

**Here's what others are saying about Charlie Worley and his book,  
*Creating Ministry Champions***

Charlie Worley has given us a coaching training DIY kit conveniently located in one place. His book, *Creating Ministry Champions*, succeeds in strategically laying out the essential foundation for, and practical implementation of, a coaching ministry to leaders of all kinds in today's church environment. Filled with extremely well-researched content, consistent Scriptural backing, and lived-out wisdom, this is a go-to resource for cultivating this much needed area for increasing the effectiveness of church leadership. I give it 5 stars all around.

— Dan Smythe, Senior Staff trainer for Global Training Network,  
and Ambassador for The Timothy Initiative

When the Diocese of Cascadia of the Anglican Church in North America was founded, we wanted to recapture the missional and church planting spirit that was part of our Anglican heritage before the twentieth century. We were blessed to have our new church planting board accepted into Charlie Worley's weeklong church planting workshop and the teachings and coaching were outstanding. This helped us lay a new foundation for our church planting work and I am forever thankful for Charlie's help and guidance.

— The Rt. Rev. Kevin Bond Allen, Bishop, Diocese of Cascadia.

We are very pleased with Charlie Worley. He was a great help to us during our time between pastors. He helped our church focus on who we are as a church, and also greatly assisted us in our search for a new pastor. He is a man of God with a high level of skill, experience, and success. His coaching of our teams and individuals has proved very valuable to us.

— Kevin J. Donohoe, lay leader, Olympic Evangelical Free Church,  
Poulsbo, WA.

## CREATING MINISTRY CHAMPIONS

**Coaching Ministry Champions**

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# CREATING MINISTRY CHAMPIONS

*An Introduction to  
Developing and Coaching Leaders  
for Churches  
and Christian Organizations*

Charles E. Worley

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The teachers, preachers, and coaches mentioned in the pages of this book – All of them have been my mentors and I have learned so much about coaching from you and your fruitful ministries.

The churches and church plants where I have been honored to serve as pastor in Florida, Nebraska, Minnesota, Vancouver, Kansas, Washington – I have learned so much from you about church ministry and leadership.

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated with thanksgiving to all the new and existing coaches who will use this book to help create ministry champions with God's help and for His glory.

It is also dedicated to all the church planters, pastors, and church leaders that I have been given the opportunity from God to coach and equip over many years of ministry.

## INTRODUCTION

There's a dream revealed in the pages of this book. It's a dream for something that can transform your church or other ministry organization, something that God has planned. Maybe you have this dream or vision. It's a dream that comes into your heart and mind from God. It's something that wakes you up when you read the words of Scripture found first in Joel 2:28. These words are repeated in a powerful sermon preached by the apostle Peter on that first Day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus as recorded in Acts 2:16-18:

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

“And in the last days it shall be, God declares,  
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,  
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
and your young men shall see visions,  
and your old men shall dream dreams...”

All who are true followers of Jesus may have different God-given visions and dreams for your church or ministry. But within the pages of this book is a dream that you may share with many others. It's a dream for a ministry that can transform us from people who do ministry into leaders who create ministry champions for the Lord and for His Kingdom.

Dreams and visions for this are often created out of a holy dissatisfaction, a sense that there must be something more to life and leadership in your church or ministry organization. They come from asking

the question, “Is my job for the Lord and His Kingdom just trying to do church and repeat the same things over and over again every week?” or “Will my legacy be that I’ve just kept the plates of ministry spinning around in circles while balancing them on top of pencil-thin sticks held up by my tired hands?” Do you really want that?

This book is the product of over twenty years of developing coaching as a leadership development tool for church planters, pastors, denominational leaders, and ministry leadership teams. Before discovering the power of coaching, I relied on conventional teaching and training because that’s the way I was trained for ministry. The spiritual gift of teaching served me well as did quality seminary education and ministry leadership experience, but still something was missing. The object of all my leadership development over those first twenty years of ministry was to gain more knowledge that I might apply. The results and unintended consequence were to learn how to do ministry better so that the plates of life and ministry kept spinning. Over time I came to the point where I needed to refocus what I was trying to do. Today I now recognize that my dream of transformation in leadership development can be summarized in three words, creating ministry champions, and the way to get there is by coaching in a way that supplements training and knowledge.

If you take seriously the contents of this book, you may discover that you will be reading a trail guide that will direct you up a new path to a transformation in the way you fulfill your ministry leadership dreams. You will learn to refocus how you develop leaders. As you refocus how you lead and help develop others, you will learn how to multiply your ministry dream through their lives and ministries. This refocusing begins by helping you understand the need for growth in godly, Christ-like character through intentional discipleship. This is an absolute prerequisite for coaching yourself and then other ministry leaders.

