

LOCAL INSTITUTE HANDBOOK



Shepherds Global Classroom exists to equip the body of Christ by providing curriculum for rising Christian leaders around the world. We aim to multiply indigenous training programs by placing a 20-course curriculum tool into the hands of spiritual trainers in every country of the world.

This book is available for free download at <https://www.shepherdsglobal.org/courses>

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CONTENTS

USING THIS HANDBOOK FOR TRAINING	5
1. THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL MINISTRY TRAINING	7
2. INTRODUCTION TO SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM	13
3. QUALIFICATIONS OF A POTENTIAL TEACHER	17
4. UNDERSTANDING OUR STUDENTS	21
5. METHODS FOR GOOD TEACHING	25
6. HOW TO TEACH SGC COURSES	29
7. DISCOVERING TEACHERS	33
8. OPERATING A LOCAL SHEPHERD INSTITUTE	37
ONLINE RESOURCES FROM SGC	46
SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS	47

USING THIS HANDBOOK FOR TRAINING

This handbook is primarily a reference guide for trainers, administrators, and local teachers. Sometimes trainers may use this handbook as a course, training teachers and administrators of local institutes. At other times, individual sections of material can be used to train on a particular topic or to introduce Shepherds Global Classroom.

It takes about six hours to teach through the whole handbook during a training event. Trainers should pause frequently for discussion. The text includes some discussion questions, indicated by the » symbol.

Students who are being trained need Bibles, writing materials, and a copy of this handbook.

Trainers should bring a variety of SGC courses for students to examine. The class will need at least three copies of each of several different courses so that students can practice teaching each other in groups of three.

When trainers have taught through Chapter 6, students should look at the SGC courses. They should look at the different directions given in the front of courses. Students should discuss the directions and make sure they understand them.

Demonstration and practice are essential to training. The trainer may demonstrate how to teach by teaching three lessons from the courses. The demonstration is best if each lesson is from a different course. If more than one trainer or some advanced students are available, they can teach lessons to demonstrate different styles.

After observing demonstration, the student of this course needs to practice teaching. Each student could teach a section of a course to the group of students. The time for each student should be 10 minutes. The purpose of the practice is for the students to understand the design of the course and teach in a way that equips others. Advance preparation for the practice teaching is good but may not be possible during a short training period. After each student practices, the instructor and other students should make observations.

Another format for practice is to divide the students into groups of 4-6. Each student gets a turn to practice. The instructors should observe the groups and give guidance. It will be



necessary for an instructor to set time limits and signal when the teaching role should be given to the next person in the group.

CHAPTER 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL MINISTRY TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

The church must teach. Jesus told the church to go everywhere teaching his commands (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul said that a pastor must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). This teaching is part of the work of discipleship. The church teaches people how to live as believers, living for the glory of God. This teaching should occur everywhere that believers exist. Strong churches are equipped with biblical truth and practical methods to purposefully teach their people.

The church must train.

And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2).

The necessity of teaching creates the necessity of ministry training. Paul told Timothy to train men who could teach others (2 Timothy 2:2). Training is not just the teaching of information. Training is not just teaching believers for their own benefit. Training equips believers to help others.

Jesus demonstrated the priority of ministry training. At the beginning of his ministry, he chose a few men who would guide and extend the church. He did not spend all his time preaching to crowds of people; instead, he often took time to train twelve leaders. He extended his ministry through those that he trained.

Acts 8:26-31 tells the story of Philip being called by God to leave Samaria and travel along a certain road near Gaza. There, he met a man from Ethiopia sitting in his chariot and reading from the prophecies of Isaiah. “Do you understand what you’re reading?” Philip asked. The African responded, “How can I, unless someone guides me?”

How can I, unless someone guides me? This sentence shows us that people need human teachers sent by God to explain biblical truth. The Holy Spirit had been doing many supernatural things, yet God was still using human teachers. This is God’s normal response to the need for training. Shepherds Global Classroom puts curriculum in the hands of trainers who can guide men and women into the truth of God’s Word.

Shepherds Global Classroom provides a transferable training program to be operated by local ministries.

PURPOSES FOR LOCAL MINISTRY TRAINING

To Train Pastors

Pastors should be trained in doctrine, Bible interpretation, preaching, and discipleship methods. Yet, thousands of churches around the world are led by pastors with few printed resources and no purposeful training. Because many pastors have not been trained, they feel unable to train others.

David Livermore has said,

The expansive growth of the church around the world is producing a shortage of theologically equipped pastors and church leaders. There are approximately 2.2 million evangelical churches in the world. 85% are led by men and women who have no theological training. 7,000 new church leaders are needed daily to care for the growing church.¹

Most potential pastors around the world cannot attend Bible college. It is not practical for them to leave their families, employment, and ministries to attend classes somewhere for several years. They need local training.

Shepherds Global Classroom exists to provide biblical, theological, and practical training to these church leaders who have no formal education in theology or ministry.

To Train Witnesses

Any person who has experienced God's saving grace is qualified to evangelize. People can tell what God has done for them. Their testimonies can be convincing, especially to people who know them and see the change in their lives.

However, sometimes a person is not able to explain the essential points of the gospel. If listeners are in a condition that seems different from that person's testimony, they may not understand how they can experience the same transformation.

Even a person who has been a believer for years may feel unable to evangelize his community because he is unable to answer questions about Christianity. This believer knows his or

1 David Livermore. "American or American't: A Critical Analysis of Western Training to the World." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (Oct 2004): 456.

her own experience of conversion, the feelings of worship, and what it is like to fellowship with others in the Body of Christ but is not able to explain these things.

Sometimes the people of a community are of a religion hostile to Christianity. They may learn to respect followers of Christ who live a good life, but they also need to hear explanations of the Christian faith.

A person can become a more effective witness by learning the principles of the gospel and the basic doctrines that support the gospel.

To Protect the Church

Pastors are responsible to protect their churches with good teaching (Titus 1:9-14). False churches and false religions use ideas to confuse and deceive people. It is sad that many people who were once converted were later led into a false church.

The pastor must teach people biblical doctrine so that people will be established in their faith. Teaching must be purposeful and systematic and provided at different levels in order to reach all the people of the church.

