

15 Guidelines for Novice Shepherds Being Coached

How to Employ Paul-Timothy Studies

Guidelines

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"How shall I make use of these studies?"

Please, take a moment now to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you.

1. Meet regularly with a coach, a leader who is more experienced than you.

- A coach trains new leaders the same way Jesus and the apostles did it, not in a classroom but while working and traveling.
- Watch what your coach does as he deals with people. He watches what you do.
- Let your coach help you plan your next few weeks' work and to select studies that fit the needs of the believers and that will help you extend the Lord's work to new areas.
- Report to him what you and the people in your congregation are doing. Report your failures and problems honestly. If you are ashamed to tell your failures and hide the truth, he cannot help you.

- Select studies that will help the believers to begin practicing ministries that are still lacking in your congregation.
- At first, you might meet with your coach once or twice a week. Later you would meet only once or twice a month. After that, you would meet once every three or four months, as long as you need help.
- We must correct one another (Col. 3:16) and confess our faults one to another (James 5:16). This means that we accept the advice of other leaders and listen to their truthful criticisms. We all need this kind of supervision, in which leaders make sure that each other's ministry is biblical. This supervision helps us to grow in our leadership skills, and to avoid exercising selfish or painful control over the people.
- A leader is dangerously foolish if he tries to do God's work without anyone examining what he does and advising him. This causes serious damage in many churches.

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2. Meet regularly with other leaders also.

- Meet with other leaders in your area. All leaders should report what their people have been doing. Let them examine your ministry. You examine theirs.
- Leaders should evaluate each other's work and spiritual growth. They help each other to improve. The New Testament commands us to help one another this way—to correct one another, forgive one another, confess our faults to one another, bear one another's burdens and many more such "one another" commands.
- Be honest with each other. If someone has a fault, correct him in love. Let others correct you. The Holy Spirit helps us to grow this way.

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3. Coach other newer leaders.

- As soon as possible you must begin coaching other newer shepherds. Some of these workers will assist you in shepherding your congregation, as fellow shepherds, worship leaders and deacons. Others will start or serve with new congregations.
- Talk with them about what they have been doing, and their plans.
- Help them select studies that meet their people's current needs.
- Do this for as long as they need help. The New Testament requires that you coach other shepherds, in 2 Timothy 2:2. You might also need to name new shepherds, as Paul instructed Titus to do.
- New shepherds should have the type of character described in Titus 1:5-9. They should be proven first. One way to prove them—to make sure they can shepherd others—is to ask them to start shepherding their own family. If they do so, they will probably serve well as shepherds of a congregation.

- Name new shepherds and coach them, when you are sure they can do the job. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 says not to name recent converts as overseers. Paul does not give a definite time to wait. This is because some believers are more mature in the faith in three weeks than others are in thirty years. Paul himself named new leaders within what appears to be only a few weeks in Galatia, for new churches (Acts 14). We wait longer in a mature church like in Antioch where they waited a year to lay hands on Paul and Barnabas to commission them as 'sent ones' (Acts 11:25-26; 13:1-3).

4. Select study units and activities that fit your congregation's current interests and needs.

Ask your trainer or coordinator for the *Paul-Timothy User's Menu*, or download it from www.Paul-Timothy.net. Click 'Download Menu'. Select the format of your choice beside '**A printable version of Users' Menu**' (read the instructions at the top).

- Prayerfully select studies from the User's Menu that meet your people's current need and opportunity for serving others. Do not simply start with the first study and go through the list in order.
- Ask the Lord to show you which studies your people need from week to week. New congregations, like newborn babies, have urgent needs that you must meet. No two congregations follow the same path to maturity.



"We trainers first listen carefully to those whom we train."

Wise shepherds listen carefully to the voice of the sheep in their flock — with 'ears to hear'.

