

Discovering the Gift of Leadership

By
David Stiles

Facilitator Guide

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About the Author

David Stiles works as a writer and consultant for churches and other organizations. He is the author of *“Skills for New Leaders: A Turbo Group Training Program”*, *“Discovering Small Groups”* and other training materials used by churches to train new leaders.

A Note for Facilitators

The author has taught this introduction to Christian leadership in a one day seminar and in a two hour workshop over four consecutive weeks. A participant guide for this course is also available.

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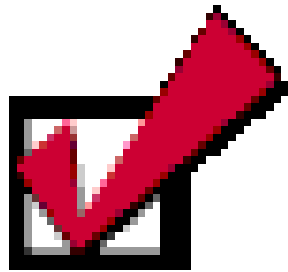
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Contents

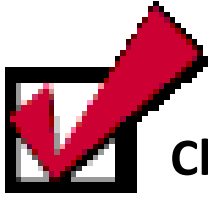
Chapter 1: Introduction	6
Chapter 2: Why Leadership?	11
Chapter 3: Assessing Your Leadership Preferences	19
Chapter 4: Encouraging Relationships.....	26
Chapter 5: Modeling Character	41
Chapter 6: Inspiring Vision	55
Chapter 7: Equipping with Skills.....	69
Chapter 8: Leadership Development Plans	81



Introduction

In this chapter you will:

- Get to know others
- Learn key features about “Discovering the Gift of Leadership”



Chapter 1: Introduction

Welcome...

Welcome to “Discovering the Gift of Leadership”. During this training you will learn helpful concepts for growing in Christian leadership. In the training you will:

- ✓ learn how Christian leaders serve God and others
- ✓ utilize a Biblical understanding of Christian leadership
- ✓ assess your leadership strengths and growth areas
- ✓ focus on four essential areas of Christian leadership
- ✓ create a leadership development plan

Our Tools...

Throughout our training we will use a variety of methods to learn about Christian leadership, including:

- ✓ Biblical insights on leadership
- ✓ Group discussion questions
- ✓ Personal reflection questions

Opening Prayer...

Lord, humbly we come before You, knowing that You give good gifts. Thank you for the gift of leadership. Help us discover the call to service that You have placed on our lives. Help us see the need for Christian leadership in our family, in the Church and in our community. Amen.

Questions for Discussion

1. Introduce yourself to others. From the list below, identify two areas that seem most in need of Christian leadership. Why?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace | <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhoods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts/Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Churches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

2. What three things would you like to gain from this training course? Why?

Why Leadership?

In this chapter you will:

- Identify a Biblical model of Christian leadership
- Utilize a definition of Christian leadership

Chapter 2: Why Leadership?

Leader. The word is used throughout our language. We frequently hear about “news leaders”, “market leaders”, “sports leaders”, “business leaders”, “civic leaders” and “political leaders”.

Although our world may have many different types of leaders, what the Bible declares is needed are **Christian** leaders; men and women who bear witness to Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit – who are used by God to accomplish His redemptive purposes on Earth so that people put their trust in God, acknowledge Christ as their Savior and serve Him as their King. Christian leaders show God’s **love** to a world that is lost without Jesus Christ. They **serve** and **care** for others, and they see lives changed, because of the call to leadership that God has given them.

If you are new to Christian leadership, you might be asking yourself several important questions, such as:

- What potential do I have for Christian leadership?
- Does God really want me to serve as a leader?
- What difference can I make as a leader?
- What can I learn from the Bible about leadership?
- What is unique about Christian leadership?
- How could I best serve as a Christian leader?

These are important questions, and the answers need to be prayerfully considered. This training program is designed to assist you as you consider these important questions.

Throughout our training program, we will look at number of Biblical examples to learn more about Christian leadership. First, let us look to the leadership of Jesus Christ, who gives us the **gift** of leadership and who modeled **perfect** leadership 2,000 years ago.

The Jesus Model

Throughout His ministry, Jesus was committed to training leaders.

At the start of His public ministry He chose twelve men to train as leaders. “Come follow me,” He told them, “and I will make you fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17)

Over the course of three years, Jesus spent a great deal of time with these twelve. He brought them with Him as He performed miracles and preached about the Kingdom of God. When the twelve were alone with Jesus, they would ask him questions about what they had seen and heard. In response, Jesus would continue their training by explaining His teaching in more detail. Eventually, Jesus sent the twelve out to preach, to have spiritual authority to heal and to lead others to Him (Mark 3:14, 6:7-13).

Jesus felt the training of leaders was an important part of His ministry. Even before his death and resurrection, Jesus told his Father, “I have accomplished the work that you have given me to do.” (John 17:4) What was Jesus’ work prior to His crucifixion? The answer according Scripture: to introduce people to God’s love and kingdom...**and to train leaders to carry on His work**. In fact, Jesus had great confidence in the leadership abilities of His followers, saying that they would do even greater works than He (John 14:12).

The type of leadership that Jesus expected of his followers, however, was vastly different from the leadership exercised by the powerful military, political and religious leaders of his time. Jesus equated leadership with service and told his disciples, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them...but you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest of you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves...[as] I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:24-27)

The Jesus model of leadership, therefore, is one that is focused on serving God by declaring and demonstrating God’s love and redemptive power to others.