The pathway toward ministry leadership coaching will be a paradigm shift from telling others what to do and how to do it by using coaching skills to help develop leaders. These coaching skills that you learn to use will help others discover their unique personal plan through your encouragement, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. You will learn how to listen actively and attentively, to ask good coaching questions that dig deep into

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the head and heart, and to help your friend through encouraging coaching conversations. These unique coaching conversations will help your friends develop their own unique goals and action steps to accomplish the plans that God has laid on their hearts. You will also be introduced to the art of coaching ministry leadership teams so that they can become championship teams for the Lord. Lessons learned from this book when applied might even help you become a better husband, parent, friend, teacher, or supervisor in your workplace.

The dream found in the pages of this book is simple and yet transformational. It's called creating ministry champions through coaching. The late Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ (now known as CRU), was reported to have said, "Small dreams do not enflame the hearts of men." It's time for leaders of churches and ministry organizations to dream big like ministry champions do. If this is your dream you will find that this book will help you develop the knowledge, essential skills, and personal characteristics you need to help create ministry champions.

You will also find that numerous coaching questions are embedded in the pages of this book to better help you understand and use your coaching skills. So I thought I might close this book introduction with one of my favorite coaching questions, "What if...?" What if you began to practice the skills and work on the qualifications mentioned in this book? What if you were to begin coaching two or more leaders in your church or ministry organization so that they began to do the same with other leaders? What if you volunteer to become part of a growing army of ministry leadership coaches God is raising up for His church today? What if every church began to develop and follow ministry leadership champions of all ages and ministry experiences? Dream big dreams from God. Become a coach who creates ministry champions.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

## CHAPTER 1

### ***What is Ministry Leadership Coaching?***

*Neither seminary nor seminar will prepare us to do ministry in the post-modern future. We believe that ministry equipping for transformational church leaders will be just in time, on the job, on the internet, in the church, and in the trenches.*

– Steve Ogne and Tim Roehl

### **INTRODUCTION**

Have you ever been in a situation where you were struggling to know how to lead a ministry or had difficulty knowing what next step to take to move a group of people forward in the right direction? Meet Ken. Ken is new to a leadership position in his church. He's excited, but also anxious. Ken was asked to help start and lead a men's ministry. Ken's in his late 30s and has never done anything like this before. In his former church he co-taught a Sunday School class for men and was recently told by the lead pastor of his current church that he had the potential to become a great men's ministry leader, but he wondered. Ken didn't know if he had the knowledge or skills to do a good job at this new challenge. He wondered if he was qualified. He also didn't know how to best lead the volunteer men's leadership staff team he would oversee. The desire was there but so were the doubts and concerns. Questions kept popping up in his head like, "Am I really qualified?" "Where do I start?" and "Who can I ask to help me?"

Your story may be different but your questions may be similar to Ken's. Being asked to serve as a ministry leader, especially in a new position or situation, you can be sure that questions like those in Ken's

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head and more will be bouncing between both sides of your brain like the clanging of a loud church bell. Questions vibrate in your head like these, “Is this ministry position really for me?” “What do I do first?” or “What’s next?” and “How do I know I’ll be successful?” Ken also didn’t know the answers to the questions that were haunting him, “How can I help the other men’s ministry workers that I recruit?” and “Where do I go to get help in my situation?”

You may not see yourself in some similar new leadership position like Ken but the reaction and needs are similar if you find yourself in a new leadership opportunity. Questions pop into your head and you search for the answers.

Lying deep underneath these questions, most new and existing ministry leaders believe in their hearts that they do not just want go through the motions of ministry. Instead they want to become much more than that. They desire to become ministry leadership champions who find God’s pleasure as good and faithful servants. That’s where coaching can be of help.

Let’s move from Ken’s story to a real life situation. I say real life because this is one of my own stories. The following story is from my first leadership ministry as a new seminary graduate.

I was qualified with education but lacking in the experience and practical knowledge I needed for my new ministry as dean of students and instructor in Christian higher education at a Christian university in Canada. My wife and I will never forget that day in late August driving onto the small campus of Vancouver Bible College in Surrey, British Columbia. We were travel weary but excited to finally be there after seven days on the road with our three-week old daughter. Finally we had navigated a car and loaded rental truck on a 2,000 mile cross-country move through mountain passes and lush green valleys.

Our first greeting to campus came from a faculty member who thought I was a new student. After that awkward introduction and getting settled into our main floor suite in a house shared with an older single lady, I began to do my best and go through the motions of leadership and educational ministry. A short four months later, word came from the college

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president that the campus would be closing for good in May. From then on, my main ministry among many at the school would be to help students find new places to continue their education, all while I searched for another ministry opportunity where I could support my wife and daughter.

