



*the ministry training church

the MINISTRY PAPERS

negative models

for many of us, the real problem when it comes to being a trainer is that **we were never a trainee!** We are trying hard to do unto others what wasn't done to us!

The ministry training culture that is increasingly part of the landscape in evangelical churches today has really only become so in recent years. It is not yet a second generation movement. This means many of those being asked to cut it as trainers never quite had the trainee stage. That makes it hard.

At this point, however, there are a number of things that can help. Peer relationships with others in the same ministry context are critical (a bit more on this later). Hopefully papers like this can prompt ideas. There are a variety of training networks around that are worth plugging into. And in any case, there's something to be said for the power of **negative modeling**.

It is possible to work backwards from negative models and learn so much from them!

Imagine the opposite of a good training model. Words like *unintentional* come to mind. And *maintenance*. And *non-reflective*. *Isolated*, *detached* and *remote* could be thrown into the mix as well. How about *piecemeal*, *haphazard*, *random*, *disorganised* ... and *passive*, *inert*, *reactionary*...

All of a sudden you've got so much material to work with! Fuelled with a strong sense of the direction you *don't* want to be going, you can now take up the Bible and listen with intent to what it's got to say about ministry! ... and to start picking new models that are headed in the right direction...intentional ministry, equipping ministry, training ministry...

This ministry paper '**the ministry training church**' introduces the big picture of the training model adopted in these MINISTRY PAPERS. It focuses especially on the role of pastor-teachers. It is essential to work through this introductory paper before using any others. The other introductory paper, '**meeting one to one**', fills out the relational aspects of the model, and broadens the focus to the role of other key leaders. It is also vital background.



investigate

read Ephesians 4:11-12

1. What are *pastor/teachers* meant to be doing?

2. As a result, what are *God's people* meant to be doing?

3. As a result, what should be happening in a church?

4. What are the implications for you and your ministry?



think & apply



ideas for discussion

In your church context, what will "maturity" typically **look like**? What will be some **concrete expressions** of the abstract idea? If your role is to equip/train people to be mature, what *is* this 'maturity'? Think hard about this before moving on. The overall goal might be 'Christ-likeness'. But try to break that down to a few more tangible points. This maturity will be evident through...

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intentional ministry

Maturity in Christ isn't easily measured. It's about character not just activities. That said, it's helpful to identify a shape of what maturity will actually look like in your context. Maturity shows itself in certain key ways. And there are also some key ways people grow to further maturity. So it's good to have a plan. It's good to have a sense of where you're taking people...



two key goals

These MINISTRY PAPERS have been developed with a certain 'shape' of Christian maturity in mind. The mature Christian in our church will live out and grow in their Christlikeness through...

1. being actively involved in a **small group**
2. being actively involved in a **ministry team**

The aim is simple: just two major goals! And yet, the table below shows how many objectives are addressed through this simple approach. It also shows how crucial the first major goal is: involvement in a small group. An intentional small group ministry addresses a number of objectives. A healthy small group provides accountability for all relationships in the believer's life. Indeed, it is even through small groups that the other major goal—involvement in a ministry team—is addressed.

small group goal	ministry team goal
<p>✦ a growing relationship with God, especially through personal Bible reading and prayer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>personal bible reading and prayer</i></p>	<p>according to the needs of the church according to the gifts of the individual believer</p> <p><i>MINISTRY TEAMS PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>crèche ministry</i> <i>kids church ministry</i> <i>kids club ministry</i> <i>primary school scripture</i> <i>youth ministry</i> <i>high school lunchtime groups</i> <i>university ministry</i> <i>pre-school mums outreach</i> <i>child protection</i> <i>support ministries</i></p> <p><i>MAIN MEETING MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>welcoming ministry</i> <i>music ministry</i> <i>audio ministry</i> <i>preaching that connects</i> <i>leading church</i> <i>kids talks</i> <i>drama/set-up pieces</i> <i>bible readings & prayers</i></p>
<p>✦ growing relationships with other believers, especially through the small group</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>leading a small group;</i> <i>joining a small group</i> <i>encouragement; hospitality</i></p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with those in their family/household, as servants</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>marriage preparation</i> <i>Christian households</i> <i>raising kids to follow Jesus</i></p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with unbelievers, especially through personal evangelism</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>personal evangelism</i> <i>personal apologetics; cults</i></p>	
<p>✦ growing relationships with the whole church in mission, serving in a ministry team</p> <p><i>MINISTRY PAPERS (e.g.):</i> <i>joining a ministry team</i> <i>see next column...</i></p>	

pathways

The core business of pastors is this: equipping God's people for works of service. Not simply ministering to others. But enabling the ministry of others. Training, therefore, is not an optional extra for the pastor/teacher but *central* to our role. And training is not an optional extra for God's people, but must be provided for all of them.