New Testament Writers

Following the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; the Apostle Paul felt God's call to preach the Good News to Gentiles (non-Jews). In the course of his preaching and teaching, Paul trained Christian leaders and expressed his views on leadership in his letters to the Early Church and to Timothy, a young Christian leader. According to Paul:

1. Christian leadership is a gift given by God.

Paul taught that leadership is a gift given by God to help others. In Romans, Paul wrote, "We have different gifts according to the grace given us, if a man's gift is....leadership, let him govern diligently." (Romans 12:6-8)

2. Christian leadership is rewarding.

Paul also taught that leadership is good; it is rewarding to the people being served, to the leader and to God who commissions Christian leaders. In Paul's first letter to Timothy, he told the young leader that he was thankful that Jesus had appointed him for service (I Tim. 1:12) and that godly leaders please God (I Tim. 2:1-3).

Later in the letter, Paul again emphasized the rewarding nature of leadership, by encouraging Timothy, "If anyone sets his heart on being a leader, he desires a noble task." (I Tim. 3:1)

3. Christian leadership can be difficult and requires sacrifice.

Paul also taught that Christian leaders will suffer because of the cause of Christ. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he encouraged Timothy not to be worried about seeing him suffer and even encouraged Timothy to join with him in "suffering for the gospel" (II Tim. 1:8) and to "endure hardship" as he had done (II Tim. 4:5)

Even with all of the sacrifice and difficulty that Paul had endured (and encouraged Timothy to endure), he was able to say with confidence at the end of his second letter to Timothy that "the Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom" (II Tim. 4:18).

According to Paul, leadership should be sought, because it is helpful to others and is a gift from God. Paul was never afraid to admit, however, that leadership can be difficult and that sacrifice and challenges await all who accept the call to lead. Paul was also able to say that leaders can always rely on the Lord for help in overcoming any kind of adversity.

A Definition:

From what we have learned so far, an initial definition of Christian leadership might be:

“A Christian leader is...
a person committed to the cause of Christ,
seeking to serve others.”

Questions for Discussion

1. What words come to mind when you hear the word “leader”?
2. How is Christian leadership unique from other types of leadership?
3. Review the initial definition of Christian leadership from the previous page. What benefits might people find as they follow a Christian leader?
4. What things would you change to the definition?

2. What things seem to be the most difficult about Christian leadership?

Notes

Assessing Your Leadership Preferences



In this chapter you will:

- Answer questions about your leadership preferences
- Learn four important ways leaders can help others

Chapter 3: Assessing Your Leadership Preferences



There are several important ways Christian leaders help others. The assessment that follows is designed to assist you in analyzing your preferences for serving as a leader. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.

Instructions:

On the following pages you will be asked to complete seven sentences regarding your leadership preferences. Each sentence has four endings.

Rank the endings for each sentence according to how well you think each one fits you. Rank a “4” for the sentence that best describes your leadership preference, down to a “1” for the sentence that least describes your leadership preference.

Place your score for each response on the line that follows each question.

Remember:

- 4 = most like your leadership preference
- 3 = second most like your leadership preference
- 2 = third most like your leadership preference
- 1 = least like your leadership preference

Use each number only once as you complete each sentence.

Leadership Analysis

Remember:

- 4 = most like your leadership preference
- 3 = second most like your leadership preference
- 2 = third most like your leadership preference
- 1 = least like your leadership preference

Use each number only once as you complete each sentence.

	Response
1. I like to help people:	
a. connect with God and others.	
b. become more Christ-like.	
c. develop a vision from God.	
d. gain skills for living better lives.	

	Response
2. People find it most helpful when I:	
a. help them to grow in their relationships.	
b. help them with character and integrity issues.	
c. help them identify areas where God is leading them.	
d. help them develop skills for life.	

Leadership Analysis, continued

	Response
3. Leaders are best when they help people:	
a. develop close relationships with God and others.	
b. grow in integrity and Christ-centered living.	
c. identify God's vision for their lives.	
d. acquire tools for succeeding in challenging situations.	

	Response
4. Leaders motivate me to:	
a. deepen my relationship with God and others.	
b. live a Christ-centered life.	
c. dream.	
d. become more effective.	

Leadership Analysis, continued

	Response
5. If I could help someone right now, I would want to help them:	
a. grow in their relationship with God and others.	
b. walk consistently in Christian character and integrity.	
c. develop a vision for serving God and others.	
d. gain new skills and tools for living.	

	Response
6. The most exciting thing about Christian leadership for me is how leaders:	
a. encourage.	
b. model.	
c. inspire.	
d. equip.	

	Response
7. As a Christian leader, I would most like to see:	
a. relationships deepen.	
b. character developed.	
c. God's vision identified.	
d. skills enhanced.	

Your Leadership Preferences

In our training, we will explore four important ways that Christian leaders can serve others. The sentences you have completed above relate to how leaders:



- ✓ Encourage supportive **Relationships**, to help people grow closer in their relationship with the Lord and with others.
- ✓ Model Christ-like **Character**, to help people understand the commitments, values and transforming power of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Inspire **Vision**, to help others reach for God-given goals and dreams.
- ✓ Equip with **Skills**, to help people successfully face the challenges of life with Christian principles and actions.

Total the scores from each line and enter the total on the lines below:

Totals for Line A (Relationships): _____

Totals for Line B (Character): _____

Totals for Line C (Vision): _____

Totals for Line D (Skills): _____

Later in the training we will analyze your totals to understand your leadership preferences.