Richmond Wandera, an influential pastor in Uganda, Africa observes that many Christians are following practices from false religions. “On Sunday people raise their hands and worship God, and on Monday if the child falls sick, they’ll go to a witch doctor. And that’s what keeps me awake at night.”² He observed that the practices of false religions seem normal in many African churches. This problem takes various forms in churches around the world.

- » What are some false beliefs that seem to influence believers in your country?

To Extend the Ministry Team

A sports team has a bench with players who are not always in the game. They may be younger and less experienced than the leading players, but they are in training. Some of them have special abilities that are needed at certain times.

A healthy, growing church should have a “bench.” It is a mistake to think that because the leadership positions are filled, the team is complete. A ministry reaches its limits and does not continue to grow unless there are leaders to help start new forms of ministry.

A healthy church should have people on the “bench” who are developing and practicing. That requires local training. Therefore, ministry training is not just for people who hold ministry positions.

2 Bryierley, Justin. “Richmond Wandera: Theological and spiritual revival in Africa”. *Unbelievable?*. Podcast audio, March 21, 2023. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/unbelievable/id267142101?i=1000605211864>

A job of the pastor is to make local training happen. The pastor will not be able to do all of the training himself, but he should arrange it and encourage it. He needs a team of people who serve in various roles.

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (Ephesians 4:11-15).



God gives people of the local church the gifts and abilities needed to fulfill the mission of the church. The church must take responsibility to purposefully develop people.

To Strengthen the Indigenous Church

An indigenous church is locally led, locally supported, and locally owned. It does not depend on foreign support or direction. Local strength is important to the health and growth of churches.

An indigenous church is at home in its culture. It is not a foreign church.

A healthy indigenous church has many advantages:

1. It effectively evangelizes and disciples in its culture.
2. The congregation matures and functions as the body of Christ without foreign dependency.
3. Leaders develop to their full potential.
4. Local participants provide support and accountability for the ministry.

Some indigenous churches are not healthy because they lack doctrinal stability and biblical standards of Christian living. They fail to influence their communities with a powerful, consistent witness. They are vulnerable to leaders who have talent but lack character. They lack a program for leadership development. They need a program for local ministry training.

Sometimes a church is started by foreign missionaries with the goal that the church eventually become indigenous. Measurements of progress include the increase of local support and the increased responsibility of local leaders.

Local training is necessary for the development of local leaders who teach doctrine, apply faith to practical living, and develop good ministry styles and strategies.

To Plant Churches

It is sad that many churches function for years without sending the gospel to other communities. Churches should train and send teams of evangelists to areas that lack churches. The goal of such a team is to form a new group of converts that becomes a church.

Some evangelists should be trained to help groups of converts become churches. They should be able to disciple new believers by teaching them how to live a Christian life. They should be able to train converts to evangelize and take ministry responsibilities.

Most new churches will be led by a local person, not by a pastor who comes from somewhere else to live in the community. Most pastors with academic training are not willing to pastor a new church or serve in a small town. We must provide ministry training to the local believer who is called by God to lead a congregation.

To Prepare Missionaries

A missionary is a person who is sent somewhere by the church for the purpose of advancing the influence of the gospel. The term *missionary* is especially used of a person who goes to another country and/or another culture, but sometimes it refers to a person who goes to another community in his own country.

The gospel is spreading rapidly in some areas of the world, mostly by missionaries who go to another region of their own country. Training would increase their effectiveness and doctrinal stability.

The 10/40 Window is an area from 10 degrees south to 40 degrees north of the equator, spanning northern Africa and southern Asia and including the countries of China and India. The 10/40 Window includes 2/3 of the world's population. More than 80% of the people in the 10/40 Window have not been reached with the gospel.

Some countries of the world are mostly unreached by the gospel though their large cities have had churches for many years. A person may serve in a church for many years but still not know how to start ministry in a new place. He knows only how to speak to a group of believers in a church building. The church should train missionaries to go with the message of the gospel and the goal of forming a local family of believers.

- » Which of these reasons for ministry training seem most urgent in the churches you know? Why?

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM

THE MISSION OF SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM

SGC exists to equip the body of Christ by providing curriculum for developing Christian leaders around the world.

We provide leaders with the tools they need to make ministry training available in local churches everywhere. Our 20-course curriculum is available for the local teachers whom God has called and gifted in every country of the world. Because of the flexibility of the program, homes, church buildings, cafés, and even shade trees become training centers where Christian leaders are trained for service.

The taxi company called Uber transports 5.5 million passengers every day. This requires a large labor force of drivers with cars. Uber did not buy thousands of cars; instead, they hired local drivers to use their own cars to carry Uber's passengers. They solved the labor problem for their business. Likewise, SGC makes training available everywhere by equipping potential teachers who are already there. God has gifted local believers with the ability and desire to teach. Our mission is to equip them!

DOCTRINAL FOUNDATION

SGC is not affiliated with a particular denomination. We hold the historic Trinitarian doctrines as expressed in the Nicene, Chalcedonian, and Athanasian creeds. We follow the absolute authority of the Bible. We hold the evangelical doctrines of grace, faith, and salvation. We believe that the work of God's grace in the believer leads him to a holy heart and victorious life.

PURPOSEFUL COURSE DESIGN

Potential local teachers need a special curriculum that quickly equips them for a training ministry. The SGC curriculum is specially designed:

- It thoroughly covers evangelical doctrine in 20 courses.
- It is developed by qualified, experienced, cross-cultural trainers.
- It is useful in any culture.
- It is written in clear and simple language.
- It emphasizes evangelical truth without denominational distinctives.
- It is practical and relevant to life and ministry.
- It is adaptable to various contexts and types of groups.
- It is available in numerous languages.
- It uses the gifts God gives to local churches.
- It equips leaders to be trainers who establish local programs.
- It rapidly prepares students to teach others.
- It is designed for group learning but is also useful for individual study.
- It is free in digital form.
- It requires no other textbooks.

The course writers have advanced academic training, teaching experience, and cross-cultural ministry experience.

The SGC courses contain the essentials of a ministry institute program. They are useful for teaching different groups, such as a class of pastors or a home Bible study group.

The courses are designed to rapidly equip local teachers to operate a local training program. A person who has spiritual maturity, Bible knowledge, and a gift for teaching can teach the courses without extensive training.

The courses are designed to be easy to teach, with discussion questions and assignments. There are sections that students can teach for practice. The average length of each course is 160 pages, divided into 7-19 lessons.

