



L I F E S T A F F

Helping People To Obey The New Covenant In Christ's Blood And To Be
Transformed Into Christ So They Can Live In Peace (Shalom*)
And Attain Eternal Life with Great Reward By Training Them To Be
Whole, Ministers, Teachers, Mature and United.

TRAINING GUIDE FOR APOSTOLIC LEADERS

H.O.P.E.

CENTER *for* CHRISTIAN UNITY



HOUSES OF PRAYER & EVANGELISM

*This is our war cry,
"We are one."***

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*Shalom is the result of God's activity in your life when you keep the new covenant in Christ's blood. Shalom is often translated as "peace" but can also be defined as completeness, unity, well-being, prosperity, health, security, and perfect wholeness. (Proverbs 16:17; Isaiah 9:6,32:17,35:1-10,40:1-8,49:8-12,54:10,62:10-12; Numbers 6:24-26,25:12; Luke 2:14; James 3:18)

** (Psalm 133; John 17:20-23; Acts 1:14,2:42, Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 1:10-13,3:1-9,12:12-13,25; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 2:13-16,3:10-11,4:13-16; Philippians 2:1-5; Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 5:9-13)

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We Are Establishing True Christian Maturity and Unity
By Equipping All Disciples to Deny Themselves and to “Be Christ”^{*}
Through The Apostles’ Doctrine and Collective Body Ministry
Under Biblical Government and Structure.

**Galatians 2:20*

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All Scripture verses will be referenced by first giving the Bible book in abbreviated form, then the chapter number, and finally the verse numbers under consideration. For example, Jn. 3:14-16 means John, the third chapter, verses 14 to 16. When the author of this publication adds words to the Scripture quotations from other versions of the Bible or elsewhere to aid understanding, those words will both be italicized and appear within parentheses. If Scripture quotations contain italicized words that do not appear in parentheses, those words were added by the translators to help understanding.

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Isaiah 66:1-2; Zechariah 4:1-14; Matthew 5:18-20,48,7:21-27; John 17:17-26;
Ephesians 4:11-16; 1Corinthians 1:27-29,12:28-30,13:13

A. M. D. G. ad majorem Dei gloriam

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

The subject of biblical leadership can be approached from many aspects. This brief teaching touches on some of the most important. One aspect deals with the spiritual gifts and calling that God gives to Christian leaders who have received the Holy Spirit. According to Romans 12:8, the Holy Spirit gives supernatural ability to certain believers to lead God's people. This ability is imparted to them when they receive the spiritual gift of leadership. 1Corinthians 12:31 (NKJV) tells Christians to earnestly desire the best gifts (better gifts-ISV; greater gifts-NASB). In the context of 1Corinthians Chapters 12-14, the best gifts are those that build up the greatest number of people. Leadership is one of these better or greater gifts. Therefore, all Christians should earnestly desire the spiritual gift of leadership. Every person is called upon by God to passionately seek what He wants done and to faithfully carry out all His assignments. Christians who obey this command become leaders. Every biblical leader demonstrates a life that is centered on divine purpose. They are committed to doing all of God's will as a sacred stewardship and in doing so demonstrate biblical leadership.

In the New Covenant Jesus Christ commands all Christians to be like Him; and Jesus Christ is the greatest example of leadership. This means that **all Christians must strive to be leaders by growing to demonstrate the example of leadership given to us by Jesus Christ.** This will certainly require God's enabling power. A teaching is available to confirm this fact entitled "Christ Is Calling You To Lead." Therefore, to function effectively all disciples working in leadership positions or hoping to do so must earnestly desire to receive the spiritual gift of leadership. To attempt to lead God's people today without the spiritual gift of leadership is not the will of God because complete success will be impossible. Yet, other qualifications are required for biblical leadership if complete success is to be achieved. Let us first study the spiritual gift of leadership.