Encouraging Relationships

In this chapter you will:

- Discover important relationships for Christian leaders to develop
- Discover how Christian leaders help people grow in their relationship with God and others



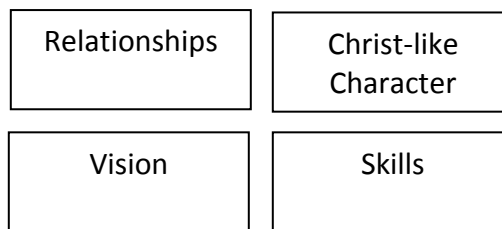
Chapter 4: Encouraging Relationships

We have mentioned that there are four important ways that Christian leaders can serve others. Christian leaders can:



1. Encourage supportive **Relationships**, to help people grow closer in their relationship with the Lord and with others.
2. Model Christ-like **Character**, to help people understand the commitments, values and transforming power of Jesus Christ.
3. Inspire **Vision**, to help others reach for God-given goals and dreams.
4. Equip with **Skills**, to help people successfully face the challenges of life with Christian principles and actions.

These areas are not only helpful for serving others but are also essential elements for a leaders' own personal growth.



Leadership Building Blocks

Essential Relationships for Leaders

Godly relationships are essential for Christian leaders to have and to develop.

Essential relationships include your relationship with:

1. **Jesus Christ** – who offers salvation, forgiveness, guidance and continued strength.

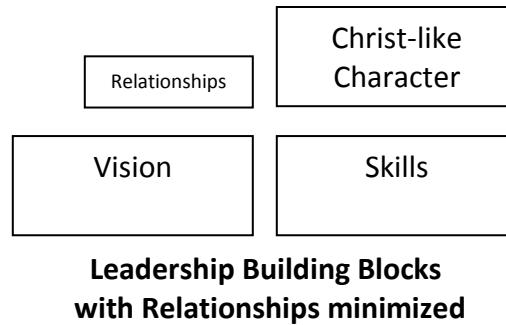
Growing in a greater understanding of the person and work of Jesus is essential for Christian leaders. Of all the relationships mentioned in this chapter, this relationship is the most important.

Christ, we learn in the Bible is *God's Son*, who willingly died on the Cross for the salvation of His people. Through faith in Christ, Christians receive salvation from the penalty and power of sin, and are brought into a right relationship with God.

We also learn in the Bible that Jesus is *Lord*. And it is Christ alone that Christians are to serve and follow. It is through Him that we are adopted as God's children and are sustained in this life and beyond.

2. **Family** – who you are uniquely connected with; requiring stewardship and care.
3. **Mentors** – who can share wisdom and insight and provide opportunities for growth.
4. **Church leaders** – who provide guidance, insight, as well as oversight for ministry.
5. **Peers** – who provide comradeship, accountability and friendship.
6. People you are **leading** – who look to you for assistance.

If Relationships are lacking for a Christian leader...



There can be many negative consequences if relationships are not maintained and developed by Christian leaders. These negative consequences might include:

1. **Burn-out** by working hard in ministry for the short-term but unable to sustain a long-term passion for ministry.
2. **Broken** or strained relationships with others. Peers may not want to work with you and people may not want to follow your lead.
3. Missed **opportunities** for learning from or helping others.
4. **Falling** for temptation if the support of others is not sought.

Encouraging Relationships

Not only are relationships important for a Christian leader's own personal development, but Christian leaders can help others by encouraging their **relationship** with the Lord and with others.

Scripture tells us that God desires that His children **know**, love, honor and depend on Him. Jesus taught that loving God is the greatest of all commands:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind...” (Luke 10:27)

Paul encouraged the Early Church; “grow in your knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10) while the author of Hebrews added, “Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:2)

Christian leaders play a vital role in encouraging others to pursue and develop their relationship with God. Let's explore a few ways that Christian leaders can encourage others to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.



Helping others Focus on Christ

Christian leaders can encourage others to develop their relationship with Jesus Christ by focusing on three important areas:

1. Christian leaders can focus on the Person of Christ.

Christian leaders can speak truth to myths, lies and distortions about the Lord and help people focus on who God truly is. Christian leaders can encourage others to focus on the attributes and character of God, helping them understand that God is:

- love
- good
- generous
- kind
- forgiving
- trustworthy
- compassionate
- just
- holy
- all knowing
- faithful
- our creator
- our savior
- our sustainer
- in control
- unchanging
- Jesus
- the Holy Spirit

2. Christian leaders can focus on the Purposes of Christ.

Christian leaders can also help people focus on the things that God wants to accomplish on Heaven and on Earth.

Scripture tells us that God desires to reveal himself to us (Exodus 3:14) that we might know and worship Him. But because of sin, we cannot, on our own, know Him. Therefore God sent His son, Jesus Christ. Christian leaders can help others look at what was accomplished when God sent his Son to:

- reveal God to us, so that we might see Him clearly and grow in our understanding of God (John 14:9, Heb. 1:3, Col. 1:15)
- redeem us from our sins, so that we will be forgiven (Acts 2:36, Mark 10:45, John, 8:46, 2 Cor. 5:21)
- restore us to God, so we can be with Him (Col. 3:1-4)

Christian leaders can help others remember the sacrifice of Jesus who "...humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross." (Phil. 2:8) and that because of His death, "God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..." (Phil. 2:9-11).

3. Christian leaders can focus on the Presence of Christ.

Christian leaders can help others respond to God's love today by helping them identify God's work in their lives and in the world. They can encourage others to trust in God's forgiveness of sins (Psalm 130:3-4) and to depend on the Holy Spirit for comfort, direction, counsel, and help. They can also encourage others to read God's Word that has been given to nourish and sustain (1 Cor. 3:2, Heb. 5:12, 1 Peter 2:2).

Questions for Discussion:

1. Reflect for a moment on the previous pages. What truth about the person, purposes or presence of Christ is most significant to you?
2. What truths about God are the most challenging to comprehend or fully incorporate in your life?
3. What truths about God would you like to communicate to others? What might be difficult to communicate to others? Why?



