“And he gave some . . . to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ”
Ephesians 4:12
ABOUT TRAINING IN MINISTRY

Training In Ministry is a proven educational program to help “equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ”.

The sixteen equipping courses are designed for 90-minute group sessions. Learners prepare lessons in advance.

Most TIM courses have a complete Leader’s Guide which is available free from our website. Leader’s Guides navigate the group Study Leader through each aspect of the 90-minute group sessions. The group learning experience is made both positive and effective by the integrative and application-type questions asked.

The educational methodology is “head”, “heart”, and “hands”. Every TIM course contains adequate factual information; learners are challenged to apply that information to their own lives; and are challenged to get involved in ministry related to that course.

THE AUTHOR

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CURRICULUM OF TIM COURSES

TRAINING IN MINISTRY courses will enable you to “equip the saints for the work of ministry and so build up the body of Christ.”

Grounding Courses

CHRISTIANITY 101 is designed to disciple new Christians, either in small groups, or one-to-one. Application: Learners will lead another person through this course.

A PANORAMA OF THE BIBLE features easy-to-remember visuals for each of the 12 Bible periods. Learners will thrill to find that they can remember the major themes of Bible content and message. Application: With the aid of the Leader’s Guide, learners will lead another person, or a small group through this course.

TRUTH THAT TRANSFORMS will provide learners with a solid foundation in the major doctrines of Scripture, with an emphasis on practical applications. Application: Learners will, with the aid of the Leader’s Guide, lead another individual, or group of people through this course.

A PANORAMA OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY provides a “big picture” view of the Church from the 1st through the 20th century. It also emphasizes practical lessons we can apply to our own ministry. Application: Learners will teach this course to another person or group.

Growing Courses

WELCOME TO YOUR MINISTRY teaches the important truth that God has called and gifted all believers for ministry and challenges them to get involved in some basic ministries in the church. Application: Learners will commit to getting additional training for ministry, and getting involved in it.

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS will provide believers with a better understanding of which spiritual gifts they may have, and how to use their gifts in service for Christ. Application: A short-term assignment will be given, wherein learners use one of their gifts in an approved ministry.

LEARNING TO SERVE: JESUS AS ROLE MODEL teaches the servant lifestyle of Jesus in many ministry related contexts, and helps learners put this into practice in their ministry. Application: Learners will be given a ministry role wherein they demonstrate the servant-leader style of Jesus.
GOING Courses

YOUR MINISTRY OF PRAYER studies prayer in Scripture, and will help learners become involved in a significant ministry of prayer. *Application:* Participants will commit to a ministry of prayer as suggested in the course content.

OUTREACH AS A LIFE-STYLE will train lay people to develop friendships with people, leading to sharing Christ with them. *Application:* Learners will practice this personal evangelism approach in their lives of sharing their faith.

YOUR MINISTRY AT HOME provides practical principles in how to establish and maintain a truly Christian home. *Application:* Applying the principles week by week within the learner’s family, including being consistent in reading the weekly schedule of verses and journaling based on these verses.

TOUCHING TOMORROW BY TEACHING CHILDREN is a superb tool to train more workers to serve in the exciting ministry of teaching children. *Application:* Teaming up with an experienced teacher as an assistant for one quarter or more.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORKPLACE relates faith to practical and ethical issues on the job. Its focus is how to be like Christ in the work world. *Application:* Learners will apply these biblical principles to their areas of work.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is a course on Christian apologetics, which will equip learners to defend and share their faith, especially among intellectual unbelievers. *Application:* Learners will engage in an effective ministry of defending and sharing their faith.

A SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT is a 12-lesson survey of the New Testament. It includes outlines of each book, background information, and questions for individual study. *Application:* Learners will be able to lead Bible studies in any New Testament book.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE will give students an in-depth exposure to the inductive method of Bible study and help them develop their own outlines for leading Bible studies. *Application:* Based on their study, learners will lead 10 Bible studies in the book of Ephesians.