Unless this training is *intentional*, however, it probably won't happen. That means identifying *goals*, as already discussed. It also means identifying the tangible steps needed for people to travel towards these goals.

Everyone's pathway to maturity will be different. But it's worth trying to identify what a standard pathway will look like. What steps are involved? What strategies might help people move from one stage to another?

Identifying a standard pathway enables you to identify roughly where someone is at. It also helps identify what their next step might need to be. It's not always neat, of course. But it's a starting point for intentional ministry.

Referring to the list of MINISTRY PAPERS on the left, hopefully it might be apparent how the various papers are designed to help facilitate the pathway below. The next page will expand on how this can work...

stage	strategy
Christian?	<i>personal evangelism</i>
initial church contact	<i>welcoming team</i>
maintaining contact	<i>hospitality</i>
getting acquainted	<i>newcomers group</i>
getting involved	<i>joining/linked to a small group</i>
getting equipped	<i>active in small group</i>
trained for ministry	<i>taken through ministry paper</i>
training others	<i>take others through paper</i>
leading small group	<i>apprentice leader</i>



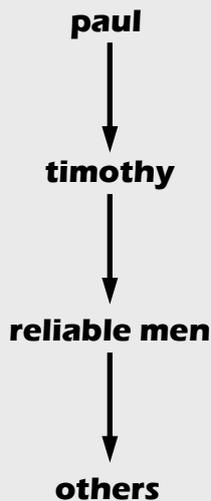
relational ministry

You have worked out some tangible goals of what Christian maturity might look like in your church context. You have worked out what some of the key steps look like on the pathway to these goals. Now it's time to train. So here's the key question: what will this training look like? When we think training, it's time to think BEYOND THE EVENT, to relationships!

teach a man to fish?

we have long ago taken hold of the idea that we need to do more than give a man a fish... we need to teach him to fish. But there's another step needed when it comes to ministry ... we need to teach others to teach others to fish. In 2 Timothy 2 we see Paul teaching Timothy to teach others to teach others...

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

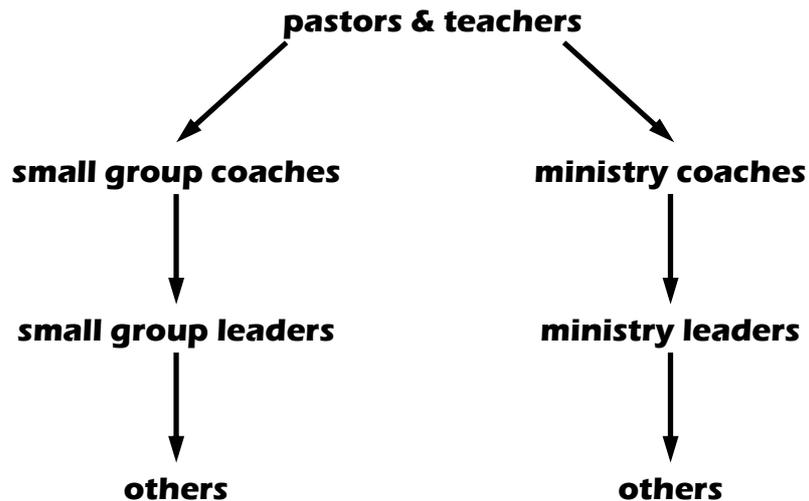


An important underlying principle of these papers is the notion of 'span of care'. This concerns how many people one person can care for. It's an especially important concept in the context of the 'small groups' ministry papers. It's also extremely relevant to becoming a ministry training church. We might call this 'span of training' - how many people can you train?

If Ephesians 4 challenges pastors to train everyone, 2 Timothy 2 reminds us that this will mean starting with a few key people, through whom everyone can be trained.

When we think about training we need to think **culture** not just events, **relationships**, not just activities.

