbling—to be part of the work of God in the lives of these men. I look forward to seeing their efforts continue to bear fruit as we seek to refine and repeat this program in the future.

My wife, Gail, has been my loyal partner and tireless encourager. She paves the way for me to do the work to which God has called me. She has supported me in this degree program, through her patient listening, thoughtful feedback, and loving friendship. She partners with me in parenting our children, Caroline, Susannah, and Josephine. There is no way for me adequately to thank my wife and daughters for the obedient sacrifices they make so that we can serve God as a family. As Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 9:15, "Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!"

P. DeWayne Sowell

Westport, Kentucky

December 2013

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to mentor a core group of men, fostering

spiritual growth and spiritual leadership development, by providing support, resources,

and accountability, in order to advance God's kingdom through personal spiritual growth

and leadership in the ministries and evangelistic efforts of Westport Baptist Church,

Westport, Kentucky.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to increase the participants' understanding of

God's purposes for men as leaders in the home and church. Biblical knowledge of the

role God intends men to fill was foundational to this project. The participating men were

to encounter God's truth and learn the importance of accepting both the responsibilities

and blessings of leadership in their families and in the work of the congregation.

The second goal of the project was to guide participating men to experience

spiritual growth by setting and pursuing individual spiritual growth goals. These

individual goals were selected in cooperation with the participant, allowing the men to

take ownership of how their participation in the project would impact their lives.

Pursuing a specific, personal goal maintained the participants' focus and energy more

readily than working towards a generic aim.

Third, this project aimed to prepare the participating men for active leadership

and ministry roles in the church. It would have been unrealistic to expect that every

participant would complete the project and then immediately assume a high-profile position of ministry leadership; however, I expected that participation in this mentoring program would move these men towards active service in the near future. Participants were led to express more confidence in God's desire to use them in a consistent role of service through the church.

The final goal of this project was a personal one: I wanted to learn how to be an effective spiritual mentor for men in my congregation. Sadly, I have never been mentored intentionally by a more mature Christian man, and I have never been a witness to an effective mentoring program. After assessing the health of my church, the men in particular, I determined that I would be negligent if I did not offer strong discipleship in the form of a mentoring relationship.

Context

Westport Baptist Church is located in Westport, Kentucky, a small, rural community on the banks of the Ohio River in northeast Oldham County. Oldham County is one of the fastest growing counties in Kentucky. Much of this growth stems from Oldham County's close proximity to the Louisville metro area, making it desirable to those wanting a relatively easy commute coupled with a suburban lifestyle. From 2000 to 2010, Oldham County's population increased from 46,178 to 60,316, a 30.62 percent growth. The projected population for 2012 was 61,412.[1]

The population of the rural area of Oldham County, where Westport is located, is much smaller and has grown at a slower rate. From 2000 to 2008, the population within the church's ministry area has grown 16.5 percent from 1,106 to 1,288. By 2013, the Westport area is projected to increase another 13 percent (168 new residents) for an

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[1]U.S. Department of Commerce, "State & County QuickFacts: Oldham County, Kentucky," United States Census Bureau, http://quickfacts.census.gove/qfd/states/21/21185.htm (accessed July 20, 2013).

area total of 1,456.[2]

The population in the Westport area is disproportionately middle-aged, compared to the national average; 37.6 percent of residents are between the ages of 45-64 compared with only 25 percent of residents in the United States. Of the sixty-five different classes in the Community Tapestry system used to classify "neighborhoods based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition," 99 percent of the Westport area population is classified as "Green Acres." This classification describes the population as a "little bit country" in that they live in a rural area immediately outside of developing suburban fringe areas. The "Green Acres" community segment is considered upscale with median household incomes of $65,000 and median home values of $197,000. This community segment "may not be farmers, but they embrace the country lifestyle, from their gardens and pets to their pursuits, hunting and fishing."[3]

Much of the early history of Westport Baptist Church has been lost due to lack of records. The limited documents reveal that the church was organized in 1843 and was one of several local congregations of different denominations that shared a community building. Each Sunday, believers from the community would attend services, with different congregations taking turns being in charge of the worship. The fourth Sunday was typically the Baptist church's turn. The Baptists of Westport eventually left this alternating system by building their own church building in 1909. Since 1909, the church has had thirty-two pastors, several of whom were seminary students or bi-vocational

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[2]North American Mission Board, "Know Your Community: Westport Ministry Area," Center for Missional Research, North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.1477835/k.CBAB/ Demographic_ReportsCenter_for_Missional_Research.htm (accessed August 6, 2008).

[3]Ibid.

pastors.[4]

The three most recent pastorates affected the church in ways that continue to influence the church and its growth, as evidenced in the unpublished business meeting minutes, the records of both the Oldham-Trimble Baptist Association and the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and personal interviews with long-time members. Looking over the past twenty years in the Annual Church Profile History Report provided by request from the Kentucky Baptist Convention, one can easily see the timeline of the church's history reflected in these statistics.

The first of the three previous pastorates had a long tenure of eighteen years. The church had steady leadership, and it was during this time the congregation decided to construct a new church building. Much of the labor was done through volunteers. The accomplishment of this task, along with the massive organization effort it entailed, engendered much excitement and renewed interest in the body and community. In the two years previous to building, baptisms were 3 (1987) and 2 (1988). In the next two years, baptisms rose significantly to 9 (1989) and 7 (1990), but this momentum was not to be sustained, and this pastor left under good terms in the spring of 1993.[5] At the time of his departure, the church was enjoying the blessings of a new building with room to grow, manageable debt, and a good reputation in the community. This situation helped prepare the road for the next pastor.

The next pastorate was a little different in that a husband and wife served as co-pastors. Their ministry in Westport began very successfully. Using each other's strengths, they concentrated on a quality worship experience and reaching out to the

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[4]Rick Lucas, "A History of Westport Baptist Church" (handout from Dedication Day 1987), Westport (KY) Baptist Church records.

[5]Kentucky Baptist Convention, "Annual Church Profile History Report" (accessed August 13, 2008, via e-mail).

community. Baptism rates and transfers started to climb in 1993 and 1994, but the largest gains happened in 1995, with 23 baptisms and an average worship attendance of 149, practically doubling in a mere three years from 75 in 1992. In 1996, this pastoral team became entangled in questions of personal morality. After a painful period of steady denials, public lies, and a criminal investigation, the church body splintered into various factions; additionally, the co-pastors resigned in such a way as to cause more divisiveness rather than the beginning of healing. This scandal not only effectively killed any growth, but also resulted in twenty-year statistical lows for baptisms, worship, and Sunday School attendance: compare the reported numbers from 1995 (23 baptisms, 149 in worship, 104 in Sunday School) with those reported in 1997, after the conflict (1 baptism, 75 in worship, 58 in Sunday School).[6]

The last of the three previous pastors served from the summer of 1997 through the summer of 2006. This pastor brought a much needed rest, calmness, and healing after the preceding tumultuous five-year period. This period of healing, however, seems to have translated into a retreat and an inward focus. The church was essentially plateaued, as can be seen in Table 1.

During this period, 2002 was the statistical high in each of the four categories. That spring, the church held a particularly effective revival to which most of the baptisms and other additions can be directly attributed. Subtracting out the gains from this revival, the numbers from that year fall into line with the numbers of the other years. Though gains were made during 2002, they were not sustained. When 2006 and 2002 are compared, 2006 totals were significantly less than 2002 (baptisms down 4, transfers down 2, Sunday School average down 16, and worship average down 14).[7]

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[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

Table 1. Five-Year Growth Pattern

Year	Baptisms	Transfers	Sunday School Average Attendance	Worship Average Attendance
2002	6	6	75	100
2003	2	5	65	82
2004	5	3	61	80
2005	3	3	70	90
2006	4	4	59	86
Totals, 2002-2006	22	21 (10)[a]		
Averages, 2002-2006	4.4	4.2 (2)[b]	66	88

[a]During 2002-2006, 11 of the 21 transfers were staff members and their families. Transfers not related to staffing totaled 10.

[b]Transfers not related to staffing averaged 2 per year.

At some point during these five years, several members began to lose confidence in this pastor, though my position as a relatively new pastor has not afforded me complete understanding of this situation. The pastor was asked for his resignation, and he gave it. No perceptible loss of numbers has been noted since his departure. When I arrived as pastor in April 2007, however, a lingering pall and noticeable frustration were hanging over the congregation, seemingly from the fact that the last two pastorates had ended negatively.

The Sunday School enrollment at Westport Baptist gives an idea of church demographics. The 2006 Annual Church Profile reported a total Sunday School enrollment of 121. Of these, 57 were age 17 and under, 47 were ages 18-54, and 17 were

55 and up.[8] The majority of the church attenders were part of married families with children. Most of our older adults were parents, grandparents, great-uncles and great-aunts to these nuclear families with at-home children. Many church members also had family ties with one another. For instance, in one Sunday School class, 14 out of 15 enrolled had some sort of family tie with one another.

After surveying key leaders in the congregation, I found only one area in which there is a strong perception of success – the youth and children's programs. This perception came mainly because of consistently high attendance for Wednesday night youth group meetings, a strong Vacation Bible School, and a thriving Awana children's program. These programs have benefited from the church's commitment to provide money and paid staff members who specialize in children and youth.

Dozens of pastors have served Westport Baptist during its history. I was called and started serving as senior pastor in April 2007. For part of my time here, I served along with a full-time associate minister; currently, I am working with a part-time youth minister and part-time minister of worship and children. My primary responsibilities include the preaching and teaching portions of services, teaching discipleship groups, pastoral counseling, visitation of members and prospects, and providing leadership for the staff and congregation. Though I was not pastor for all of 2007, statistical numbers had some increases over those of 2006. Worship average increased from 86 in 2006 to 94 in 2007; the Sunday School average increased from 59 to 67; and undesignated receipts grew from $179,000 to $195,000.[9]

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[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

Rationale

Westport Baptist Church is home to several steady ministries, such as Sunday School, Awana, youth group, and a praise team. The work of the church has been effective enough that the congregation has recently added a family life center with gymnasium, kitchen, and classroom space to the facilities. The labor of these ministries, however, has been overwhelmingly accomplished by the women of the church. The men of the church, in general and especially as compared to the women, have not readily served, led, taught, guided, or even participated in functions of the church. Under this structure, with predominantly female volunteers, the church had maximized its ministry. Without an increase in spiritual leaders and obedient workers, Westport Baptist Church could neither expand ministry nor effectively sustain current efforts. Simply put, the men of the church disproportionately exhibited a lack of spiritual leadership stemming from a lack of spiritual growth, vibrant faith, and servants' hearts. The conspicuous absence of these men in leadership and service was limiting the ministry of the church.

One could easily find evidence of this problem. In the early years of my serving as pastor, evening programs at Westport Baptist Church included Awana, youth group, and adult Bible study. Working with 40 children, Awana had 12 women who served and no men. Youth group had 2 women and 2 men leading the forty youth; one of those men was the paid youth minister, and the other assumed no active role beyond simply being present as a chaperone. Wednesday Adult Bible study attendance was typically 5 women and 1 man. During this same time period, Sunday School had 15 women and 6 men who taught or substituted regularly. In the music program, the worship team consisted of 7 women and 2 men. Other special worship groups such as drama, interpretive movement, and musicals had no or very little male involvement. For many years, the deacon body, which is not exclusively male, had consisted of several men who were willing to fill the position, not necessarily of men who were eager to serve; aside from serving communion, the deacons had little active role or responsibility

within the church. For summer ministries, not counting paid staff, 2 men volunteered for Vacation Bible School (compared to 30 women), 1 male chaperone accompanied the youth to Kentucky Changers, 2 men served as counselors with the youth at camp, and no men assisted in the summer Wednesday night children's activities. The church had no ministries specifically dedicated to men, not even a Sunday School class or small-group exclusively for men. Even the associational Baptist Builders group, which is predominately men and well attended by other churches, had only 1 participant from Westport Baptist Church.

All three ministers on staff at Westport Baptist Church identified the status of men in the life and service of the church as a serious problem. Several women, during Bible studies and strategic planning meetings, had expressed a concern for and had been praying for the spiritual development and maturity of the men in our church. Many of these women had been calling out to God to grow their husbands into spiritual leaders of the households because their lack of maturing in spiritual leadership affected not only the church, but also their particular families. The children and youth involved in our ministries were lacking male role models of active faith. The women of the church were at risk of being overburdened and burnt out. The men were missing the opportunity to experience the blessings of a growing faith and the support and encouragement of other godly men. Ministries were suffering or going undone because of lack of spiritually strong men. The boys and young men were not being mentored by our current adult men to be godly men.

Through this project, I have led a core group of men through an intentional time of mentoring. By providing support, resources, and accountability, these men are more intentional in spiritual growth, devoting more time and energy to biblical literacy, prayer, and worship. This core group has started developing spiritual leadership skills, and they are more prepared to take on greater service in current or new ministries of

9

Westport Baptist Church. They will continue to lead their families in godly ways. These men have encouraged and supported one another through intentional fellowship. Spiritual health and vitality is becoming the hallmark of these men's lives. In essence, this project has allowed Westport Baptist Church to see the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 carried out by discipling this core group of men and, in the future, we hope to see them leading in making disciples of others.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The definition of "mentoring" takes on various shades of meaning depending upon who is using the term. Many authors, both secular and religious, provide adequate definitions. For the purposes of this project, I have used Chuck Lawless's definition. Lawless defines biblical mentoring as "a God-given relationship in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach his or her potential as a disciple of Christ."[10]

For this project, I have personally mentored a core group of 7 men. There are several reasons for this focus. First, because I had never before mentored anyone, I wanted to experience the mentorship process myself before trying to implement a more robust strategy of a church-wide mentoring program with many mentoring groups. My personal involvement has allowed me to set an example for the men and the church by modeling mentoring.

Second, the project focused on men because our church suffers from a lack of men who are spiritually growing or serving. Further, I delimited the group to men because of the potential depth of the mentoring relationship and inappropriate appearance of mixed-gender mentoring.

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[10]Chuck Lawless, *Discipled Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches that are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 122.

I delimited the core group to a size of 5 to 10 participants for two reasons. First, a minimum of 5 is a significant number of men for a church of our size. From May to July, 2008, we averaged 105 in worship and 76 in Sunday School. Of these, there were only 25 men over the age of 18 who were enrolled in Sunday School. Thus, 5 men were 20 percent from this pool of men who were most likely to participate. A maximum of 10 was placed because of the self-limiting nature of having only one mentor to work with the participating men.

I anticipate that this project will continue to lead to greater spiritual growth and maturity for the participants. Assessing the long-term results was limited, however, by the project's fifteen-week duration.

Research Methodology

Throughout this project, I used several methods to secure input, data, and feedback from the core group of men who participated. During our initial meeting, I explained this project's mentoring program, entitled "Press on to the Prize" (POP). I answered questions about the project process in general and about specifics of the POP program in which they would be directly participating. At this meeting, I distributed a spiritual growth assessment survey for all participants to complete; this assessment provided the baseline data for the project.

The next time I met with the participants was during scheduled, individual meetings. During these meetings, the participant and I reviewed his completed spiritual growth assessment survey. Based on this survey and our dialogue, the participant set specific spiritual growth goals and formulated a spiritual growth plan to achieve these goals, using a goal-setting document.

After setting goals, I continued to meet with each man participating in POP approximately every two weeks to assess progress on his goals. For these individual POP meetings, I used a separate progress chart for each goal he set to help him evaluate and

11

chart his personal spiritual growth.

In addition to the individual mentoring, I led a group study with all the men participating in POP. Participants learned how God has created and equipped each of us to be servant-leaders in the kingdom and in the church body, using Erik Rees's *S.H.A.P.E.: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.[11]

At the last individual POP meeting, in addition to the usual progress form, I asked each man several exit-interview questions, seeking summary data on his growth experience through the mentoring he received during POP. I also asked him to fill out the spiritual growth assessment survey again, to secure final data to compare with the baseline data. To conclude the project, we gathered for a Victory Lap Celebration. As part of the meeting, some participants shared testimonies of how the POP campaign impacted them. I kept anecdotal records of the testimonies. At this meeting, I asked the participant and his spouse to complete an evaluation of their POP experience.

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[11]Erik Rees, *S.H.A.P.E: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life— Small Group Study* (Lake Forest, CA: Purpose Driven, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT
FOR MENTORING

The novice manager might look on mentoring as an innovative technique for training leaders; the jaded leader might see it as just another way to sell leadership books. Mentoring is not, however, simply the latest slant in leadership development. Mentoring is a history-proven strategy of a teacher or leader personally training and encouraging a protégé.[1] Though historical examples and analysis of mentoring might show many good reasons for modern interest, it is the essence of mentoring found throughout the biblical record that Christian leaders can find most advantageous. Believers have a scriptural obligation to discipleship, specifically through spiritual mentoring relationships.

The Obligation to Discipleship

At the very beginning of creation, God created both male and female as companions because it was not good when man was alone (Gen 2:18). Humanity has an innate need for relationships and potential betterment because of them. The biblical Adam was better because he had the companionship and support of Eve. An individual being helped and encouraged by another in almost any endeavor seems more likely to progress or succeed in part because of that relationship. More specifically, because of humanity's created design for supportive relationships, a Christian's spiritual growth can be encouraged by others.

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[1]Historical examples include Socrates to Plato, Aristotle to Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar to Marc Antony. Peer Systems Consulting Group, "The Mentor Hall of Fame," Peer Resources, http://www.mentors.ca/mp_history.html (accessed October 6, 2009).

A simple definition of discipleship is "learning from and following a teacher."[2] At the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, he called the first disciples with the simple, but forceful command, "Follow me" (Mark 1:17).[3] Though the first disciples might not have realized the full ramification of this command, through an overall understanding of New Testament teaching, we see that Jesus was calling these men to full discipleship; he called them to follow him as a teacher and learn from him as an example in their lives, thoughts, and ministries.

In the forty days between Jesus' resurrection and his heavenly ascension, he continued to teach his disciples (Acts 1:3). In one of his last recorded teachings, Jesus clearly and convincingly instructed the eleven that they were not only his disciples, but that they had the task of disciple-making. Matthew 28:18-20, known as the Great Commission, records Jesus' command of disciple-making:

> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Jesus' original disciples were to follow and learn from him personally. With the Great Commission teaching, Jesus was instructing his disciples to take his message out and make more disciples. Even more, the disciple-making command was not limited to these particular eleven, but is seen as a "universal mission," taken by all believers to all people of all generations.[4] He reassured the disciples that, though he would not physically be present to teach and lead, spiritually he would be with them and empower

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[2]Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006), 24.

[3]Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

[4]R. T. France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 1 (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1985; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 412-13.

them in this mission forever.[5]

The Great Commission, not only assigns the obligation of discipleship to the Eleven and subsequent believers, but also provides important insight about this disciple-making mission. The imperative verb of verse 19 is to "make disciples." Three subordinate participles describe with imperative force the manner in which to make disciples: "going," "baptizing," and "teaching."[6] All three must be involved for disciple-making to be truly biblical. "Going" implies that the disciples are intentionally to seek out and tell those who are not already disciples. "Baptizing" carries the weight of non-believers converting to become Christ-followers by repenting, believing, and committing themselves to Christ. "Teaching" is the last part of the disciple-making method. It involves instructing the believer to know and obey Jesus' commands and instructions. In essence, a disciple is in the "process of becoming like Jesus."[7] Thus, discipling "proves a perennially incomplete, life-long task."[8]

Christians and churches are not following Christ's disciple-making command if they are not "going," "baptizing," and "teaching." Great Commission disciple-making is holistic in that all three parts must actively be practiced, from seeking to tell unbelievers, to challenging them to believe and receiving them into fellowship, to instructing them after they profess faith.[9] The universal church stands under the Great Commission obligation to discipleship now as it has for the last two millennia. Bill Hull

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[5]Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 431.

[6]Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33b (Dallas: Word, 1995), 882.

[7]Chuck Lawless, *Discipled Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches That Are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 45.

[8]Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

[9]Ibid., 433.

states, "A commitment to be and make disciples must be the central act of every disciple and every church."[10]

The Great Commission clearly teaches that making disciples must be part of biblical Christianity. The Bible also gives more instructions in Ephesians 4:11-14, that pastors and other leaders are specifically to be equipping God's people for God's work:

> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

In verses previous to these, Paul is speaking about Christ's gifts (Eph 4:7-8). In verse 11, it seems clear that the various leaders are not simply gifted themselves, but are themselves gifts to the church.[11] These leaders, as gifts to the church, are to practice ministry in such a way that they "equip" other believers to minister for the good of Christ's kingdom and for all involved to mature in spirit from being easily deceived spiritual children. More specifically, "the shepherds and teachers" identified here, a role that is often considered synonymous with "pastor,"[12] is "responsible for the day-to-day building up of the church."[13] As pastors purposefully and systematically equip and build up the members, the members spiritually mature and, in turn, are readied and released for ministry work. These equipped and maturing believers can then build Christ's kingdom

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[10]Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, 26.

[11]Francis Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 2nd ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 10 (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1989; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 125.

[12]F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 347-48.

[13]Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 127.

16

through their practice of ministry.[14] These verses and the Great Commission present a more robust model in regard to the obligation of discipleship. For instance, God calls a growing believer to be a pastor; God then gifts this pastor to a local church; this pastor obeys the Great Commission by making disciples in the local church by going, baptizing, and teaching; the purposefully discipled believers themselves start practicing the Great Commission mandate of making disciples; a portion of these discipled believers receive God's calling to the pastoral ministry.