YOUR MINISTRY OF LEADERSHIP will encourage, equip, and train Christian men and women for increased effectiveness in leadership. *Application:* Learners will demonstrate the skills taught in this course in an assigned ministry position.
Chapter 1

What in the World is Your Church Doing?

After 22 years in educational ministries in the Philippines, my family and I returned home to face some “reverse culture shock.” When visiting an adult Bible class in a supporting church, I observed the same people I had seen there four years earlier. Somehow I was shocked. “How long have you been in this class?” I asked one gentlemen. “Fourteen years” was the reply. “Really! How does it feel being in the same class for so many years?” He leaned near, cupped a hand and confided, “To tell you the truth, after a while, it gets kind of boring—you know, the same subjects come up again and again.”

Think about it! Is he just an isolated case? Or does he represent what can be found in many churches today?

“It is no secret that the organized church today is in trouble,” says Robert Coleman. “Not only has the institution lost momentum, but by and large, it has lost direction” (Foreword to Bill Hull’s The Disciple Making Pastor, pg. 9).

Leith Anderson (Dying For Change, pg. 10) says, “85% of America’s Protestant churches are either stagnating or dying.

Joe Aldrich, past President of Multnomah University says, “In the past 10 years hardly a single county in America has experienced church growth.”

We need to ask ourselves: Have we lost momentum as Christ’s ambassadors—because we have lost direction?

Why is it that—

• A large majority of people feel that churches give undue emphasis to organizational matters, and not enough to spirituality?

• It takes 1,000 Christians 365 days to win one person to Christ?
• The United States is becoming more pagan each year, and is now reported to be the fourth largest mission field in the world?

• Meanwhile, some of the cults have grown at an amazing pace. The Mormons for example, now have over 6,000,000 members, making them one of the largest church bodies in America.

Pastors are part of this problem too, because—

• The average stay of a church pastor is between 3 and 4 years. Yet many studies suggest that a pastor’s most productive years only begin between the fourth and the seventh years.

• Most pastors feel overwhelmed, like they’re doing too many things.

• Most pastors are caught up doing the urgent things and have little time for the important things.

• Many pastors are not implementing a discipling ministry, even though this is the central command of our Lord, Matthew 28:18-20.

Church members share responsibility because—

• We see the minister as just that—the person who does the ministry—all of it if possible. “That’s why we pay him,” they tell us.

• We have little awareness that we too are to be the ministers in the church—and that the pastor is the equipping leader of our team of ministers.

• We are “pew potatoes” in our churches. Vance Havner quips, “in order to be a member in good standing in most evangelical churches today, you would need to be a backslider!”

• We don’t seem to know that they are in a war zone, and that the enemy is all about us.

• We often have a woeful lack in knowledge of Scripture—and thus are ineffective as disciplers of others.

According to a Gallup poll, of 22 million “evangelicals,”
Chapter 2

THE BIBLICAL MANDATE

Jesus’ last command in Matthew’s gospel contained these compelling words:

“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.”

The key here is the single imperative: “make disciples”. Matheteusate is from mathetes, meaning “a pupil, follower, or learner”. The clear focus of the Great Commission is on making disciples. The three present participles are supportive to this imperative.

Going may be translated, “as you go,” or “while going.” Central to the ministry of disciple making is the ministry of evangelism. A church that is fulfilling the great commission is reaching out in its community.

Baptizing implies that the ministry of evangelism has been fruitful. Some have believed the message of the Gospel, and now publicly identify themselves with Christ through baptism.

The third participle is teaching. It is critical that we notice that we are “to observe” His teaching. That means to apply—that is, to integrate into life. Merely observing truth does nothing. Christianity is not a spectator sport. Jesus calls us to a changed life. In Luke 6:40 Jesus says: “Everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher”.

Going, baptizing, and teaching. These activities, taken together, constitute making disciples. It is what we are called to do. It is Jesus’ last command.

The Chosen Twelve—Ordinary People!