Too much of our approach to training is **event**-focussed. We hope that if we can drag enough people along to the training event – it will be an instant fix all, with everyone who attends changed forever! The reality is, however, that while training events have their place, on their own they tend to produce very little lasting impact. The event can act as a useful catalyst. But unless there is an ongoing training relationship for feedback, discussion and prayer, not much will result. Unless there is a genuine sharing of struggles, training is **not training!** Worse, outside of a relational context, ministry skills are abstracted from personal godliness and theological development... so we're not training the person.



all these coaches & leaders all must be trained in the two foundational ministry papers: ✦ the ministry training church & ✦ leading one-to-one... as well as the relevant leadership paper (e.g. ✦ leading a small group or ✦ youth ministry). They must be equipped by pastors (over time) to, in turn, take people they lead through relevant papers...

Remember, the role of the MINISTRY PAPERS is not simply to transfer *content*, but to establish these trainer/trainee relationships. In this way, the *process* is as important as the content. The paper forms a 'contract' of agreed approach to the ministry, a basis for ongoing reflection, and a springboard to further reading and discussion. It's the starting point for an ongoing training relationship. This is why the 'meeting one-to-one' paper is also vital for all coaches & leaders.

notes:

- ✦ training is geared through two main arms: the small groups arm and the ministries arm.
- ✦ the intervening stage of 'coaches' is needed if the total number of small group leaders/ ministry leaders is, say, in double figures (span of training).
- ✦ pastors train small group coaches (who then train small group leaders e.g. 'leading as small group') and ministry coaches (who then train ministry leaders e.g. 'youth ministry').
- ✦ small group leaders not only orientate people to being part of a group ('joining a small group'), but have responsibility for training/equipping in the 3rd & 4th areas listed on page 2. They will, therefore, take their group members through the household/family papers & personal evangelism papers (assistant/apprentice leaders will be also be needed!).



fellow workers

You need a plan. And to make it happen, you need a team! New Testament ministry was always a team thing. Our ministry should be no different. The kind of ministry shown on the previous page will not happen through someone working one-out. You're going to need to develop a team of key leaders who share your ministry...and life...

ministry papers & fellow workers...

Peter is a gifted musician. A great person to have involved in music ministry. But even better than his ability on the guitar, is Peter's ability to understand gospel ministry. Peter is a fellow worker.

After being involved in music ministry at church for a year or so, Peter was appointed leader of night church music. All the training he'd received through meeting one-to-one throughout that time, would now be passed on.

Whenever a new person is potentially joining the night music team, Peter makes a time to sit down and meet with them. Whether musician, singer or sound person, he meets with them to go through the music ministry paper.

This 'up-front' meeting is invaluable. Lots of questions are answered, and issues clarified. From theology through to pragmatics, a lot of ground is covered. For Peter, his leadership is seen to not be arbitrary, but based on a thought out gospel-centred approach to the ministry. And for the new team member, they understand what it is they are joining.

Of course, it's not that just this one meeting sorts out everything. But a key foundation for the relationship in team ministry together is put in place. Many later questions/issues can be clarified by reference back to key points covered in the paper.

It's great to have a fellow worker like Peter looking after music at night church. It's not just music, it's ministry.

office of ministry...

Synergy. Communication. Accessibility. Teamwork. Ministry focus. Training culture. All sound worth having?

A church-based shared-office environment, where possible, can really help get it happening.

read to the end...

Unfortunately, the end of Paul's letters are at best skated over or at worst ignored altogether. Preached on them lately? They are often dressed up with inspiring Bible sub-headings like "concluding remarks". Better would be "fellow workers", "passing the baton" or "thoughts on team ministry". Where ever Paul did ministry, there were always plenty of these fellow workers alongside him....

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus (Romans 16:3)

Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ... (Romans 16:9)

Timothy, my fellow worker, sends his greetings to you... (Romans 16:21)

We are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9)

As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you... (2 Corinthians 8:23)

But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger... (Philippians 2:25)

Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God... (Colossians 4:11)

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker (Philemon 1)

it takes time...

Developing a training culture means investing time in a few people who share your vision for the church & who'll share it with others, who'll share it with others... it needs to be the next biggest slab of time in your week, after preparing the Bible Talk. In fact, on a regular basis, when you're not preaching, it's also a good idea to devote a whole week just to team development.

Being fellow workers means sharing life and ministry together. Weekly one-to-one meetings are crucial, as well as staff or team meetings. But these need to be merely the platform for team ministry not the sum total of your communication or interaction. As with all relationships quality time happens within quantity time. You can't always pick the minute in your team when a good idea will blossom, or a good conversation spark. So you need to really give yourself to the team. Out of the quality of these gospel partnerships grows the whole culture of the church. Feed it!

who are your fellow workers?

what are you doing to train them?

what are you doing to train them to train others?

how might a planned approach to training help?