The Great Commission calls the church universal to be disciple-makers; Ephesians 4:11-14 more specifically calls leaders and pastors to equip or disciple believers; Paul mentors believers by using his own Christian life, as well as those of other godly believers, as models. Paul writes to the Corinthian believers:

> For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me. That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. (1 Cor 4:15-17)

Paul and other biblical writers frequently mention this strategy of discipleship by observing godly lives. For instance, in 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul writes, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." In Philippians 3:17, he writes, "Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us." Philippians 4:9 reads, "What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you." He writes in 2 Thessalonians 3:9, "It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate." In Hebrews 13:7, we find the admonition to "remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith." Peter offers similar advice, saying, "So I exhort the elders among you. . . . Shepherd the flock of God that is among you . . . not

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[14]Ibid., 128-29.

domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:1-3).

The biblical record clearly expects mature Christians to be role models and examples in faith and practice for spiritually growing believers. One of Paul's discipleship methods, therefore, was "Let me mentor you. Let me be your role model."[15] The role modeling strategy, while valuable for all believers who read his letters, was especially important within his close mentoring relationships with those who had seen his life first hand.

Churches and their leaders are unquestionably under the biblical obligation to discipleship. Discipling can rightfully be done using a multitude of tools, such as preaching, teaching in large groups, teaching in small groups, counseling, and writing. Additionally, a tool some pastors and church leaders might overlook is intentional biblical mentoring. Chuck Lawless suggests that "mentoring is . . . at the core of biblical discipleship and is a non-negotiable element of a local church's ministry."[16]

Though some authors vary the exact meaning of mentoring, the concept of biblical mentoring is well-defined by Lawless as "a God-given relationship in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach his or her potential as a disciple of Christ."[17] Lawless notes several aspects of this definition that make it distinctly biblical:

> First, mentoring takes place within a *God-given* relationship. Second, the mentor is himself growing in his/her Christian walk. Third, mentoring includes both encouragement (giving confidence through support) and equipping (providing tools and training for tasks). Fourth, the mentor challenges the mentee to strive for God's best.[18]

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[15]Larry Kreider, *Authentic Spiritual Mentoring: Nurturing Younger Believers Toward Spiritual Maturity* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2008), 15.

[16]Chuck Lawless, *Making Disciples through Mentoring; Lessons from Paul and Timothy* (Elkton, MD: Ephesians Four Ministries, 2002), 5.

[17]Lawless, *Discipled Warriors*, 122.

[18]Ibid., 126.

Disciple-making through mentoring is a demanding assignment. It requires "*commitment to a person* (not to a project, but to a person), *commitment to a process* (recognizing the long-term process of change), and *commitment to a purpose* (working toward a specific goal of Christian growth and maturity)."[19]

Biblical Examples of Discipleship through Mentoring

Spiritual mentoring is thoroughly biblical and has both Old and New Testament examples. For the purposes of this project, four biblical examples of spiritual mentoring will prove instructive: Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, Jesus to the twelve disciples, and Paul to Timothy.

Moses and Joshua

Moses was one of the most important figures in all of scripture. His life's story, recorded in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, is a heroic saga abounding in details.[20] Moses faithfully followed God's call and command to lead God's chosen people, the Israelites, out from under Egyptian slavery and to the promised land of Canaan. God blessed the nation with Moses' leadership in spite of their many complaints and faithless acts. Though Moses was a godly leader, the withering criticism and grumblings of the people continually tested his faithfulness. In one episode of the people's complaining, Moses struck the rock to bring forth water (Num 20:2-13). Though the water came forth abundantly, God considered Moses' manner of performing this miracle as a sinful affront to his holiness.[21] God declared that the consequence of

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[19]Lawless, *Making Disciples through Mentoring,* 29.

[20]George W. Coats, "Moses," in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Trent C. Butler (Nashville: Holman, 1991), 988.

[21]Scholars dispute exactly how Moses sinned against God and why this sin was considered so heinous. For this chapter, it is sufficient to know that this sin, in whatever form, was the reason God cited for not allowing Moses to lead the people into the promised land.

Moses' sinful action was that he would not ultimately lead the people into the promised land of Canaan (Num 20:12; 27:14; Deut 31:2).

When God told Moses that it was time for him (Moses) to die, Moses voiced concern that the Israelites would be like "sheep that have no shepherd" (Num 27:17), and asked God to appoint a leader over the people. God chose Joshua and instructed Moses publicly to invest him with the authority of leadership. Moses invested Joshua, per God's instructions, by laying his hands on him and commissioning him before all the people (Num 27:12-23). Moses and Joshua also went to the "tent of meeting" where God met with them alone. In this meeting, God told Moses that he would soon die, and then God personally commissioned Joshua to lead the people into Canaan (Deut 31:14-23). Finally, upon Moses death, Joshua assumed the leadership of the Israelites, being filled by God's spirit, invested by Moses' hand, and obeyed by the people (Deut 34:9). Though Joshua was the new leader, he was far from unqualified and untested. Paul House observes, "No one else [had] his experience and potential for leadership."[22] This potential was because Joshua was influenced and mentored by someone uniquely qualified for the position, Moses himself.

Joshua is first mentioned in the book of Exodus as a military leader that Moses assigned to fight the Amalekites (Exod 17:8-16).[23] In this first event, Moses used his role and circumstances to mentor Joshua by equipping and encouraging him. Moses gave Joshua responsibility and guidance by telling him to choose an army and then lead them to fight the Amalekites. This assignment illustrates that Moses gave Joshua direction, yet he also gave him freedom to accomplish his assignment without overly instructing. Moses demonstrated his trust in Joshua by sharing greater information than Joshua needed to know about the battle plans (i.e., that Moses would be holding forth the staff of

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[22]Paul R. House, *Old Testament Survey* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992) 82.

[23]Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Joshua* (Chicago: Moody, 1964) 13.

God). After the victory, God instructed Moses to write about the battle and the future of

the Amalekites and specifically to "recite it in the ears of Joshua" (Exod 17:14). Moses

himself, without an amanuensis, would write the battle's account for posterity and

personally impress the story upon Joshua.[24] As Moses recounted the battle, he would be

fulfilling a key role of a mentor, that of encourager; by recounting the obedience,

bravery, and heroism of Joshua and the army, Moses equipped Joshua to be an improving

leader, as they likely discussed Joshua's role in the battle as the army's commander.

After Joshua's obedience in choosing and leading the Israelite army into battle

and after the victory over the Amalekites, Scripture indicates that Joshua fulfilled the role

of trusted assistant to Moses.[25] As an assistant, Joshua accompanied Moses up the

mountain to receive the law and the tablets of stone (Exod 24:12-15). On their way down

the mountain, Joshua made note that there was noise coming from the camp (Exod 32:15-

18). Though specific details of what Joshua did while on the mountain for forty days and

nights or how far up the mountain Joshua went with Moses are not found in Scripture,

there is clearly a closeness between him and Moses that is not enjoyed by anyone else.

Though their experiences might have been different, their camaraderie would have only

deepened after this dramatic experience of climbing and spending time on the mountain.

Additionally, since Joshua was with Moses and not in camp, he was untainted by the

golden calf debacle (Exod 32:1-35). Missing this sinful episode helped set Joshua apart

for future leadership.

After being a successful military leader and assistant, Moses assigned Joshua

another very important job as one of the twelve spies sent to scout the land of Canaan

(Num 13:1-33). God specifically instructed Moses to send one man from every tribe who

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[24]Martin Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary*, trans. J. S. Bowden, The Old
Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 143.

[25]Pink, *Gleanings from Joshua*, 14.

was a leader in his respective tribe. Joshua's being acknowledged as leader of his tribe and being appointed as a spy by Moses helped fulfill the main duties of a mentoring relationship, encouraging and equipping a protégé. Moses encouraged Joshua in two significant ways: first, by trusting him to carry out such a dangerous and important job; secondly, by acknowledging him as a key leader in front of the entire nation. Moses also equipped Joshua to lead the Israelite invasion by allowing him to gain first-hand knowledge of Canaan through this forty-day reconnaissance mission.

When the spies returned, they gave a report that the land was indeed a fruitful and good land, but that the inhabitants were too strong to conquer. Joshua and Caleb were the only spies who urged the people not to rebel against God and to go take the land. They did not back down, even under the threat of stoning from the people (Num 14:6-10). Joshua then learned an invaluable lesson from his mentor Moses. God told Moses that he was going to "strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they" (Num 14:12). Moses could have simply allowed God to proceed, but Moses revealed a heart of compassion, mercy, and humility. Moses did not want this favored status for only his own offspring, but he desired God's mercy upon the Israelites as a whole. Joshua witnessed Moses praying, interceding, and crying out for a people who were literally about to stone them moments earlier. God honored Moses' request and limited his judgment of immediate death to the ten faithless spies; he also condemned the nation to forty years of desert wilderness wanderings, with all those twenty years old and older, except Joshua and Caleb, to die during this forty years (Num 14:13-38).[26] Moses, through his model of leadership in the midst of crisis, mentored Joshua, illustrating the characteristics of humility and compassion along with the power of prayerful intercession. This first-hand experience taught Joshua more about humble, compassionate leadership than mere words ever could.

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[26]J. Vernon McGee, *Numbers* (LaVerne, CA: El Camino, 1975), 91.

Even though Moses knew that he himself would not lead the Israelites into Canaan and that Joshua would lead after he died, Moses never showed jealousy, animosity, or indifference towards his protégé. Moses specifically took opportunities to remind Joshua of God's greatness and encouraged him to be "strong and courageous" (Deut 3:21-22; 31:7-8).

Moses did an excellent job of mentoring Joshua for leadership and preparing the nation of Israel to follow Joshua. After Moses died, Joshua obeyed God in calling the people and leading them into Canaan. The people responded by saying, "Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you" (Josh 1:17). Throughout the book of Joshua, Joshua followed Moses' example of faithfully obeying God by leading the Israelites in taking, subduing, and dividing the land. In Joshua's last days, he charged the people to follow God exclusively and led them in renewing the covenant (Josh 23-24). Moses successfully mentored Joshua, who developed into one of the greatest leaders Israel ever knew.[27] His legacy was summarized in Joshua 24:31: "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the Lord did for Israel."

Elijah and Elisha

Elijah is a rich character, being a "prophet, preacher, political reformer, and miracle worker all at the same time."[28] While Elijah was a great prophet, his experience was not one victorious mountaintop moment after another. In the course of being a prophet, Elijah witnessed God work powerful miracles, but he also encountered fear, frustration, stress, loneliness, and times of uncertainty. All of these experiences would

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[27]David M. Howard, Jr., *Joshua*, The New American Commentary, vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 28-29.

[28]Paul R. House, *1 and 2 Kings*, The New American Commentary, vol. 8 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 212.

certainly contribute in making him a unique mentor to help Elisha become a great prophet in his own right.

Elijah burst forth in Scripture in 1 Kings 17:1-7. The biblical record reveals Elijah's first prophecy as a face-to-face encounter with a very powerful and very evil king: he immediately confronted Ahab, king of Israel, for Ahab's heinous transgressions of taking a foreign wife, Jezebel, and of the idolatry of personally worshiping and promoting the worship of Baal (1 Kgs 16:29-34). Unlike some other great biblical characters (e.g., Joseph, David, or Paul), we have no account of Elijah's formative years. We have no stories of how he was prepared or why God chose him to deliver this great judgment to Ahab. It seems reasonable to suggest that Elijah might have had little training, experience, or mentoring for such a task and reasonably could have been nervous, overwhelmed, and then emotionally exhausted by carrying out this original assignment of prophesying against the powerful and evil King Ahab.

In comparison, God commanded Moses to deliver a message face-to-face to Pharaoh. Unlike Elijah's experience, Moses had grown up in Pharaoh's court, had been educated and trained in Egyptian ways, had endured years of living as a shepherd, had a theophany of God in the burning bush, and was given his brother Aaron as a helper before he ever faced Pharaoh (Exod 2-4). Scriptural silence about Elijah's earlier years must permit the idea that Moses would likely have been more fully prepared to face Pharaoh than Elijah was to face Ahab. This deficiency of experience, training, and mentoring would likely have made Elijah more sensitive in preparing Elisha as his replacement. As a prophet, Elijah would have had a great appreciation for what God had called Elisha to do and could have given him guidance and advice like no other person, especially because he knew the difficulties from personal experience.

Elijah prophesied that a severe drought would plague Israel and that it would not relent until God sent rain. After initially confronting Ahab with the prophesy of drought, God immediately directed Elijah to go into hiding, evidently to keep him out of

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Ahab's grasp. For the next three years, Elijah hid from Ahab. First, he hid alone by the

brook of Cherith, being miraculously sustained by food brought by ravens (1 Kgs 17:1-

6). Though the ravens brought food to Elijah to provide for his physical needs,

emotionally Elijah endured loneliness and lack of encouragement while watching the

brook, his only water supply, dry up. This time of hiding would not have been a luxury,

but a time of isolation, wondering in fear if he would be found by Ahab's men and

wondering about how much longer water would be flowing.

When the brook dried up, God directed Elijah to hide in Zarephath, a city at

"the very heart of Baalism."[29] As Elijah traveled to Zarephath, he would have seen the

privation of the land because of the drought. When he arrived, he saw the destitute lives

a widow and her son were leading. While there, he and the widow both helped each

other with God miraculously providing food through always-full jars of flour and oil

from her home (1 Kgs 17:8-16). This miraculous time was not without difficulty. When

the son died, the widow, in essence, blamed Elijah for his death. As Elijah prayed for

God to bring the son back to life, his prayer seems to be rather confrontational and

accusatorial (1 Kgs 17:17-24). Still, "the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the

life of the child came into him again, and he revived" (1 Kgs 17:22).

Later in Elijah's story, more difficulties arose as he continued to follow God's

commands. After three years, God told Elijah to confront Ahab. When he did this, Elijah

challenged Ahab and the prophets of Baal to pray to see which god, Baal or Yahweh,

would answer by fire. Baal did not answer his prophets' cries; however, God answered

Elijah's prayer by dramatically sending a consuming fire. The people started worshiping

God, and upon Elijah's command, they seized and slaughtered the prophets of Baal (1

Kgs 18:1-40).

Elijah successfully faced the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel with God

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[29]House, *1 and 2 Kings*, 215.

sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice. While this seemed to be a great victory for Elijah's resumé, it ended on negative note, with Elijah running for his life under Jezebel's threat of death after Ahab told his wife everything that Elijah had done. With this threat, Elijah ran away in fear (1 Kgs 19:1-3). Elijah understood Jezebel's threat as an end of his ministry.[30] Thus, Elijah ran into the wilderness where, in an emotionally, physically, and spiritually spent state, he prayed that God would take his life (1 Kgs 19:4).

God confronted Elijah asking him what he was doing. Elijah answered in an overwhelmingly negative way: "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kgs 19:10). God then came to Elijah in a "low whisper" (1 Kgs 19:12). God instructed Elijah to do three things: anoint Hazael king over Syria, anoint Jehu king over Israel, and anoint Elisha "to be prophet in your place" (1 Kgs 19:15-16).

Elijah seems to have been a conflicted man, having great spiritual victories followed by gut-wrenching spiritual depression. Considering all the emotional, stressful, and spiritually intense situations that Elijah had faced as a prophet, he must have been relieved to know that he was about to anoint another with the burden of being a prophet in his place. In fact, as soon as Elijah received this word, he did not actually seek out Hazael and Jehu to anoint but went directly to anoint Elisha and, seemingly, relieve himself of the burden of being a prophet.[31] Elijah did not linger or make great ceremony in anointing Elisha; rather, in a hurried way Elijah "passed by him and cast his cloak upon him" (1 Kgs 19:19). Elisha even had to run after Elijah to tell him that he would

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[30]S. J. DeVries, *1 Kings*, 2nd ed., Word Bible Commentary, vol. 12 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 235.

[31]Paul J. Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History: Profiles of Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Elisha* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 153.

follow him. It was with this act that the mentoring relationship between Elijah and Elisha began. It is not clear exactly what relationship, if any, Elijah was wanting. It seems reasonable, considering his past spiritual vicissitudes, that Elijah might have desired no longer to be a prophet at all, wanting to turn the work over completely to Elisha.

After Elisha broke dramatically from his old life by sacrificing his oxen and using the yoke as firewood,[32] he did not immediately replace Elijah, but instead followed and assisted Elijah (1 Kgs 19:20-21). In essence, it appears to be a compromise of sorts: instead of Elisha rejecting Elijah's prophetic mantle or hurriedly replacing Elijah without training or qualification, he followed Elijah as a protégé. Whether Elijah desired to be a mentor or not, he submitted to this arrangement of being a prophet with an assistant who was being trained to replace him. Elijah's knowledge and experience as a prophet was unique, and Elisha would benefit from whatever wisdom he could gain, even if Elijah was reluctant at first. Additionally, it appears that Elijah might have benefited from having a protégé. Instead of Elijah single-handedly facing situations, he had someone there to encourage him. From the point of Elisha joining Elijah, Scripture never reveals another situation were Elijah becomes discouraged or depressed as he did before this relationship.

Elijah and Elisha's relationship must have grown close and been mutually respectful. In the last scene featuring the two prophets, three different times, Elisha refused to leave Elijah (2 Kgs 2:2, 4, 6). In these final good-byes, scripture shows Elijah and Elisha walking along, talking together. Surely, Elijah the mentor was greatly touched when Elisha, his protégé, honored Elijah by asking for a "double portion" of his spirit (2 Kgs 2:9). As House points out, this request "indicates his understanding that Elijah has a special relationship with God."[33] As the whirlwind took Elijah up into heaven, Elisha

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[32]Kissling, *Reliable Characters*, 152.

[33]House, *1 and 2 Kings*, 258.

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cried out, "My father, my father!" and tore his clothes in two pieces illustrating what a close relationship had formed between the two men (2 Kgs 2:12).

Elijah prepared and poured into his protégé so that Elisha's prophetic succession was obvious and successful. Immediately following Elijah's departure, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and performed the miracle of splitting the Jordan River, the same miracle Elijah had performed, as recorded in 2 Kings 2:8. With this miracle, the sons of the prophets recognized Elisha as Elijah's successor by bowing before him in submission (2 Kgs 2:14-15).

The relationship between Elijah and Elisha seems to have helped both men. Elijah had an assistant that would help him in carrying the weight of being a prophet. Elisha benefited from witnessing and learning from Elijah directly and enjoyed the benefit of being Elijah's acknowledged successor. Elisha's mentoring under Elijah was acknowledged even by King Jehoshaphat as something special in 2 Kings 3:11b-12, "'Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah.' And Jehoshaphat said, 'The word of the Lord is with him.'"

Jesus and the Twelve Disciples

The greatest of all scriptural examples of a leader specifically training a select few is Jesus' calling and mentoring the twelve disciples. The disciples learned how to be ministers before their Great Commission assignment, specifically by being with Jesus.[34] Jesus called the Twelve out from his larger group of followers: "And he [Jesus] went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons" (Mark 3:13-15). Being firmly rooted in Christ's example, "the critical need of the modern church does not

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[34]Billie Hanks Jr. and William A. Shell, eds., *Discipleship: Great Insights from the Most Experienced Disciple Makers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 24.

involve moving away from preaching and teaching, but it does require reestablishing a New Testament concept of apprenticeship."[35] To do so, modern mentors are well served to give special attention to Jesus' style of discipleship.

The Bible presents Jesus as our perfect example. What we know about him and his methods, we find in the New Testament. The four gospels, in particular, are not overly lengthy. We must view everything they say and reveal not as haphazard, but as sacred and important. Though it might seem that the thrust of Jesus' ministry was miracle-working and preaching to the crowds, his overarching plan was simple: to establish his church through the work of his followers, specifically and initially his disciples. One of the first events in Jesus' ministry, even before his first public miracle at the wedding in Cana, is the direct calling of disciples to follow him (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:38-50). Robert Coleman notes, "His [Jesus'] concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitudes would follow…. Men were to be his method of winning the world to God."[36] Jesus' ministry of three and a half years was relatively short.[37] In that time he traveled, taught, and healed, but he focused much of that limited time on teaching and training the twelve disciples.

There are several lessons that modern mentors can learn as we seek patterns and principles that Jesus used in mentoring these men. First, Jesus diligently prayed for his disciples both before and after selecting them.[38] "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993), 21.

[37]H. W. Hoehner, "Chronology," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scott McKnight (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 119.

[38]S. Lance Quinn, "Discipling," in *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, ed. John MacArthur, Jr. (Dallas: Word, 1995), 327.

called his disciples and chose from them twelve" (Luke 6:12-13). Jesus' choosing of the

twelve as apostles was an all-important decision, one not to be made flippantly.

> One of the most important steps [Jesus] ever took was the selection from among His
> disciples of the Twelve who were to be His disciples. It was an act on which the
> whole future of Christianity depended. . . . It was after this night-long vigil, that He
> proceeded to the choice which was to be so momentous for Him, and for them, and
> for all the world.[39]

Praying was an integral part of Jesus' method in selecting and training his

disciples. It was so important that in his prayer in John 17, Jesus made over forty

references to his disciples.[40] As Jesus prayed, the disciples would surely have been

encouraged by hearing in his prayer about their obedience (John 17:6), their knowledge

(John 17:7), their belief (John 17:8), and God's protection from "the evil one" (John

17:15). Jesus' prayer clearly affirmed them and would prove inspirational during the

difficult days of his arrest and crucifixion. Modern mentors should follow Jesus'

example by praying for direction and guidance in establishing mentoring relationships.