When you hear the term “The Twelve Apostles,” do you
usually think of these as ordinary men? More likely we regard them as professionals—called by Christ Himself, who were called to minister for Christ.

Thus it’s easy to lose sight of the fact that Jesus chose twelve very ordinary people to become His apostles. He called them—simple working men—Peter, Andrew, and James—fishermen. And Matthew—a tax-collector. None of these men came from the religious or highly educated class. In fact, the people of Jesus’ day referred to the apostles as “uneducated, common men” (Acts 4:13).

This fact is of the greatest importance. For it indicates that ordinary people today can be similarly called, equipped, and sent forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Clergy and laity: different words with the same meaning**

We understand the word “clergy” as referring to the church pastoral staff. But now notice how this word was used in the New Testament. The word itself is *kleros* and meant, “that which is assigned by lot, portion, or share.” Thus Peter speaks of “those allotted (kleron) to your charge” in I Peter 5:3—referring to the whole body of believers. Now this stunner: *never* in the New Testament, does *kleros* refer to church leaders! This was a usage that developed later in history—from secular sources.

The word for ordinary people in the church was *laos*, or lay, and means, “the people of God”.

In writing about the relationship between *kleros* and *laos*, J. B. Lightfoot, in *The Christian Ministry*, (p. 20) concludes, saying, “all Christians are God’s laity and all are God’s clergy.”

**The Honor of Being God’s Servant**

**DEACONS.** In the New Testament, those who served were called *diakonos*. It was not a word that reflected a lowly status. Consider who it is that Christians are serving—the God of the universe! Consider some called to be “servants”, such as Abraham (Genesis 26:24), Moses (Numbers 12:7), Caleb (Numbers 14:24), and Isaiah (Isaiah 20:3).

Furthermore, Jesus himself is the absolute role-model for servanthood. “*I am among you as one who serves*” (Luke 22:27). In John 13, Jesus set an example for all of His servants,
Chapter 3

Lay Ministry the Mirror of History

How ordinary Christians served Christ and His Church in centuries past is an inspiring lesson indeed.

In the First Three Centuries

In these early centuries it is clear that all of God’s people served together. The result was incredible growth of the Church. Philip Schaff expresses it:

“In those days every congregation was a missionary society, and every Christian believer a missionary.” (Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 2, p. 20.)

And Latourette says:

“The men and women who earned their livelihood in some purely secular manner and spoke their faith to those whom they met in this natural fashion” were the chief agents in the expansion of Christianity.” (Kenneth Scott Latourette, The History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol. 1, p. 116).

The secular philosopher Celsus described Christianity as:

“A religion which spreads through workers in wool and leather and fullers and uneducated persons” (Ibid).

Powerful stuff! The Church grew mightily during this period, primarily through ordinary, even uneducated church members!

Lay teachers were prevalent in those early times. Ambrosiaster indicates that in those days, “everyone taught” (Stephen Charles Neill and Hans-Ruedi Weber, The Laymen in Christian History, p. 41).

A teaching order, called the choros, later developed. Origin leaves this account of the ministry of ordinary Christians:

As far as they are able, Christians leave no stone unturned to spread the faith in all parts of the world. Some, in fact, have done the work of going round not only cities, but even villages and
country cottages to make others pious toward God. One could not say that they did this for the sake of wealth, since sometimes they do not even accept money for the necessities of life, and if ever they are compelled to do so by want in this respect, they are content with what is necessary and no more, even if several people are willing to share with them and give them more than they need (Ibid).

Lay people were involved in virtually all pastoral ministries, including baptizing. Ambrosiaster affirms that in those days “everyone baptized” (Ibid, pg. 35).

The Didache (170) provided that any Christian might baptize—but on this condition: “before the baptism let him that baptizeth and him that is baptized fast.” (Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers, p. 232) Lay people also practiced the gift and ministry of healing. Irenaeus says,

Wherefore, also, those who are in truth His disciples, receive grace from Him, do in His name perform (miracles), so as to promote the welfare of other men, according to the gift which each one has received from Him. For some do certainly and truly drive out devils, so that those who have thus been cleansed from evil spirits frequently both believe (in Christ) and join themselves to the church (Ibid, pg. 46).