Four tips for encouraging others to grow in their relationship with God

As you consider Christian leadership, here are four practical steps that you might take for encouraging others to grow in their relationship with God:

1. Encourage others to depend on the Lord for insight.

The Bible is clear that we cannot know God without His help. We are needy people, dependent upon the Lord for everything, including insight, knowledge and wisdom.

Scripture encourages us to “call out for insight” and “cry aloud for understanding” (Prov. 2:3) and the Lord will let us “know the word that sustains the weary” (Isaiah 50:4).

2. Encourage others to expect that God will teach them.

The Bible is filled with descriptions of God blessing his people. “For I know the plans for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

Scripture also teaches that when we seek God we will find him. Jeremiah writes:

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord.” (Jeremiah 29:13)

3. Encourage others to listen to God’s Word with an open heart and mind.

The prophet Samuel, even as a young man, had an open heart and an open mind, and said simply, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Sam. 3:9).

Having an open heart and an open mind means being willing to receive direction from the Lord and to learn from Him:

“Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” (Psalm 95:7)

4. Encourage others to be diligent in pursuing a relationship with God.

The early Christians “received the message with great eagerness and examined Scriptures every day” (Acts 17:11).

According to Proverbs, people will find truth as they diligently look for it:

“My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”
(Proverbs 2:1-5)

An Expanded Definition:

To continue our definition of a Christian leader, we might add:

“A Christian leader is...
a person committed to the cause of Christ,
seeking to help others by:
-encouraging supportive relationships.”

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is a right relationship with God important?
2. What are some ways Christian leaders can develop their relationship with God?
3. How would you like to help others grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ?

Personal Reflection

1. How would you characterize your relationship with God right now?

2. How is Christ important to your daily life?

3. What specific things would you like to do to grow in your relationship with God?

Notes



Modeling Character

In this chapter you will:

- Discover how Christian leaders model Christ-like character to others

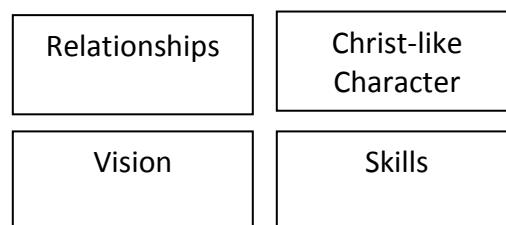
Chapter 5: Modeling Character

We have mentioned that there are four important ways that Christian leaders can serve others. Christian leaders can:



1. Encourage supportive **Relationships**, to help people grow closer in their relationship with the Lord and with others.
2. Model Christ-like **Character**, to help people understand the commitments, values and transforming power of Jesus Christ.
3. Inspire **Vision**, to help others reach for God-given goals and dreams.
4. Equip with **Skills**, to help people successfully face the challenges of life with Christian principles and actions.

These areas are not only helpful for serving others but are also essential elements for a leaders' own personal growth.



Leadership Building Blocks

Christ-like Character

Growing in Christ-like character and maturity is essential for Christian leaders.

What is Christ-like Character?

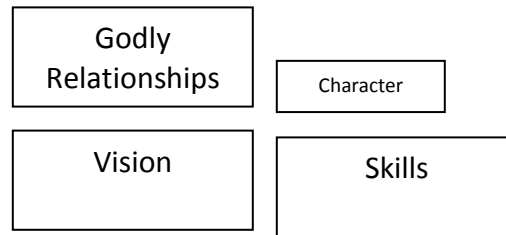
Growing in Christ-like character means growing more and more like Christ.

Christ-like character is:

- ✓ Having the right motives. It is not just doing things – but doing them for the right reason.
- ✓ Displaying the “Fruit of the Spirit” (as described in Galatians 5:22):
 - Love
 - Joy
 - Peace
 - Patience
 - Kindness
 - Goodness
 - Faithfulness
 - Gentleness
 - Self-Control

It’s important to note that God is very interested in forming Christians spiritually to make His people more like Him. Many times we focus on **external** results, but God focuses on the inner person.

If Character is lacking...



**Leadership Building Blocks
with Christ-like Character minimized**

There can be many negative consequences if Christian character is not sought nor developed by Christian leaders.

These negative consequences might include:

1. **Broken trust** - as people hesitate to follow because of poor choices made by leader.
2. **Missed** opportunities for leaders and people working with the leader.
3. **Harmful** actions done to others.

Christ-like Character Traits...

Christ-like Character Traits		
Accountable	Hospitable	Persevering
Authentic	Humble	Prayerful
Caring	Identifies with Jesus	Pursues Excellence
Compassionate	In fellowship	Puts God first
Consistent	Integrity	Reliable
Content	Impartial	Repentant
Courageous	Joyful	Respectful
Dependable	Keeps Commitments	Sacrificial
Depends on God	Kind	Studies Scripture
Does not love money or possessions	Lacks bitterness	Self-controlled
Fair	Lacks envy	Selfless
Faithful	Lacks self-righteousness	Straightforward
Follower of God	Listens to God's word	Supportive
Full of Faith	Loving	Teachable
Generous	Loyal	Thankful
Gentle	Mature	Transparent
Helpful	Obedient	Trustworthy
Holy	Open to being changed by God's Word	Willing to Serve
Honest	Patient	Wise
Hopeful	Peaceful	Work ethic

Modeling Character

Christian leaders help others by being **Christ-like**. Because of their character, others are encouraged to grow in their faith and lead Christ-centered lives.