The SGC curriculum is a valuable box of tools for accomplishing the mission of the church.

Note: It is best if students already have some Bible knowledge and spiritual maturity. The courses are not designed for discipleship of new converts. We recommend using *Cultivate Discipleship Lessons* (also available from SGC) for discipleship.



MINISTRY RELATIONSHIP STRUCTURE

Shepherds Global Classroom partners with **mission organizations/national ministries** to make local training available. Each mission organization/national ministry serves local churches by helping them start **local institutes**.

The following lists describe the roles and responsibilities of

1. Shepherds Global Classroom
2. The mission organization/national ministry, and
3. The local institute

As they cooperate for the training of Christian ministers.

The Role of Shepherds Global Classroom

- Provide a set of 20 ministry training courses.
- Make courses available for download from the SGC website.
- Provide an SGC mobile app with courses, videos, and training materials.
- Supervise translation of courses into various languages.
- Provide a course for teacher training and send trainers for regional events.
- Offer course completion certificates for students enrolled in approved training programs.

The Role of the Mission Organization/National Ministry

- Offer churches the opportunity to operate local institutes.
- Promote SGC materials and train teachers for local institutes.
- Partner with SGC to offer regional training events.
- Arrange the printing and distribution of courses.
- Recommend the SGC website and app for training materials.
- Regularly contact teachers to offer consultation and new materials.
- Approve local training centers to give certificates.

The Role of the Local Institute

- Provide a place for classes to meet.
- Select local teachers and support them if necessary.
- Recruit and register students.
- Pay for the cost of printed courses.
- Schedule and conduct classes.
- Maintain records of student attendance and assignments.

Chapter 8 gives more details about the relationship between a mission organization/national ministry and a local institute.

- » How would you describe a possible use of the SGC courses in your ministry context?

CHAPTER 3

QUALIFICATIONS OF A POTENTIAL TEACHER

A SPECIAL MINISTRY

Teachers are special people. The Apostle James warns us that not everyone should be a teacher, because teachers have special accountability to God and are condemned if they are not faithful (James 3:1).

The Apostle Paul warned that a person may be proud of knowledge and may despise others (1 Corinthians 8:1). He said that love motivates us to build up others rather than exalt ourselves. People with knowledge should consider it a tool for helping others rather than something that makes them superior. If they are seeking honor through knowledge, they are wrongly motivated and will do harm.

These warnings are important for people who want to teach or serve in any role of ministry, because they should be motivated to study in order to serve with their knowledge.

TRANSFORMATIONAL TRUTH

Bible study requires a special attitude from the student. People may study science or mathematics without seeing any application to their own character. Students may not be changed by the knowledge they gain. Biblical truth is different. Students of the Bible feel their character challenged as they study. They must humbly allow the Holy Spirit to change their character to match the truth they are learning. Biblical truth is transformational.

QUALIFICATIONS OF AN SGC TEACHER

- » What were some important characteristics of a teacher who impacted you? What made the teaching effective?

In addition to the characteristics described in this chapter, a student in the teacher training course should be a participating member of a local church and have a pastor's recommendation.

An SGC teacher should be spiritually mature, skilled at teaching, and biblically knowledgeable. When looking for qualified teachers, remember to consider character first. Good character is the foundation for developing skills.

Academic requirements: A teacher should be able to read, understand, and explain the course material well. Though an academic degree may equip a teacher with instruction methods and deeper knowledge, the SGC vision is to develop teachers who can transfer the same training to others. For this reason, we do not depend on finding teachers with academic degrees. We depend on God's faithfulness to give spiritual gifts to potential teachers everywhere. We expect to find and equip the people who are gifted with teaching ability.

The list below includes other characteristics that are also important. A teacher may not excel in every quality but should try to improve in them all. Teachers who lack any one of them will be less effective.

1. **Spiritually mature.** The teacher should be a good example of spiritual qualities. If teachers' Christian lives and attitudes are not always consistent, they are not good examples for students.
2. **Available.** If someone's schedule is already too full and not well managed, he or she is not available for a regular teaching ministry. Teachers must be willing to make teaching a priority. Some talented people should not be given this ministry because they will let it be hindered by other activities.
3. **Reliable.** Teachers must be people who fulfill their commitments. They must be punctual and able to follow a schedule. Class members will become frustrated if teachers miss classes or come late.
4. **Confident.** Teachers must believe that they are able to learn how to lead a group. They may need some supervised practice that will build their confidence.
5. **Able to resolve conflict.** Teachers need to be able to keep the right attitude when people disagree and cause problems. They need to be able to help resolve conflicts between others.
6. **Able to teach.** Do people understand the teacher's explanations? A teacher must be one who does not confuse people.
7. **Hungry for God's Word.** Teachers must be people who enjoy God's Word, so they can invite others to enjoy it also. They must make the Bible important in their own relationships with God.
8. **Dependent on God.** Teachers must realize that spiritual results can happen only by the work of the Holy Spirit. They must be ready to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

They must depend on anointing from God. They must not be confident that their explanations will succeed because of their abilities alone.

9. **Ready to serve.** Teachers should not be people who want to be served. They should not be looking for a ministry for the purpose of displaying their talents. They must be responsive to needs and ready to volunteer.
10. **Under spiritual authority.** Teachers should be spiritually accountable to other individuals. They should follow the direction of spiritual leaders.
11. **Faithful to the church.** Teachers should be committed members of local churches. Their teaching should cause people to appreciate the church and become more committed to it.
12. **Zealous to succeed.** If teachers have zeal to succeed, they will not quickly give up. They will adapt to circumstances. They will look for information to help them be more effective. They will take initiative when there are problems or opportunities. They will have energy and enthusiasm.
13. **Doctrinally accurate.** Each teacher should have a good foundation of biblical, evangelical doctrine.
14. **Experienced in ministry.** Teachers should be people who have been faithful in church ministry for some time.

CHAPTER 4

UNDERSTANDING OUR STUDENTS

RELIGIOUS QUALIFICATIONS

Because SGC's program has the purpose of ministry training, the student should be a Christian believer with a good testimony and God-honoring lifestyle. An unbeliever will not understand or appreciate much of the content of the courses.