In the church in North Africa we are told that lay people conducted much of the worship service. Writing in the year 197, Tertullian says that lay people “meet to read the books of God” and then “each from what he knows of the Holy Scripture or from his own heart is called upon before the rest to sing to God.”

Even in the area of doctrinal discussions, lay people sometimes played a part. Origin indicates this in an address to an assembled synod dealing with problems on the Trinity, which also included “the laity” (Ibid, pg. 42).

This widespread involvement of ordinary believers in the early centuries of the Christian era was a chief reason for the tremendous expansion of the Church.

Working against the involvement of lay people in the church was the felt need for unity. Because the Church was growing so rapidly, and only a few hand-written copies of the Scriptures available, this was perhaps understandable. Also, many writings by false teachers were being circulated.
"Change" can be a scary word—especially in churches that have long done things a certain way. In his gripping book, “Dying for Change” Leith Anderson, shares this story:

When the pastoral candidate first addressed the congregation, he gave an inspiring description of his qualifications, experience, vision, and plans. His final line summed up his stirring presentation: “With God’s help, I intend to lead this church forward into the nineteenth century!”

Surprised and embarrassed by the candidate’s apparent mistake, the chairman of the search committee whispered loudly, “you mean ‘the twentieth century!’”

To which the candidate replied, “We’re going to take this one century at a time.”

No doubt about it, your desire to equip more church members in ministry will put you in the role of a change agent. To help, we'll first reflect on research about change; then consider the implications in your own ministry. One leader put it this way, “The price of change may be high . . . but the cost of stagnancy is unbearable.”

Why do Church People Resist Change?

In a seminar attended by over 200 church administrators, the speaker asked, “Why do people in the church resist change?”

Here are the most agreed upon reasons:

• Fear of the unknown; people feel more secure with familiar strategies and programs.

• Lack of exposure to new ministries and methods.

• People have a vested interest in the status quo.

• People assume that new ministries will require additional
commitment of time in an already jam-packed schedule.

- They feel changes will require greater commitment of money.

- Concern over compromise; they fear that adopting the new will involve giving up something they deem important in the life of the church.

- Afraid needs won't be met by the proposed changes.

- Insufficient knowledge of or lack of understanding concerning the new proposals.

- Negative past experiences with program innovations.

- Proponents of change come on too strong or take the negative “You're-doing-it-all-wrong-now” approach in proposing their ideas.

- Spiritual apathy or inertia.

- Fear of failure in the new venture; lack of confidence.

- Concern that changes will produce unforeseen consequences and create a new set of problems for the church.

Note this: these reasons for resisting change can help shape our strategy for promoting and implementing them!

**The Process of Accepting a New Idea**

In his book *Working With Volunteer Leaders In The Church*, Reginald McDonough—citing research by Beal and Bohlen, says that people progress through *five stages* before adopting a new idea.

**Stage One: Awareness.** When a person is first introduced to a concept, before he knows the details, he may be a long way from embracing it.

**Stage Two: Interest.** Here the person wants to know the facts about the concept. He wants to know how it's done, and what resources are available to help implement it.

**Stage Three: Evaluation.** Next, the person assimilates the information, asking: “What ramifications will this idea have
Chapter 5

HOW ADULTS LEARN EFFECTIVELY

For many years it was thought that mature adults could not be expected to learn effectively. This theory has since been debunked—when we learn how adult learners learn best!

Two Philosophies of Learning

Dr. Malcolm Knowles, a widely recognized leader in adult education, tells us that there are two primary philosophies of education today. “The prevailing concept in the history of civilization has been that (education) is the process of transmitting knowledge or culture.” According to this theory, “The role of the teacher is to transmit a body of content and the role of the student is to absorb it” (Wider Horizons in Christian Adult Education, Lawrence C. Little, Ed., p. 75). This approach to education emphasizes mental discipline as a learning approach. Its primary concern is with the processing of information.