Paul encouraged Timothy to model a Christ-centered life:

- ✓ “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” (II Timothy 2:15)
- ✓ “Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings...but as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it.” (II Timothy 3:10-11, 14)

The writer of Hebrews adds: “Remember your leaders, who spoke the Word of God to you, consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.” (Hebrews 13:7).



Four points about growing in Christ-like character

As you consider Christian leadership, here are four important points that you will want to keep in mind as you model Christ-like character:

1. Growing in Christ-like character does not mean that you are perfect and will never make a mistake.

According to the Bible, all people sin and miss the mark of God's holiness; we all make mistakes; God is the only one who is perfect. In Scripture, the Apostle Paul wrote:

“..all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

Growing in Christian character, therefore, does not mean being perfect, rather it means relying on the perfection of God, and seeking God's grace for the forgiveness of our sin. According to John,

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:8-9)

Christ came to earth because we could not (on our own) fulfill God's laws and measure up to God's standards. Our role as Christian leaders, therefore, is to trust in God's grace for the forgiveness of our sins and to continue to rest and trust in God's grace as we encounter issues and concerns in life.

2. Growing in Christ-like character means taking character issues seriously.

The Lord wants us to be faithful in following Him and desires that we take character issues seriously. In the parable that Jesus told of the Prodigal Son, the son, once he recognized his folly, returned to his father and said remorsefully, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.” (Luke 15:21)

Taking character issues seriously is found throughout Scripture:

- ✓ The Lord says, “Be holy as I am holy.” (Lev. 11:44)
- ✓ “...without holiness no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)
- ✓ “...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles” (Hebrews 12:1)

3. Growing in Christ-like character is essential for leadership development.

Developing as a Christian leader will mean developing Christ-like character. To grow, God will allow situations to occur in your life that will test your faith and character. Throughout Scripture, we see leaders being tested:

- ✓ God tested Abraham by telling him to go to Mount Moriah and sacrifice his son (Genesis 22:1, Hebrews 11:17)
- ✓ God tested King Saul, who failed to be obedient (I Sam. 15)
- ✓ King David said, “I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.” (I Chronicles 29:17)
- ✓ Jesus was tested prior to the start of his public ministry (Matt. 4:1)

4. Growing in Christ-like character means considering your personal life before you lead.

It is important to count the cost of leadership before making the commitment to become a Christian leader because others will look to you as a model of Christ-likeness.

Jesus said that it would be better for someone to have a millstone tied around his or her neck and be thrown into the sea than to lead another into sin (Matthew 18:6).

Paul also recognized the importance of modeling Christ-likeness to others, saying, "...if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall." (I Cor. 8:13).

An Expanded Definition:

To continue our definition of a Christian leader, we might conclude that:

"A Christian leader is...
a person committed to the cause of Christ,
seeking to help others by:
-encouraging supportive relationships
-modeling Christ-like character."

Christ-like Character Traits...

Christ-like Character Traits		
Accountable	Hospitable	Persevering
Authentic	Humble	Prayerful
Caring	Identifies with Jesus	Pursues Excellence
Compassionate	In fellowship	Puts God first
Consistent	Integrity	Reliable
Content	Impartial	Repentant
Courageous	Joyful	Respectful
Dependable	Keeps Commitments	Sacrificial
Depends on God	Kind	Studies Scripture
Does not love money or possessions	Lacks bitterness	Self-controlled
Fair	Lacks envy	Selfless
Faithful	Lacks self-righteousness	Straightforward
Follower of God	Listens to God's word	Supportive
Full of Faith	Loving	Teachable
Generous	Loyal	Thankful
Gentle	Mature	Transparent
Helpful	Obedient	Trustworthy
Holy	Open to being changed by God's Word	Willing to Serve
Honest	Patient	Wise
Hopeful	Peaceful	Work ethic

Questions for Discussion

1. Using the list on the previous page, describe one or two leaders that you admire, what qualities stand out in your mind? Why?
2. What Christ-like characteristics would you like to help others develop? Why?
3. What challenges have you faced that have tested your character/integrity? How difficult was it to make the right choice?
4. What challenges are you facing right now that require you to respond with a Christ-like attitude?

3. What steps can you take to help others grow in Christ-like character?

Notes



Inspiring with Vision

In this chapter you will:

- Discover how leaders can inspire others to reach God-given dreams

Chapter 6: Inspiring with Vision

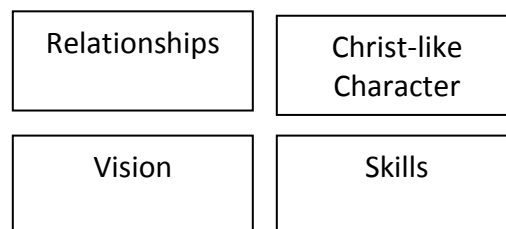
We have mentioned that there are four important ways that Christian leaders can serve others.

Christian leaders can:

1. Encourage supportive **Relationships**, to help people grow closer in their relationship with the Lord and with others.
2. Model Christ-like **Character**, to help people understand the commitments, values and transforming power of Jesus Christ.
3. Inspire **Vision**, to help others reach for God-given goals and dreams.
4. Equip with **Skills**, to help people successfully face the challenges of life with Christian principles and actions.



These areas are not only helpful areas for serving others but are also essential elements for a leaders' own personal growth.



Leadership Building Blocks

Vision

God imparts vision to his people to help them know Him and do His will. According to Scripture, “Where there is no vision the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18)

Vision helps people create a **focus** for life and ministry, it helps define reality, is **future** oriented and helps people identify where they can “make a difference.”