That experience was what I will call a pivotal point of need, not for more training nor for more good resources. My main need was not for someone who could tell me what to do next. I needed a coach who would walk alongside me to encourage and equip me in ministry leadership. And I desperately needed a friend who would have regular conversations with me in which he would ask me questions about what God was saying to me. My need was for someone to listen prayerfully and attentively, and pull out of me what I believed were my next steps in godly ministry leadership. But my answers wouldn't be enough to meet my need. I also needed to be held accountable for taking those next steps. I needed a coach to walk alongside me on my journey.

Looking back on this time in my life, I sure could have benefited from a ministry leadership coach. My need was to be asked questions, lots of questions, and listened to by a friend who sticks closer than a brother. I needed a coach/friend who would ask me questions like the following:

- “How did God show up for you this week?”
- “What do you need to focus on in developing this ministry?”
- “What resources do you need to assist you this year?”
- “Who do you know that might be able to help you in your situation?”
- “What is God saying to you in your current situation?”
- “Who will you recruit, coach, and equip to become student leaders?”
- “What top three issues or opportunities do you need to address this next year?”
- “What top two or three organizational structures or systems need to be developed in the next twelve months?”

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- “What one thing will increase your ministry effectiveness by at least 20% over the next school year?”
- “How are you maintaining balance between your marriage and family life and your new ministry?”

The answers would have come from me, and they would have been of great help to me and my new ministry. But looking back, in spite of lacking ministry leadership coaching, God used that experience to help instill within me a love for teaching, equipping others for ministry, and disciple-making. Good can come out of facing challenging situations without a coach. It's just that with ministry leadership coaching, I and the student leaders I helped would have probably been much more effective and fruitful in serving the Lord at that time. More spiritual growth and dependence on God probably would have occurred. I might even have become a ministry champion for the Lord in that situation.

If you are a pastor or leader in a church or Christian organization, no matter how experienced and well-trained you might be, you will benefit greatly from a ministry coach to help you become a ministry champion for the Lord. You can also help others you lead or your ministry peers by coaching them to become ministry champions as well.

Every ministry leader needs a ministry coach, but what does a ministry leadership coach do that makes coaching such an effective leadership tool? Let's start by asking an important question.

### **WHAT IS MINISTRY LEADERSHIP COACHING ALL ABOUT?**

Ministry leadership coaching is building a helping relationship that bring out the purpose, plans, and vision that God has placed in the heart of a ministry leader resulting in Spirit-led action. This is accomplished primarily by asking good questions, listening intently for the answers, and helping someone being coached take steps forward and upward toward God and His plans. The focus of this coaching relationship is on the person or team being coached, for they set the agenda of coaching sessions.

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The essence of coaching is helping an individual or team move ideas and dreams from the heart to the head and then to the hands and feet. Ministry leadership coaching only works when you help your friend move his ideas, hopes, and dreams out of his heart and mind into his hands and feet for action. Therefore, the coach works to help bring out of his friend or a ministry leadership team what God has already put into their heart and mind.

The assumption behind this kind of coaching is that God loves us so much that He puts his purpose, plans, and vision into the hearts of church leaders. The Holy Spirit then uses ministry coaching guided by prayer and the word of God to help a leader take action steps forward toward success in ministry. Thus the goal of coaching ministry leaders is to partner with God in creating ministry champions. Ministry leadership coaching is therefore the guided discovery of what God has said He has done in the New Testament book of Ephesians: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)

Ministry coaching works first of all through prayer and a deep dependence on God to show pastors and ministry leaders what are these good works. They will be unique to each person, each ministry, and each church or Christian organization. However, it is important to remember that these unique good works are planned by God. In fulfilling God’s plans, He wants us to be His ministry champions. Coaching ministry champions requires a partnership with a purpose.

Like the Apostle Paul, we who are ministry leaders need the help of a Barnabas, a son (or daughter) of encouragement, who will coach us into Holy Spirit-led action. In the New Testament, Barnabas was a courageous man of God who came alongside of Saul of Tarsus to encourage and equip him to become Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles. It’s obvious from the New Testament accounts of the ministry of Barnabas to Paul that Barnabas put his ministry focus not on himself but on the new believers he would be coaching and discipling. At the heart of ministry coaching is humble servitude that puts others first.

Finally, the coaching relationship assumes that the best way to help a person or a team discover and accomplish God's will and plans is for the coach to ask guided questions and listen with focus and reflection. The coach then holds the individual or team accountable for developing and achieving goals and objectives that those being coached develop with God's help. Coaching ministry leaders has its benefits.