The Greek word translated as “leads” in Romans 12:8 means to be over, to preside, to rule, to direct. By implication it also means to care for something, to protect, to be concerned for something. The notions of leading people and caring for them are not mutually exclusive. The two concepts go hand-in-hand. Biblical leaders are disciples who lead or direct others in a caring, protective manner. They act as directors who are also helpful friends, mentors and protectors. Therefore, biblical leaders direct others in ways that feel helpful, caring, protective and concerned to those they lead. In essence, people who are being directed by biblical leaders should feel as if they are being served in a humble way. This is why Jesus said the following in Mark 10:42-45 (NKJV):

MARK 10:42-45

(42) But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. (43) Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. (44) And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slaves of all. (45) For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

This is the great example of leadership that Jesus gave us. God empowers believers to lead because He trusts them to serve as slaves of God, other disciples and the lost. God gives power to leaders when He knows His power is used redemptively to serve others.

Therefore, disciples who are gifted and called by God to lead will function as follows: They minister as leaders who direct disciples and are over them in authority but who direct them in a caring, helpful, concerned, protective and servant-like way. (Different positions of authority are given to apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers, deacons, house group leaders, worship leaders, and others. This will be discussed fully in other teachings). Practically speaking, leaders lovingly watch out for the souls of those they lead by helping them to obey the New Covenant in Christ’s blood and to be transformed into Christ so they can live in peace (shalom) and attain to eternal life with great reward through training them to be whole, ministers, teachers,

mature and united. Shalom is the result of God's activity in your life when you keep the New Covenant in Christ's blood. Shalom is often translated as "peace" but can also be defined as completeness, unity, well-being, prosperity, health, security, and perfect wholeness. Biblical leaders guide disciples on the highway to Holiness, which is the highway to shalom (Isaiah 35:1-10). By accomplishing the preceding tasks, leaders will help disciples to gain the greatest level of reward for all eternity when they go to Heaven.

According to Romans 12:8 those who have the spiritual gift of leadership are called to function in it with diligence. The Greek word translated "diligence" can mean eagerness, earnest effort, zeal, attentiveness, devotion, commitment. Therefore, leaders exemplify zeal, eagerness, earnest effort, devotion, commitment, attentiveness. This is what it means to be a diligent leader. Of course, this means biblical leaders do not give up. They work through and overcome failures, personal struggles and suffering to achieve success through hardship; and they help others to do likewise. The Holy Spirit gave us further details about diligence in 2Timothy 2:1-7.

2TIMOTHY 2:1-7

(1) You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2) And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (3) You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (4) No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. (5) And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. (6) The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. (7) Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

These verses are written to Timothy who is an apostle (1Thessalonians 1:1 with 2:6). Paul is directing Timothy to protect the apostolic teachings he has learned from Apostle Paul by committing them to faithful leaders who will be able to teach others also. Therefore, the teaching responsibility given to Timothy is commensurate with his

office as an apostle. Not all Christian leaders have this responsibility, but much of Paul's instruction to Timothy is applicable to every Christian leader.

Every leader must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The word "grace" here represents God's divine empowerment. Every leader must be very careful to learn and teach only the original apostolic teachings, which came from Jesus Christ and were passed on to Paul who passed them on to Timothy who passed them on to faithful leaders who passed them on to others also.

Verses 3 and 4 tell us that **all leaders are called to be good soldiers of Christ** because they say "no one" engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, and every disciple is engaged in warfare (Ephesians 6:10-12). Good soldiers endure hardship, which comes as leaders struggle against opponents of the Gospel. Nothing should distract leaders from pleasing and following Christ. Leaders must give themselves wholeheartedly to Christ and His orders. So even if a leader works at a secular job like Apostle Paul did making tents, you must not let the affairs of life distract you from service to Christ. Leaders must serve Christ with unentangled service and be willing to bear suffering making sure the truth of God's Word is actualized in the lives of others.

Leaders, like athletes, follow the rules of self-sacrifice and discipline to win the prize; but Christian leaders compete against everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

The farmer is rewarded because of his hard work, and he is the first to partake of his crops as his reward. Likewise, **Christian leaders must work hard to bear fruit that remains**, which bestows upon them great eternal rewards for the souls they saved.

The Holy Spirit calls leaders to carefully consider and understand what He has said in 2Timothy 2:1-7. The examples given here help us to understand the diligence expected of Christian leaders in Romans 12:8. They consistently display disciplined, vigorous, undivided service to God that is richly rewarded. These examples help you

to better understand the synonyms given for the word “diligence” including zeal, eagerness, earnest effort, devotion, commitment and attentiveness.