We find in Scripture a number of examples of leaders who were given a vision from God:

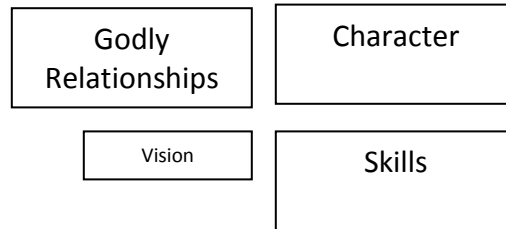
- ✓ Moses – had a vision to see God free the Hebrews from slavery and lead them to the Promised Land.
- ✓ David and Solomon – had a vision to follow God and build a Temple for the Lord
- ✓ Nehemiah and Ezra – had a vision to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and the Temple
- ✓ Paul - had a vision to evangelize the non-Jewish world

Inspiring with Vision

Christian leaders play an important role in helping others to discover God’s direction in their life. Christian leaders can articulate a God-given vision and ask others to help in accomplishing that vision (such as Nehemiah asking the Israelites to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem).

Christian leaders can also help individuals identify their **unique** God-given vision, encouraging them to identify how God desires to use their gifts and talents.

If Vision is lacking...



**Leadership Building Blocks
with Vision minimized**

There can be many negative consequences if vision is not sought nor developed by Christian leaders.

These negative consequences might include:

1. **Tasks** are done without meaning.
2. **Missed** opportunities for leaders and people working with the leader.
3. **Actions focused** on the present and not on future needs.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Describe two Christian leaders that you admire.
2. What is (or was) their vision?
3. What are the goals they are attempting (or attempted) to accomplish?
4. What did they do to accomplish these goals?
5. What do you find inspiring about their leadership and their vision for ministry?



Five Steps for Developing Vision

As you look to help others identify their God-given vision and seek to identify what vision God is giving to you, consider the following:

1. Ask the Lord for insight.

The Bible is clear that we cannot develop a vision for ministry without God's help. We are needy people, dependent upon the Lord for everything, including insight and guidance for our lives.

In Scripture, we are encouraged to “call out for insight” and “cry aloud for understanding” (Prov. 2:3) and the Lord will let us “know the word that sustains the weary” (Isaiah 50:4).

2. Be willing to wait on the Lord.

Leaders are frequently called to wait. Waiting on the Lord before, during and after God imparts vision can be seen throughout Scripture. Examples include Jesus having his disciples wait for the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4) and Paul waiting in Tarsus before starting his public ministry.

We can have confidence in the Lord that He will be with us as we wait:

- ✓ “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope” (Psalm 130:5)
- ✓ “...we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently” (Romans 8:25)

3. Differentiate between the things that are merely good from the things that are of God.

There are many “good” things that you might do in the world. In fact, you might be asked on a regular basis do “good” things. With limited time and resources, having a clearly defined vision can help you identify what is “**best**”---the things that God is specifically calling you to do.

A clear vision can help you evaluate and clarify commitments and can help you when making decisions regarding your time, energy and resources.

4. Identify the things in your life that stop you from acting on your vision.

There are many things that may get in the way of acting on a God-given vision:

- other things to do
- fatigue
- confused priorities
- lack of organization
- unclear values
- “not enough time”
- lack of faith in God
- lack of confidence
- remembering past experiences

Identify the areas that make acting on vision difficult for you and pray that God would help you overcome these obstacles.

5. Be willing to Dream.

Thinking about the future can be difficult. It can be hard to imagine life ten or twenty years from now. God-given visions, however, are future-oriented. The following questions may help you think about the future and discover the vision that God is giving you:

- What would you like to accomplish in your life?

- What things are your top priorities?

- What is your ultimate objective as a Christian leader and follower of Christ?

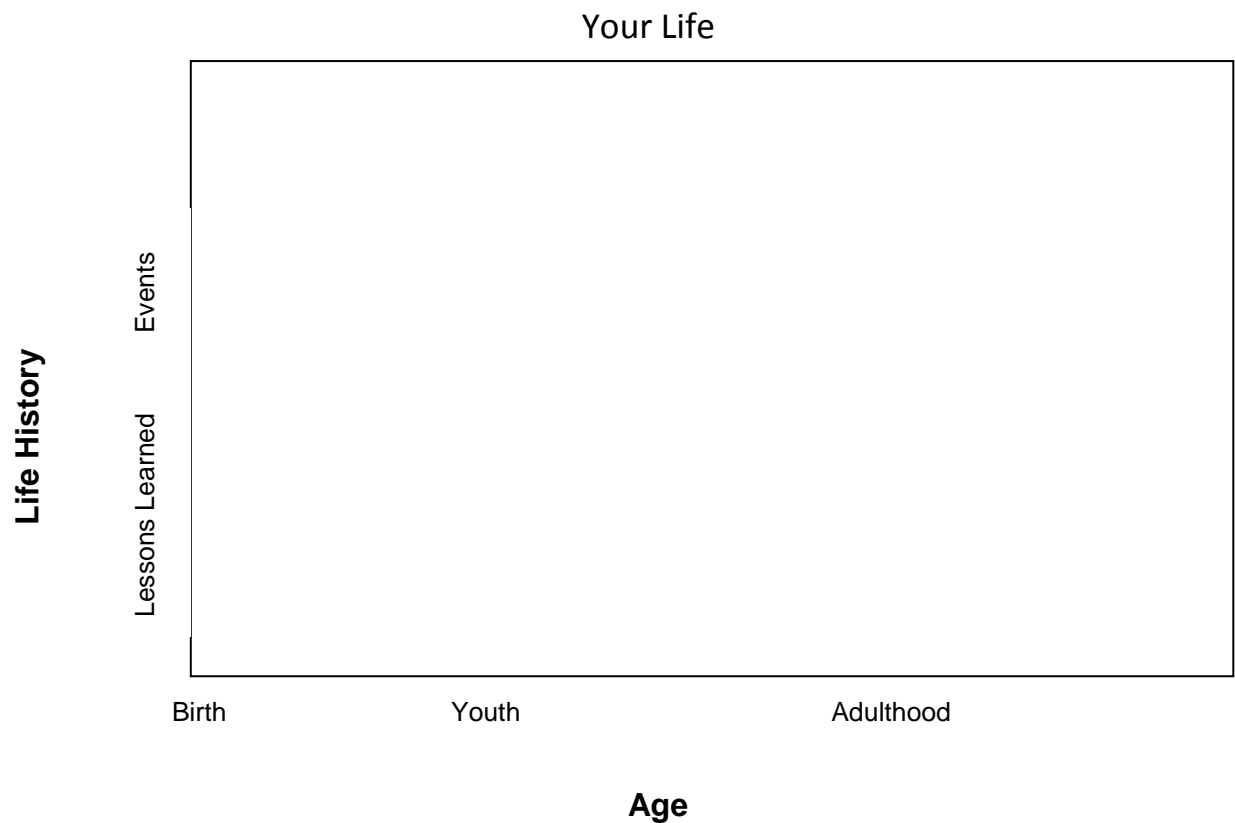
- What difference does God want you to make in the world?