LeRoy Eims notes that Jesus "did not hastily rush out and grab the first people who

showed interest."[41] Furthermore, mentors should also encourage protégés by praying

with them and over them, affirming their growth and praising God for the way he is

shaping and using them.

A second principle of Jesus' ministry, one in which mentors can take much

comfort, is that Jesus' disciples were exceedingly ordinary.[42] These men were not the

key religious figures of their day. They were not even from the more "refined" areas of

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[39]James Stalker, *The Example of Jesus Christ* (New Canaan, CT: Keats, 1980),
92.

[40]Walter A. Henrichsen, *Disciples Are Made – Not Born: Making Disciples
Out of Christians* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1975), 7.

[41]LeRoy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan,
1978), 29.

[42]Ibid.

Israel, but from relatively unimportant towns and villages.[43] Though only specifically

referencing Peter and John, Acts 4:13 could have described almost any of these disciples

as "uneducated, common men." The disciples were not exceptional in and of themselves.

What made them special was that they followed Jesus, learned from Jesus, and, in turn,

taught and passed on what they had received from Jesus.[44] Modern mentors might look

in their churches and bemoan that, by human standards, prospective protégés have little

potential. Yet, Jesus' example illustrates that a protégé's only real requirement is to be

willing to learn and grow from a mentor and the mentoring experience.

  A third mentoring lesson relates to the number of people one person can

effectively mentor. Scripture shows that Jesus selected from a larger group of disciples a

smaller group of twelve apostles (Luke 6:13-17; Mark 3:13-19). In Christ's few years of

ministry, these twelve men would be the ones with whom Jesus would spend the greatest

amount of time training and teaching. Jesus clearly understood "that other things being

equal, the more concentrated the size of the group being taught, the greater the

opportunity for effective instruction."[45] Some might consider this selecting of apostles as

unfair to the larger group of disciples or the crowds, but Scripture never indicates that

Jesus evaded or in some way neglected others because of this special group of protégés.

The gospels constantly tell of Jesus preaching, teaching, feeding, healing, blessing, or in

some way ministering to the needs of others outside the Twelve, even skipping meals to

deal with the urgent needs of others.[46]

  Though there were large crowds, Jesus did not dedicate himself to growing

ever-larger crowds. He made sure that he was equipping a select group of disciples to

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[43]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 23.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid., 25.

[46]Ibid., 26.

expand ministry and reach the multitudes through their leadership. He understood that though he personally could minister and gather large crowds, eventually for his message to go out to the greater world, more leaders and teachers were needed. Jesus' personal ministry to the masses added to the kingdom; however, his strategy of mentoring future leaders would, in turn, be effectively multiplying the kingdom.[47] Ralph Martin notes,

> The appointment of the Twelve (Mark 3:13-19) serves a double purpose. They are to learn the secrets of the kingdom by personal acquaintance as learner-apprentices, and they are then to become missionary-apostles to the world. In both ways they form the nucleus of the church.[48]

Jesus successfully balanced ministry to the masses, while intentionally training a smaller group to be leaders and teachers of the future. In regard to concentrating on leadership development, Coleman comments, "Everything that is done with the few is for the salvation of the multitudes."[49]

Further, Jesus' equipping strategy highlights the importance of relationship and "spending purposeful time with [the] disciples."[50] In training the disciples, Jesus' method was definitely informal compared to the regimented approach of the scribes of his day and compared to today's ministerial training through degree programs. Jesus' program statement was "follow me" (Matt 9:9, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:27, and John 1:43).[51] The disciples learned by following and being with Jesus. Jesus gave them time, access, and availability. By being with Jesus, they were able to learn through observing, questioning, and participating. For example, the disciples witnessed and heard Jesus teaching the crowds using parables (Matt 13:3; Mark 4:2; Luke 8:4). Later, the disciples had

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[47]Ibid., 29.

[48]Ralph P. Martin, *The Four Gospels,* vol. 1 of *New Testament Foundations: A Guide for Christian Students*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 183.

[49]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 30.

[50]Quinn, "Discipling," 331.

[51]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 34-35.

opportunities to question Jesus and have the parables further explained to them in private without the crowds (Matt 13:36; Mark 4:10; Luke 8:9). The disciples were also privy to certain miracles not performed in a public setting. For instance, Jesus made the disciples get in a boat and set sail without him. Later, during the storm, Jesus came to the disciples' boat by walking on the stormy waters. During this miracle sequence, the disciples witnessed Peter walking on the water and the storm ceasing (Matt 14:22-33). Modern mentors, following Jesus' example, should also give protégés special access and specialized or specific teaching that would benefit them.

Jesus also gave the disciples opportunities to participate in ministry and practice what they were learning. In Luke 9:1-6, Jesus sent the Twelve "out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." After receiving final instructions in this ministry, the disciples left Jesus and traveled from village to village preaching and healing. This itinerant ministry of healing and preaching would have been very practical in their training and would have "firmly rooted in the apostles' minds" the teachings and miracles of Jesus as they recounted them to others.[52] Later, the disciples reported back to Jesus about their ministry experiences and they all withdrew together to Bethsaida (Luke 9:10). Though not a stated purpose of withdrawing together, Jesus would have had the chance to debrief the disciples about their respective ministry experiences. He likely used this time alone to instruct, guide, and encourage them in what they had just accomplished.

As Jesus and the disciples were withdrawing, the crowds pursued them. Jesus used this time to miraculously feed the crowd of five thousand (Luke 9:10-17). The account specifically notes that the disciples were ministering by passing out the food and taking up the leftovers. In other words, they witnessed first-hand how little Jesus started with and how much food was left over. Because of the lack of the people's

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[52]Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 266.

acknowledgment of the miracle, this miracle feeding was "meant primarily for the disciples and would enable them to answer the question Jesus asked in Luke 9:20, 'But who do you say I am?'"[53] Modern mentors can once again learn from Jesus' example of personally mentoring his disciples by giving them the opportunity for hands-on experience in ministry and then following up with a time of debriefing and explanation.

Clearly, Jesus mentored the Twelve by teaching and sharing with them more intimately and more plainly than he did with the crowds; he did this even with more difficult teachings. The synoptic gospels contain three major passion predictions.[54] Each time in these three passion predictions, Jesus was exclusively teaching the twelve disciples and plainly revealing that he would be handed over to his enemies, that he would be killed by them, and that he would be raised on the third day. Though the disciples did not completely understand what this teaching meant, we clearly see that Jesus was preparing the Twelve by sharing with them more intimately and on a deeper level than he ever did with the crowds. As a mentor, Jesus was both equipping and encouraging his disciples by not withholding this hard teaching of his rejection, death, and resurrection. As protégés, they received privileged access and teaching. Modern leaders would be wise in teaching protégés candidly, not hiding or glossing over the more difficult things that a protégé might face. For instance, a mature pastor should honestly mentor a young pastor by being balanced in sharing about defeats as well as victories instead of simply painting pastoral ministry as perpetually positive.

Preparing the disciples to carry on after his death was a major task of Jesus. As Coleman points out, instead of Jesus concentrating on reaching the most individuals through mass preaching, teaching, and healing efforts, he actually spent more and more

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[53]Ibid., 272.

[54]The first is found in the parallel passages of Matt 16:13-23, Mark 8:27-33, and Luke 9:18-22; the second in Matt 17:22-23, Mark 9:30-32, and Luke 9:43-45; and the third in Matt 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34, and Luke 18:31-34.

personal time with the Twelve.[55] Jesus specifically spent his last hours, before his arrest and crucifixion, not preaching and healing the crowds, but training and teaching his twelve disciples in the upper room. John 13-17 provides a glimpse into what Jesus did and taught in these last lessons. Jesus started his upper room instructions with the simple, yet powerful, act of washing the disciples' feet. Jesus stated, "For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you" (John 13:15). Jesus' act of washing the disciples feet was dramatic and impressed itself upon the disciples' minds, teaching them that they too were to be servants.[56] Jesus also served the last supper here in the upper room, using the bread and the cup to establish a symbolic reminder of his body and blood that were to be broken and poured out during his crucifixion. Clearly, modern mentors should learn from Jesus' example by not only teaching with words, but through memorable actions and illustrations. Protégés will recall these actions and stories long after mere words.

Christ's choices near the end of his ministry suggest that his priority was equipping these disciples. With Christ's example, church leaders should intentionally and personally take time being with and developing select believers through mentoring. A new believers class or short-term discipleship Bible study is not the same as developing mentoring relationships that intentionally seek to be deeper and stronger. As Coleman forcefully points out,

> There is simply no substitute for getting with people, and it is ridiculous to imagine that anything less, short of a miracle can develop strong Christian leadership. After all, if Jesus, the Son of God, found it necessary to stay almost constantly with his few disciples for three years, and even one of them was lost, how can a church expect to do this job on an assembly line basis a few days out of the year?[57]

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[55]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 36.

[56]Kenneth O. Gangel, *John*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 251.

[57]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 41.

Paul and Timothy

The author of thirteen New Testament books and figuring prominently in Acts, Paul is "one of the major personalities of early Christianity."[58] Scripture and tradition clearly portray Paul in several roles such as martyr, apostle, theologian, missionary, evangelist, and pastor.[59] In these roles, Paul's ultimate mission was to preach the gospel, especially to the Gentiles (Gal 1:15-16; Eph 3:1-9).[60]

In fulfilling this mission, Paul did not seek simply to travel and make pockets of immature converts, but to make believers and then make sure they were equipped and trained in the faith. Universal discipling of believers was one aspiration of Paul's ministry efforts: "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me" (Col 1:28-29). Paul's words and actions show that he personally ministered and wanted other church leaders to minister diligently in making converts who were growing and maturing in their faith (Eph 4:11-16). Paul even instructed that older women "train the young women" (Titus 2:3-4).[61]

Paul mentioned by name over thirty men and women as fellow-workers with him in his years of ministry.[62] These fellow-workers varied from each other, but, in general, they would have had opportunities to learn, watch, travel, and minister alongside Paul. Paul and his fellow-workers shared the characteristics of encouragement and

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[58]Oscar S. Brooks, "Paul," in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Trent C. Butler (Nashville: Holman, 1991), 1079.

[59]John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 440-41.

[60]Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 42.

[61]Jessica Lowery and Dennis McCallum, *Organic Disciplemaking: Mentoring Others Into Spiritual Maturity and Leadership* (Houston: Touch Publications, 2006), 27.

[62]Ibid.

equipping found in mentoring relationships, even if their relationships were not formally labeled or sought out as such.

Paul's most well-known fellow-worker and protégé was Timothy. Paul compared his relationship with Timothy to that of "a son with a father" (Phil 2:22). He described Timothy as his "beloved and faithful child in the Lord" (1 Cor 4:17). Timothy likely converted to Christianity under Paul's teaching in Lystra and quickly became a strong believer (Acts 14:8-23; 16:1-5). Luke describes Timothy as a "disciple" whom Paul wanted to accompany him (Acts 16:1-5).[63]

As Timothy went with Paul, he had the opportunity to hear Paul preach and to minister along with him. Without a doubt, Paul found Timothy trustworthy, sending Timothy on many specific ministry assignments. For example, Paul revealed to the Thessalonians that he sent Timothy to them to "exhort you in your faith" (1 Thess 3:2).[64] We also see that Paul told the Philippians that he sent Timothy there to minister because he was in jail and could not come himself. Paul's reasoning in sending Timothy was that Timothy was "proven" and "he has served with me in the gospel" (Phil 2:22). In another episode, Paul revealed his confidence in Timothy by sending him to remind the Corinthians of what Paul had originally taught them: "I urge you, then, be imitators of me. That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ" (1 Cor 4:16-17).

These scriptural records of Timothy's assignments illustrate the close, mutually beneficial relationship that Paul and Timothy enjoyed as mentor and protégé. Timothy clearly learned from Paul, and Paul equipped and encouraged Timothy by giving him personal ministry experience and guidance. Furthermore, we see that Paul's

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[63]Robert J. Dean, "Timothy," in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Trent C. Butler (Nashville: Holman, 1991), 1350.

[64]Ibid.

mission of taking the gospel to the Gentiles was not subordinated or hindered by having Timothy as a protégé, but instead was multiplied and extended.

Paul investing in Timothy was not an end in itself. Paul also instructed Timothy to teach other faithful workers and pass along what he had learned.[65] This charge is articulated in 2 Timothy 2:2: "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." As Lowery and McCallum point out, "From this single verse, we clearly see that Paul used personal discipleship as a conscious strategy for developing leadership in the early church."[66] Paul reminded Timothy that he had personally mentored him by referring to "what you have heard from me" (2 Tim 2:2). Scripture suggests that much of Timothy's personal spiritual growth and maturity was fostered by Paul's personal mentoring and that Timothy was, in turn, to pass it on.

Though Paul might have personally mentored many believers, Timothy certainly stands in a special place. Paul specifically wrote two letters of instruction to Timothy that we now find as part of the canon (1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2). In these letters, Paul continued to equip Timothy through personal encouragement and instruction as a Christian leader. Timothy was instructed in dealing "with such matters as the character and qualifications of church leaders, the proper conduct in worship, the maintenance of purity in doctrine, and the projection of a healthy image in the larger community so as to enhance the church's evangelistic outreach."[67] Paul was preparing Timothy for things he would face as a minister. It is clear that Timothy had learned his lessons well, because of Paul's positive statement about his protégé in 2 Timothy 3:10: "You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my

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[65]Lowery and McCallum, *Organic Disciplemaking*, 27.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Polhill, *Paul and His Letters*, 397.

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steadfastness." This verse especially highlights Paul's personal relationship with Timothy: "The article before each word is emphatic; these are the events in Paul's life of which Timothy knows and the significance of which he understands, hence the translation 'my.'"[68] The example of Paul and Timothy demonstrates to modern mentors and protégés that mentoring relationships can benefit God's kingdom, other believers, and those in the mentoring relationship itself.

Summary of Biblical Mentoring Principles

Modern believers have a compelling scriptural obligation to discipleship, specifically through spiritual mentoring relationships. The biblical record contains many examples of these relationships "in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach his or her potential as a disciple of Christ."[69] By examining the relationships of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and the twelve disciples, and Paul and Timothy, one can find a foundational overview of biblical mentoring. Many principles for effective mentoring are found in their examples, as well.

Moses illustrated the importance of encouragement in a mentoring relationship. He also uniquely equipped his protégé for the coming leadership. Moses offered Joshua privileged, intimate access to his activities by enlisting Joshua as an assistant. He continued to entrust Joshua with tasks of increasing complexity and importance. During a time of crisis, Joshua was afforded the chance to see how Moses engaged in fierce intercessory prayer on behalf of his people. Finally, Moses not only prepared Joshua to lead, but he also prepared the people to follow Joshua's leading.

The relationship of Elijah and Elisha offers encouragement to the reluctant mentor: Elijah was certainly not seeking that role, but God used him to help shape Elisha

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[68]William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Nelson, 2000), 556.

[69]Lawless, *Discipled Warriors,* 122.

as a prophet nonetheless. Elijah seems to have been strengthened and encouraged by the relationship, too. The lesson for the modern mentor is that even in a season of personal darkness, God can ordain a mentorship that is mutually beneficial and advances the kingdom work.

Jesus' time on earth, mentoring the disciples, provides detailed guidance for any mentoring relationship. First, he undergirded the selection and the teaching of the disciples with prayer, praying for them, with them, and over them. Moreover, Jesus chose exceedingly common men to mentor in this way, showing us that effective mentoring has more to do with the Holy Spirit's work in a willing heart than with the protégé's innate skills and giftedness. Jesus also demonstrated the necessary exclusiveness of the mentoring process. It was not possible for him to mentor every person who followed him; instead he focused his time and teaching on the Twelve without sacrificing his ministry to the masses. The disciples were granted exclusive time and access to Jesus, allowing them to soak in some experiences that were tailored to grow their faith in ways that would be significant to their future ministry. Another specific strategy Jesus used as he mentored the disciples was to provide them with explicit, specific instruction and explanation.

Paul's relationship with Timothy highlights the importance of trusting a protégé with appropriate assignments. As with Elijah and Elisha, the mentoring relationship between Timothy and Paul proved mutually beneficial, with Timothy extending the work Paul was able to do. Paul's instructions to Timothy point out a key mentoring principle: as the protégé develops and grows, he should, in turn, pass on what he has been taught, discipling another generation of believers.

CHAPTER 3

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MENTORING
IN THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH

Throughout organizations, tasks go undone and opportunities pass for a lack of

leaders and qualified individuals. Churches, likewise, suffer with anemic or non-existent

ministries because individual members are unable or unwilling to lead and organize

greater things for the kingdom. A number of reasons might impede a particular

individual from being an effective leader. One common, yet preventable, impediment is

a lack of basic guidance in developing godly leadership skills. Some people might do

very well without any encouragement, but it seems evident that when individuals are

encouraged and held accountable, they are more likely to perform better than those

without encouragement and accountability. Unfortunately, not all people are self-

motivated, and they might never contribute in a leadership role, for no other reason, than

the human "tendency to be lazy, lose focus, or give into temptation."[1]

One way to combat this propensity for underachievement is the strategic use of

mentoring. In the most basic definition, a mentor is a person who provides

encouragement and accountability to help another person advance, improve, or grow in

some way. Specifically, effective mentors operate with the view that they want the very

best for their protégés and will pray for them, care about them, help them, and will

cultivate friendly relationships that are open and accessible.[2] A mentor who follows

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[1]Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006), 52.

[2]Bobb Biehl, *Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 4.

through in such a way will significantly influence a protégé. The unique characteristics of a mentoring relationship allow a more experienced person to make the most of his or her resources, using them faithfully for another's advantage. Mentors have many resources that can be drawn upon for a protégé's benefit: the mentor's experience and knowledge; access to people, networks, information, and authority; money; material goods, such as homes, cars, offices, tools, and personal libraries; friendship and companionship; time; and a unique personality and perspective.[3] Further, mentors can use any "painful lessons" that they have learned to give warning to protégés. Being a mentor does not mean that the mentor is perfect or has always made the best choices; it means "building a relationship that impacts another man's life."[4]

The Need for Mentorship in Modern America

Historically, mentoring has played an important role in the preservation and advancement of civilization. It has a successful record as the primary way craftsmen passed on knowledge to apprentices. Apprentices did not simply attend classes on a subject, but they learned through hands-on training as they worked alongside master craftsmen. Apprentices did not necessarily learn about a barrage of unrelated topics; rather, they absorbed a lifestyle by being with and emulating their teachers.[5] In this way, craftsmen would successfully pass on the knowledge, skill, and way of life associated with a particular trade to their apprentice.

In modern American society, however, many adults "go to work" where they do not as readily pass on their particular skills to their own children or have apprentices to train. In modern formal education, often a professor simply lectures a roomful of

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[3]Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 137-38.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 9.

students without meaningful one-to-one interaction. Tim Elmore points out our modern

university shortcomings, noting:

> It is academic in nature; it is cerebral and cognitive. It is passive. And while it is the fastest method to transfer information to another person or group, it is not the most effective method for the student to learn.[6]

Additionally, modern campuses often do not effectively facilitate faculty and students

meeting outside the class for activities such as mentoring. Knowledge, therefore, is

learned, and diplomas awarded, through testing and institutional achievement. Though

knowledge is certified, how to integrate this knowledge with life or career is not honed or

evaluated by another through an apprenticeship process such as intentional mentoring.[7]

This method of learning lends itself to students acquiring knowledge, but then losing

focus in what direction to take or what to do upon graduation.

Beyond the realm of education, modern America has several other trends that

highlight the need for a new prevalence of mentoring relationships. Adjusting to the

changing societal standards for gender roles has led a significant number of male

Christians to have questions about manhood and what that means. Mature adult

Christians mentoring maturing adolescents or young adults can offer opportunities to

discuss what it means to be a man or a woman on a level that the protégés may not have

reached with their own parents. Another trend in American society is the rapid

advancement of technology and the subsequent decline in personal relationships.

Mentoring relationships can help provide authentic personal connections, healthy adult

role models, and consistency in a world of change.[8] A related trend is the decline in the

prominence of familial relationships. Unlike throughout most of civilized history,

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[6]Tim Elmore, *Mentoring: How to Invest Your Life in Others* (Duluth: Growing Leaders, 2004), 19.

[7]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 10.

[8]Ibid., 12.

modern society lends itself to producing a mobile populace that is not necessarily rooted to one geographical place. Extended families can often spread across great distances; therefore, family members, such as uncles or aunts, no longer naturally mentor nieces and nephews.[9] Mentoring can provide connections, a sense of belonging, and help fill the gap left by extended families living farther apart. Finally, American society has an overabundance of leadership failure. Elmore points out that a very basic benefit of mentoring is that it "can reduce the probability of leadership failure, provide needed accountability, and empower a responsive, potential laborer."[10]

Successful mentoring brings about many positive shifts in the lives of both the mentor and the apprentice. An effective mentor can bring perspective, encouragement, and wisdom to a situation where a protégé is feeling overwhelmed with choices and uncertainty. A mentor can give instruction, demonstrate principles, supply opportunity for debriefing and feedback, and provide accountability and assessment.[11] Simply put, an effective mentoring relationship will positively, significantly, and eternally influence a protégé's life. These protégés' choices and lives will give a sense to mentors that they themselves have invested their own lives wisely and have lived with "significance."[12]

The benefits of mentoring are not only personal, but they also stretch to societal gains for the future. A mentoring relationship can multiply far beyond the initial investment "which demonstrates that every time you build into the life of another person, you launch a process that ideally will never end."[13] Biehl declares that Christians are

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[9]Ibid., 11.