As I mentioned, leaders of God’s people include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers, deacons, house group leaders, worship leaders and all others who rule, lead or facilitate in any capacity. All biblical leaders in the congregation share in the responsibility of shepherding all members of the congregation. Even though they may not have the same authority as do apostles, prophets, evangelists or pastor-teachers, all biblical leaders still share in the responsibility of discipling believers and equipping them to “be Christ.” As examples of Christ, good leaders give their lives for the sheep (John 10:11,15:12,13). **Therefore, those disciples who are striving to obey Christ’s command to be like Him will grow to become leaders; and one test of their leadership is their willingness to give their lives for the sheep.**

Good leaders are found in the field with the sheep. They are focused on their assignment—to care for and direct God’s people as Christ did. This implies that all leaders must be relational. This is very important because disciples require a sharing relationship, which the Bible calls fellowship, to grow up in all things into Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16). Therefore, leaders must strive to have fellowship or a sharing relationship with each person they lead. They must cheerfully work to develop ever-deepening relationships with those under their leadership. Leaders must be diligent in fostering positive Christian relationships so that each person they lead knows and trusts them and obeys their instructions, which always must be based upon the Word of God. **Leaders will effectively nurture relationships when they consistently act in a Christ-like manner and do what is necessary to advance the well-being, unity, prosperity, completeness, health, security, wholeness, and peace of those they lead.**

From this foundation of secure relationships, a leader’s primary responsibility is to make sure all disciples under his or her leadership are properly fed with the accurate knowledge and understanding of God’s Word so they can keep the New Covenant in Christ’s blood, minister effectively, live in peace (shalom) and attain to eternal life with great reward (Jeremiah 3:15; John 8:31-32, 17:3,17-26; 1John 2:3-4). As mentioned, each leader must share in

the responsibility of equipping each disciple to “be Christ.” Since Jesus Christ is the Word of God (John 1:1,14; Rev. 19:13), disciples “become Christ” by becoming the Word of God (John 15:3-11; Romans 8:29; 2corinthians 3:18, 4:4,6; 1Peter 1:22-25; 1John 3:2,9). This occurs as disciples learn and obey God’s Word.

Therefore, leaders of God’s people must work together to make sure each disciple learns and obeys God’s Word, also known as the Gospel, the Apostles’ Doctrine, the teachings of Christ. **This is of primary importance because all disciples must fulfill the biblical requirement to keep the New Covenant between themselves and God so they can experience God’s presence and shalom; be fully equipped; and be fully effective for God in this world because they are whole, ministers, teachers, mature, and united; and go to heaven when they die** (Matt 7:21-27, 28:20; Mark 3:35; Luke 6:40,46; John 15:1-14; James 2:14-26; Rev 2:26, 3:2, 22:12-14). This means that biblical leaders must always demonstrate radical, immediate obedience to God’s Word themselves so that those they lead will have true role models to imitate. Therefore, biblical leaders consistently demonstrate that they have considered the cost of discipleship and are committed to paying it’s price by doing the following: denying themselves; taking up their crosses daily; following Christ’s example; losing their lives for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s; never being ashamed of Christ and His words; hating fathers and mothers, spouses and children, brothers and sisters; yes, and their own lives also; forsaking all that they have; abiding in Christ’s word; hating their lives in this world; putting to death the deeds of the body; living godly in Christ Jesus; **etc.** (Luke 9:23-26,14:25-35; Mark8:34-38; John 8:31,12:25-26; Romans 8:13; 2Timothy 3:12; etc.).

A brief description of a leader’s primary responsibilities before God is as follows: Every leader must actively share in the responsibility to make sure that each disciple becomes whole, a minister, a teacher, mature and united so that all disciples fully keep the New Covenant between themselves and God. Certain key details of this process include the leader’s diligent efforts with other co-leaders to do the following:

Biblical leaders must make sure each disciple obeys Jesus’ commands above all else including to repent, to believe in and obey Jesus Christ as the Lord God Almighty who came in the flesh, to be baptized in water,

to receive and demonstrate the Holy Spirit, to function effectively in a ministry utilizing his or her spiritual gifts for the benefit of others, to go and make disciples baptizing them and teaching them to obey all of the Apostles' Doctrine summarized in the commands to love God with all of their being and to love others just as Christ loved them, to persevere through suffering as they are baptized in fire, to have fellowship with other disciples on a consistent basis to create and maintain a culture that demonstrates Christ-like community, to regularly break bread together (meaning to have both communal meals and holy communion, which we call a celebration of the New Covenant in Christ's blood), to pray, to give, and to worship, while the leader strives to set a Christ-like example in all of these things for them to imitate.