The student should believe the historic essentials of the Christian faith, including evangelical doctrine. The program is designed to serve the body of Christ everywhere, so distinctive denominational beliefs are not required.

The student should be a church member who participates in the worship and fellowship of his or her church. Students who are unwilling to commit to churches are not good candidates for ministry training. Ideally, they should be part of churches that will allow them to practice what they are learning. Some of the assignments involve the participation of other believers.

REQUIRED ACADEMIC LEVEL

A local institute should be designed to serve students who can read and write well. It is not necessary that they be school graduates, but they must read and write to understand the courses and complete the assignments. The institute should offer a certificate to students who are able to study at this level.

Other levels of teaching may be offered to students who want to learn but are not able to do the assignments. For example, teachers may teach general congregations or home Bible study groups with people who do not read well and cannot do the assignments.

UNDERSTANDING OUR STUDENTS

Students who enroll in local SGC institutes are different from students of other kinds of institutions. They are not like children in school. They are different from university students and many of the students at a Bible college. Teachers should adapt their styles for this kind



of class. The academic ability of some of the students will be lower than the ability of a college student. Teachers should adjust their expectations. They should explain how students should do assignments. They should reprimand laziness and carelessness, but their critique of students' work should be helpful and encouraging, never disrespectful.

Remember, if God has called individuals to ministry, God is giving them the abilities they need. Students may already demonstrate the anointing and blessing of God in their ministries. It is our responsibility to help them develop. It would be wrong to discourage them.

There will be a wide range of age in most groups of SGC students. Some may have recently finished school. Others may be the age of grandparents. Maybe some have been pastors for many years. Sometimes a student may be older than the teacher.

A student twenty years old who recently finished school may have more academic ability than a pastor who is sixty years old. However, each must be shown respect. We should not honor academic ability in a way that disrespects maturity and experience. While we emphasize academic requirements, we should avoid embarrassing students who are not practiced at that kind of work.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

- » What should be different about our method of teaching when we are teaching adults instead of children?

Adult learner is a term used to describe a student who has begun adult life. Adult learners may be married and have children. They may have worked at some occupation or ministry. They have already had a variety of life experiences. When adults choose to become students again, they are committing to some personal goals.

The style of the teacher and class should be designed to meet the needs of adult learners.

1. **Adult learners want training that helps them immediately.** They need to discuss how they will practice what they are learning. The class should take time for students to describe how they expect to apply the knowledge. The teacher should not spend all of the class time presenting material without interaction with the students.
2. **Adult learners want respect.** They already have adult responsibilities and do not want to be treated like children. Teachers should have the attitude of learners and demonstrate openness to ideas. They should show respect for the experience and insights of their students.
 - » In your culture, what is the best way to show respect to adult learners? How do you want to be treated as an adult student?

3. **Adult learners want to make choices as they study.** Their experiences and goals make some kinds of study attractive and relevant to them. They need freedom to follow their interests and develop their own styles of study.
4. **Adult learners want to practice in class.** The teacher should have students make presentations, explain sections of material, and help answer questions. Sometimes students may tell stories from their experiences. Though teachers must avoid wasting time, they should also realize that a story may be a student's way of applying something he or she learns.
5. **Adult learners develop relationships with the other students.** They learn from each other's feedback. They give and receive respect. Adult learners will remember and value some of the interaction for the rest of their lives. The class may need to occasionally divide into small groups for discussion.
6. **Adult learners want to come to their own conclusions.** They expect some variety of opinions to be tolerated.
7. **Adult learners want to like and respect the teacher.** They do not expect the status distance between themselves and the teacher to be as great as the difference between a student and professor at a university. They value personal attention from the teacher. They want to be able to admire not only the knowledge but the committed life and character of the teacher.

FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS

The teacher should take time in class and with individual students to talk about good study habits. Students should learn how to discipline themselves and schedule daily study time.

The teacher should keep careful records of assignments and attendance. At the end of the course, the record will be the basis of the grade. During the course, when individual students are not doing well, the teacher should talk to them and tell them how to improve.

It is important for the teacher to make sure the student understands how to do an assignment. Assignments that are done poorly should be returned to the student for improvement, but the teacher should make sure the student understands how to improve the work.

If students' attendance or assignments are making their grades low, the teacher should talk to them about the need to improve. Student should not be surprised by their grades at the end of the course.

CHAPTER 5

METHODS FOR GOOD TEACHING

SETTING THE STYLE OF THE CLASS

At the beginning of a training program, there is excitement and expectation. Students do not know exactly what to expect, but they hope to get help from the group.

The first meeting of the class may be different from the later meetings because introductions and explanations about the class are necessary. However, the first meeting will set the style for future meetings. For example, if someone does not talk in the first meeting, that person will expect to be silent in the future. If someone dominates the discussion, the group will expect future discussions to be dominated by the same person. If the meeting is disorderly, they will expect the same in the future. If the class has little student participation, they will expect the same pattern.

Some students may drop out after a few meetings because the class is not what they expected. The class cannot be designed to please everyone, but it should be designed to satisfy the students who want to learn. It is important to lead the class properly so that the students who were expecting the right things will not be disappointed.

AIMING FOR RESULTS

The ultimate results of our training should be effective ministries and consistent Christian lives. Effective pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries are the ultimate products we want from our program.

Teachers must look for immediate, observable results in order to know if their classes are effective. They must know if their classes are effective without waiting to see if their students do well in ministry.

- » What are some ways to immediately know whether or not your teaching is effective?

Good attention from the class is the first result a teacher must have. Teachers must maintain order so that students can give attention. Teachers cannot blame only the students if their attention is poor. Teachers must make the class interesting.

There are other signs that the class is succeeding. Signs include participation of the students in discussion, good questions from the students, good attendance, completion of assignments, and enthusiasm from the students about what they are learning. If teachers are not seeing these signs, they should find ways to improve the style of their classes.