[10]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 17.

[11]Ibid., 19.

[12]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 14.

[13]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 131.

shrinking in numbers and overall societal influence.[14] To combat diminishing influence, Biehl contends that mature Christians mentoring younger Christians "is the bridge that will connect, strengthen, and stabilize future generations."[15] Future Christian leaders will be needed in homes, in churches, and in society. Today's Christians are responsible for stepping into the roles of mentors, influencing tomorrow's Christian leaders to Christlikeness.[16] The need for godly Christian mentors is great and cannot be overstated or overlooked.

Factors in a Mentoring Relationship

Several factors significantly influence the effectiveness of spiritual mentoring relationships. Some key concepts are the characteristics of an effective mentor, the characteristics of a good protégé, the dynamics of a pastor in the mentoring process, and special considerations when mentoring men. When mentors and protégés understand these concepts and how they interrelate, they are better prepared to craft a positive mentoring experience.

Characteristics of an Effective Mentor

Some mentors will be better than others, but overall, mentors who influence their protégés must understand three important premises. First, the mentor must view the protégé as a person, not a project. Second, the mentor must spur the protégé to grow, not to maintain. Third, the mentor must guard his own personal integrity.

Elmore points out that the prevailing characteristic of an influential mentor is being committed to the mentoring task; specifically, the mentor must be committed to the

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[14]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 13.

[15]Ibid., 15.

[16]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 131-33.

protégé as a person, not a project.[17] When mentors regard their protégés as real people, with all that their humanness entails, then mentors are more likely to persevere in the relationship when there are setbacks rather than victories. As a way to increase personal familiarity and commitment, Elmore suggests that mentors share openly and honestly, with vulnerability and humility.[18] With mentors setting the example, protégés will feel free to be open and honest. In turn, these conversations will build a personal relationship and will help give direction to how a mentor can pray and support a protégé not just in the mentoring relationship, but also in life. Protégés will receive instructions better when they feel that their mentors understand them, know their situations and histories, and indeed realize that they are people, not projects. A mentoring relationship that is formal, cold, and impersonal simply will not be as effective or rewarding.

Scripture also gives evidence that mentors and protégés should have a personal, caring relationship. Ron Davis cites Jesus' example and refers to his own experiences when he says that "the cornerstone of effective mentoring – the ingredient which is so often overlooked – is the ingredient of *affection*."[19] Jesus confronted and rebuked, but he also loved: he wept over Lazarus, he was gracious with the adulterous woman, he received the children, and he washed the disciples' feet.[20] Mentors who imitate Christ's example will balance complementary characteristics of justice and mercy. In other words, a Christ-like mentor must not only correct and teach, but must also show affection and good will towards his protégé. A growing protégé needs a wise friend more than a formal supervisor.

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[17]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 83-84.

[18]Ibid., 85-86.

[19]Ron Lee Davis, *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 83.

[20]Ibid., 84.

Effective mentors are not content with personally knowing and supporting protégés, but are committed to spurring their protégés to achieve personal growth. Elmore suggests that mentors help protégés grow by committing to the process of spiritual mentoring. In this process, the mentor takes personal responsibility in initiating spiritual dialogue and influencing through biblical direction.[21] In other words, in a spiritual mentoring relationship, effective mentors will intentionally, specifically, and unapologetically be biblically guided, using biblically derived goals and measurements.

While being biblically guided and goal driven, a mentor must be wary of becoming a harsh and unbending judge. As effective mentors seek growth for their protégés, they must learn to speak the truth in love or what Davis calls "tender-tough mentoring."[22] Being tender and tough means balancing one's attitude and assessments between grace and truth. Mentors must be gracious and not crush a protégé's spirit with undue or unfairly presented criticism. Yet, mentors must also be honest and truthful with their protégés to help them achieve greater results. Davis writes,

> Mentoring is not an "either/or" proposition – either tough or tender. Tenderness without toughness becomes a kind of sugary indulgence that smothers the learner's growth. Toughness without tenderness becomes harsh and cold, and leads to bitterness in the learner. Effective mentoring is "both/and" – *both* tender *and* tough.[23]

As mentors spur their protégés to growth, there will be instances of failure. Too often, when people fail in the business or political world, they are removed from their jobs or positions.[24] Davis, however, argues that people can effectively learn from their own failures. Thus, if a protégé fails in some respect, a mentor should not be quick

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[21]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 85-86.

[22]Davis, *Mentoring*, 71.

[23]Ibid., 68.

[24]Ibid., 85.

to end the relationship, but instead should use the experience as a teaching tool in helping the protégé grow as a leader. He points out that successful companies like Apple and Johnson & Johnson have a corporate culture that allows management to learn from failures in order to implement success.[25] Biblically, Davis observes that the twelve disciples, especially Peter, failed in several instances. Christ, however, did not replace them when they failed; he continued to devote himself to teaching them. The disciples, despite failures, became leaders in the early church.[26] Following Christ's example, an effective mentor creates a relationship where a protégé can grow through failures, helping to create later successes.

Though failures might be a reality when dealing with protégés, they are not simply to be ignored, but carefully addressed. Unfortunately, it is often easier to discourage protégés through finding faults instead of encouraging them to learn from their mistakes. Encouragement is always appropriate. Davis notes,

> To be effective, biblical mentors, we must be generous, always ready to affirm, always pulling for the learner and cheering him on, always motivating and encouraging, always hoping that the learner will not only catch us, but surpass us. Our goal as mentors is not simply to make carbon copies of ourselves, but to spur others on to even greater things that we ourselves have achieved.[27]

As a leader mentors others, it is tempting for the mentor to believe he has arrived at the peak of his development and become lax in matters of personal standards and accountability. Yet mentors must especially be wary to maintain their own personal integrity as others look to them as examples. Elmore points out that mentors who make a concentrated effort to live and speak above reproach, to mature in their spiritual lives, to choose submission to God and his control, and to be self-disciplined will enhance and

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[25]Ibid., 86.

[26]Ibid., 87-89.

[27]Ibid., 148.

make their mentoring relationships more fruitful.[28] Mentoring with personal integrity means that the mentor will spend time working within his own life even as he spends time assisting a protégé who is doing the same.

Effective mentoring cannot be separated from a mentor's integrity. Davis writes, "Integrity may be defined as the congruence – that is, consistency, harmony, agreement – between one's walk and one's talk."[29] Mentors' words and their lives are always being compared. If there is a discrepancy between the words and actions of the mentor, then protégés will suffer disillusionment or will commit the same errors.[30] Linked with personal integrity is a mentor's spiritual integrity, or devotion to God. Christian mentors are not simply secular mentors with a casual Christian veneer. A spiritual mentor should be faithfully devoted to God and practicing spiritual disciplines, especially prayer.[31] If a mentor does not have personal integrity, then he has no business in being a spiritual mentor.

Characteristics of a Good Protégé

Pouring time and energy into a mentoring relationship is a task that should not be entered into lightly. Though it is impossible to evaluate fully the compatibility and effectiveness of a potential mentor and protégé before the relationship is underway, there are three overall characteristics of a protégé that show strong potential for mentoring: that is, the degree to which the potential protégé is respectful, responsible, and likable. An expectation of a perfect protégé is unrealistic, but a protégé that is respectful towards his or her mentor will certainly make a mentoring relationship more rewarding and easier to

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[28]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 85-86.

[29]Davis, *Mentoring*, 96.

[30]Ibid., 97.

[31]Ibid., 109-21.

maintain. Mentors will respond more positively to protégés who exhibit respect through admiration, appreciation, and consideration. When a protégé shows admiration and appreciation by affirming how and what the mentor is teaching the mentor is encouraged to prioritize and to be dedicated to the relationship. A conscientious protégé is considerate of a mentor's time and schedule, being punctual and accommodating for meeting times and locations.[32]

Protégés with good potential have a certain profile of qualities; many of these qualities can be summarized simply as being responsible. As part of being responsible, high potential protégés usually pursue goals, accept challenges, learn eagerly, and take personal responsibility for their own growth.[33] This trait of personal responsibility positions a protégé to benefit fully from the mentoring relationship.

Biehl points out that mentoring relationships work better if mentors find their protégés to be likable.[34] A mentor will more readily invest their limited amount of time in those protégés they like and with whom they enjoy spending time. Additionally, if a protégé is likable, a mentor will be more willing to work around a protégé's weaknesses. In general, a relationship must be comfortable for both participants; neither should feel threatened or intimidated by the other. The more these qualities of respect, responsibility, and likeability are present, the greater the possibility that an effective mentoring relationship can develop.

Dynamics of a Pastor in the Mentoring Process

There are several good reasons why pastors should be passionate about both a mentoring ministry and their personal involvement as mentors in their respective

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[32]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 109-10.

[33]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 48-56.

[34]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 122-25.

churches. Many pastors are well aware that leaders in the church are in short supply and

that pastors have a scriptural mandate to teach and train (Eph 4:11-13). In an effort to

bring up leaders, and more generally as part of the teaching and training aspects of

churches, pastors have significant grounds to see intentional mentoring as a valid and

desirable ministry and labor for its success. As recognized leaders, pastors can more

effectively initiate personal mentoring and mentoring ministries in their churches.

Pastors themselves are a resource to serve as mentors because they likely have many of

the characteristics that make good mentors such as spiritual maturity, discipline, wisdom,

knowledge, and experience.[35] In addition to serving as mentors, pastors also can

facilitate mentoring relationships between others in their flock. Pastors are exposed to a

wide range of people across their communities and churches; these connections with a

variety of people help pastors be in a position to help match mentors and protégés who

might not know each other. These same connections help pastors match themselves with

the most appropriate protégés. Ted Engstrom writes, "Mentoring can't happen outside

the context of relationship. No one is in a better position to carry this out than the

shepherd [pastor]."[36] A pastor that is fully engaged in personal mentoring and supportive

of mentoring ministries will certainly help prepare tomorrow's church leaders.

Special Factors in Mentoring Men

From the very beginning, God created men and women distinctly and

differently from one another. These differences directly affect the way men and women

engage in and respond to relationships in their lives. In the mentoring process, there are

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[35]Ted W. Engstrom, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), 71.

[36]Ibid., 73.

some special considerations inherent when the mentoring relationship is between men.

Practitioners offer several observations about men and the mentoring process that invite reflection. First, men generally move quickly to the task of solving problems logically and objectively. The propensity towards logic means that men tend to create relational distance, whether intentional or not, between themselves and others by placing a premium on rules over relationship.[37] This "no nonsense" approach undercuts empathy and can hamper relationship building between mentor and protégé from the very beginning. If, indeed, a foundational lack of personal understanding takes place, a mentoring relationship will become a rigid project with steps and goals instead of a relationship that is suitably flexible, dynamic, and meaningful.[38] Setting and meeting goals in a project, rather than growing a relationship through the journey, might be more natural for men, but as Elmore points out that "we simply cannot do mentoring well if we don't do relationships well."[39] Hendricks argues that men easily neglect relationship building, but relationship is necessary to a sound mentoring process. He explains that "men are not involved in vital relationships the way they once were . . . . The point is, we need older men and younger men *relating* in such a way that younger men grow as older men guide."[40] Those mentors who are able to foster relationships with their protégés will have a better-quality and deeper mentoring experience.

Second, American culture greatly influences our modern image of masculinity. Society idealizes men who are "tough." This expectation makes it difficult for men to show weakness, actual or perceived, of any sort. Men are thus discouraged from seeking

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[37]Dan Erickson and Dan Schaffer, "Modern Man in Contemporary Culture," in *Effective Men's Ministry: The Indispensable Toolkit for Your Church*, ed. Phil Downer (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 22.

[38]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 43-44.

[39]Ibid., 45.

[40]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 183.

assistance, heeding advice, or being accountable to others. Elmore observes, "This image [of the American male] can be summarized with the words: strong, silent, self-sufficient, resourceful, shrewd and, on a good day, courteous to women and to each other."[41] Mentors need to be aware that male protégés might unintentionally let their cultural norms keep them from benefiting the most from mentoring. The cultural aloofness of males means that face-to-face encounters might be difficult to generate, but will be more productive than large group teaching. Thus, mentors need to seek and create a "male-friendly environment."[42]

Third, comparatively few men have had strong male Christian role models and might find difficulty in sharing freely, simply because they have never experienced or observed others in this sort of transparent, intimate relationship.[43] Some studies have "shown that the average man in the church has few or no close Christian friends."[44] Authentic Christianity, with genuine displays of concern, respect, and love, can feel disingenuous to those men who have never had strong male Christian role models. Additionally, men rarely see other men showing vulnerability or sharing feelings; they simply do not know how to do it and often fail to realize that it is appropriate.

To combat these obstacles, Elmore offers the following suggestions for men involved in mentoring other men. First, intentionally plan some casual events together for the sole purpose of building relationships. When planning meetings, meet in places that foster transparent communication. Set a goal of relationship building within the mentoring covenant. Lastly, share concerns and life situations with one another, and pray

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[41]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 46.

[42]Erickson and Schaffer, "A Modern Man in Contemporary Culture," 20-21.

[43]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 46.

[44]Erickson and Schaffer, "A Modern Man in Contemporary Culture," 20.

for those together.[45] Simple steps like these help address the inherent difficulty that men often face in developing and maintaining an effective mentoring relationship.

Barriers to Effective Mentoring

In a mentoring relationship, there are numerous obstacles that can reduce the effectiveness of the relationship. Though details vary from case to case, Elmore contends that the most common problems fall within one of the following categories: unmet expectations, relationship/personality clashes, and failure to meet objectives.[46]

Often, either the mentor or the protégé enters the relationship with expectations that can go unmet.[47] The best way to eliminate unmet expectations is to eliminate unrealistic and unspoken expectations. Elmore suggests several guidelines to follow at the very beginning of a mentoring relationship. First, both mentor and protégé need to state clearly and precisely their individual purposes, goals, and desires for the mentoring relationship. During this conversation, expectations can be discussed and settled upon instead of remaining unspoken and, ultimately, unmet.[48] Hendricks insists that "the best way to avoid disappointment is to clarify as much as you can up front."[49] Secondly, mentors need to estimate and explain accurately to their protégés a realistic idea of how much time they can devote and a realistic idea of their own ability in being a mentor. Protégés might overestimate a mentor's time and ability if the mentor is not clear about his schedule and skill limitations.[50] A protégé who has overestimated his or her mentor's time or ability might become disillusioned and cynical. Biehl points out that mentoring

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[45]Ibid., 48-49.

[46]Ibid., 139.

[47]Ibid*.,* 140. Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 111.

[48]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 141.

[49]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 112.

[50]Elmore, *Mentoring,* 141.

can take significant time and that opportunities exist outside of scheduled appointments, such as inviting protégés along on trips or short outings that simply "pop-up" during the course of life.[51] Lastly, mentors and protégés should regularly discuss, evaluate, and pray together as part of the mentoring process.[52] Protégés should be encouraged to make an exhaustive, priority-ordered list of questions or topics they would like to bring up for discussion with their mentors.[53] This list helps make sure the protégés and mentor address the most important matters in a limited amount of time. Hendricks suggests that even when expectations are realistic and clarified, either the mentor or protégé can disappoint each other in an array of aspects. All mentors and protégés need to maintain awareness that all people, in their utter humanity, are prone to failure or error; in those cases, "deal with it in a Christ-like way and move on."[54]

The second major barrier to effective mentoring is relationship and personality clashes between protégés and mentors. At the start of a mentoring relationship, optimism abounds as mentors and protégés note the positive qualities and potential that led them to commit to the relationship. These initial positives can, in essence, mask or devalue negative qualities. As time passes, character flaws can become more noticeable and aggravating, threatening to overwhelm the relationship. As a way to ease personality conflicts, Elmore encourages mentors and protégés to understand and accept that, with enough time, conflict will naturally and normally happen between two sinful people. Conflict, however, does not automatically destroy a relationship. Mentors and protégés can manage and resolve many typical problems if they acknowledge and commit to working troubles out before problems start. Sometimes, however, mentoring

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[51]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 46.

[52]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 142.

[53]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 47.

[54]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 113.

relationships must end or change substantially; in these cases, mentors must be honest, fair, and caring in altering the relationship.[55] Along with acknowledgement and commitment to resolve conflicts, Elmore simply suggests a proactive stance, avoiding as much conflict as possible through wise pairing of mentors and protégés.[56]

A third major barrier to effective mentoring is failure to meet objectives. Elmore again recommends that prevention through planning is key. Specifically, both parties should sign a written covenant agreement that articulates objectives, assignments, and overall commitment to the process.[57] If either party violates the agreement, then the other party is obligated to bring attention to the situation. Obviously, both mentor and protégé should be gracious with each other while holding each other accountable to their agreement. If there is persistent failure, on either side, then a revised and more realistic plan should be considered.[58] As part of the covenant, Hendricks encourages not making open-ended commitments, but should include specific times of reevaluation and readjustment.[59] A mentoring relationship should not be given up too quickly without first trying some basic conflict resolutions and redefining of the relationship that might be more realistic under the circumstances.[60]

Best Practices of Effective Mentoring

An effective mentoring relationship is not a happy accident. Instead, it is the product of intentional decisions about how to structure the time and interactions to achieve the targeted aims. In an effort to build an effective mentoring relationship,

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[55]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 53.

[56]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 142-45.

[57]Ibid., 146.

[58]Ibid., 147-48.

[59]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 195.

[60]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 57.

mentors should concentrate on three essential practices: modeling, individual meetings, and relationship building. Mentors should also aim to avoid three missteps: a possessive attitude, blindness to weakness, and reproducing weaknesses.

A great practice in a spiritual mentoring relationship is modeling through personal example.[61] Mentors should seek to live out biblical truths in their lives and be living examples of what they are trying to pass on. As mentors live these truths, their personal examples model to their protégés what they are trying to teach. In Scripture, Paul references the fact that he and others lived as examples of the faith to the Thessalonians.[62] As First Thessalonians 1:5b says, "You know how we lived among you for your sake." It was obvious to Paul, as it should also be to modern mentors, that mentors living in accordance to what they are teaching provide a powerful example and model that cannot easily be dismissed. Leading by example and modeling correct behavior and action will show and teach protégés while giving overall validity to the mentor's work.[63]

The twelve disciples had opportunities to learn simply through watching Jesus as an example of how to live, teach, and minister. For instance, they saw Jesus take time to speak with a woman from Samaria in John 4. This episode illustrated the fact that Jesus did not discriminate against women or Samaritans, as ancient Jewish society often did. The disciples – and modern followers as well – could more easily remember Jesus' lesson of "do not discriminate" through observing his actions than they would have by only listening to his words.

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[61]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 98.

[62]LeRoy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 99.

[63]Phil Downer, "Becoming a Spiritual Parent," in *Effective Men's Ministry: The Indispensable Toolkit for Your Church*, ed. Phil Downer (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 178-79.

For mentors to teach by modeling through personal example, they must be available to and transparent with their protégés. Jesus did not simply speak some teachings from a pulpit or in front of a class and then go home. Jesus was available to the disciples by living and traveling with them. John alludes to the fact that the disciples had personal time with Jesus in 1 John 1:1 with the phrase, "we have looked at and our hands have touched."[64] In American society, mentors and protégés might not live and travel together as they did in the scriptural accounts, but times of simply being together and sharing experiences will provide opportunities for the mentor to be a living example of his teaching.

For mentors to model effectively, not only must they be available, they must also have a certain sense of transparency, being appropriately open and frank with their protégés.[65] Transparency allows protégés to observe the humanity of their mentors, and not simply have an idealized or unattainable image of their mentor. Scripture shows Jesus being transparent with his disciples, especially the inner three disciples of Peter, James, and John. In Matthew 17:1-2, Jesus shares a very intimate moment with Peter, James, and John and clearly revealed himself as God's son through the transfiguration.[66] If mentors lack transparency, they risk being overly guarded and formal, robbing a protégé of a real example of a life with mistakes and successes.

In addition to modeling, another excellent practice is individual one-on-one meetings. Individual meetings are most effective when mentors and protégés use them for accountability in pursuing specific and personalized goals and objectives.[67] Erickson and Schaffer observe, "Men will seldom be transparent in a large church gathering. They

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[64]Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 100.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Ibid., 101.

