

# DEVELOPING MINISTRY LEADERS

A Practical Guide for  
Developing Ministry Leaders, Deacons and Elders  
In Your Church or Parachurch Ministry

*TEACHERS GUIDE*

by  
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## ENDORSEMENTS

If you are just beginning your ministry or you are a seasoned, mature minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and have planted one or many successful churches, then *Developing Ministry Leaders* is a 'must' resource manual to be added to your resource materials for planting a new church and/or training and equipping leaders to fill the numerous New Testament ministries the Lord has set in His Church. If you want to follow the New Testament model for training Ministry leaders, then *Developing Ministry Leaders*, by Dr. Darrell Ellis will enable you to accomplish that task. It will work in any church structure or denominational format of establishing ministry leaders.

It has been my privilege to know and serve with Darrell and Pam Ellis since their Bible school days. I have observed his dynamic ability to communicate the gospel and establish godly, Christ-like, servant-style ministry leaders. When schools of training and materials for developing Pauline-style ministry leaders were limited, Dr. Ellis writes from rich personal experience of his *trial-error method* of establishing a New Testament Church and training Ministry Leaders. *Developing Ministry Leaders* is the fruit and outcome of years of proven ministry and practical application of biblical principles of leadership training. I am honored and thankful I can add this resource to our National Ministers Training Curriculum in various schools abroad.

Rev. Harley M. Fiddler  
President, International Focus Ministries, Inc.

Great books like this one are few and far between. This book, *Developing Ministry Leaders*, is a goldmine of wisdom. It is a practical leadership guide that I believe every church leader needs in their library.

*Developing Ministry Leaders* sheds light on many topics that have nagged the minds of church leaders for years, such as how to develop your leadership potential, church discipline and qualifications for ministry leaders, deacons and elders. It also clearly defines the elder's role in leadership in the local church. *Developing Ministry Leaders* lifts up Jesus, honors God, challenges believers, and helps church leaders develop strong churches and ministries that will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil in these last days. I wholeheartedly recommend this great book.

Bishop Amos Sesay  
Anointed Word International Churches, Africa

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my wife and best friend Pam, who has been such a blessing to me over these past 35 years. She has been a tremendous blessing as a faithful ministry partner and co-laborer in church planting and pastoring and mentoring upcoming leaders for the past 30 years. She has also been a great blessing in helping me type and proofread this book. I appreciate the sacrifice she has always been willing to make when I tell her, "I really believe the Lord is saying we are to ..."

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## FOREWORD

Darrell Ellis has written a comprehensive book that will help insure the future of the Church in the Earth. Everything rises and falls in leadership, and there is a great need for future leaders. But leaders are not born, they are made. Pastor Ellis knows this, and with the aid of his many successful years in apostolic and pastoral ministry, he has given us an important work, providing curriculum for training successful leaders.

I have known Darrell and Pam for decades and have been involved with several of their numerous ministry plants. I have always been impressed with the well-planned order and the God-given grace that is present in their ministry. With churches in foreign lands and in various states of the U.S., he has used the principles in this book to raise up many fine leaders for the Kingdom of God.

I am looking forward to introducing *Developing Ministry Leaders* to my friends in ministry and using it myself in my classes at Christ For The Nations Institute.

John T. Hollar, D. D.  
Director, Christ For The Nations Institute

# INTRODUCTION

They say “necessity is the mother of invention.” Well, this training guide was birthed out of serious “necessity.” As a young pastor with only five years of experience at the time, my wife and I were sent to a very unchristianized part of the U.S. to plant a church, and we needed help. I mean serious help. What we needed was ready-made leaders who we could plug into the many ministry positions we needed filled in our growing new church, but there weren’t any.

As we looked out over the motley group of attendees during the first few Sundays of our newly founded church, there were few who even remotely fit the bill. Our new assignment in 1992 was to plant a church in a town in Arizona. It was hot (very hot in the summer), dusty, dry, and filled with lots of sinners and very few saints. It was just the place God wanted a new church planted. In 1992, the town and surrounding area of about 50,000 people had a serious church leadership void. This was not Tulsa or Dallas, believe me. As I was praying, and asking the Lord how I was going to build a church without leaders. I said, “Lord there aren’t any Christian leaders in this area. What am I going to do?” I sensed very clearly in my heart and mind the words, “Develop your own.”