- To discern these needs and opportunities, listen carefully to your people.
- Each Ministry area has several sets of studies. For example, the ministry WORSHIP includes sets on Communion, on celebrating Jesus' resurrection, and on other aspects of worship.
- Each set has a study on the same topic for *Shepherds* and another for *Children*. This enables children to prepare ahead of time a Bible story related to the topic that the adults will learn. The children can act out the Bible story for the adults during worship time.
- Shepherd's studies have the word 'Shepherd' in their top margin.
- Children's studies have the word 'Children' in their top margin.
- Some sets have *supplemental* studies with additional information on the topic.
- Each New Shepherd's study has several activities. You do not need to do all of them

5. Prepare well before teaching or leading your flock in any activity.

- Discipline yourself and your people to prepare well, starting more than a week ahead of time.
- Ask the worship leader to arrange with the children's teacher for the children to present what they prepare for the worship time. Also, ask the worship leader to select songs and worship activities that go together with the week's topic.
- Is your flock small? Satan tempts shepherds to neglect preparation for worship, especially for small congregations. It is just as important to prepare well ahead of time for small congregations than for big ones, for four reasons:
 - 1) The strength of small congregations is that everyone participates in different ways during worship, as the New Testament requires. More people come to Christ and serve Him in small congregations around the world than in big ones. If we do not prepare helpers ahead of time, we lose this participation. The leader will do all the important things himself--a sin that grieves the Holy Spirit. This cripples the flock that God has given us to shepherd.
 - 2) People in small congregations have the same needs as people in large ones, which require prayerful preparation.
 - 3) Large congregations often have experienced, well educated pastors who work full time. They have the ability and the time to make many preparations the day before the worship time. However, small congregations multiply much more rapidly and therefore often have volunteer shepherds who are less experienced and less educated. If they wait until the day before the worship time to prepare, their preparations will be poor, robbing God's flock of His blessings.
 - 4) The Holy Spirit works powerfully during the times of prayerful planning and preparation with helpers—not just during the worship time. God uses this preparation by several coworkers to prepare new leaders the way Jesus and Paul did.

6. Work together with others to lead the flock.

- Wise leaders do not work alone. Jesus and the apostles did not work alone. Prepare other workers to lead worship and help you shepherd your flock. Some will be deacons who serve people with special needs during the week.
- If you prepare someone to lead worship, let them read P-T study number 8, Guidelines for Worship Leaders and their helpers.
- Provide a copy of the children's study each week, for children's teachers.

7. Carry out the three actions of each New Shepherd's study.

- The three actions are:
 1. Prepare our heart and mind with god's word
 2. Plan with your coworkers what your people will do next week
 3. Plan with coworkers the upcoming worship time

- Part 1—Prepare your Heart and Mind with God’s Word.

Begin each P-T study a week or two before you share it in a worship service. It takes time to digest its meaning, pray about it and think how to help your people to apply it to their lives and do the related activities during the week that follows.

- Part 2—Plan With Your Coworkers What Your People Will Do Next Week.

Meet with your helpers several days before the worship service, to plan what your people should do during the week that follows the worship service. Each study has suggestions for things they might do. If you have in mind what God wants your people to do, then it is much easier to prepare meaningful worship and teaching.

- Part 3—Plan with Coworkers the Upcoming Worship Time.

Your coworkers should help you to plan worship and to teach. Plan the worship several days ahead of time, so that each participant can pray and prepare well. Allow time to rehearse with those who are to say poems or do dramatic works. If that is not possible, then those who help lead worship should meet at least an hour before worship starts, to pray and plan. Plan to help all the believers to participate freely, so that a few do not dominate the meeting.

8. Include the children in worship activities.

- Arrange with the Children’s teacher, for the children to participate in the worship. The Children’s studies provide Bible stories to dramatize and other things for the children to do during worship. Let adults and children work together as much as possible.
- Ask neighbor children and their parents who are not yet believers, or who do not attend worship, to help with the skits. Do not give them an important part—they might not arrive. Such participants often come to Christ.