[67]Ibid., 102.

are more likely to share openly in a men's small group or a face-to-face encounter."[68]
Elmore offers a few pointers for individual meetings. For example, mentors and protégés
should have an initial meeting to "clarify expectation on both sides," and to set goals for
the mentoring process. They should meet where there is a certain degree of privacy and
anonymity due to the personal nature of mentoring. They should also determine how
frequent meetings should be, keeping in mind that they should be frequent enough that
the meetings become a self-sustaining habit, instead of an unusual occurrence.[69]

During these meetings, the main task should be dialogue, encouragement,
teaching, and prayer that arise from previously discussed goals and objectives.[70] Elmore
suggests that mentors use the acronym S.A.L.T. to help have appropriate and on topic
conversations during the meetings. S.A.L.T. stands for the following: Say something
affirming, Ask the right questions, Listen well, Turn the discussion to the truth or
principle to be learned.[71] Following this protocol ensures that the time together is
focused and intentional. During individual meetings, Elmore suggests an inductive
approach which means that mentors ask appropriate questions rather than simply lecture
or talk. Elmore reasons that "asking questions encourages *them* to come up with and *own*
the answers, not you. As you learn to 'host' the conversation, you can guide them toward
a biblical response without just giving it to them."[72]

In addition to modeling and individual meetings, relationship building that is
not as formalized can benefit a mentoring relationship. Hendricks suggests that mentor
and protégé both have times of being on each other's "turf." As mentors and protégés

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[68]Erickson and Schaffer, "Modern Man in Contemporary Culture," 21.

[69]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 208-09.

[70]Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 103.

[71]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 209.

[72]Ibid., 211.

spend time together at one another's home, workplace, or favorite coffee shop, they will both have a greater "appreciation for each other's background, preferences, and style."[73] Hendricks also suggests relationship building by sharing a leisure activity together such as attending a ball game or having a family barbecue together.[74]

As mentors seek to be effective through these best practices, they should also be aware of and avoid three specific missteps: having a possessive attitude, being blind to weakness, and reproducing weakness.[75] If mentors have a possessive attitude, they might see protégés as personal projects and limit their ministry exposure to other leaders and situations, not giving them opportunities to learn from others. Mentors should continue to seek an attitude that protégés are God's people, not theirs, and that God can move them and place them in a variety of ministries even outside a mentor's sphere. A wise mentor understands that he or she is not a "boss," but a teacher and friend in helping and training a protégé to go into any number of ministries at God's direction.

Mentors need to be wary of becoming blind to weaknesses.[76] As mentors witness protégés improving in some areas, mentors can, in essence, become "blinded" to other weaknesses. A protégé might unintentionally have certain areas go uncorrected and underdeveloped because "blinded" mentors let some areas go unexamined.

Specifically, mentors might easily overlook a problem in the protégé if it mirrors their own particular weaknesses. The mentor then inadvertently passes those weaknesses along to his protégé. This problem can be tough to avoid because mentors must be perceptive, aware, and honest enough to evaluate themselves accurately. Eims cautions that "people with whom we are working pick up our strengths as well as our

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[73]Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 105-06.

[74]Ibid., 107-08.

[75]Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, 105-06.

[76]Ibid., 106.

weaknesses."[77] One effective means to combat passing on weakness is for mentors to ask others to assess a protégé. An outside evaluation will help find weaknesses that the mentor might have passed on or overlooked. It is also wise for mentors to expose protégés to other mentors or teachers to broaden and deepen their experience.[78]

Leading Protégés to Mentor Others

Elmore contends that for mentoring truly to be effective, the mentoring process must continue with protégés developing and becoming mentors to others. To combat a failure to multiply mentors, Elmore recommends that an initial and stated goal of a mentoring relationship is for the protégé to ultimately become a mentor to others.[79] As protégés become mentors and then their protégés become mentors, a multiplication effect of the original mentor will occur. As Davis articulates,

> Mentoring, however, operates on the principles of exponential growth. Initially, the mentoring process impacts only a few people, but it impacts them at a very deep level. And while it yields deceptively small returns at the outset, it quickly mushrooms as the yield compounds, multiplies, and factors itself.[80]

Effective mentors operate with the explicit goal of producing a chain reaction of mentors begetting mentors. Mentors must encourage – and expect – their protégés to seek out relationships in which they can become a mentor for another person for this multiplication process to continue.

The Great Commission teaching of Matthew 28:19-20 makes clear that Jesus spiritually mentored the original twelve disciples with the purpose that they themselves would make disciples. As these first disciples carried out this discipling and mentoring

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[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 148-50.

[80]Davis, *Mentoring*, 207.

process, the early church grew rapidly through a multiplication process. The apostle Paul supported and practiced a multiplication ministry as 2 Timothy 2:2 teaches: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."[81] The early church's multiplication ministry changed the world as Christianity spread. Mentors have an opportunity to change their churches, communities, and ultimately the world, as they pour into protégés and help them achieve far more than if they were left to struggle and contend on their own.

Summary of Practical Considerations for Mentoring

Mentoring those around us to grow spiritually and make greater strides, aside from being biblical, is simply the right thing to do. As believers, we have a responsibility to train up and seek the betterment of our fellow brothers and sisters so that they can likewise lead and help spur personal spiritual growth and, ultimately, kingdom growth. In one limited study of mega-church senior pastors, in spite of their diversity, each of these pastors pointed to at least one significant mentor that affected them in their own personal lives and ministries.[82] In our current culture that undercuts Christianity and promotes the idol of self, mentoring is needed to help Christians truly live beyond themselves by helping others navigate the pitfalls of this world and strive for a life of fruitful obedience.

Specifically, pastors are strategically positioned and equipped to establish meaningful mentoring relationships with select Christian men within their churches. These relationships can flourish if both mentor and protégé take steps to overcome the known barriers and follow best practices for mentoring. Ideally, the relationship will reproduce itself over and over as the protégé becomes a mentor for another man.

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[81]Elmore, *Mentoring*, 157.

[82]Biehl, *Mentoring*, 7.

Through mentoring, we can be a church that realizes the Great Commission, making

disciples – genuine, committed, fruitful disciples.

CHAPTER 4

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE:
A SPIRITUAL GROWTH CAMPAIGN FOR MEN
AT WESTPORT BAPTIST CHURCH

This chapter details the implementation, process, and methodology of this project's fifteen-week mentoring program, entitled "Press on to the Prize: A Spiritual Growth Campaign" (POP), conducted at Westport Baptist Church, Westport, Kentucky, during the fall of 2012. This project took final shape after a study of both the biblical precedent and the practical concerns in regards to discipleship and one-on-one mentoring in the context of the local congregation.

Formulating the Plan

Soon after I accepted the call to serve as pastor of Westport Baptist Church, I did an initial investigation into the life of the congregation. I quickly became aware of the disconnect between worship attendance and personal spiritual maturity, particularly in some of the men. These men were not assuming roles of leadership in the life of the church or in their families. In other words, we had many men who simply attended, but had the appearance of doing little else when it came to their personal spiritual lives and being spiritual leaders. I am not suggesting that there were not any spiritually mature males in the congregation, but there was a perceived notion that families, especially those with children at home, were spiritually guided more by mothers than by fathers. In fact, there was a lack of any targeted work of the church, beyond basic worship services and Sunday School, to help men grow in their faith or spiritual maturity. This lack of intentional ministry to men contributed to the formation of a segment of men whose

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spiritual involvement was limited to worship attendance and, perhaps, a more sporadic Sunday School attendance. Again, it was perceived that many of these men, did not seek or strive to lead the work of the church, to mature spiritually, or to grow in their faith beyond the most basic of spiritual disciplines, simple attendance. At Westport Baptist, those men who were not strongly self-motivated to grow in their spiritual lives and take on leadership positions both in the church and in their families were often left unchallenged to pursue meaningful growth in their faith and spiritual leadership.

In my personal faith background, I have no experience in the areas of one-on-one mentoring or disciple-making. My interest was piqued, however, after hearing testimonies from my classmates and ministerial peers about the power of a spiritually mature man in their past, such as a youth minister, pastor, godly relative, or strong man of faith from their congregation, guiding and helping them in their spiritual journeys towards Christian maturity. From my own observations, it seemed that many men in my church, though fine men in and of themselves, were not in a position of spiritual growth that would lead them to wield godly influence in their families and in our church. I wanted to challenge the men in my church to undertake a time of focused attention towards growing in their faith so that in turn they could be those godly men that their families, our church, and our world need. I also wanted to learn personally to be one of those men who are a godly influence to other men in a one-on-one setting, outside the general responsibilities of a pulpit ministry. I began investigating the concept of disciple-making through both group teaching and one-on-one mentoring in an effort to find effective means for me to help men in their spiritual journeys.

My investigation started with the biblical concept of disciple-making, especially from the perspective of a spiritual mentor to a mentee. Naturally, I found the essence of mentoring and disciple-making in many areas of scripture, but especially and most clearly in the lives of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and his disciples,

and Paul and Timothy.[1] It was clear that the biblical record upheld, particularly from these examples, the practice of spiritual mentorship.

I then investigated discipling through mentoring from academic sources other than the Bible. Reading books about discipleship that detailed strategies for effectiveness helped me gain perspective and acted as a catalyst for me in formulating the POP campaign. The end result was for me to serve as a spiritual mentor of a small group of men from my church. These men and I would meet together in both group sessions and one-on-one sessions. In the group meetings, I would teach the men using appropriately themed discipleship study materials. In the one-on-one meetings, I would challenge, discuss, and hold the men accountable to their individualized spiritual growth goals. In both the group and one-on-one meetings, I would emphasize personal responsibility in pursuing spiritual growth and encourage the men to let God use them as spiritual leaders in their own families, in the church, and in their other areas of influence.

Implementing the Press on to the Prize Campaign

To be successful, I knew the participants would need a period of uninterrupted focus on the personal growth they were working to do during POP. Looking through the church calendar, I found an ideal time, starting after the conclusion of special events of summer, and extending through early November. This time period would allow us to begin with the new school year—and the return to regular schedules that time of year offers many families—and to conclude the program before Thanksgiving and the busy schedules of the holidays. I began the implementation of the program by praying for God's direction, recruiting participants, meeting with participants, preparing a sermon series, and planning a final celebration banquet for the participants and their families.

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[1]See chap. 2 of this project.

Recruiting Participants

   In late July 2012, I prepared the August edition of our church newsletter, mailing it to the members of our congregation and community. In this newsletter, I featured an article in the pastor's section revealing my project to the widest audience possible (see Appendix 1). The purpose of the article was to inform and encourage a significant group of men to consider going through the program. I also hoped putting out an article in such a broad forum would generate interest, maybe inspiring wives to encourage their husbands and other men of the church to participate in POP and to promote discipleship growth in general.

   This newsletter article focused on several points. First, I described my intentions to work with a core group of men to develop individualized spiritual growth plans, meeting regularly to help them achieve their goals. The second point was that Christians are biblically obligated to pursue spiritual growth and to be part of God's plan in discipling others. The third point was that the Bible directs pastors and leaders to equip God's people for God's work. Using these points, I challenged men of the church to consider volunteering to be part of POP. In the following days, I was intentional in my efforts to mention the newsletter article to those I saw in the course of a normal week, asking them to read it and to seriously consider enrolling or encouraging their husbands to participate.

   My next step for recruiting participants was preaching a church-wide sermon during the morning worship service of August 5, 2012. The sermon emphasized the importance of spiritual growth and servant-leadership, as seen in Philippians 3:12-16. I broke the passage into three broad points: Paul's past, present, and future. I related that Paul had changed from a Christless past, that he awaited a heavenly future, but meanwhile he was in the maturing present. Paul's maturing present meant that he was "pressing on to the prize," living a life fully committed to growing and maturing in the

faith and making disciples. To close the sermon, I made a general appeal for the

congregation to take personal discipleship seriously, striving for real growth, and in turn

use their living, growing faith to influence others in their spiritual journeys. I challenged

the congregation to commit to daily Bible study and prayer time, giving suggestions for

success. Additionally, I encouraged members to read a book about Christian discipleship

or to participate in a group discipleship study that our church offers. Finally, I made a

special appeal to the men, saying that I would like to help them specifically in their own

spiritual journeys through POP, and I invited those men interested in participating in POP

to stay for a few minutes after service for a quick enrollment.

Eight men signed up for POP, a significant number considering that only about

20 attenders that day fell within the participant parameters of POP. During the following

week, I contacted 2 more men whom I considered to be prospective candidates but who

had not signed-up. Both of these men were very interested and seemed earnestly to

consider POP participation; however, both declined, noting that the program sounded like

it would be beneficial for them, but that the time commitment for POP seemed more than

their work and family schedules would allow. They both stated that they would likely

participate later if I were to lead another campaign. Of the original 8 men enrolled in

POP, one participant had to withdraw due to an unexpected emergency heart surgery. He,

too, expressed great interest in participating in a future campaign.

With the enrollment set at 7, I started the paperwork for tracking each man's

progress as I led them through the "On Your Mark, Get Set" group orientation meeting

and the "Go!" individual meetings. The participant files contained the following

documents: a one-page description of POP that clearly delineated purposes and

expectations (Appendix 2), a project calendar (Appendix 3), a spiritual growth self-

assessment to be completed at the start of POP (Appendix 4), a goal setting worksheet

(Appendix 5), an on-going goal progress record (Appendix 6), a meeting record

(Appendix 7), a second copy of the spiritual growth self-assessment to be completed at

the end of POP (Appendix 4), an exit interview survey (Appendix 8), a participant

evaluation (Appendix 9), and a spouse evaluation (Appendix 10).

"On Your Mark, Get Set" Meeting

I held our group orientation gathering, which I called the "On Your Mark, Get

Set" meeting, on August 21, 2012. I shared my hope and enthusiasm for all of us as we

progressed through the campaign. I also informed the men that, per seminary guidelines,

they were volunteering and could drop out of the campaign at any time. All of the men

affirmed that they understood and that they desired to participate in POP.

I then went over the POP summary sheet with the men, emphasizing the goals

and rationale of POP (Appendix 2). I outlined the entire POP process, including

expectations that I had of them, of myself, and that they could have of me. I distributed

the spiritual growth self-assessment survey (Appendix 4), asking the participants to

complete it before our first individual meeting in order to provide a baseline score for

each man's spiritual growth. Further, I explained that each man and I would meet during

the next few days, review their survey answers, and, using this information, work

together in setting several specific growth goals for the mentee to concentrate on during

the campaign. At the end of the campaign, they would again complete the spiritual

growth self-assessment (Appendix 4) to help gauge any changes experienced during POP.

I then scheduled individual meetings with each of the 7 men to take place in the next

several days (see Appendix 3).

Four-Week Sermon Series

During the early weeks of the POP campaign, as part of an overall emphasis in

spiritual growth and discipleship for the church at large and to help encourage the

participants in their work towards their personal goals, I prepared a four-part sermon

series entitled "Press on to the Prize – Becoming More like Christ." I delivered this

sermon series on consecutive Sunday mornings, beginning August 26, 2012, and ending

on September 16, 2012. In these sermons, I challenged the congregation to take on the task of personal discipleship and addressed each sermon towards different topics to help make spiritual growth successful.

The first sermon of the series was called "Growing Up – Lessons in Spiritual Maturity." In this sermon, I emphasized the point that when we give our lives to Christ we are born-again. Just as a physical baby will grow with care and nurture, a spiritual baby will grow with spiritual care and spiritual nurture. Referring to 2 Peter 3:8-11, I encouraged the congregation to be serious about becoming like Christ, which means being different from the worldly culture. Instead, believers must intentionally seek Christ in our habits, our routines, and in the way we think, lest we default to our sinful ways. Though God provides all that we need for spiritual growth, we must choose to "eat" and "drink" of God's provisions. Unfortunately, we might choose, for a variety of reasons, to neglect God's spiritual food and provisions. Believers who neglect God's provisions and personal discipline and effort towards spiritual maturity will become spiritually stagnant and, in essence, be stunted in their own spiritual growth.

The second sermon of the series was called "Transforming – Lessons in Truth." In this sermon, I pointed out that believers are transformed by the truth of God's Word. I emphasized how God's truth changes us, equips us, and has authority over us. I challenged the congregation to take God's truth and personally apply it to their lives by stressing James 1:22, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

The third sermon of the series was called "Standing Firm – Lessons in Temptation." In this sermon, I preached that Christians were not immune to temptation, but that resisting temptation actually served to develop spiritual maturity. Using 2 Corinthians 2:11, I spoke about Satan and his desire for us to fail in developing Christlikeness. I also spoke about defeating Satan's temptations by realizing his strategy and thwarting it appropriately.

The final sermon of the series was called "Running the Race – Lessons in Persistence." I compared maturing in the Christian life to being a marathon runner in that one must be intentional, deliberate, and well-paced to complete the course that lies ahead. I taught that maturing takes time and persistence and that there are no short cuts to maturity. Referring to 2 Corinthians 3:18, I encouraged the believers to see spiritual growth as an on-going process, not a one-time decision. During this final sermon, I reiterated my challenge to the congregation to set aside a consistent time of personal devotion consisting of daily Bible reading supplemented with reading other Christian writing that groups in our church had used as resources, such as *Radical* by David Platt, *Not a Fan* by Kyle Idleman, and *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren.

"Go!" Meetings

After our "On Your Mark, Get Set" group orientation meeting, I scheduled the first individual meetings, entitled "Go!" meetings. I met with each participant an average of 2 hours. I started the meetings by having the mentee share with me his personal testimony. As appropriate, I would ask him follow-up questions, clarifying points about his religious upbringing and background. This time of getting to know each man more personally and becoming familiar with his spiritual history was invaluable to me as a mentor during POP.

We then went over their self-assessment survey (Appendix 4). I authored the survey based on research I did in connection with discipleship and disciple-making. I specifically broke the survey into six different content areas with ten questions in each area. The assessed areas were worship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, and prayer. The men answered each of the 60 questions by scoring themselves from "never" to "always," using a correlating number scale, 1 to 5.

After talking about these areas, each participant and I spent time discussing goals that we thought might be effective to aid his spiritual maturity, using a goal setting

worksheet I designed to correspond with the self-assessment (Appendix 5). We selected goals by considering the participant's own interests, personality, and abilities, along with time management considerations because each of these men were fully employed and had families at home. Though each man set his own personal growth goals, there were a few overarching themes that united many of the participants' aims. Several men set attendance goals for themselves and their families in regards to worship and Sunday School. Many participants set goals relating to daily or regular Bible study or devotional reading. Further, multiple men set goals relating to leading regular family devotions and specific prayer time with and for their spouses and children. Some participants set goals relating to ministry such as volunteering through the church to help in home repairs and participating in mission trips. When setting these goals, special effort was made to state and formulate the goals in such a way so that the goal could be measured and tracked. For instance, a man and his family sporadically or not attending Sunday School would set a specific goal, such as attending nine out of the next ten Sundays.

After setting the individual growth goals in this "Go!" meeting, I helped the mentee develop a realistic, workable plan to achieve the goal. At the end of each meeting, I prayed with and over the mentee, dedicating the efforts on his spiritual growth goals to the glory of God, asking for strength and endurance as he "pressed on to the prize," and requesting special blessings upon his family and the church as a result of his commitment to growing his faith. I invited the mentee to start working on his goals, but I made sure he did not feel alone in the endeavor. Before ending our first individual meeting together, I scheduled the next individual meeting together, an "On Track" meeting, for approximately 2 weeks later (Appendix 7).

I kept each man's spiritual growth self-assessment survey (Appendix 4), placing it into his POP file. I then took the notes from our meeting and recorded each individual goal on its own on-going goal progress record (Appendix 6) and also placed these goal records into each man's file. Additionally, over the next few days, I gathered

materials that any of the men might have needed in regards to their goals and delivered them. For instance, I delivered a copy of *Purpose-Driven Life* to a participant who selected to read that book, and I compiled a list of resources for family dinner table devotions for another man who set a goal of leading a daily spiritual lesson for his children each evening.

"On Track" Meetings

Each of the men set between three to five individually appropriate goals to work on during the campaign. Over the course of the POP campaign, in addition to seeing these men during the course of regular church activities, I had five rounds of "On Track" individual meetings, with each meeting lasting between 1 and 2 hours for each participant. During these meetings, the mentee and I would start by talking about how things in his life were going in a general way. After this, I would always move to checking on how "on track" he was in accomplishing or fulfilling his goals. Specifically, I would have his goal progress records (Appendix 6) in front of me and would review by asking him about each of the goals he had set. As we discussed each goal, a natural discussion evolved about how he was growing or maturing in his faith because of his efforts to fulfill the demands of his goals. We discussed ideas and strategies for reaching the goals, and I would share with him from my experience and recommend resources. I tried consistently to encourage him in pursuing his goals and helped him adapt his goals when needed. Towards the end of our meeting time, I always prayed with the mentee about his goals, our discussions, and other issues he was facing in his life, especially family and work related issues. I would then schedule the next individual "On Track" meeting (Appendix 7).

"S.H.A.P.E. Training" Group Meetings

Along with having individual "On Track" meetings with the 7 mentees every other week to assess goal progress, we started the "S.H.A.P.E. Training" group meeting

component of POP on September 9, 2012. The group meetings were for all the participants and were held for six consecutive weeks, ending October 14, 2012. We met for 1.5 hours on Sunday nights, the time when the most men indicated it would be convenient. This time corresponded with a women's Bible study, a children's ministry, and youth group at our church, so childcare and transportation concerns were minimized. We began each week's session by spending a few minutes fellowshipping and sharing prayer requests and testimonies. The main part of the meeting, however, was used in working through a discipleship study.