Those words kept coming back over and over—not as loudly as the thundering voice on the mountain top spoke to Charlton Heston (playing Moses) in the movie, “The Ten Commandments,” but quietly and clearly, every time I pondered ministry questions like,

“Who can we get to be the head usher?”

“Who would qualify to be our children’s director?”

“Who is going to head up the nursery?”

... and so on.

Like so many pastors who plant new churches, my wife and I were wearing most of the ministry leaders’ “hats.” Hats like “custodian,” “church lock up person,” “bulletin maker,” and many more. Needless to say, It didn’t take the Lord long to convince me that I needed to heed His rhema word and “Develop my own ministry leaders.” Little did I know at the time that home-grown leadership is actually often the best. So I developed the first draft of this training guide in order to develop our “potential leaders” into actual ministry leaders in our local church. I have rewritten it twice since then to its present form.

Since its first writing, I have taken many people through this leadership training class and developed many ministry leaders, deacons, and elders. Obviously, no course of study or book alone can develop ministry leaders. Leadership development is a Divine process that is aided by God-ordained leaders with a shepherd's heart, who are willing to take the time to build relationships, mentor, and nurture people over time, through the various trials of life, times of illumination and stages of God ordained development. This training is in truth the work of a spiritual father or mother who is willing to invest the time, tears, training and moments of joy to parent a son or daughter in the faith to maturity.

This training guide can be used with a great measure of flexibility. It's a great teaching aid for leaders, who are training leaders, and it is a great study guide, which is designed for both classroom settings or individual study. There is a student manual with blanks and a teacher's guide with the answers. This guide can be used in the local church as I have used it for so many years, or adapted to fit any parachurch ministry or Christian endeavor. It is suitable for almost any setting where leadership principles need to be imparted and order needs to be developed in order to flow in team unity. It can also be used for self-development, pastoral development, missions ministry teams, and missions churches. Although biblical five-fold ministry terminology and function are used in this manual, it can easily be adapted to fit your organizational structure and terminology. For instance, where I refer to an apostle, one could easily substitute bishop, director or superintendant, if those names more closely fit your ministry's structure.

This practical manual is classroom ready and is intended to be used prayerfully, providing a structural teaching framework from which the Holy Spirit can spontaneously quicken the pastor, elder, or other church leader who is teaching it, with real life illustrations, examples, and testimonies. When I teach from it, the Holy Spirit always quickens nuggets of wisdom, real life experiences, and even a little spontaneous humor from the storehouse of what God has placed within me over the years. I trust He will do the same for you.

Although the manual deals with character development, local church structure, ministry related problems, and a host of other issues, it is also intended to be used to provide a forum for ministry related questions and relationship building.

Church leaders, if you need a classroom tool that can help you turn your volunteers or paid staff into faithful servant-leaders, then this manual will be of great help.

# SECTION 1

## BASIC TRAINING FOR ALL LEADERS

# Chapter 1

## LEADERSHIP TRAINEE SELECTION

One of the most important responsibilities of any Church leader is selecting people who are ready to be trained as ministry leaders, deacons and elders. We are to “lay hands suddenly on no man.” We are to use prayerful Holy Spirit-led caution in selecting our leadership candidates. Over the years I have gleaned some valuable nuggets of wisdom from the school of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, prayer, mistakes, and my mentors regarding selecting people for leadership training. In addition to the excellent list found in 1 Timothy, chapter 3, and Titus, chapter 1, regarding qualifications for deacons and elders, here are some of the qualities I look for and observations I make before selecting trainees. Church leaders and ministry overseers must be watchfully alert making mental notes and observations regarding people they are considering for leadership training. Apostles, elders, pastors and ministry leaders should practice Proverbs 27:23 in this regard. “Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, *and* attend to your herds; ...”

The list below is not comprehensive, but it covers many key qualities a leader should be looking for and qualities future leaders should cultivate. Of course, there are no perfect leaders or trainees, but there are standards that must be met for leadership. God’s grace will be sufficient to help us improve and grow into the ministry He has called us to. Leaders need to possess the boldness in love to point out areas where the trainee does not measure up and help them develop. Students and trainees need to keep a humble, teachable attitude and be appreciative of a spiritual father or mentor who is willing to sincerely and lovingly help them grow and fulfill their purpose in Christ. An environment of grace and love must always be the milieu for discipleship training and leadership development.