FURTHER DIRECTIONS FOR GOOD TEACHING

- 1. Prepare well for teaching.** Take time to make sure you understand everything in the lesson. Look for the material in the lesson that helps accomplish the listed objectives. Underline important statements and think about how to explain those statements more than one way. Add notes on the edges of the paper to remind you of how you plan to explain ideas.
- 2. Value the time.** Respect the time of each student. Although each culture's view of time may be different, teach the students to keep a schedule for class in the same way they respect a schedule for work.
- 3. Arrange student seating in a way that makes class discussion easier.** Because discussion is important, seating should be arranged so that all students can be involved.
- 4. Listen well when students speak.** Signs of good listening are eye contact, a concentrated facial expression, ignoring distractions, and responsiveness to the speaker's humor or other emotions.
- 5. Make sure all students are giving attention to and participating in the training.** If a student seems to be uninvolved, ask a question to pull them into the discussion. Start with their name, so that they know they are being addressed with the question. ("Paul, what do you think about this?") Your goal is not to embarrass them but to involve them in the training.
- 6. Ask questions that the students can answer to build their confidence.** If someone gives a wrong answer, try to affirm something good about the answer before critiquing it.
- 7. Try to affirm every comment in some way before criticizing it.** Students will gain confidence if their participation is affirmed.
- 8. Keep the attention of the students.** Don't depend on discipline and authority to make the students listen. Make the class interesting by changing your style, asking



questions, telling stories, changing the emphasis in your voice, describing a problem to solve, or giving surprising facts.

9. **Don't let one student talk too much and answer all the questions.** You can direct questions to specific students. Or you can ask, "What do the rest of you think?" In a discussion, you could say, "Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken about this yet."

If individual members still talk too much, leaders could talk to them outside of the meeting. A leader could say something like this: "Charles, you are a quick thinker and are able to respond quickly in discussions, but I'm concerned that some of the others will not participate if we answer everything quickly. Can you help me get everyone involved?"

10. **Don't let two or three students continue arguing while ignoring the group.** If someone wants to keep arguing for a long time about something, tell that person that the discussion will have to be finished later.
11. **Don't allow anyone to interrupt others.** Raise your hand, assertively stop the interrupter, and allow the first speaker to finish. Otherwise, a discussion will always be dominated by the less mannered members. People who are less assertive will feel frustrated that they cannot finish their sentences.
12. **Listen to complaints.** Any complaint may show a problem that can be corrected. Don't ignore signs of dissatisfaction. If someone is dissatisfied with the class, he or she may not understand the purpose, or may have a valid complaint.
13. **Correct a disruptive student.** If individual students persistently act hostile, disruptive, argumentative, or bored, they may not accept the purpose of the class. The class may not be what they expected. Talk to them privately to help them see the class's purpose.
14. **Do not pretend to know the answer if you don't know.** The teacher does not have to know everything. It is okay to tell students that you will look for the answer.
15. **Don't allow students to criticize their pastors.** Because the students are learning, they will notice the faults of leaders.
16. **Know your students.** You can teach much more effectively if you know their family situation, ministry experience, academic background, current ministry position, and goals for the future. Try to learn these things in personal conversations.

Other directions for good teaching and characteristics of adult learners are given in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

HOW TO TEACH SGC COURSES

THE CLASSROOM

The teacher should arrange the classroom in advance if possible. Students should be seated in an arrangement that lets them see each other. The teacher should make sure that the space will be free from distracting activities and noises during the class time. The teacher should try to make sure there will be comfortable seating, a comfortable temperature, and good lighting. An outdoor study area can be good if there are not too many distractions.

The classroom should have a large board for writing and drawing.

THE FIRST CLASS DAY

Teachers should introduce themselves, sharing about their families, ministry experiences, current ministries, and academic backgrounds. They should avoid listing achievements as if trying to show high status. They should remember that the purpose of sharing this information is to build a relationship with the students.

Students should introduce themselves briefly. The teacher could interact briefly with each, asking one or two questions to show interest and build the connections among them.

After introductions could be a time of prayer. Pray that God will use the class to meet the needs of the students. The teacher should show dependence on God to make the teaching life-changing and useful. Future class sessions should begin with prayer and could include brief sharing of prayer needs.

Teachers should tell the students what materials to bring, including Bibles, the printed course, and writing materials. Teachers should emphasize that students should take notes for their own future benefit, not for testing purposes. (All test material is in the course text.)

After introductions, the class time on the first day should be typical of the style that the class will have in the future, so that students know what to expect.

LESSON DESIGN

SGC courses are not simply books; they are courses designed for teaching. Each course has directions for the teacher near the front. The courses are similar to each other but are not exactly alike in design.

The lessons of some of the courses begin with lesson objectives. It is not necessary for the teacher to read those to the class.

Many lessons begin with a question or story or some other technique of gaining interest and making the student feel that the topic is important.

Teachers can go page-by-page through the lesson, explaining paragraphs of material. They should prepare in advance by making sure they understand the material and by underlining key phrases to help them explain each paragraph.

Discussion questions occur throughout the text. Sometimes a question introduces the material that follows. Other times, the question asks students to respond to something they just studied. The questions do not call for a “yes” or “no” answer, but for explanation. The teacher should let several students respond. It is not necessary for the discussion to come to a definite conclusion every time, especially when the question is introducing material that follows.

Teachers will need to insert additional discussion questions of their own. Any time teachers realize they have been talking for several minutes with no interaction from the students, they should ask the students a question.

It is always a challenge to keep discussions from wasting time. However, most people do not learn well without discussion. Students need time to think and hear others talk about how the concepts apply to their cultures and church situations.

Most lessons end with assignments. The teacher should explain the assignment. If a class day includes several lessons, the teacher should make sure students understand all the assignments that will be due at the next class.

LATER CLASS DAYS

Assignments for each lesson must be completed by the time of the next class. The teacher should collect assignments at the beginning of class each day. Some student presentations



could be made at the beginning, and others later in the class time to provide some variety in the day.

When there is a test or something to be written from memory, it is important to make sure that students are seated so that they can easily avoid seeing what other students are writing.

Besides the assigned student presentations, the teacher should frequently ask a student to present material from a section of the course. This should be arranged ahead of time so the student can prepare.

TIPS FOR TEACHING THE SGC CURRICULUM

Prepare the Lesson

1. Read the lesson completely.
2. Read the test to find important points to emphasize.

In the lesson, underline what is on the test.

3. Mark other important things that you want students to learn.

For example, circle or put a star beside a key paragraph. Use the lesson objectives to decide what is most important.

4. Begin the lesson with a question or story that will build the students' interest in the lesson.
5. Prepare 2-4 open-ended questions to ask during the lesson.

Space the questions to keep students involved. For example, ask a question at the beginning of the lesson and a second question in the middle of the lesson.