But a second view of education teaches that instead, the primary object in education is the learner, rather than the material learned. Knowles says,

“This concept defines education as a process of guided growth of the learner toward his full potential as a whole person” (Ibid).

Since our task as Christian leaders is to “make disciples,” then this second view of learning must have our full support. This does not mean however, that content is not important. We do not see these two theories as necessarily in opposition. Each has a place, but the primary focus must be on the learner.

Principles of Learning

The following key principles of learning can help facilitate the learning process, especially with adult learners.

Motivation is the single most important principle related to effectiveness in learning. Educators tell us that people
learn best when they are strongly motivated by interest, a challenge, a sense of need, or a problem to be solved.

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION** allows a more effective learning experience, in contrast to when learners are passive recipients of the teaching experience.

**PERSONAL DISCOVERY** will provide a more effective and satisfying learning experience.

**INTERACTION** among learners helps reinforce what has been learned.

**RELATE TRUTH TO LIFE.** Finally, people learn best when they relate learning to their own life experiences.

*Motivation, Active Participation, Personal Discovery, Interaction, and Relating Truth to Life are all key ingredients in the TIM group learning experiences.*

**Adult Learning Distinctives**

The application of the following principles can have a profound effect on *motivation* and *involvement* by adult learners.

**ADULTS NEED TO KNOW THEY CAN LEARN EFFECTIVELY.** Many adults have doubts about their ability to learn. Some of their reasons are: 1) They have been away from school for years and feel “rusty.” 2) They feel lost with newer educational methods and fields of knowledge. 3) Existing (but older) research supports the view that older adults no longer can learn effectively. 4) Past negative educational experiences can be a barrier to successful learning. 5) Adults can forget that even in their youth learning, was accompanied by effort.

The first modern scholar to reverse the widespread belief that adult intellect and learning abilities deteriorates with age was E. L Thorndike. Even his studies however, were of limited value because they were based on the *rate, or speed, of learning.*

While differences of opinion still exist, many adult educators agree with Wilber Cross and Carol Florio, who affirm that we are *never* too old to learn.

“*That old myth about the deterioration of the mind is being*
Adult learning takes place best in an interactive format. Consider the following discussion keys:

• Proper physical environment (arrangement of chairs in an informal manner, etc.).
• Being transparent encourages others to open up.
• Good eye contact with a learner’s response to a question.
• Affirming the respondents’ contributions.
• A warm “group atmosphere” encourages interaction.
• Carefully worded thought-through-in-advance questions.

How to Formulate Good Discussion Questions

One reason for discussion disappointment is poorly-worded questions. Often these questions aren’t planned in advance. Here are some important guidelines to remember:

USE THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF QUESTIONS. These are: fact, meaning, and application—and in that order. Examples are from Matthew 4, where Satan tempted Jesus.

1. Fact Questions. The answer to fact questions must be available in the Bible text or other resource that the learner has immediately at hand. This question enables the learner to glean the requested facts. Examples: What were the three temptations Satan tempted Jesus with? What were the various locations to which Satan transported Jesus during the series of temptations?

2. Meaning Questions requires learners to analyze the facts of the passage and formulate principles or behavioral implications from the passage. Examples of this type of question would be: To what basic human drives did the temptations appeal? What do we learn about Satan’s character and strategy through this episode?
3. Application questions provide group members the opportunity to share how the theme of the passage is affecting them. Or they may ask them to evaluate their life in light of the behavioral implications of the content. Examples: Can you share a time when Satan tried to keep you from some course of action that would have brought glory to God? What is one area in which Satan most often tempts you to sin? (Asked rhetorically . . . and answered silently.) Can you think of a verse of Scripture that speaks, directly or indirectly, to that area of temptation?