- What do you find interesting and compelling?

- What would happen if you focused your energy in the next few years on the compelling things God may be calling you to?

- What would happen if you didn't spend energy on this?

Personal Reflection



1. Using the space above, think about your past. Write a few words for each time period. Note the lessons you learned during each period and significant events that occurred.

Use the space below and on the following page to answer the following questions.

- What have been the most significant events?
- What have been your most significant relationships?
- What have been the most important things that God has taught you?
- What themes and patterns emerge?

3. What are some things in your life that may get in the way of acting on a God-given vision? Why?

Equipping with Skills



In this chapter you will:

- Discover how leaders help provide Christian skills and tools for living

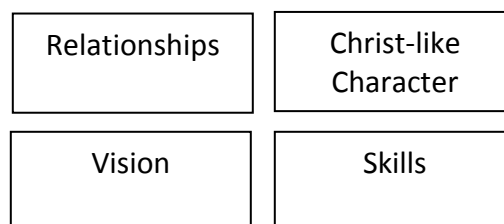
Chapter 7: Equipping with Skills

We have mentioned that there are four important ways that Christian leaders can serve others. Christian leaders can:



1. Encourage supportive **Relationships**, to help people grow closer in their relationship with the Lord and with others.
2. Model Christ-like **Character**, to help people understand the commitments, values and transforming power of Jesus Christ.
3. Inspire **Vision**, to help others reach for God-given goals and dreams.
4. Equip with **Skills**, to help people successfully face the challenges of life with Christian principles and actions.

These areas are not only helpful areas for serving others but are also essential elements for a leaders' own personal growth.



Leadership Building Blocks

Leadership Skills

Christian leaders will also utilize skills in ministry. Each of the following skills will play some role in ministry:

Asking Good Questions – seeking to uncover needs and other information through questions

Communicating – the Gospel (the Good News about Christ) and God’s truth to others

Keeping a Group on Track – helping a group meet its goals and objectives

Listening – seeking to understand needs and communicate concern

Managing Change – implementing or responding to a changing environment

Mentoring – helping others develop

Planning – identifying details for ministry

Prayer – seeking God’s direction and insight

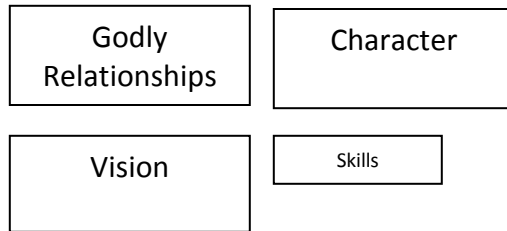
Problem Solving – seeking solutions to obstacles

Recruiting – inviting people to be involved in a ministry or a group

Team Building – utilizing the skills of others to accomplish results

Welcoming Others/Communicating Acceptance - ensuring that people feel accepted and welcome

If Skills are lacking...



Leadership Building Blocks with Skills minimized

There can be many negative consequences if skills are not sought nor developed by Christian leaders.

These negative consequences might include:

1. **Tasks** done ineffectively.
2. **Missed** opportunities for leaders and people working with the leader.
3. **Communication** problems with people.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Reflect on the list leadership skills:

- Asking Good Questions
- Communicating
- Keeping_a Group on Track
- Listening
- Managing Change
- Mentoring
- Planning
- Prayer
- Problem Solving
- Recruiting
- Team Building
- Welcoming Others/Communicating Acceptance

In the list below, identify the most important skills that you would like to develop. Next, write a description of what that skill might look like.

Rank	Name	Your Description
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

2. What challenges might you face in developing these skills?

3. What are some ways you might overcome these challenges?

Equipping with Skills

One important role of a Christian leader is to serve as a teacher, **trainer** and equipper of new skills for Christian living.

Christian teaching and training should not be based on the leader's opinions but rather should be based upon *Biblical truth* (what God has declared true about an issue).

Christian leaders can communicate these important insights from God's Word in both formal and informal settings to people who are seeking to grow in a variety of areas.

Listed below are only a few of the needs that people may identify as they seek to follow God.