To help in achieving these goals, all leaders in our ministries are to make sure each disciple completes the progress report included in the "**Training Guide & Status Report For Apostolic Disciples**" on a bimonthly basis where more details are given to assist leaders and disciples in their transformation "into Christ." Our leaders are also expected to complete these progress reports.

Biblical leaders are life coaches who consistently expect God's best from those they lead. This means that biblical leaders warmly instill in each disciple the conviction that they can do all things through Christ. Leaders consistently impart to those they lead the attitude that they can successfully carry out God's will. Leaders impart this conviction by always vocalizing a positive expectation that each disciple will succeed. Therefore, a leader's encouraging, vocal expectation of those he or she leads becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Biblical leaders have an expectation that each of the disciples they lead will succeed in all godly endeavors especially the number-one priority of "being Christ" in this world. This expectation must be held and communicated by leaders and experienced by those they lead. Disciples must know that their leaders have high expectations for them. Disciples must have the consistent impression that their leaders expect them to succeed in "being Christ." Leaders must demonstrate what they expect disciples to accomplish. This means that leaders do not only speak about where things

need to be, but they also provide an authentic picture of where things need to be with their own lives.

As coaches biblical leaders should constantly assess the training needs of those they lead. Through their dual roles as directors (leaders, rulers, facilitators) and caregivers (helpful friends, servants, mentors and protectors), leaders must be willing to do all that is necessary to make sure each disciple becomes whole, a minister, a teacher, mature and united and continues to progress in manifesting love, prophesying truth, and experiencing shalom. They need to work together with other co-leaders to help disciples experience God and manifest Him to others by expecting and equipping each of them to demonstrate the gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit in ministering to the Lord, the body of Christ and the world. **When co-leaders work together to lead each disciple to meet these goals, empowered and led by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, they will help each disciple to “be Christ” in this world.**

As biblical leaders strive to carry out all the actions mentioned above, they will grow in their ability to set the example of “being Christ,” which those they lead must follow. The very assignment of leadership that God gives a disciple is a primary means through which He calls the disciple to maturity. A leader’s ministry is one of God’s primary tools for his or her spiritual development (Ephesians 4:11-16). Due to their commitment to Christian maturity, **biblical leaders will project God’s love, power and divine order through their sacrifices, direction, courage, concern, commitment, integrity, protection, encouragement, loyalty, edification, comfort, admonishment, vitality, caring relationships, freedom, etc.** In short, they will demonstrate authentically biblical faith, hope, and love, which comprise the essence of being a true disciple, of being Christ-like, of “being Christ,” and by so doing will keep the New Covenant with God enabling them to call upon God’s help in every situation.

Biblical leaders must do all things previously mentioned as well as those that follow with diligence. To demonstrate diligence, God’s designated leaders must exemplify eagerness and zeal. What does this practically mean? **This means they must demonstrate lots of positive energy, which is the outflow of a person who consistently**

demonstrates faith, hope, and love. Biblical leaders need to energize others by loving them (through sacrificial love) and inspiring them with humble servanthood (through works of faith) and high expectations (through patient hope). They need to convey a positive, faith-filled and hope-filled attitude that says all things are possible through Christ. However, this attitude must be conveyed in a humble, broken way that demonstrates self-surrender to God not self-promotion, self-reliance or self-righteousness. Leaders should not appear to be negative, mediocre, complaining, needy, bland, critical, carnal, weary, dull, spiritless, unmotivated, divisive, immature, selfish, or behaving in ways that are not Christ-like.

Biblical leaders need to execute. They need to set goals with deadlines and get the job done. They need to press through each obstacle until victory is achieved. They must not be passive, defeatist, lazy or shrink back from responsibility. They must prove to be steadfast, faithful and loyal.