I chose to use *S.H.A.P.E.: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*, part of *A Purpose Driven Resource* line of products that is part of Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven* ministry.[2] Upon seeking a group discipleship study to use, this resource seemed a perfect fit of biblical and practical teaching in encouraging mentees to look for opportunities and ministries for them to use their unique selves for God's glory. Each participant was given a learner's guide and encouraged to work through the weekly assignments. Each lesson had a video segment of the author, Erik Rees, teaching the main lesson. After the video, I facilitated the lesson by emphasizing key points, reviewing answers to the questions encountered in the learner guide, and leading us through the group discussion questions. The lessons were an excellent group resource and helped reinforce the whole purpose of POP, spiritual growth, spiritual leadership, and our lives for God's glory.

After the initial session encouraging group members to embrace who they were for God's glory and to be used by God in their ministry contexts, each lesson thereafter dealt with a concept represented by one letter from the acronym S.H.A.P.E. The second lesson was represented by "S" and was about spiritual gifts, exploring what spiritual gifts

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[2]Erik Rees, *S.H.A.P.E: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life—Small Group Study* (Lake Forest, CA: Purpose Driven, 2006).

a person may possess and what ministries this may entail. The third lesson, "H," was about heartbeat, identifying the passion God gives a person and exploring ways to use that for kingdom work. The fourth lesson of S.H.A.P.E., abilities, examined the natural abilities a person has that can be used in ministry settings. The fifth S.H.A.P.E. topic dealt with a person's personality; Rees teaches that personality is not good or bad, but will strongly influence what ministries a person will enjoy and find most fulfilling. Rees' final lesson was "E," which stands for a person's experiences. He taught how a person's experiences will make each person a unique player in the kingdom of God. At the end of the six-week group discipleship study, the men had thought through these five personal areas of their lives to discover, what Rees calls, their unique S.H.A.P.E for ministry.

During the "S.H.A.P.E. Training" group lessons, only 2 men had to miss any of the lessons. They caught up by viewing the lessons on their own, and I briefly reviewed the lesson and concepts with them during our following individual "On Track" meetings. All of the mentees completed "S.H.A.P.E Training" and found it to be influential to understanding how they are divinely designed to fulfill a unique and meaningful position of service to God.

Final "On Track" Meetings
with Exit Interviews

By the week of October 28, 2012, we had completed the group discipleship study and had only the final round of individual meetings remaining. I used the previous week to distribute the final spiritual growth self-assessment survey (Appendix 4). This survey matched the survey given at the start of the project, and the answers would serve as a method to measure spiritual growth in the six areas of worship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, and prayer. The men were asked to complete the survey in advance of our final individual meeting so that it could help fuel our discussion of the effectiveness of this campaign to spur them on towards spiritual maturity. In preparation,

I also reviewed my notes from their on-going goal progress record (Appendix 6) to help me discern how successful they were in accomplishing their goals.

In these meetings, I first conducted an exit interview asking all 7 men the same set of questions (Appendix 8). These questions allowed the men to reflect on the growth they had experienced. We also looked over the spiritual growth surveys; we discussed their aggregate scores along with how well they did with their particular goals, noting score changes from the earlier survey. As part of this meeting, I asked each man if he would give a testimony about his POP experience during our Victory Lap Celebration banquet to be held the next week.

Victory Lap Celebration

On Saturday, November 10, 2012, I hosted our Victory Lap Celebration. This celebration event was a catered meal and a final group meeting for POP. The participants, their spouses, and their children were invited to fellowship together, sharing both a meal and the testimonies about the POP experience. I also asked all the participants and spouses to fill out a closing evaluation form (Appendixes 9 and 10).

The Victory Lap Celebration was a wonderful conclusion to this project. I could see the results of relationships that were forged over the preceding months as men and spouses fellowshipped among themselves. After the meal was over, we moved to a time of testimony and encouraging words. I started by giving each man a card of gratitude for their participation, and I enclosed a personal note of encouragement and thanksgiving. As I called each man's name, I expressed my thanks to him individually and specifically before the other participants and the family members.

After this, I opened the floor to the men who had agreed to give testimonies about their POP experience. I was greatly encouraged by these men sharing in this public forum many of the significant growth goals that I knew had been accomplished on individual levels. In the end, all of the men shared some aspect of their experience, even

those who had not previously expressed an interest in giving a public testimony; some men shared very personal and powerful anecdotes that brought tears to our eyes. The spouses were also invited to share about how their husbands' participation impacted their family, and several wives gave ringing endorsements of their husbands' progress and the POP campaign in general. This celebration was a meaningful way to encourage each other and recognize the progress that the men had made over through the POP campaign.

Participant and Spouse Evaluations

At the Victory Lap Celebration, I asked both the participants and their spouses to fill out an evaluation form (Appendixes 9 and 10). I was very curious to learn if the participants and their spouses found the program to be as influential in their lives as it seemed from our individual meetings; I was greatly encouraged by the results of these evaluations. I was especially grateful to see the spouses' responses, since up to this point, they were not directly involved or surveyed in any way through POP. A fuller evaluation of the intended results and efficacy of the POP campaign will be addressed in Chapter 5, but responses on the exit evaluations that both participants and spouses filled out were very positive.

Specifically, I asked the spouses to evaluate ten statements using a scale of 1-5, indicating responses of "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," respectively. The statement, "I have positive feelings about the Press on to the Prize campaign," was given a cumulative score of 35, meaning each of 7 wives marked 5, indicating they strongly agreed with the statement. The next statement, "I would encourage other men to participate in Press on to the Prize," also received a cumulative score of 35, again a unanimous "strongly agree" response.

I asked the men, using the same scale, to evaluate the following statement, "I experienced spiritual growth during the Press on to the Prize campaign." The men each responded with a score of 5, a perfect "strongly agree" response. They also each strongly

agreed with the following statement: "My participation in Press on to the Prize increased my understanding of God's purpose for me as a leader in my home and church."

These perfect scores of 35 on four rather broad and general evaluation statements, from both participants and spouses, means that out of 28 chances to give a score indicate that, at least in a general sense, POP seems to have been a worthwhile, beneficial endeavor. First, from the participants' view, they personally experienced spiritual growth and increased their understanding of their personal potential and responsibility to assume spiritual leadership in church and in the home. Second, from the spouses' view, POP was such a positive experience for their husbands that they would encourage others to participate without hesitation.

These evaluations, which were anonymous, greatly encouraged me as a pastor and as the lead mentor of POP. Before being given the evaluation, I assured everyone that I would not know any particular person's answers and that I wanted honest feedback for my own betterment and to help those I may be working with in future POP campaigns. For these reasons, I think the evaluations are a fair and worthy indicator of the POP campaign. One of my biggest fears of conducting this project was that the men would spend these weeks focused on surveys, group meetings, individual meetings, and then specifically working on their individual goals outside of these meeting times, only to judge it as a waste, not worthy of their time, attention, or effort. I also feared that even if a participant did have a positive personal experience, that it would be undercut in some way because his spouse felt that the campaign, in essence, stole her husband's time, not lending any tangible value for their family. From the evaluation data and from the public testimonies shared in the Victory Lap Celebration, my fears were allayed because all responses seemed to indicate that POP was a helpful program for the participants and their families and that they would recommend to other men.

Conclusion

I was extremely pleased with the POP campaign. I heard participants give tearful gratitude to God for using the POP experience to break them out of spiritual complacency. I know that serving as a mentor helped my personal relationship with each of the men grow and deepen considerably. I feel that an on-going program using the POP model will bear fruit in whatever ministry or church situation I may find myself. We now have 7 men who all had spiritually significant growth periods and are now more involved in spiritual leadership in their church and in their homes.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the 15-week mentoring program, Press on to the Prize: A Spiritual Growth Campaign (POP), which was implemented at Westport Baptist Church (Westport, Kentucky) from July to November 2012. This evaluation includes assessing the project's purpose and goals, weighing both the strengths and the weaknesses of the project, suggesting improvements for future implementation, and reflecting both theologically and personally on the project and its process, from conception and design through implementation.

Evaluation of the Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the project was to mentor a core group of men, fostering spiritual growth and spiritual leadership development, by providing support, resources, and accountability, in order to advance God's kingdom through personal spiritual growth and leadership in ministries and evangelistic efforts of Westport Baptist Church. Evaluating how effectively the purpose of the project was met is best undertaken by evaluating each particular goal.

Goal 1: Understanding God's Purposes

The first goal of the project was to increase the participants' understanding of God's purposes for men as leaders in the home and church. I targeted this goal because I suspected that men in our church might have simply abrogated their personal spiritual leadership in their own homes and in the life of the church. Comparing the applicable data from the spiritual growth self-assessment participants completed pre- and post-POP

80

(see Appendix 4) indicates improvement in the men's understanding of their positions as spiritual leaders (see Appendix 11 for a complete listing of each participant's survey responses).

For the self-assessment, the men had to determine how often they demonstrated a characteristic described in a presented statement, with a score of 1 meaning "never" and a score of 5 meaning "always." Self-assessment statement 20 reads, "I am the spiritual leader of my household." The men's average score for this statement pre-POP was 3.7 (see Table A4 in Appendix 11); after POP, their average score on this statement was 4.4, closing in on a full point of improvement (see Table A5 in Appendix 11). In fact, the individual scores reveal that each man went up either a full point in their assessment or stayed the same because they had previously rated themselves at a maximum of 5, as two of the seven men had done. Clearly, each man indicated that he had improved or stayed strong in the area of being a spiritual leader.

To be a leader in the home, it seems reasonable to suggest that a man must spend time with his family. Statement 45 says, "I dedicate time to spend with my family." As a cohort, the average score on this item pre-POP was 4.0 (see Table A13 in Appendix 11); after POP, the average response improved to 4.3 (see Table A14 in Appendix 11). The increase may not be as dramatic, but individually the men either ranked the same or increased.

Further, the survey results indicate that through their participation in this project, they prayed more often for both their families and their church, an essential first step of spiritual leadership. Statement 54 says, "I pray for my family and loved ones." As a group, they increased from a pre-POP score of 4.6 to a post-POP score of 4.9. Only one man out of the seven participants did not increase on this particular statement when he had room to do so. Interestingly, with statement 55, "I pray for my church and its leaders," there was a greater increase, from a pre-POP score of 2.4 to a post-POP score of 3 (see Tables A16 and A17 in Appendix 11). It seems reasonable to expect a man to pray

more fervently for his own personal family than for his church family. Although I would have wanted a greater increase in statement 55, it seems that prayer for the church and its leaders is now a more regular topic than before it was brought to their attention through the POP process. Overall, the participants' assessment of the general topic of prayer (statements 51-60) increased from an average total of 36.71 to an average of 41.14, indicating that both understanding and practice of the men being leaders in this regard increased (see Table A18 in Appendix 11).

In the Victory Lap evaluations, the men and their spouses rated their level of agreement with ten statements ranging from 1, "strongly disagree," to 5, "strongly agree" (Appendixes 9 and 10). The men were asked to rate the following statement: "My participation in Press on to the Prize increased my understanding of God's purpose for me as a leader in my home and church." Their spouses were asked to rate the mirroring statement: "My husband's participation in Press on to the Prize increased my understanding of God's purpose for him as a leader in our home and church." The men's answers averaged 5, "strongly agree." Their spouses' answers averaged 4.29, lower than their husbands, but still clearly agreeing with the statement. This difference is understandable because the wives did not participate directly in POP, but had to rely on their husbands' growing understanding, their sharing the information learned in POP, and their observable behavior. In other words, the spouses were one step removed from the direct teaching, and some husbands did a more effective job conveying what they were learning than others.

During the exit interview (Appendix 8), each man was asked several questions, and I noted his responses. Question 5 of the exit interview specifically asked, "Did your POP participation change how you view yourself as a leader at home and at church?" This question was a direct assessment of goal number 1. Participant A answered question 5 by saying,

Yes, absolutely! I now think of myself as the leader in my home. I am having a more positive impact in my home. My family is seeing me do my personal devotion time. The kids seem to feel at ease asking questions about spiritual stuff. I am doing a much better job at being a spiritual leader in my family. I am doing better now than I ever have. We are praying together as a family. Family relationships in general are improving, especially with my teenage son. I am amazed at the 180° turn around in such a short time. I know that his behavior is a result of what I have been and am doing now.[1]

Participant B answered, "I have made progress. I am interested in serving. I plan on going on an international mission trip to Honduras. This is the first time doing something like this [the mission trip] and most likely I wouldn't have considered it without going through POP."

Participant C said, "It helped me a lot. I plan on keeping up with family devotions. I am motivated to grow personally and in keeping the kids going."

"I now know that I am leading," said Participant D, "whether I realize it or not. People are seeing either a good leader or a bad leader. I want to help change people to the positive."

Participant E responded, "It has encouraged me in making a conscious effort at being a strong spiritual leader of my family. I feel really good about doing the right thing."

Participant F said, "I realized that I had a responsibility to be an example and take the lead. I couldn't simply blame others for [spiritual] things not getting done."

Participant G said, "Yes. I am more conscientious leader at home. I am being intentional and I am always seeking God's wisdom for me in my home."

Though some of the men gave more details than others, the exit interviews support that the men indeed saw themselves, more than ever before, as spiritual leaders of their families. They understood that these roles were important and were not to be abandoned or given over to their spouses, and that the responsibility of leadership was

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[1]The participants are identified by letter designation to maintain anonymity.

also accompanied by the blessings of getting to see the fruit of leadership.

Goal 2: Experiencing Spiritual Growth

The project's second goal was to guide participating men to experience spiritual growth by setting and pursuing individual spiritual growth goals. I was pleasantly surprised by the seriousness that the participants put forth in their self-assessments and then letting these assessment results guide them in setting their own individual goals. I was also encouraged by the tenacity with which some of the men planned and undertook their goals. My experience seems to support a general stereotype that men are "doers" and can be successful when they make plans and then follow the plans that they set. My experience in POP says that if a participant sets a reasonable, yet growth-directed goal, then he can and will work towards it with simple, yet consistent monitoring, such as our individual meetings. Though some of the men's individual goals had to be expanded and made more robust as the POP process went on, none of the goals that the men originally set were abandoned or given up as unattainable. Some even reported that while they thought the process seemed overwhelming when explained in full during the initial meeting, they were pleasantly surprised by the positive growth and feeling of accomplishment as they simply followed the plans that they had set.

By examining the self-assessments, evaluations, and interviews, I found abundant evidence that each mentee experienced significant spiritual growth because he set and actively pursued individual spiritual growth goals. The men each set three or four goals using a goal-setting worksheet that corresponded to their self-assessments (Appendix 5). They were not required to set a goal for each of the areas in the spiritual growth self-assessment (worship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, and prayer). As their mentor, I guided them to use their self-assessments to determine areas where they would like to see growth. We then determined a goal that would bring focus to that area. The results seem to indicate that the men experienced an overflow effect:

that being intentional in one area actually helped lead to growth in multiple areas. For example, a participant's personal attendance goal would help attendance rate increase across the entire household and would help with discipleship in general because now the participant and his family were under teaching more consistently.

The participants set meaningful and challenging goals. I wanted the participants to maintain ownership of their goals, so while I offered advice about their goals, I did not dictate what they chose to pursue. Some men set goals that were very easily measurable for tracking progress. For example, Participant A set a goal of leading a time of family devotions five out of seven days each week. Participant B set a goal of regular Sunday School attendance, defined as attending three out of every four Sundays. Participant G committed to memorize the Romans Road verses, plus additional verses, to total one verse memorized per week of commitment. Other men were more reluctant to write goals that were specific and well-defined, though the resulting aims were still meaningful for the men, but their success was more subjective. Participant F set a goal of being a more positive Christian witness, especially in the work environment, and Participant D decided he wanted to pray for his wife more intentionally.

Working towards these goals, no matter how measureable, led the men to significant spiritual growth when comparing the results of the self-assessment taken before and after POP participation. Table 2 shows the average score for the self-assessment items, broken down into six categories of Christian living. The two areas that measured with the lowest overall improvement were the areas of fellowship and prayer. At first this looks somewhat disappointing, but upon closer inspection these two areas were the strongest among the men to begin with. Therefore, there was not as much room for improvement, and the men tended to make goals that worked on their weakest areas more than their strongest areas. In other words, it is reasonable to expect greater gains in the areas that had the most overt goals concentrated on them, and these areas tended to be the ones that had been assessed as the weakest to begin the POP process. The data also

shows that even in these areas for which the men were less likely to set specific goals, the scores still improved by ten percent or more.

Table 2. Self-assessment scores by category

Christian Living Category	Average Score Before POP Participation	Average Score After POP Participation	Score Change	Growth Percentage
Worship	3.04	3.60	0.56	18.42
Discipleship	2.97	3.79	0.82	27.61
Ministry	2.20	2.73	0.53	24.09
Evangelism	2.41	2.89	0.48	19.92
Fellowship	3.44	3.79	0.35	10.17
Prayer	3.67	4.11	0.44	11.99

Note: Each category represents ten questions on the assessment. The numeric scores represent the frequency of the participant's exhibiting the behavior describe on the assessment, with an answer of 1 corresponding to "Never," and a score of 5 corresponding to "Always." See Appendix 4 for the full self-assessment instrument.

In the Victory Lap evaluations, filled out by both mentee and spouse (Appendixes 9 and 10), I specifically asked in question number 2, "I [or for the spouse, "My husband has"] experienced spiritual growth during the Press on to the Prize campaign." All of the men strongly agreed with this statement. Five of the spouses answered "strongly agree," and the other two women marked that they "somewhat agree." These scores indicate that both mentees and spouses agreed and most strongly agreed that the mentees experienced spiritual growth during POP. I realize that though the answers are subjective, it is obvious that in the minds of the participants and their families, POP clearly fulfilled one of its overarching purposes – to foster spiritual growth.

Specifically, the participants noted that the POP process of self-assessment,

goal-setting, working on goals, followed with group and individual meetings, was a positive experience accompanied with significant spiritual growth that was individually tailored for each participant. On the evaluation (Appendix 9), when asked to respond to the statement, "My spiritual growth was enhanced by setting growth goals," all of the men marked that they strongly agree. In response to statements 6 and 7 on the evaluation, "My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the accountability of meeting regularly with the pastor to talk about my goals and progress," and "My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the support the pastor offered during our meetings," the men again were unanimous in their answer of "strongly agree."

In the exit interviews, several men shared the impact of their individual goals on their spiritual growth. Participant G said this about his goal of daily prayer and devotion:

> My general daily walk with God has really improved. I am focused daily on being a spiritual leader in my family. I am trying to talk with my kids about spiritual things, knowing that it is my responsibility. My prayer journal has really helped in keeping me praying for situations at home, work, and for others. The self-assessment was really a good thing for me to do. Setting goals based on that really helped me and knowing that I was being held accountable really made me follow through.

Participant A set goals of looking for ministry and witnessing opportunities in the workplace, leading regular family devotions, and going on a short term mission trip. In his interview, he shared,

> The goal of seeking to be a more positive witness at work has definitely helped me. I have been more open about my Christian faith. I have specifically had conversations about faith with co-workers. My job in corrections has also made it possible for me to share my testimony with inmates. I have encouraged inmates to do better and put Christ first in their lives. I think I have been able to speak truth into their lives. The inmate conversations I have had about faith seem to be positively received. I have certainly been more open and more willing. I have taken opportunities because of my goal of being a witness at work. Setting goals of family devotions and personal devotional reading has made these activities consistent. I have a daily quiet time before going to work, which gets me in a better frame of mind to handle daily life. Setting the goal for going on a short-term mission trip has helped pique my interests in missions and ministry opportunities and seeking to do these more often.

87

Goal 3: Preparing for Leadership

The third goal of this project was to prepare the men for active leadership and ministry roles in the church. A significant portion of the spiritual growth self-assessment surveys (statements 21-30) deal with the overall topic of ministry (see Appendix 4 and Tables A7, A8, and A9 in Appendix 11). As a group, the men improved significantly in the ministry category from their pre-POP scores to their post-POP scores. Their average pre-POP score was 2.20, with a 2 being categorized as "rarely." Their average after score increased to 2.73, a half point increase, or a 24 percent increase. Upon closer examination, the ministry category started out with the lowest score out of all six assessed categories, a score that confirmed my assertion during the planning phase of this project that the men of Westport Baptist did not have a strong practice of ministry. After POP, the ministry category still had the lowest score of all six assessed areas. Nonetheless, this category netted the third greatest point increase out of the six categories. In other words, though the ministry category still may have the lowest assessment score, the men had significant improvement after going through POP. Though the men are not yet fully engaged in active leadership and ministry, they are now on a positive trajectory.

Looking at specific assessment statements suggests that participants are indeed better prepared for ministry and leadership than before the POP experience. Statement 26 of the spiritual growth self-assessment says, "I understand my spiritual gifts and unique abilities, as well as how to use them for God's purposes." By comparing the pre- and post-POP assessment scores, we see that the men made significant strides. The men's average rating pre-POP was 2.29, and post-POP, the rating was 3.29, a full point, or a 44 percent betterment on that particular statement (see Tables A7 and A8 in Appendix 11). In fact, two of the men individually made increases of two points respectively.