To encourage discussion, questions should be open-ended rather than closed. For example, "What do you know about Isaiah?" is an open-ended question because it has many correct answers and is easy to answer. "What years did Isaiah live?" is a closed question because it only has one correct answer.

Present the Lesson

1. Stay focused on the content from the textbook.

Don't simply read the textbook, but most of what you say should come from the text. Students need to see that what you are teaching comes from the book so they can teach it themselves.

If you make a point that is not in the textbook, keep it short.

2. If the students do not understand you, repeat the same point in different words.

For example, if a student doesn't understand when you say, "we are justified by faith in Christ," you could then say, "God accepts us as righteous when we believe in Jesus" or "salvation is a gift of God received by faith."

3. Do things throughout the lesson to keep the attention of your students.

For example, ask a question or call on a student to read a Bible verse or a paragraph of the lesson.

Conclude the Lesson

1. Review the most important points.

For example, "Today, we learned..." or "In summary..."

2. Explain all assignments, making sure students understand the instructions.
3. Remind the students to read the following lesson in preparation for the next class.

Reflect on the Lesson

Ask yourself:

1. What did I do well?
2. What should I do differently next time?
3. What did I learn about teaching today?
4. Did I achieve the lesson objectives?

CHAPTER 7

DISCOVERING TEACHERS

THREE WAYS TO USE THIS CHAPTER

1. **A trainer can use the methods in this chapter to develop local teachers.** If a local church does not have someone who feels able to teach, a trainer cannot start a local program that immediately operates independently. The trainer must discover and develop potential teachers. This chapter tells the trainer how to get local teachers started.
2. **The trainer equips local teachers to use this method for their students.** If the local teachers of the new site are already capable of teaching, the trainer does not need to use the exercises in this chapter. The trainer should teach the method to the local teachers so they can use the exercises to develop their students.
3. **A local teacher develops students.** Every teacher should try to develop the ministry skills of students. The methods described in this chapter will be useful for helping students begin speaking to groups.

THE NEED TO DISCOVER TEACHERS

Sometimes when SGC representatives visit churches they find people who are immediately ready to start teaching the courses. Usually, these potential teachers are people who have some academic training and teaching experience. They look at the courses and realize that they are easy to teach. Directions are printed in the front of each course. Discussion questions are provided. The courses are not just books; they can be taught as they are.

The courses are designed so that a person with reading skill, Bible knowledge, and teaching ability can quickly learn to use them. However, sometimes people who have not had much academic training feel that they are not able to teach. They think that only a highly trained person can teach.

God has given teaching ability to many people who have not had the opportunity to study in a university. Because teachers are necessary for the church, we can be confident that God ordinarily provides people with teaching ability wherever the church exists (Ephesians 4:11-12).

Many people do not realize that they have already developed teaching skill in their normal lives. They explain things at home and at work. They help people solve problems. They have a reputation for being able to explain things. When they were students in school they were skilled at reading and understanding and explaining. They don't know that they have the ability to teach.

A trainer should help potential teachers discover their ability through guided speaking experiences. Through experience, a person gains confidence for speaking to groups.

WAYS TO CREATE SPEAKING EXPERIENCES

1. **Give speaking assignments on easy topics.** The speech can be just a few minutes long. If students seem nervous about standing in front of the group to speak, they could make their first speeches while seated in their chairs.

Examples of easy speaking assignments:

- Tell about a challenge from your childhood.
 - Tell about a relative who was important to you.
 - Ask another student some questions then introduce that student to the group.
 - What is a place you would like to visit? Why?
 - Tell about one of your favorite verses of scripture.
 - Tell about a typical day at your workplace.
 - What do you remember from a sermon you heard recently?
2. **Direct a question to a person in the class.** The question should require some explanation, not just a short answer. The question should be something the person will be able to answer, so that he will become more confident and not be embarrassed.
 3. **Ask students to explain their writing assignments to the group.** The courses require various writing assignments. Even if the trainer is there only for a day, students can be given some time to write one of the assignments and present it.
 4. **Divide into groups of three for teaching practice.** Have each person teach a short section to the group. This gives a small audience and allows several students to practice at the same time.
 5. **Ask a student to explain a section of material from a lesson.** Many sections in the courses have just a few paragraphs that explain a concept. Ask a student ahead of time to be prepared to explain a section in a few minutes.
 6. **Ask an advanced student to teach a lesson from one of the courses.** The easiest arrangement is for a student to teach a lesson that he has heard someone else teach.

The student demonstrates a higher level of ability when he prepares and teaches a lesson that nobody has taught to him. The trainer may feel that he should teach as much as possible, and the class may prefer to hear the trainer, but the goal is to equip others to teach.

- 7. Use the “Table Talk” method.** The students sit around a table with printed courses. No teacher is at the table. Various students take turns talking about something in the lesson. One person at the table is appointed to lead and keep the discussion going by asking various students for input. The leader is not a teacher. The group will discover that they can function and learn by discussion without a teacher. This method enables study groups to form in places that lack a person who feels qualified to teach.

CONCLUSION

The vision of SGC is to make ministry training local everywhere. Training can happen everywhere through the people that God gifts with ability and biblical understanding. Teachers should remember that their purpose is not only to give knowledge but to equip students to explain truth to others.

CHAPTER 8

OPERATING A LOCAL INSTITUTE

INTRODUCTION

Courses from SGC are used in different kinds of programs. Some high schools (sometimes called secondary schools) use certain courses. Some churches use courses in their Sunday schools. Home Bible study groups choose courses to study. Pastors select material from courses to use in preaching and teaching.

The directions in this chapter apply to the operation of a local institute that uses the 20 SGC courses for a complete program of study.

ACADEMIC LEVEL

The complete set of SGC courses includes the most important content of a Bible college curriculum. It is purposely written without difficult vocabulary.

A student must be able to read and write well to study the courses as they are designed.

The courses are not designed for discipleship of new converts, though much of the material is useful for that purpose.

The best practices for the group are for each student to

1. Have a copy of the course.
2. Complete all assignments.
3. Practice presenting material during class sessions.
4. Be in good relationship with a local church.
5. Have regular ministry outside of the group.

A teacher who maintains these practices will effectively train students for ministry.