Knowing how to...		
Accept Others	Lead Others	Respond to Sin
Be Content	Listen to Others	Respond to Temptation
Be a Christian in the workplace	Love God	Sacrifice
Change Negative Behavior	Love Others	Share my faith
Develop a Focus and Purpose in Life	Make Good Decisions	Study the Bible
Experience Joy	Maintain a Great Marriage	Worship
Forgive	Maintain Healthy Relationships	Other:
Fast	Manage Money	
Grow in Holiness	Overcome Addiction	
Grow in the Christian Faith	Overcome Adversity	
Handle Grief and Loss	Parent young children	
Help Others	Persevere	
Journal	Pray	

Questions for Discussion

1. Reflect for a moment on the list on the previous page. What are some of the most important things that have you learned from Christian leaders? Why were these things important to you?

2. From the list on the previous page, circle three areas that you would like to help others learn about. Why are these areas important to others?



Five important tips on helping others learn new skills

Leaders play a pivotal role in helping others learn new skills and truth about themselves and God. As you consider Christian leadership, consider the following:

1. Ask the Lord for insight.

Ask the Lord to help you understand the needs of others. It is important for leaders to ask God to help them understand the pain and difficulty that others are facing. Jesus described His desire to help those in need, by saying, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.” (Luke 5:31)

Christian leaders need the Lord to reveal not only what the needs are of others, but how they can best communicate His truth to those they are leading.

2. Ask questions to uncover needs.

Jesus asked many questions to uncover the needs of his disciples and the crowds that followed him. “Who touched me?” he asked on one occasion. On another occasion, he asked, “Who do you say that I am?” Asking questions helps us get beyond our own assumptions regarding what people need and hear directly from those we seek to help.

3. Remember that the ultimate goal is knowledge of God.

One Christian leader identified a need in his community and offered a class for parents on how to potty-train their toddlers. Many people came to the training, however, the leader’s ultimate goal of the class was not potty-training, it was helping these families know and depend upon Jesus Christ. After the training, the families were invited to the leader’s church and many became Christians because of the leader’s care and concern for their needs.

4. Remember that learning takes time.

It may take a long time for people to learn the skills that you are helping them with, such as having a better marriage, or a better prayer life. It is important to note that Jesus recognized this fact and repeated His teaching to His followers. Throughout the Gospels we learn of Jesus saying, over and over, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like...”, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like...”. Obviously, the people hearing the message did not fully understand His message the first time, so he repeated the message again and again.

5. Look to give away what you have learned.

Jesus said that it is “better to give than to receive.” Serving as a Christian leader, you have the opportunity to give away the lessons you have learned to the benefit of others.

An Expanded Definition:

To continue our definition of a Christian leader, we might conclude that:

“A Christian leader is...
a person committed to the cause of Christ,
seeking to help others. by:
-encouraging supportive relationships
-modeling Christ-like character
-inspiring Christ-centered vision
-equipping with Christian skills”

Personal Reflection:

1. What skills or ideas have you tried to impart to others? What were the results?

2. What are some ways that you might more effectively equip others?

Leadership Development Plans



In this chapter you will:

- Analyze your preferences for leadership
- Create a plan for further growth

Leadership Development Plans

It can be helpful to ask yourself the following questions regarding leadership plans:



1. Who is God calling you to serve?

It is important to identify who God is calling you to serve. God may be calling you to:

- ✓ Serve people in your neighborhood
- ✓ Serve the poor or homeless in your city
- ✓ Serve families in your community

As you consider who God is calling you to serve, it can be helpful to remember that God might be calling you to a group of people who are different than you are. The Apostle Paul, for example, was called to a group of people (the Gentiles) who had a very different background than he had.

2. What does God want you to accomplish?

It is important to identify objectives that God may be calling you to work toward. God may be calling you to:

- ✓ Start a small group
- ✓ Join a ministry to the poor
- ✓ Create a new service for your Church

3. How does the Lord want you to accomplish these tasks?

There are many ways to do ministry. It is important to read Scripture and work with mentors and church leaders to identify how tasks should be accomplished.

4. When does God want you to do this?

You will need to prayerfully consider when these tasks should be done.

5. Who else is God calling you to work with?

In Scripture we see many examples of people **working together** to accomplish God's purposes:

- Jesus and his disciples
- Paul with Timothy
- Moses and Joshua

It is important, therefore, not to work alone in ministry but to engage others.

Questions for Discussion – Leadership Development Planning

1. Who is God calling you to serve?
2. What does God want you to accomplish with your leadership?
3. How might you go about accomplishing that objective?
4. When would you take action on those tasks?
5. Who else is God calling you to serve with?

Leadership Development Plans

Growing as a Christian leader is a life-long process, the following is designed to help you as you plan for future growth in leadership.



Refer back to page 24 and enter the totals from the assessment again:

Totals for Line A (Relationship): _____

Totals for Line B (Character): _____

Totals for Line C (Vision): _____

Totals for Line D (Skills): _____

Questions for Discussion - Analysis of Your Highest Area

1. Which area did you score the highest in?
2. How can others be served by Christian leaders focusing on this area?
3. Are you surprised that you scored highest in this area? Why?
4. What might you need to do to ensure that you continue to focus on this area?

Questions for Discussion

– Analysis of Your Least Preferable Area

1. Which area did you score the lowest in?
2. Are you surprised that you scored lowest in this area? Why?
3. What might be some reasons you chose other areas instead of this one?
4. What might you need to do as a Christian leader to grow in this area?

Personal Reflection: Course wrap up

1. What are the most important lessons you learned in this training course?

2. What actions will you need to put into place to incorporate those lessons into your life?