The responses to statement 29 also imply both ministry and leadership development over the course of POP. The statement reads, "I identify ministry needs,

then help to organize others to work with me to meet those needs." The average score pre-POP was 1.14, a rating only marginally more often than "Never" (see Table A7 in Appendix 11). Of all of the statements the men were asked to assess, the participants gave this statement, tied with one other statement, the lowest scores. This score is rather shocking because in essence the men are saying, "I *never* see ministry needs," or "I *never* organize (i.e., lead) others to work with me to meet those needs," and possibly both. Either way, the participants are revealing a propensity not to lead or minister in a most extreme way – an attitude of "I do not get involved." After POP, the assessments for statement 29 reveal an average score of 1.57, a gain of .43, or a 38 percent increase (see Table A8 in Appendix 11). Though there was some positive movement—three of the men increased one full point—overcoming the simple inertia from "never" ministering or leading is quite formidable and will need a more robust plan of action for most of the men to move into even occasional ministry leadership.

On the Victory Lap evaluation, statement 4 says, "My participation in Press on to the Prize has prepared me for a more active leadership or ministry role in my church." The men's average rating for this statement was a 4, or "somewhat agree" (Appendix 9). The corresponding statement on the spouses' survey says, "My husband has talked about taking a more active leadership or ministry role in my church" (Appendix 10). The spouses' average rating for this statement was a 3.86, close to a "somewhat agree" rating. Of the ten evaluation statements, this was the men's lowest rating and the women's second lowest rating. These ratings indicate, compared to others, that the men were not as strong or comfortable in active leadership and ministry as they were in the other assessed areas. The participants gave low scores to the areas of leadership and ministry from the start; nevertheless, both the men and their spouses indicate that POP helped the men grow in these areas.

To help the participants grow in the areas of ministry and leadership, I led the men to complete *S.H.A.P.E: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life—Small*

Group Study by Erik Rees.[2] *S.H.A.P.E.* is a study tool to help participants make meaningful spiritual and personal discoveries about themselves with the goal of finding ministry areas that fit well with their areas of skills and giftedness. As the subtitle indicates, the study helps participants discover and use their personal "shape" for kingdom work. On the Victory Lap evaluations, statement 8 says, "The S.H.A.P.E. study helped me understand God's purpose for me" (Appendix 9). The men's average rating for this statement was a 4.57. All participants scored that statement as a 4 or 5, a "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" response. Statement 9 says, "The S.H.A.P.E study helped me determine in what capacity I should be serving God." The answers averaged a 4.14. When the scores of all ten evaluation statements are compared, the statements addressing leadership and ministry were the lowest scoring statements. While the evidence implies that POP helped to guide the participants to start exploring the ideas of ministry and leadership in the church, there is still need for more growth in this area.

In the exit interviews, without the limitation of the number scale, the men were able to articulate more positive nuances than the numeric scores may indicate (Appendix 8). I asked the men, "What did you learn from the S.H.A.P.E. study about your personal usefulness to God's kingdom? How do you foresee putting those lessons into action?"

Participant A said, "S.H.A.P.E. has helped me realize that God can use the gifts I have, not the ones I wished I had.   I can use my personality, gifts, and experiences to work with youth and to be involved in mission trips that involve manual work. The study has helped me think about some options that I hadn't thought of before."

Participant E said, "I found the S.H.A.P.E. study to be insightful. Being used in the right ministry for your 'shape' will recharge rather than drain you of energy. I don't feel guilty anymore about not doing ministry that does not fit my ministry 'shape.'"

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[2]Erik Rees, *S.H.A.P.E: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life—Small Group Study* (Lake Forest, CA: Purpose Driven, 2006).

Participant G said, "The study broke it down for me and taught me that everyone has a place in God's kingdom. That it is okay to try different ministries and explore ministry areas. But you can't just sit back. As they say, 'God can't steer a parked car!'"

In the short-term, the goal of preparing men for active leadership and ministry in the church was partially met. Clearly, when men are growing in faith and challenged to explore their kingdom purpose, unique gifts, and personal calling, they are becoming more prepared to lead and participate. However, I foresee that without the persistent support of our group study and the regular individual meetings, these men will likely not demonstrate the enthusiasm and passion needed to lead a ministry opportunity through our church. Though the hard numbers were not as encouraging as I had hoped, the men's exit interviews imply that the participants understand that they should have an active role in ministry and leadership.

Goal 4: Learning How to Mentor Effectively

The final goal of the project was a personal goal: to learn how to be an effective spiritual mentor for men in my congregation. I found my role implementing the POP program and then serving as a mentor through it to be an invaluable experience. Though I considered several different directions my research could take, I am quite pleased with the way this ministry project came together. Serving as a mentor helped me understand the dynamics of the mentor-mentee relationship and the commitment it takes to be an effective mentor, knowledge that will serve me in my efforts to set up an expanded mentoring program with more groups or pairings of mentors and mentees.

The combination of group teaching sessions and one-on-one mentoring meetings was effective. In the group time, I could teach about a topic in a general way; then in our individual meetings, I could help the men apply the lessons more effectively

by asking them personal, targeted questions about what we had been discussing. As I met with the men individually, I served as a trusted accountability partner who could pray with them specifically, help tailor their goals to their specific life needs, and guide their efforts with knowledge and encouragement. In our group meetings, I was able to foster a sense of camaraderie, and in the individual meetings, a sense of friendship and trust. Having a personal relationship with each man and having significant individual meeting times helped to make the POP experience a blessing to my pastoral ministry.

The men were asked to rate statements focusing on my role as their pastor and mentor for the project on the participant evaluation (Appendix 9). Statement 5 says, "My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by resources the pastor provided to me during Press on to the Prize." The participants strongly agreed with this statement, with an average rating of 4.71. Statement 6 says, "My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the accountability of meeting regularly with the pastor to talk about my goals and progress." All seven men strongly agreed, rating this statement a 5. Statement 7 reads, "My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the support the pastor offered during our meetings." This statement also garnered a perfect 5 rating. In other words, out of a total of 21 individual responses on this topic (three statements each rated by seven participants), 19 times the men answered "strongly agree," the highest possible rating. The data indicates that the men indeed valued the resources, the accountability, and the support that I was able to provide through our mentoring relationship. During this project, often the individual meetings were the highlight of my week as a mentee would share with me how he saw God at work and as I saw spiritual growth in the men from meeting to meeting.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

In a project that involves this many people for this length of time, it would be unrealistic to expect unanimous satisfaction and perfect results from all participants.

Nevertheless, based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback from self-assessments, evaluations, interviews, and public testimonies from the men at the Victory Lap Celebration, I do not hesitate to call Press on to the Prize a great success, a worthy project, and deserving of the participants' time and effort.

Several strengths of the project led to its success. The most important of these was the commitment to intentional mentoring through one-on-one meetings. The biweekly, individual meeting was the key to effective accountability and support. These meetings allowed the process to be highly personalized to each participant, and thereby the support, resources, and prayers were relevant to each mentee. These individual meetings even improved the effectiveness of our group S.H.A.P.E. study because I could, in a private setting, check for understanding, provide re-teaching support, and encourage deeper application of the group lesson material.

The individual meetings allowed us the chance to review progress and then to appropriately modify goals and work through problems that would present themselves. In other words, if a goal were being neglected, I had built-in checkpoints to help get the participant back on track before an inordinate amount of time passed. In the past, I have set church-wide goals for the congregation, such as a memory verse plan or a Bible reading plan. Many people would start out with great enthusiasm but then, little by little, stop working on the goal. Most often, I would not know when people gave up on these sorts of goals until it was practically too late to help get them back on track. The individual meetings with a standing date of meeting every two weeks provided systematic and effective accountability for both the mentees and me as a mentor.

Another strength of POP was that it was extremely personalized. Each participant was evaluated through the Spiritual Growth Self-Assessment before beginning, and I used the results of this assessment to guide each individual in making personal growth goals. Though we had as a group the general goal of spiritual growth, targeting individual, personal growth goals was the key to achieving growth as a group.

It seemed that the more personally stated the goal, the more diligently the man would pursue the goal. For instance, a broadly stated goal of "praying more" did not prove as motivating for the participant as a more specific goal of "praying for my spouse and her job situation." The categories of the statements on the self-assessment (worship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, and prayer) led to specific personal goals and, ultimately, growth in these varied areas of Christian living. In our first individual meeting, we reviewed the self-assessment results, and I would guide the participant to identify areas with room for growth and to set personal goals targeted to spur growth in those areas.

The individual meetings and the personalized goals also made POP appropriate regardless of the spiritual maturity of the participant. In previous attempts to guide church members to work toward group goals, I have experienced the difficulty of setting goals that were at once too easy for some and too hard for others; such group goals often prove to be an obstacle for an individual's growth. The personalization of the growth goals set in POP made it possible for the men of varying spiritual maturity to participate effectively and to experience growth in their areas of concentration.

Another strength of the POP process is that it is a plan that can be reproduced and expanded. It can be reproduced because there are many church members who are interested in growing spiritually, thus a plentiful supply of mentee candidates. Furthermore, expansion is conceivable with a single POP coordinator who could organize and support a small group of POP mentors who, in turn, each lead a small group of mentees. The key to successful reproduction and expansion of POP groups—and perhaps the greatest obstacle—is recruiting and equipping strong mentors. A good mentor will be able to challenge his or her mentees effectively. In order to do so, these mentors must be spiritually mature while also being someone who is still growing and maturing themselves; they must have enough time to meet with mentees; they must have access to, or knowledge of, appropriate resources; and most importantly, the best mentors must

have a heart for mentoring ministry.

From my pastoral experience with other church programs, I can identify another strength of POP: the specified length of commitment. Though spiritual growth is a life long journey, using POP for an intense and focused season of spiritual growth gives the advantage of being able to challenge people without the drawback of an unending commitment. In the life cycle of a new group, from new relationships starting to the celebratory end of formal work together, there are naturally occurring times of reflection and times to refocus. These natural beginnings and endings allow a participant to see a commitment through, and then recommit if he wants to go through the process again. A benefit of mentoring relationships through POP is that even when the designated POP period is over, the valuable relationship that has blossomed between mentor and mentee remains. The predetermined length of the formal relationship limited neither the depth nor the endurance of the brotherly bond I formed with participants; it did, however, ease the way for more reluctant participants to risk involvement in what may have been seen as a daunting commitment if there were no end date.

Press on to the Prize, as I conducted it, has some natural weaknesses that can hinder the success of the program. First, there seems to be a natural cap on how many mentees one mentor can lead through this process at a time. I had seven men with this first group. I found that balancing and scheduling time between the men, my family, and my other pastoral duties led to occasional feelings of stress and fatigue. Mentors are able to handle varying numbers of mentees, depending on their current life-situations. From my experience, I believe having seven mentees is ambitious for a mentor with full-time work and family commitments. I recommend that a pastor, who can hold some of the meetings during designated work hours, mentor no more than five POP participants at once, and that a lay leader with a full-time job outside the church mentor no more than three POP participants at once.

Another weakness, in line with the last, has to do with the mentor being

motivated and disciplined enough to make the mentoring relationship a priority. I was motivated, even when some of the participating men were not, because in addition to my own passion for leading these men into spiritual growth and leadership, I had my personal goal of completing the requirements for my degree. Yet, if the mentor is not self-motivated or disciplined enough to follow through, the whole plan falls apart. Unmotivated leadership is a weakness common to many church programs. Building in accountability for the leadership is one way of addressing this weakness. Since the mentor helps the mentee, and not necessarily the other way around, a mentor's motivation has to be something other than tangible benefits. These more intrinsic motivations might include a feeling of accomplishment, appreciation, or obedience. Preparing mentors to look for, value, and respond to the intrinsic motivation is another way to overcome this weakness.

Theological and Personal Reflection

I came away from the POP process realizing more than ever that personal spiritual relationships are paramount in the Christian journey. Though, I may not have always been mindful of these important relationships in my spiritual life, I have been inspired and challenged through the many one-on-one or small group relationships in my past just as much as through mass teaching, such as large worship services or whole-group teaching in a Sunday school or seminary class. As a pastor, I have the unique opportunity to offer experiences to my flock that provide ample opportunity for people to forge relationships with eternal benefits. True discipleship can be a messy project that seems off-putting in the commitments that it requires, commitments of time, energy, and resources. An investment in POP enables me, and reminds me, to invest in the relationships that may change a person forever as he seeks to be more like Jesus.

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus certainly preached and ministered to the masses, but he spent much of his valuable time, including his last precious hours, with an

intimate, small group of disciples, as seen in Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and John 13-17. Jesus indeed came in the flesh and had a personal relationship with his disciples. Jesus mentored those who would one day provide the main leadership, preaching, and teachings in the early church. While it is appropriate for me as a minister of the gospel to spend time ministering to the masses, studying and preaching the word, it is also appropriate to spend time with a smaller group of Christ's followers. It is through the discipleship of the smaller group that leaders will rise up to lead the future church.

I also have a greater appreciation for setting personal spiritual growth goals. I realize that a general spiritual growth challenge to a church body can certainly help some, but challenging individuals to set personal growth goals seems to help bring believers along, if for no other reason than personal goals are more relevant to the individual. It is certainly easier to motivate someone to work towards their personal goals rather than those of a "one-size" fits all category.

Conclusion

I preach to a large gathering in our main worship service nearly every Sunday. I do not always have a clear understanding of what is being received by the congregation. Through the personal teaching, mentoring, and small group experience I had in POP, I saw growth and spiritual maturation of men right before me. Though I surely have served as an informal mentor at other times during my ministry life, I see the value more than ever before of having an organized, yet flexible, plan for personal mentoring. From the men's responses and their actions, I am convinced that they benefited from the POP experience. I know that I greatly enjoyed and benefitted from the process of leading this project. I plan to use POP groups in my personal discipleship ministry to help Christians break out of a stagnant spiritual life and to "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:14).

APPENDIX 1

TEXT OF NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Many of you realize that I have been working toward my Doctorate of Ministry degree, and part of my study includes a multi-week ministry project in my own church setting.

My work has focused on the importance of spiritual growth for men in the church. This month will mark the start of my first round of this project, called *Press on to the Prize*.

I will be working with a core group of men (5 - 7 participants) throughout the remainder of 2012. We will be developing individualized spiritual growth plans, and I will meet with them regularly, as individuals and as a whole group, to help them achieve their goals.

I am particularly excited about the potential of this project, not just for achieving my degree, but more importantly for what it offers the participants. Personally, I always benefit from spiritual experiences that offer intentional focus and accountability as I am challenged to grow.

Scripture tells us we have an obligation to growth; in our church circles, we like to use the word "discipleship."

In one of His last recorded teachings, Jesus clearly and convincingly instructed the remaining eleven that they were not only His disciples, but that they had the task of disciple-making. Matthew 28:18-20, known as the Great Commission, records Jesus' command of disciple-making.

The Bible also gives more instructions in Ephesians 4:11-14 that pastors and

other leaders are specifically to be equipping God's people for God's work. As pastor, I must purposefully and systematically equip and build up the members of the church; the members should spiritually mature and, in turn, be readied and released for ministry work for the glory of Christ's kingdom.

Scripture also encourages us to grow by observing godly lives (see 1 Corinthians 11:1, Philippians 3:17, Philippians 4:9, 2 Thessalonians 3:9, and Hebrews 13:7).   This strategy lends itself to a one-on-one conversation, an important element of the *Press on to the Prize* project.

Dr. Chuck Lawless sees discipleship as "a God-given relationship in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach his or her potential as a disciple of Christ."

I am praying earnestly about the formation of this first discipleship group. I feel certain God will do something big with it. If *Press on to the Prize* sounds like something you would like to participate in, whether in this current round or in the future, please let me know as soon as possible.

Press on to the Prize

A Spiritual Growth Campaign

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

-- Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV 84)

- The purpose of Press on to the Prize (POP) is to foster spiritual growth and spiritual leadership development, by providing support, resources, and accountability, in order to advance God's kingdom through a core group of men at Westport Baptist Church.

- We are all called to be disciples of Christ, training ourselves and growing in our spirits to be more like him.

- A believer's life purpose is to glorify God. Scripture teaches us that we do that by expressing our love to God through **worship**, becoming more Christ-like through **discipleship**, demonstrating God's love to others through **ministry**, telling others about Christ through **evangelism**, and identifying with the body of Christ through **fellowship**. As a member of God's kingdom, these five areas along with **prayer** are essential to functioning as a spiritually growing, healthy believer.

- When we seek to be disciples and go through a time of spiritual growth, Christ molds us and equips us through various means. As we are individuals in God's kingdom, we have experiences and passions that are unique to us that can be used for the kingdom.

- As an individual, working toward spiritual growth can be intimidating and frustrating. We all have better chances of success when we have support, resources, and accountability.

- POP provides a unique opportunity for personal discipleship. This experience includes self-assessment, goal-setting, a small group study, individual meetings with the pastor, along with consistent, personalized support and encouragement.

- Expected outcomes
  - significant spiritual growth toward spiritual maturity for the individual
  - God's unique equipping and training for active participation in His kingdom
  - a better fulfilling of our purposes as disciples
  - a clear understanding of your role within your home and church
  - a deeper relationship with another individual that can help provide encouragement, support, accountability, and resources

PROJECT CALENDAR

Press on to the Prize
Project Calendar

AUGUST 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Newsletter Publication - POP Article	2	3	4
5 POP Recruitment Sermon	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 "On Your Mark, Get Set" Whole Group Meeting	22	23	24 "Go" Individual Meetings	25 "Go" Individual Meetings
26 "Growing Up" Sermon	27 "Go" Individual Meetings	28 "Go" Individual Meetings	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 "Transforming" Sermon "On Track" Individual Meetings	3 "On Track" Individual Meetings	4 "On Track" Individual Meetings	5 "On Track" Individual Meetings	6	7 "On Track" Individual Meetings	8
9 "Standing Firm" Sermon S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 1	10	11	12	13	14	15

SEPTEMBER 2012, continued

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16 "Running the Race" Sermon S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 2	17 "On Track" Individual Meetings	18 "On Track" Individual Meetings	19 "On Track" Individual Meetings	20	21 "On Track" Individual Meetings	22
23 S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 3	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 4						

OCTOBER 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 "On Track" Individual Meetings	2 "On Track" Individual Meetings	3 "On Track" Individual Meetings	4 "On Track" Individual Meetings	5	6
7 S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 5	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 S.H.A.P.E. Training Group Meeting 6	15 "On Track" Individual Meetings	16 "On Track" Individual Meetings	17 "On Track" Individual Meetings	18 "On Track" Individual Meetings	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	30 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	31			

NOVEMBER 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	2	3
4 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	5	6 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	7 "On Track" Individual Meetings with Exit Interview	8	9	10 Victory Lap Celebration
11	12 POP Data Analysis	13 POP Data Analysis	14	15	16	17

APPENDIX 4

SPIRITUAL GROWTH SELF-ASSESSMENT

Spiritual Growth Self-Assessment

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to determine your current strengths and areas for improvement in regards to your spiritual growth. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will complete this assessment and discuss it with Rev. Sowell. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this self-assessment survey, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

Directions

Please complete this assessment honestly and intentionally. Your responses will be confidential between you and me. Score each statement using the following scale:

1 – Never	2 – Rarely	3 – Sometimes	4 – Often	5 – Always

Worship   **Score**

1. I attend Sunday morning worship services. _____

2. I set aside a time of Sabbath to rest and focus on God each week. _____

3. I spend time thinking about the nature and greatness of God. _____

4. I give a tithe to the Lord. _____

5. I give to special offerings above my tithe. _____

6. I share testimonies about what God has done in my life and in my family during worship services and Sunday School. _____

7. I speak freely with others about who God is and what He does. _____

8. I lift my heart in song during Sunday morning worship services. _____

9. When I listen to music, I choose songs that glorify God. _____

10. When I worship, I have an encounter with God that leaves me changed. _____

Total Score for Worship [   ]

Discipleship   **Score**

    11. I read and study my Bible.   _____

    12. I read devotional literature, like my Sunday School lesson or a daily
        devotional guide.   _____

    13. I attend Sunday School.   _____

    14. I take notes during the sermon at church.   _____

    15. I participate in our church's periodic intensive Bible studies.   _____

    16. I memorize scripture.   _____

    17. When I become aware that an area of my life does not line up with God's
        word, I make the necessary changes to be obedient to God.   _____

    18. I have relationships with other believers who hold me accountable and
        encourage me to grow.   _____

    19. I can trace ways I have become more like Christ since I first accepted Him
        as Lord and Savior.   _____

    20. I am the spiritual leader of my household.   _____

Total Score for Discipleship   [   ]

Ministry   **Score**

    21. I have an on-going ministry role through our local church body.   _____

    22. I participate in our church's occasional ministry activities, like Repair
        Affair, KY Changers/ Adult Changers, etc.   _____

    23. I participate in associational and statewide ministry activities, like Baptist
        Builders, the Adult Clothes Closet, or Disaster Relief.   _____

    24. I seek ways to serve others and meet their needs.   _____

    25. When I serve others, I do it out of love and compassion, expecting
        nothing in return.   _____

    26. I understand my spiritual gifts and unique abilities, as well as how to use
        them for God's purposes.   _____

    27. When I am serving others, I seek to meet spiritual needs along with
        physical needs.   _____

    28. I grow spiritually by participating in ministry experiences that are
        "outside my comfort zone."   _____

    29. I identify ministry needs, then help to organize others to work with me to
        meet those needs.   _____

    30. I volunteer to serve others without being asked.   _____

Total Score for Ministry   [   ]

Evangelism   **Score**

  31. I pray for non-believers.   _____

  32. I have non-Christian friends, co-workers, relatives, or acquaintances with
      whom I try to share my faith.   _____