Avoid questions calling for a simple “yes” or “no” response. Why? They fail to stimulate discussion. Such questions can usually be re-worded to arrive at the same desired conclusion. Example: “Did God intend for Jesus to experience this attack of Satan?” can be reworded to say: “What indicates that it was God's will for Jesus to experience this bout with Satan?”

Carefully plan how to begin questions. Suggestion: avoid those that begin with “Do”, “Did”, “Was”, “Is”, and “Are”—unless followed with a second question. Why? Because they can only be answered with a discussion-deadening “Yes” or “No” response. Better questions begin with “What”, “Why”, “How”, “In what way”, “When” etc. Example: What is significant about the timing (or period in Jesus’ life) in which these temptations occurred? How does this passage illustrate our Heavenly Father’s sensitivity to us during times of temptation?

Avoid questions calling for an obvious answer. Examples: What is Satan called in verse 3? What did Jesus say to Satan in verse 7? How many days did Jesus fast?

Avoid questions that are irrelevant to the lesson, or unrelated to the basic thrust of the discussion.

Example of irrelevant questions: Verse 11 says that angels ministered to Jesus. What are some ways they might have ministered to Him in this situation? What is the meaning of the word “glory” in verse 8?

Generally avoid directing personal questions to specific individuals. Examples: Frank, can you tell us of a time when the devil tempted you by appealing to ambition
How to Develop Your Equipping Ministry

Equipping God’s people is a matter of obedience to Jesus’ command in Matthew 28:19, “make disciples”. In Ephesians 4:12 we are told to, “equip the saints for the work of ministry.”

As you plan for lay equipping, consider the following steps.

1. Involve Your Leadership Team

Gaining support from church leaders and other decision makers is critical. Bill Hull’s *The Disciple Making Pastor* (Baker) as well as the TIM course *Welcome To Your Ministry*, are helpful resources. By carefully laying the groundwork you will be able to move forward in unity.

2. Evaluate Your Church Purpose Statement

Your church mission statement doubtlessly reflects God’s priorities for your church. But does it include a commitment to the discipleship mandate of Scripture? If not, consider revising it to include this key focus.

3. Preach the Bible’s Mandate to Equip

A successful equipping ministry must be based on a firm conviction that God calls all of His people to be involved in ministry, and that training for ministry is essential.

Preaching from such passages as Matthew 28:16-20, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Peter 2 and 4 can be very helpful.

4. Promote Your Commitment to Equipping

One church’s mission four-fold statement is communicated on four banners: *Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Evangelism.* This congregation is visually reminded of their purpose as a church each and every Sunday.
5. Plan Your Goals for Equipped Ministers

Break these down into three major areas:

• Current ministry needs in your church

• Ministries you would like to see started but don’t have equipped people to lead them.

• Needs in your community, which could be better met by people who were better equipped.

Look to reach out in areas of your communities’ felt needs. In this way your church can be seen as relevant. You can be a light on a hill—not one under a “bushel”!

List these needs in priority order.

6. Plan Your Curriculum

It is important that you develop a curriculum master plan—one that is ministry-focused.

TRAINING IN MINISTRY courses cover three general areas: GROUNDING, GROWING, and GOING. These courses, listed on pages 4 and 5, are described more fully here.

Grounding Courses.

Basic courses for all learners are:

CHRISTIANITY 101 is the basic discipling course. It is recommended for new believers’ classes, and for one-to-one discipleship of new or undisciplined Christians. It is amazing how many—even some who have been Christians for a long time—have never been discipled in the basics of their faith and how to live it out in a consistent way. Taking this course provides the necessary foundation for beginning the equipping process.

A PANORAMA OF THE BIBLE is a fantastic tool to provide the “big picture” of the Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—and in a manner they will never forget! Each lesson features a simple symbol (which learners reproduce) visualizing the main features of each Bible lesson. Students get excited about this course! Learners who take this course get the “ah ha!” experience—they get the big picture!

TRUTH THAT TRANSFORMS is the foundational course on