

A Plea for Church-Based Theological Education

Each Church's Role in Growing Its Own Leaders

Workshop 5—Jonathan Moore

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

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

—Ephesians 4:11–13

I. Why must we develop leaders?

- *What is the task of the Church?*
-Disciple-making: Matthew 28:19
- *What is the role of the church's leadership in the task of the church?*
-Word-entrusting: 2 Timothy 2:2 (cf. Eph 4:12)
- *How was the Church designed to grow?*
-Member-serving: Ephesians 4:11–16 (n.b. Eph 5:26–27)

II. How do we develop leaders?

- *What models can we follow for leader development?*
- Mentoring, investing (2 Tim 2:2)

Paul was not merely mentoring Timothy one-on-one to take his place, but guiding him in a process of in-service learning.

- *What components are necessary in leader development?*
- Character, conviction, communication, content

III. How can we develop leaders in our church using CBTE?

Church-Based Theological Education (CBTE) develops leaders within the life of the church, focusing on the concept of apprentice/craftsman through character, skill, and Bible knowledge development of capable, future leaders.

A. Questions we must ask ourselves:

- Are we depending on the life and ministry of the church, (not programs & schools)?
- Are we focused on *a process of entrusting* (discipling, modeling & mentoring)?
- Are we focused on establishing healthy churches?
- Do we believe that “CBTE” is for everyone and all of life? (Heb 13:17)

B. Have you thought through the process of CBTE?

- Begin with the first & basic principles of the faith
- Plan for everyone’s involvement

C. Intentional procedures for developing a CBTE in your church

- **Purpose** — Sit down and think

- What is your aim?
- What are you passing on? What happens if you are gone?
- What is most important?
 - Bible study, reading habits, ecclesiology, ethics & worldview, discipling & evangelism, biblical theology, habits, money, family, basic content, “wisdom living”

- What are we currently doing? Is it effective? Is it pointed at the right goal?
- How is *character* developed and evaluated? How is *communication* developed and evaluated? How is *conviction* developed and tested? How is *content* learned, retained, assessed and shared?

- Plan — Create a strategy

- State your aim
- Explain how it is achieved at all levels
- Describe specific ways the following will grow:
- Conviction
 - Walk with men, teach the core of Scripture, teach people how to think critically
- Character
 - How do we ensure that leaders are gospel-centered? Study the Bible’s core disciplines & character traits, cultivate discipline and heart habits, stress that “sound doctrine” is not knowledge but godly living
- Content
 - Two possible methods for developing content knowledge— “in house” or “outsource”
 - CBTE “curriculum”: EABST, First Principles, Foundations series, Capitol Hill’s core seminars, BiblicalTraining.org, 9 Marks
- Communication
 - Socratic method, teaching opportunities, planned discussions
- Culture—discipling
 - Cultivate a culture of discipling
 - Teach it, model it, encourage it
 - This should be the church’s centerpiece

- Perform — do it; start working

- “Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately [result in] hard work.”

- **Progress** — evaluate it
 - “The unexamined life is not worth living.”
- **Partner** — Be accountable and find resources to assist

IV. What should we know about CBTE?

- *CBTE's potential advantages:*

- *CBTE's potential disadvantages:*

Paul evangelized strategic cities, established local churches, and entrusted the churches to faithful men, creating a pattern for the establishing of churches and their future leaders into the church-planting cycle itself. "The teaching" or "sound doctrine" that is entrusted is not cold, abstract theological knowledge, but woven naturally into the family and community situations of churches.

According to the model of the New Testament, theological education is fundamentally church-based whereby leaders develop in the context of churches through mentoring and real ministry experiences.