  33. I share my testimony with others.   _____

  34. I am prepared at any time to share my personal faith story.   _____

  35. I am confident in presenting the gospel.   _____

  36. When God allows an opportunity, I invite others to accept Christ as their
      personal savior.   _____

  37. I invite others to church and Sunday School.   _____

  38. I participate in evangelistic mission trips, either at home or abroad.   _____

  39. I give generously to mission offerings.   _____

  40. My witness to others remains consistent as they listen to my words and
      observe my actions.   _____

Total Score for Evangelism [ ]

Fellowship   **Score**

  41. I maintain close friendships with other Christians.   _____

  42. I pursue peace in my relationships with others.   _____

  43. I apologize when I wrong others.   _____

  44. I forgive those who have wronged me.   _____

  45. I dedicate time to spend with my family.   _____

  46. My use of time shows that I value relationships with others above my own
      success, wealth, or leisure.   _____

  47. I am an encouragement to my fellow believers, building up the body of Christ.   _____

  48. I seek to appreciate the unique differences among the body of believers.   _____

  49. I attend church fellowship events.   _____

  50. I plan fellowship opportunities for other believers.   _____

Total Score for Fellowship [ ]

Prayer	Score
51. I set aside a time and place for regular prayer.	_____
52. I "pray without ceasing" as I go through my day.	_____
53. I participate in group prayer.	_____
54. I pray for my family and loved ones.	_____
55. I pray for my church and its leaders.	_____
56. My prayers consist of praise, confession, thanksgiving, and requests.	_____
57. I listen to God in prayer, not just do all the talking.	_____
58. I persist in prayer even when God's timing or answer is not what I expect.	_____
59. I believe that God answers prayers.	_____
60. I have experienced change in my own life as a result of prayer.	_____

Total Score for Prayer

APPENDIX 5

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE
Goal Setting Worksheet

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather data about your individual goals for spiritual growth. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will set goals for your spiritual growth. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this goal-setting sheet, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

_____

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. --Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV)

Worship Goals
- ❑ Attend Sunday morning worship services _____ times in the next 12 weeks.
- ❑ Set aside a time of Sabbath to rest and focus on God each week.
- ❑ Spend time thinking about the nature and greatness of God.
- ❑ Give a tithe to the Lord.
- ❑ Give to special offerings above my tithe.
- ❑ Share a testimony about what God has done in my life and in my family in worship or Sunday School.
- ❑ Speak freely with others about who God is and what He does.
- ❑ Lift my heart in song during Sunday morning worship services.
- ❑ Choose songs that glorify God when I listen to music.
- ❑ Lead others in worship through music, drama, or Scripture reading.
- ❑ Other:_____
- ❑ Other:_____

Discipleship Goals
- ❑ Read and study my Bible daily.
- ❑ Read devotional literature.
- ❑ Read a book on a topic pertinent to your spiritual growth.
- ❑ Attend Sunday School ___ times in the next 12 weeks.
- ❑ Take notes during the sermon at church.
- ❑ Participate in an intensive Bible study.
- ❑ Prepare for and lead a Bible study group.
- ❑ Memorize _____ Scripture verses weekly.
- ❑ Maintain a discipleship journal to record my efforts to make changes that align my life with God's word.
- ❑ Develop an accountability relationship with a fellow Christian.
- ❑ Lead a weekly family devotion time in my home.
- ❑ Apply Scripture to your family relationships (with children/spouse).
- ❑ Other:_____
- ❑ Other:_____

Ministry Goals

- ❑ Complete the "Get in SHAPE" portion of the Press on to the Prize campaign.
- ❑ Seek an on-going ministry role through our local church body.
- ❑ Serve in one of the ministry opportunities supported by our church.
- ❑ Serve someone out of love and compassion, remaining completely anonymous.
- ❑ Pray for opportunities to meet spiritual needs through the meeting of physical needs. Keep a journal documenting God's answer to this prayer.
- ❑ Participate in a ministry experience that is "outside my comfort zone."
- ❑ Identify a ministry need, then help to organize others to work with me to meet that need.
- ❑ Volunteer to serve before the ministry leader has to "recruit" me.
- ❑ Other:_____

- ❑ Other:_____

Evangelism Goals

- ❑ Pray for a non-believer daily.
- ❑ Establish relationships with non-Christian friends, co-workers, or relatives with whom I can share my faith.
- ❑ Share my testimony with others.
- ❑ Prepare to share my personal faith story at any time.
- ❑ Review the basics of presenting the gospel.
- ❑ Pray for opportunities to invite others to accept Christ as their savior, following through as God allows.
- ❑ Invite others to church and Sunday School.
- ❑ Participate in evangelistic mission trips, either at home or abroad.
- ❑ Give generously to mission offerings.
- ❑ Maintain a consistent witness to others, in word and deed.
- ❑ Other:_____

- ❑ Other:_____

Fellowship Goals

- ❑ Maintain a close friendship with another Christian.
- ❑ Pursue peace in my relationships with others.
- ❑ Apologize for wronging someone.
- ❑ Forgive one who has wronged me.
- ❑ Dedicate time to spend with my family.
- ❑ Prioritize my time to relationships with people above work, possessions, and hobbies. Keep a time ledger to check progress.
- ❑ Encourage my fellow believers.
- ❑ Attend _____ church fellowship events in the next 12 weeks.
- ❑ Plan a fellowship opportunity for other believers.
- ❑ Other:_____

- ❑ Other:_____

Prayer Goals

- ❑ Set aside a time and place for regular prayer.
- ❑ Practice "prayer without ceasing" as I go through my day.
- ❑ Maintain a personal prayer list or journal for my family and loved ones.
- ❑ Maintain a personal prayer list or journal for my church and its leaders.
- ❑ Include praise, confession, thanksgiving, and requests in my times of prayer.
- ❑ Listen to God in prayer, not just do all the talking.
- ❑ Persist in prayer even when God's timing or answer is not what I expect.
- ❑ Keep a prayer journal of answered prayers.
- ❑ Other:_____

- ❑ Other:_____

GOAL PROGRESS RECORD

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE

Progress Record for _____

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to record the progress towards your spiritual growth goals, as discussed at your individual meetings with the pastor. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will discuss your efforts, successes, and struggles as you work towards your spiritual growth goals, as well as allow Rev. Sowell to record notes on the conversation. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time*.

By your completion of this progress sheet, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

Goal:	
Go! Visit POP Round 1	Action Plan:
POP Round 2	Progress Made:
	Problems Encountered:
	Next Steps:

POP Round 3	Progress Made:
	Problems Encountered:
	Next Steps:
POP Round 4	Progress Made:
	Problems Encountered:
	Next Steps:
POP Round 5	Progress Made:
	Problems Encountered:
	Next Steps:
POP Round 6	Progress Made:
	Problems Encountered:
	Next Steps:

MEETING RECORD

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE

Meeting Record for _____

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to record the progress towards your spiritual growth goals, as discussed at your individual meetings with the pastor. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will discuss your efforts, successes, and struggles as you work towards your spiritual growth goals, as well as allow Rev. Sowell to record notes on the conversation. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time*.

By your completion of this progress sheet, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

Appointment Schedule	Date and Time	Location
Go! Visit/ POP Round 1		
POP Round 2		
POP Round 3		
POP Round 4		
POP Round 5		
POP Round 6		

APPENDIX 8

EXIT INTERVIEW SURVEY

POP Exit Interview Questions

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to help determine the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship you engaged in during Press on to the Prize. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will be asked a series of questions, and your answers will be noted. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time*.

By your completion of this interview, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

1. Did you complete another Spiritual Growth Self-Assessment?
   ❏ Yes
   ❏ No

2. What positive changes, if any, have occurred in your life as a result of your POP participation?

3. What did you learn from the S.H.A.P.E. study about your personal usefulness to God's kingdom? How do you foresee putting those lessons into action?

4. What is your plan for continuing your spiritual growth?

5. Did your POP participation change how you view yourself as a leader at home and at church?

6. Is there a particular lesson, experience, or area of growth about which you would be willing to share during our Victory Lap Celebration?

APPENDIX 9

PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE
Participant Evaluation

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather feedback about design and execution of the Press on to the Prize Spiritual Growth Campaign. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will rate each of the following statements regarding your experience with the project. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this evaluation survey and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

Directions:
Please circle a rating for each of the statements below, using the following scale:
 1 – Strongly Disagree   2 – Somewhat Disagree   3 – Unsure   4 – Somewhat Agree   5 – Strongly Agree

My participation in Press on to the Prize increased my understanding of God's purpose for me as a leader in my home and church.	1 2 3 4 5
I experienced spiritual growth during the Press on to the Prize campaign.	1 2 3 4 5
My spiritual growth was enhanced by setting personal growth goals.	1 2 3 4 5
My participation in Press on to the Prize has prepared me for a more active leadership or ministry role in my church.	1 2 3 4 5
My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by resources the pastor provided to me during Press on to the Prize.	1 2 3 4 5
My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the accountability of meeting regularly with the pastor to talk about my goals and progress.	1 2 3 4 5
My efforts to grow spiritually were helped by the support the pastor offered during our meetings.	1 2 3 4 5
The S.H.A.P.E. study helped me understand God's purpose for me.	1 2 3 4 5
The S.H.A.P.E. study helped me determine in what capacity I should be serving God.	1 2 3 4 5
During Press on to the Prize, the pastor has served as an effective spiritual mentor for me.	1 2 3 4 5

SPOUSE EVALUATION

PRESS ON TO THE PRIZE
Spouse Evaluation

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather feedback about design and execution of the Press on to the Prize Spiritual Growth Campaign. This research is being conducted by Phillip DeWayne Sowell for purposes of project research. In this research, you will rate each of the following statements regarding your experience with the project. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this evaluation survey, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

Directions:
Please circle a rating for each of the statements below, using the following scale:
 1 – Strongly Disagree   2 – Somewhat Disagree   3 – Unsure   4 – Somewhat Agree   5 – Strongly Agree

My husband's participation in Press on to the Prize increased my understanding
of God's purpose for him as a leader in our home and church.   1 2 3 4 5

My husband has experienced spiritual growth during the Press on to the Prize
campaign.   1 2 3 4 5

Our family has experienced spiritual growth due to my husband's participation
in Press on to the Prize.   1 2 3 4 5

My husband has talked about taking a more active leadership or ministry role
in my church.   1 2 3 4 5

I was able to grow spiritually during Press on to the Prize as a result of my
husband's commitment and efforts to grow in Christ.   1 2 3 4 5

During Press on to the Prize, my husband and I talked about more spiritual
matters than usual.   1 2 3 4 5

Press on to the Prize placed reasonable demands on my husband's time.   1 2 3 4 5

I have positive feelings about the Press on to the Prize campaign.   1 2 3 4 5

I would encourage other men to participate in Press on to the Prize.   1 2 3 4 5

During Press on to the Prize, the pastor has ministered effectively to our family.   1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX 11

SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

Table A1. Worship: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Worship attendance	4	3	4	5	5	4	4
2. Sabbath observance	2	2	4	2	4	2	3
3. Thinking about nature of God	2	3	3	2	4	4	4
4. Tithing	3	3	3	5	5	5	4
5. Offerings beyond tithe	1	2	2	3	3	3	2
6. Share testimonies at church	3	2	1	2	4	1	2
7. Speak freely about God	3	2	3	1	3	2	3
8. Lift heart in song	4	2	1	4	5	4	2
9. Music choices glorify God	4	3	4	3	4	3	3
10. Encounter God during worship	3	2	4	3	3	3	2
Worship Pre-POP Total	29	24	30	30	40	31	29

Table A2. Worship: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Worship attendance	4	4	5	5	5	4.5	4
2. Sabbath observance	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
3. Thinking about nature of God	4	3	5	3	5	4	4
4. Tithing	4	4	4	5	5	5	4
5. Offerings beyond tithe	3	3	3	3	3	4	3
6. Share testimonies at church	3	2	1	2	4	3	3
7. Speak freely about God	3	2	4	3	5	3	3
8. Lift heart in song	4	3	1	4	5	5	3
9. Music choices glorify God	4	4	3	3	4	4	3
10. Encounter God during worship	3	3	4	3	3	4	3
Worship Post-POP Total	35	31	34	35	43	40	34

Table A3. Worship: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Worship Pre-POP Total	29	24	30	30	40	31	29	213	30.43
Worship Post-POP Total	35	31	34	35	43	40	34	252	36
Growth (Difference)	+6	+7	+4	+5	+3	+9	+5	+39	+5.57

Table A4. Discipleship: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
11. Read/study Bible	3	2	4	2	3	3	4
12. Devotional literature	1	3	4	3	3	2	4
13. Sunday School attendance	4	3	1	5	5	1	5
14. Take sermon notes	3	3	1	1	3	3	3
15. Bible study participation	3	1	3	1	4	2	2
16. Memorize Scripture	2	2	3	2	3	2	2
17. Obedience	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
18. Accountability	2	4	2	4	2	3	4
19. Tracing Christ-likeness	3	3	3	4	5	4	3
20. Household spiritual leader	3	3	3	3	5	4	5
Discipleship Pre-POP Total	27	26	28	28	37	27	35

Table A5. Discipleship: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
11. Read/study Bible	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
12. Devotional literature	4	3	4	4	4	4	4
13. Sunday School attendance	4	4	4	5	5	4	5
14. Take sermon notes	3	3	3	5	4	4	3
15. Bible study participation	3	3	4	3	4	4	3
16. Memorize Scripture	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
17. Obedience	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
18. Accountability	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
19. Tracing Christ-likeness	3	3	3	5	5	4	4
20. Household spiritual leader	4	4	4	4	5	5	5
Discipleship Post-POP Total	33	34	36	40	43	40	39

Table A6. Discipleship: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Discipleship Pre-POP Total	27	26	28	28	37	27	35	208	29.71
Discipleship Post-POP Total	33	34	36	40	43	40	39	265	37.86
Growth (Difference)	+6	+8	+8	+12	+6	+13	+4	+57	+8.14

Table A7. Ministry: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
21. On-going ministry role through church	2	1	1	3	5	1	1
22. Occasional activities through church	2	1	1	2	4	1	1
23. KY and OTBA activities	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
24. Seek ways to serve	2	3	2	3	3	2	3
25. Serve out of love	5	4	3	5	5	5	4
26. Understand my spiritual gifts	2	1	1	3	4	2	3
27. Meet spiritual and physical needs	2	2	2	1	3	2	4
28. Growth through ministry experiences	4	1	1	1	3	1	2
29. Organize ministry	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
30. Volunteer without being asked	2	2	3	3	2	1	4
Ministry Pre-POP Total	23	17	16	23	33	17	25

Table A8. Ministry: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
21. On-going ministry role through church	3	1	1	5	5	1	2
22. Occasional activities through church	2	2	1	3	4	1	3
23. KY and OTBA activities	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
24. Seek ways to serve	2	3	2	3	3	3	4
25. Serve out of love	5	4	3	5	5	5	4
26. Understand my spiritual gifts	3	3	2	4	4	4	3
27. Meet spiritual and physical needs	3	2	2	3	4	4	4
28. Growth through ministry experiences	3	2	1	1	3	4	3
29. Organize ministry	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
30. Volunteer without being asked	2	3	3	3	3	3	4
Ministry Post-POP Total	27	24	17	29	35	29	30

Table A9. Ministry: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Ministry Pre-POP Total	23	17	16	23	33	17	25	154	22
Ministry Post-POP Total	27	24	17	29	35	29	30	191	27.29
Growth (Difference)	+4	+7	+1	+6	+2	+12	+5	+37	+5.29

Table A10. Evangelism: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
31. Pray for non-believers	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
32. Know non-believers	4	2	3	3	3	2	2
33. Share testimony	3	2	3	2	2	2	2
34. Prepared to share at any time	3	1	2	2	4	2	3
35. Confident in presenting gospel	2	1	2	1	4	2	2
36. Invite others to accept Christ	1	2	2	2	4	2	5
37. Invite others to church	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
38. Mission trips	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
39. Give to mission offerings	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
40. Consistent witness	3	3	4	3	3	2	4
Evangelism Pre-POP Total	24	19	24	23	31	21	27

Table A11. Evangelism: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
31. Pray for non-believers	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
32. Know non-believers	4	2	3	3	4	3	2
33. Share testimony	3	2	3	3	2	3	2
34. Prepared to share at any time	4	2	4	3	4	3	3
35. Confident in presenting gospel	3	2	2	2	5	3	3
36. Invite others to accept Christ	2	3	2	3	4	3	5
37. Invite others to church	3	2	3	3	3	4	3
38. Mission trips	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
39. Give to mission offerings	2	2	3	3	2	4	2
40. Consistent witness	4	3	4	3	3	3	4
Evangelism Post-POP Total	30	23	28	27	33	32	29

Table A12. Evangelism: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Evangelism Pre-POP Total	24	19	24	23	31	21	27	169	24.14
Evangelism Post-POP Total	30	23	28	27	33	32	29	202	28.86
Growth (Difference)	+6	+4	+4	+4	+2	+11	+2	+33	+4.71

Table A13. Fellowship: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
41. Close Christian friendships	2	4	4	5	4	4	5
42. Pursue peace	5	4	3	5	4	4	5
43. Apologize	3	4	3	4	3	4	4
44. Forgive	3	4	4	3	4	4	3
45. Spend time with family	4	3	5	5	4	4	3
46. Value relationships	4	3	3	5	3	3	3
47. Encouragement to other believers	3	3	3	3	3	2	4
48. Appreciate differences	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
49. Attend fellowship events	4	3	4	4	4	3	3
50. Plan fellowship opportunities	1	2	1	3	4	1	1
Fellowship Pre-POP Total	32	33	33	40	37	32	34

Table A14. Fellowship: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
41. Close Christian friendships	4	4	4	5	5	4	5
42. Pursue peace	5	4	4	5	5	5	5
43. Apologize	3	4	3	4	4	5	4
44. Forgive	3	4	4	4	4	5	4
45. Spend time with family	4	4	5	5	5	4	3
46. Value relationships	3	3	3	5	4	3	3
47. Encouragement to other believers	3	3	3	4	3	3	4
48. Appreciate differences	3	3	3	3	5	4	4
49. Attend fellowship events	3	3	4	4	4	4	3
50. Plan fellowship opportunities	1	2	1	3	4	3	1
Fellowship Post-POP Total	32	34	38	42	43	40	36

Table A15. Fellowship: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Fellowship Pre-POP Total	32	33	33	40	37	32	34	241	34.43
Fellowship Post-POP Total	32	34	38	42	43	40	36	265	37.86
Growth (Difference)	0	+1	+5	+2	+6	+8	+2	+24	+3.43

Table A16. Prayer: Pre-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
51. Time and place for regular prayer	3	3	5	5	4	4	3
52. Pray without ceasing	2	3	4	3	3	2	3
53. Group prayer	3	2	5	3	3	2	3
54. For family	4	5	4	5	4	5	5
55. For church	2	2	3	3	3	2	2
56. Praise, confession, thanksgiving, requests	3	4	5	5	5	5	5
57. Listen in prayer	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
58. Persist in prayer	3	2	5	5	5	3	4
59. Believe God answers	5	3	5	5	5	5	5
60. Experienced change as a result of prayer	3	3	5	5	5	4	4
Prayer Pre-POP Total	30	29	44	42	40	35	37

Table A17. Prayer: Post-POP survey

Shortened Survey Statement	Participants' Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
51. Time and place for regular prayer	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
52. Pray without ceasing	3	4	5	3	5	3	4
53. Group prayer	2	2	4	5	3	4	4
54. For family	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
55. For church	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
56. Praise, confession, thanksgiving, requests	4	5	5	5	5	4	5
57. Listen in prayer	3	4	3	3	4	4	4
58. Persist in prayer	4	4	5	5	5	4	4
59. Believe God answers	5	4	5	5	5	4	5
60. Experienced change as a result of prayer	3	4	5	5	5	4	4
Prayer Post-POP Total	35	39	45	44	46	36	43

Table A18. Prayer: Pre- and post-POP comparison

	Participants' Individual Responses (Identified by letter to preserve anonymity)							Sum of All Participants' Responses	Average of All Participants' Responses
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G		
Prayer Pre-POP Total	30	29	44	42	40	35	37	257	36.71
Prayer Post-POP Total	35	39	45	44	46	36	43	288	41.14
Growth (Difference)	+5	+10	+1	+2	+6	+1	+6	+31	4.43

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ABSTRACT

MENTORING MEN TO BE SPIRITUAL LEADERS
AT WESTPORT BAPTIST CHURCH,
WESTPORT, KENTUCKY

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013
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This project involves mentoring a core group of men, fostering spiritual growth and spiritual leadership development, by providing support, resources, and accountability. Chapter 1 introduces the project by detailing the purpose, goals, rationale, definitions, limitations/delimitations, and research methodology for the project. This chapter also includes particular ministry context, history, and community demographic for Westport Baptist Church, Westport, Kentucky. Chapter 2 presents the biblical and theological support for mentoring relationships, including specific biblical examples of Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, Jesus to the Twelve Disciples, and Paul to Timothy. Chapter 3 addresses the practical considerations for mentoring in the contemporary church. Chapter 4 explains how the project was implemented in the local church context. Chapter 5 contains an overall evaluation and analysis of the project along with theological and personal reflections. Appropriate appendixes and bibliography are also included.

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