9. Form tiny groups to pray for and to advise one another.

- Some of the things that God requires us to do when we meet can be done only in groups small enough to listen to each person.
- God requires us to serve one another in several ways:
 1. Instruct one another: Romans 5:14
 2. Encourage one another: Colossians 3:16; Heb. 10:25
 3. Exhort one another: Hebrews 3:13
 4. Spur one another to love and good deeds: Hebrews 10:24
 5. Edify (strengthen, build up) one another: 1 Thessalonians 4:18 & 5:1, 11
 6. Confess our faults one to another: James 5:16
 7. Pray for one another: James 5:16.



How powerfully God's Holy Spirit works when we help each other in tiny groups during worship!

10. Teach God's Word and worship in a way that fits small groups.

- The apostle Paul urged all to take part during worship in some way in 1 Corinthians 14:26, ***“When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation.”***
- Wise shepherds do not use traditional pulpit preaching for small congregations. Rather, they teach in ways that allow the people to ask and answer questions, and discuss how to apply the truths from God's Word that they are learning.
- P-T studies offer discussion questions, poems, stories and role-plays to make teaching more powerful. Stories are easy to remember and enable your people to pass on God's Word to others.
- Place chairs for worship in a circle, so that people see each other's faces, and can talk easily one with another.
- Do not try to use all the options that you find listed in a P-T study. Select those that fit your people's interests and culture.

11. Celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly.

- Each New Shepherd's study offers a different Bible reading to introduce the Lord's Supper.
- Some churches use only the passage in 1 Corinthians 11 to introduce it. This passage should be used occasionally because it has important guidelines for Communion. However, to use it every time robs your people of valuable and inspiring instruction in God's Word about Jesus' sacrifice.

12. Let your flock members report what God is doing, during worship.

- Has God healed someone? Have believers gained victory over bad habits? Have people come to Christ? Have new congregations been started? Have new ministries begun? Let the people report what God is doing, and praise him for it.
- To recognize what people are doing encourages them to continue serving. It also encourages others to pray and to do more.

13. Plan activities to do during the week, during worship.

- Announce during the worship the plans that you have made with your coworkers for activities that your people will do.
- Let the people give their ideas, about how to serve Christ during the next week.
- Help those who want to serve, to do things for which God has given them spiritual gifts, such things as:
 1. The gift of evangelism—tell others about Jesus, Luke 24:46-48,
 2. The gift of helps—serve others who need assistance, Galatians 5:13,
 3. The pastoral gift—help your family to apply God's Word, Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4,
 4. The gift of wisdom—bring God's influence into the community, Matthew 5:13-14,
 5. The gift of compassion—serve the needy, Matthew 25:31-46,
 6. The gift of encouragement—assure and comfort others, 1 Thessalonians 5:11,
 7. The gift of healing—pray for the sick and demonized, James 5:13-16,
 8. The gift of leadership—cooperate with sister churches, Acts 15:41.
 9. The gift of giving—provide resources for needed projects, 1 Corinthians 8:1-4.

14. Provide women and children opportunities to serve.

- Women should use the spiritual gifts that God has given them. In some cultures, men will not allow women to teach or coach them. Other cultures permit godly women to teach men, as Priscilla taught Apollos (Acts 18:26). In all cultures, women should coach younger women (Titus 2:3-5).
- Encourage older children to disciple younger children. This helps both to grow.
- Women who meet to serve during the week, or deaconesses, should read Paul-Timothy study 7, *Helping a Congregation's Body Life*.

15. When you have finished the Shepherds' studies, read the Supplementary studies.

- The *New Shepherds* studies are short and simple, but they lay solid foundations for more advanced work. If you bypass them, you may have blind spots later that seriously weaken your ministry.
- If you want to study a topic in more detail than what the New Shepherd's study offers, you may read the supplementary studies that correspond to some topics.