Student editions are available for groups of students who are not preparing for ministry. The student editions are condensed versions of the courses. They are used in high schools



(secondary schools) and Sunday schools. Those students do not do the normal assignments because they are not practicing ministry or preparing for ministry. The student editions should not be used for students who are preparing for ministry and plan to receive a certificate of ministry training. Teachers of these students must teach from the original SGC course text because the student edition is incomplete.

SGC does not give an academic degree. In some places local or national institutions that use SGC courses give a degree or certificate based on their own requirements. The student must register with the institution and fulfill their requirements.

In places where an academic degree is not available, the program should be considered professional training. In the business world professional training programs prepare a person to work in a skilled occupation. Those programs do not provide degrees, but they certify that a person has been trained. Likewise, the SGC program is professional training for ministry.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Only a Bible is necessary in addition to the courses, but the courses recommend materials for further study. A local institute should try to develop a library for student use.

CLASS SCHEDULE

A local institute can have its own schedule for classes, based on local situations. However, sufficient time must be committed. If a teacher simply teaches the content without discussion and student practice, the time spent will be less, but the class will not equip the students well. If the group spends time discussing the material and the completed assignments, a course will take more than thirty hours of classroom time. The students should spend additional time doing the assignments outside of class.

THE ORDER OF COURSES

A certain sequence is not necessary. Each class is complete and does not depend on another class to precede it. It is possible to run the program in a cycle, allowing new students to join at the beginning of any course. An institute can continuously recruit new students rather than making them wait until the beginning of a year. Individual students enroll at the beginning of any course and continue through the cycle until they have finished all courses.

QUALITY CONTROL

The teacher should keep records of student attendance. A student who does not attend at least 75% of class time and complete 100% of the required work should not receive credit

for the course. In special circumstances, the teacher may give additional study requirements to compensate for missed class time.

The teacher should keep careful records of assignments completed by students to make sure the final grade is fair and accurate. The teacher should make sure individual students know if their assignments or attendance are making their grades low.

If the local institute is part of an association of institutes, records of attendance and assignments should be available for regional trainers to inspect. A certificate will not have value if the institution does not consistently maintain requirements.

LOCAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Each local institute site should be locally supported. The classroom is provided by a local church. The teachers serve as part of the local ministry. The cost of printed courses is covered by the local ministry or by students. If an institute is part of an association of institutes, the central administration may set a fee for students that covers the cost of printed courses and helps support the local institute staff.

It is necessary for local institute staff to be honest and transparent in all financial matters (2 Corinthians 8:21). Everyone involved should know what money is collected and how it is spent. A committee should be involved in managing funds. Examples of financial matters include fees that students pay to the local institute or the central administration, cost of printed courses, support of local teachers, and any other money collected or spent.

Because honesty is a basic element of Christian character, it is not possible for a dishonest person to be a good Christian example. A dishonest person should not hold any ministry position. Any incident of dishonesty will affect a leader's relationship with SGC.

ESTABLISHING A NEW TRAINING PROGRAM

This section is designed to assist a local ministry team as they set up a new training program. It provides an order for planning the aspects of the program. The local ministry team should discuss and record their answer to each question.

1. Identity of the Responsible Ministry

- » Who is opening the training program? (An existing institute? A church association? A local church? A partnership of several churches or pastors?)
- » Should others be invited to share in the responsibility of opening this program?

2. Mission and Goal

A mission statement describes purpose. Example of a mission statement: “Our mission is to train Christian leaders with biblical doctrine and ministry methods.”

A goal has measurable details. Example of a ministry goal: “Our goal is to train church planters to open 20 new churches in the Irkutsk Region in the next five years.”

- » What is the mission statement for the new training program?
- » What is the goal of the new training program?

3. Name of the Training Program

If the new training program will not be part of an existing institute or network of local training centers, the local ministry can choose a name for it. Decide on a name which will be understood in your local context. (SGC prefers that local ministries not use the name Shepherds Global Classroom.)

- » What is the name of the new training program?

4. Facility

- » Where will classes be held? Will there be an office? (Can a local church or other building be used without cost? Will the classroom have adequate space and comfort and be free from distraction?)

5. Printed Curriculum

- » How will we provide students with printed courses? (Will we print them on our own equipment, print them at a local business, or buy them from a training office elsewhere?)
- » What will the cost be?
- » How do we plan to cover the cost?
- » Are students able and willing to use digital courses on mobile devices rather than having printed copies?

6. Schedule

Decide on a specific schedule for the classes. Examples:

- Students will meet each Tuesday and Thursday evening from 7-9 p.m.
 - We plan to teach through one course in two months.
 - The first class will begin June 3 and end July 29.
 - New students can join at the beginning of each new course.
- » What days and times will classes meet?
 - » How much time will we plan for each course?
 - » When will we start?
 - » At what times can new students join?

7. Teachers

Teachers should be familiar with the SGC manual. They should be reliable and willing to take time to prepare for teaching. A good spiritual character and Christian example are absolutely necessary. It is good if a teacher has some institute training, but it is not always possible. Teachers should already have a good reputation in their current ministry.

- » What qualifications do we expect of teachers?
- » Who is available and willing to begin?

8. Administration

Examples of positions:

- Director
 - Registrar/secretary
 - Treasurer
- » Who will direct the training?
 - » What other staff are needed?
 - » Who should receive phone calls from potential students?
 - » What is the job description for each position?

9. Certificates

If you want to award students with certificates from your local ministry, you can set your own requirements. If you want to give certificates from SGC, you must be in contact with an SGC representative who verifies the quality of your training program and approves you to give SGC certificates.

Example of a certificate plan: Students will be awarded a certificate from the local ministry for each course completed. Students who complete 10 courses will have a graduation and receive a certificate from SGC. Students may continue for 10 additional courses and an advanced certificate if they desire.

- » What certificate(s) will our graduates receive?
- » Who will provide certificates and set the standard for the program? (A church denomination? A local church board? SGC?)

10. Student Enrollment

Decide on the requirements of enrollment. For example:

Students must:

- Be recommended by their local pastor.
- Submit a written personal testimony of salvation.
- Sign a student covenant.
- » What is required before someone can enroll in the program?

Decide on any financial obligations of enrollment. Possible obligations to consider:

- Students must pay \$_____ for each printed course
- Students must pay \$_____ as a teacher fee
- Students must pay \$_____ as a facility fee
- Students must provide their own food and travel costs
- » What are the financial obligations of students?

