

## New Testament Guidelines for Ministry Leaders

Paul-Timothy (P-T) training derives from and promotes specific biblical guidelines. Viewed and applied *together*; these guidelines give leadership training better results. This is especially so when harmonized with evangelism, development work, pastoral care and other ministries that God requires of a church body.

Believers having different spiritual gifts are to serve one another in a united body, moved by love from the Holy Spirit. Help them to do so without separating those with different spiritual gifts into isolated programs and ministries (1 Corinthians chapters 12 & 13, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4:11–16).

Biblical training patterns teach us to merge leadership training with congregational body life in ways that (a) lower the financial and personal cost of training, (b) build more enjoyable relationships, (c) remove barriers separating training programs from church life, and (d) give trainees a more balanced, realistic view of ministry.

The New Testament requires that churches implement the following 13 ministries and corresponding guidelines. In many churches and missions, these ministries are neglected or are replaced with less effective traditions.

### 1. Evangelize families.

- Witness in such a simple way, that new believers can imitate it and pass on the Good News at once to relatives and friends. Avoid expensive equipment.
- Evangelize *families*. Avoid extracting converts from their circle of relatives and friends.
- Let the Holy Spirit lead seekers to *repent*; avoid asking for superficial ‘decisions.’
- Baptize all who *repent* without undue delay, like the apostles did.

### 2. Start new congregations and cells.

- Start congregations among neglected people nearby and afar, in all cultures (Acts 1:8).
- Build new congregations and cells around newly-converted families. Bringing them into existing cells, only if unable to build a new cell around them. This is what Paul and Silas did with Lydia’s family (Acts 16:14–15, 40).
- Teach new believers to obey all of Jesus’ commands, like they did in the first church (Acts chapter 2), in obedience to Jesus’ commands recorded in Matthew 28:18–20. Lay this foundation of loving obedience *first*.  
Jesus’ basic commands, which include everything He commanded in their most basic form, are these: (a) Repent, believe and be born anew by the Spirit; (b) Baptize, letting new believers die to sin and rise with Jesus to new life (Rom. 6); (c) Celebrate the Lord’s Supper, respecting the Body of Christ; (d) Love God, neighbor, enemies (forgive); (e) pray in His Name; (f) Give; (g) Make disciples (witness, shepherd, send missionaries).

### 3. Pray in Jesus’ name.

- Intercede for people who do not yet know Jesus.
- Heal folks’ physical and emotional diseases in Jesus’ name.
- Wage spiritual warfare.
- Agree as a body on prayer requests.
- Practice family devotions.

### 4. Cultivate loving, edifying fellowship.

- During worship meetings let believers talk, plan activities and pray together.
- Cultivate this ‘body life’ between congregations as well as within them.

**5. Give purposefully.**

- Practice all forms of Christian stewardship, including bi-vocational service.

**6. Serve the needy.**

- Meet needs of suffering people, both within the family of God and in the larger community.
- Except for life-or-death emergencies, avoid giving things in a way that builds dependency.

**7. Shepherd the flocks.**

- Watch over the flock alertly. Console and restore those who need special care.
- Counsel people with problems. Correct offenders; shun those whose teaching causes division.
- Avoid merely *teaching* the flock; mere teaching is not *leading*. Do not confuse leading and educating.

**8. Teach and apply God's Word.**

- Equip believers to do ministry. Do not simply communicate information (Eph. 4:11–16).

**9. Train shepherds, community developers and church planters.**

- Train leaders on the job, mentoring and modeling skills like Jesus and Paul did. They would take trainees with them to work. Avoid working alone.
- Trainees train newer leaders who train others at the same time, as in 2 Timothy 2:2.
- Balance formal classroom training with mentoring to meet urgent needs of new flocks, by listening to each trainee report what his flock still lacks (Titus 1:5).
- Use the 'menu' approach, choosing training topics that new congregations need, by providing a list of vital, basic church practices and doctrines with their corresponding studies, applying a variety of resources as Jesus did (Matthew 13:52).

**10. Organize for service.**

- *Coordinate* the work of those whom you train. Do so as *servant-leaders* who do not lord it over others (1 Peter 5:1–4).
- Help believers to serve one another and the larger community with their spiritual gifts.

**11. Strengthen marriages and families.**

- Keep each family together in worship; let children participate in an active way.
- Avoid excessively segregating young people by age. Let older children disciple and lead younger children.

**12. Develop Christian character and virtues.**

- Offer activities that help believers develop godly virtues. Do not simply teach about virtues.

**13. Worship regularly as a body.**

- Enable all believers to participate actively.
- Celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly, respecting the Body of Christ in both of aspects: (1) The Body is believers who are united by breaking bread together, and (2) the Body is Christ in whom those believers participate mystically (1 Corinthians 10:16–17).
- When starting new churches or cells, adapt the form of worship to a small group.