Biblical leaders need to manifest passion for God, the body of Christ, and the lost. They need to show strong, heartfelt excitement about their work and life in Christ. This means that leaders need to constantly convey genuine care for others. They need to demonstrate this care through observable acts of faith, hope, and love. Every disciple under the direction of our leadership should feel that their leaders deeply care for them.

Biblical leaders should demonstrate integrity. They must tell the truth, take responsibility for mistakes and shortcomings and strive to correct them, and show fairness without partiality at all times. They need to value all others as equals. They must be good listeners, able to maintain confidentiality, teachable and not prideful. Biblical leaders must consistently demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit with an emphasis on sacrificial love to all others, especially their spouses and children.

Biblical leaders should demonstrate both intellectual and emotional intelligence. They must know what their position requires them to know and be able to manifest that knowledge in a positive way. They must use their natural and supernatural abilities to

demonstrate maturity, self-control, self-awareness, discernment of people's hearts, and proper responses in every situation. Leaders must handle difficulties with gentleness and poise, enjoy success with humility, be boldly confident, be all things to all people. They must rule, lead or facilitate people wisely and keep them accountable. This level of intelligence comes through a close walk with the Holy Spirit and experience in ministry

(1Corinthians 2:12-16; Hebrews 5:14).

Biblical leaders must show loyal dedication. This is another aspect of diligence. They must be loyally dedicated to God, sacrificial living, worship, prayer, Bible study, teaching others, giving, being humble and tender-hearted, Christian maturity and unity, and the goals of the ministry and its overseers that are based upon the Word of God. Biblical leaders who are loyally dedicated to these things will allow God to use them as He desires. They will not compete with others or compare themselves to others. They will not demand their rights (2Corinthians 10:12; Philippians 2:1-5).

As leaders consistently exemplify Christ by carrying out all of the actions previously mentioned as well as those that follow, they will continually foster biblical relationships in Christ's body where sacrificial love, godly order, collective body ministry, and a strong emphasis on the Great Commission develop and thrive. This will help to create true Christ-like community (fellowship) and an apostolic culture. One of the primary jobs of biblical leaders is to create true Christ-like community (fellowship) and an apostolic culture, which are essential elements needed to develop Christian maturity and unity.

Biblical leaders must also strongly fight for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). They do this by continuing steadfastly in the Apostles' Doctrine and by working for doctrinal unity in the body of Christ, which is another essential element needed to develop Christian maturity and unity. Leaders work for doctrinal unity by helping to protect and teach the Apostles' Doctrine (the original teachings of Christ, the Gospel, the unadulterated Word of God) to all disciples (Acts 2:42; 1Timothy 1:4:16; 2Timothy 2:2). Denominationalism is a sin. The Apostles' Doctrine includes an important teaching that directs all Christian leaders to maintain a unified biblical government and structure in the

body of Christ. Biblical government and structure are also essential elements needed to develop Christian maturity and unity. True Christ-like community (fellowship), biblical government and structure, collective body ministry and a strong emphasis on prayer and the Great Commission are important parts of the Apostles' Doctrine. Only by teaching and following the Apostles' Doctrine can Christian maturity and perfect unity occur, which are both commanded by Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:48; John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:13-16).

Therefore, biblical leaders have the primary responsibility to establish Christ-like maturity and perfect unity in the Lord's body by equipping all disciples to deny themselves and "be Christ" through the Apostles' Doctrine, sacrificial love, godly order, the orchestration of collective body ministry, a continuing emphasis on prayer and the Great Commission, biblical government and structure, and true Christ-like community (fellowship). Maturity and perfect unity will not occur in the body of Christ apart from biblical leadership. These acts of obedience to God's Word by all of God's leaders are needed if each disciple is to keep the New Covenant in Christ's blood, be transformed "into Christ," live in peace (shalom) and attain to eternal life with great reward. Biblical leaders must accept and diligently carry out these God-given commands with sincere devotion and love for God, His disciples, and the lost so the greatest possible number of people can go to heaven.

May all leaders of God's people (including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers, deacons, house group leaders, worship leaders, and others) be anointed by God to succeed in equipping all disciples for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (Ephesians 4:11-16 NKJV, NIV).

Amen