11. Shepherd Representative

SGC has specified a person to communicate with training ministries in your region. Your ministry should designate one person to be in communication with the SGC representative. The SGC representative will arrange for certificates for your graduates.

- » Which person in our ministry will communicate with the SGC representative?

A MISSION ORGANIZATION/NATIONAL MINISTRY AND A LOCAL INSTITUTE IN COOPERATION

ABC is the fictional name of a national ministry that helps churches establish local institutes. The site agreement ABC uses for local institutes is found on the following page. ABC representatives regularly visit and inspect local institute sites using the questions listed on the last page of this chapter.

SAMPLE SITE AGREEMENT

*ABC uses this form to explain the relationship between their **national ministry** and the **local institute**.*

The purpose of ABC is to serve the body of Christ by equipping the church to develop ministry leaders. A local church or ministry organization may be approved to operate a ministry training program using SGC courses.

ABC reserves the right to cancel this agreement in the case of a local ministry not fulfilling its commitments.

ABC provides the following:

- A set of 20 ministry training courses
- A training seminar for teachers
- Administration visits to the training site to encourage local teachers and enhance quality
- Certificates for students on the completion of each course (a personal copy of the course is necessary for each student to receive a certificate)
- A certificate for completion of the entire program
- An ABC sign to be posted at the ministry site

The local ministry commits to the following:

- To appoint faithful, competent local teachers with the approval of ABC administration
- To require teachers to cooperate with training and directions from ABC administration
- To provide a classroom that is convenient for good study
- To support local teachers financially as necessary
- To collect and send to ABC an enrollment fee for each course copy needed
- To provide ABC administration with records of student attendance and assignments completed
- To post the sign provided by ABC. The sign is the property of ABC and will be removed in the event of cancellation of this agreement.

Name of local ministry _____

Signature of representative of local ministry _____

Signature of authorized representative of ABC _____

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL INSTITUTE INSPECTION

When representatives from ABC visit sites, they use the following questions to evaluate and guide for improvement.

1. Have the site teachers received SGC teacher training?
2. Do the teachers use a variety of teaching methods?
3. Do the teachers involve the students in discussion and participation?
4. Is the site developing assistant teachers who practice in class?
5. Is the classroom convenient for study (seating, lighting, free from distraction and noise)?
6. Does each student have a personal copy of any course being studied?
7. Are all students able to read and write well enough to complete assignments? (Required for certificate.)
8. Does the class schedule provide thirty hours of class time for each course in addition to time spent completing assignments?
9. Do the testing procedures ensure that students do not copy answers from others or from written material?
10. Do the teachers maintain accurate records of student attendance? (A student who misses more than 25% of class time should not receive credit for the course.)
11. Do the teachers maintain records of student assignments completed? (All assignments must be completed for a certificate.)
12. Is the local institute developing a system for local financial support?
13. Are local institute finances managed by a local committee for openness and accountability?

ONLINE RESOURCES FROM SGC

SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM APP

The SGC app is available in both the Apple store and Google Play.

The app provides all courses for reading or download. Translations into various languages are being made available as each is finished.

SHEPHERDSGLOBAL.ORG

The website provides courses for download and other materials.

TEACHER TRAINING

This *Local Institute Handbook* can be downloaded as a document.

SHEPHERDS GLOBAL CLASSROOM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

DOCTRINAL FOUNDATIONS COURSES

Christian Beliefs

This is a systematic theology course, describing the Christian doctrines about the Bible, God, man, sin, Christ, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the Church, and last things.

Romans

This course teaches the theology of salvation and missions as explained in the book of Romans, discussing several issues that have been controversial in the church.

Eschatology

This course teaches the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation along with other sections of prophetic scripture and emphasizes essential doctrines such as the return of Christ, the final judgment, and the eternal kingdom of God.

Doctrine and Practice of the Holy Life

This course gives a biblical description of the holy life that God expects and empowers for a Christian.

Doctrine and Practice of the Church

This course explains God's design and plan for the church and biblical subjects such as church membership, baptism, communion, tithe, and spiritual leadership.

BIBLE SURVEY COURSES

Exploring the Old Testament

This course teaches the essential content and teachings of the 39 books of the Old Testament.

Exploring the New Testament

This course teaches the essential content and teachings of the 27 books of the New Testament.

Principles of Biblical Interpretation

This course teaches the principles and methods of interpreting the Bible properly in order to guide our life and relationship with God.

EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP COURSES

Introduction to Apologetics

This course teaches the scientific, historical, and philosophical basis for a Christian world-view, and shows how the Christian faith is consistent with reason and reality.

Faith Traditions of the World

This course gives the evangelical believer an understanding of the teachings and proper responses to 17 religious groups.

Biblical Evangelism and Discipleship

This course presents the biblical principles that guide evangelism methods. It describes forms of evangelism and provides lessons to use in discipling new converts.

Spiritual Formation

In this course students learn to have the attitudes of Jesus, to relate to God the way Jesus related to his Father, to humble ourselves as Jesus did, to practice the spiritual and personal disciplines of Jesus, to endure suffering as Jesus did, and to engage in the Christian community (the Church) formed by Jesus.

Practical Christian Living

This course applies scriptural principles to the use of money, relationships, the environment, relations with the government, human rights, and other areas of practical living.

Christian Family

This course gives a Christian perspective on human development through the stages of life and applies scriptural principles to family roles and relationships.

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP COURSES

Ministry Leadership

This course emphasizes Christian character while teaching leaders to guide organizations through the process of discovering values, realizing purpose, sharing vision, setting goals, planning strategy, taking action, and experiencing achievement.

The Life and Ministry of Jesus

This course studies the life of Jesus as a model for ministry and leadership in the 21st century.

Principles of Communication

This course teaches the theology of communication, methods for effective speaking, and methods for preparing and presenting biblical sermons.

Introduction to Christian Worship

This course explains how worship impacts all aspects of the believer's life and gives principles that should guide individual and congregational practices of worship.

CHURCH HISTORY COURSES

Survey of Church History I

This course describes how the church fulfilled its mission and protected essential doctrine through the period from the early church to the Reformation.

Survey of Church History II

This course describes how the church expanded and faced challenges through the period from the Reformation to modern times.