1. Jesus tested those He planned to develop into leaders by requiring that they follow Him.

**Mark 2:14 (KJV)** “And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus

sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.”

2. If a person is not already following Jesus and willing to follow those He has placed in delegated authority, they are not ready for leadership training. This means they must be a disciple of Jesus Christ to qualify for leadership training.
3. The test of time. Observation over time is another way to determine whether or not a potential trainee is ready to be trained for leadership. Wait until enough time has passed for potential trainees to demonstrate faithful church attendance, willingness to serve and other important qualities before inviting them to be trained for ministry leadership. Speak into their lives personally, and let them know what is expected for those who will be selected for leadership training to see whether or not they rise to the challenge.

**1 Timothy 3:6** “... not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.”

Neophytos: newly planted, i.e. (figurative) a young convert (“*neophyte*”): novice.—Strong’s Greek and Hebrew Dictionary.

4. A novice can either be a young convert or simply someone who is fairly new to your church or ministry. Do your best to know if they are called to the church or ministry and if they have caught the vision of the house before inviting them to be trained for higher-level ministry positions.
5. The quality of desire. Does the potential leadership trainee really want to serve in ministry. A burning desire to serve the Lord in their obvious area of gifting and calling is of vital importance.
6. The quality of friendliness. Is the person you plan to train friendly? Observe them around people. You don’t want unfriendly greeters or ushers.
7. Do they have agape love toward you and the people of the ministry they are going to serve? Years ago, I was grieved over a young man that I had selected and trained for ministry who had betrayed me. I cried out to God, praying, “Lord how

have I failed?" Through prayer the Lord showed me that this young man never demonstrated the quality of agape love toward me or the teens he claimed to have a heart for. His affection was selfish and self-centered. Therefore, it was easy for him to readily betray me, our church, and much worse the tenderhearted teens.

**John 21:15** "So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs.'"

8. Pray through and let the Holy Spirit guide you in selecting the right leaders. This may take some time. Be patient, and be prayerful.

**Acts 13:2, 3** "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away."

9. Watch to see if they are considerate of you and others. People who disregard other people are not ready for ministry.
10. How does the person treat their spouse and family?

**1 Timothy 5:8** "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

11. Look for the character quality of faithfulness in small things and natural things, including financial giving. Assign them some entry-level tasks to see if they are responsible to fulfill their duties over a period of time.

**Luke 16:10, 11** "He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?"

**1 Corinthians 4:2** “Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

12. How secure is the person? Insecure people will act out in various harmful ways.
13. Is the person free from bondage and oppression? Help people get set free and stay free for a considerable period of time before promoting them.
14. Look for the qualities of submission and respect. A rebellious disrespectful person will readily betray you and the ministry, causing you a world of grief.
15. Do they have the same spirit of faith? In other words, are they of the same spirit being compatible with your ministry.

**2 Corinthians 4:13** “And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, ‘*I believed and therefore I spoke,*’ we also believe and therefore speak, ...”

**Philippians 2:2, 3 (Amplified)** “Fill up *and* complete my joy by living in harmony *and* being of the same mind *and* one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind *and* intention. Do nothing from factional motives [through contentiousness, strife, selfishness, or for unworthy ends] or prompted by conceit *and* empty arrogance. Instead, in the true spirit of humility (lowliness of mind) let each regard the others as better than *and* superior to himself [thinking more highly of one another than you do of yourselves].”

16. Do they really receive your ministry? Do they ever ask your counsel? Have they asked you to pray about anything? Do they pay attention to your instruction? Do they receive you as their pastor, director, boss, or whatever position of leadership you are in?
17. How do they respond to correction? Do they receive it and make adjustments and corrections in their life or do they manifest a rebellious attitude? Are they stubborn?

18. How is their personal devotional life? Is it consistent and sufficient to maintain the spiritual strength and vitality they will need for the ministry they are called to?
19. How well do they communicate with you and others in your ministry? Do you always have to call them, because they never call you? Do you have to pull conversation out of them? Do they listen well? Are they good enough communicators for the ministry position they are called to?

**Ephesians 4:29 (KJV)** “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

20. Are they cooperative? Do they get along well with you and your ministry team?

**Romans 15:5, 6** “Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

21. If married, is their spouse in agreement with their being in leadership ministry? Is their spouse an asset or detriment to their ministry?
22. Are they presentable in appearance and conduct?