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COACHING?**

There are several benefits of ministry coaching, just as there are benefits to other kinds and ways of helping ministry leaders. Some of the main benefits of helping leaders increase their ministry effectiveness become evident during the coaching relationship and the coaching conversations.

Ministry coaching allows the person or team being coached to develop a plan for action that is led by the Holy Spirit. The person being coached is responsible to come up with his own goals and actions. This means that ministry coaching may cause the church or ministry leader to better own the ministry and the outcome. For example, as an intentional interim pastor, I coach my assigned church pastor search team to follow a search protocol where each step or goal belongs to the members of the team. Members of this team need to own the process. How and when team members arrive at their plan to accomplish the search protocol comes from their training, teamwork, resourcing decisions, and most of all, the leading of the Holy Spirit. With effective coaching, the pastor search team members follow their leading by the Holy Spirit and the result of the prayers, discussions, and decisions they make themselves. It's not the coach's decision on the what, when, where, who and how to accomplishing their goals. It's the team's decision and they arrive at that decision in agreement that it comes from the Lord. Proverbs 16:9 puts it this way: "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps."

Coaching a ministry leader works to help a church or ministry organization in many ways, and the benefits to the church are many. What follows is a testimony from the church chairman and his wife from a congregation in Kansas that was in transition between pastors. The pastor search team was coached by me during weekly meetings.

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(Our coach's) work with our church helped us to see our weakest areas, set a plan to work on those areas and take steps to better health in our church body. The work we did while (he) was with us helped to prepare us for the new pastor. Now that our new pastor is here, we have an identity for who God has called us to be that isn't dependent on one person. This is vital to our overall health and effectiveness, and we feel our coach and his giftings allowed us to get to this place. - Brent and Cindy Wichert (Brent was church chairman and member of the pastor search team)

Do you have a dream for your current ministry or a new ministry? Maybe it comes in a recurring thought or idea that just keeps repeating itself over time and place. You've checked it out with the Scriptures and there's nothing about it that would violate the principles and commands of the Word of God. It might be a beginning vision for something that you could champion for the Lord and His Kingdom. You just don't know what to do about it. You don't need someone to tell you what to do and how to do it, because it's yours for your unique situation and for God's Kingdom. This is the time for you to begin a conversation with a ministry leadership coach. Give it a try.

### **HOW DOES MINISTRY LEADERSHIP COACHING DIFFER FROM OTHER KINDS OF COACHING OR HELPING RELATIONSHIPS?**

There are many similarities between coaching ministry leaders and other kinds of coaching. How is ministry coaching different from other forms of coaching or helping? Let me suggest a few examples, some of which are not necessarily related to ministry leadership, but nonetheless have some elements of coaching that are applicable to ministry leaders and teams.

#### **Coaching sports**

The first example of coaching is perhaps most common of all. Look around and you will see different kinds of athletic or personal fitness coaches at work. Whether it's football, tennis, cross-country, basketball,

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soccer, cycling, the triathlon, track and field, or any other serious sport, they all have coaches. I'm very biased as a Cornhusker fan, so I'll start in Lincoln, Nebraska, for an example.

One of my favorite sport coaches who helped create champions and championship teams is Coach Tom Osborne, now the retired head football coach and athletic director of the University of Nebraska. Coach Osborne's teams won three national football championships. He was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1999. The NU Memorial Stadium now proudly carries his name. It may not be an overstatement to say that the majority of people born and raised in the Cornhusker state know the name Coach Osborne and can recognize him in a crowd. He's a follower of Jesus and a true football coaching champion.

What I find especially interesting about Coach Osborne was his use of the psychology of coaching to win so many games and help so many football players and other coaches take steps to become their best. He was able to take athletic farm boys from Nebraska and help turn them into top-level football players, many of whom ended up playing professional football. He saw the potential in each member of the team and went to work coaching and encouraging them into greatness. As the head coach, Coach Osborne shaped the culture of the Cornhuskers football team just like ministry leadership champions shape the culture of their church or organization. In your church or ministry organization, good coaching is about developing a culture of creating ministry champions who help advance the Kingdom of God in their sphere of service for the Lord.

Coaches of sport teams and players focus on training and enhancing athletic skill sets and performance. The best ones also emphasize character and other qualities no matter what the level of athleticism or possession of skill sets that are required for a particular sport. They also work on the head and heart of the players helping equip them to be champions at their sport and in life.

Good coaching of any kind aims at helping athletes work to increase performance levels and outcomes. Coaches who create champions also

emphasize teamwork. For example, take the importance of team unity in sports. Coach Osborne was one of the best in that area of coaching. He coached his teams toward unity. Here is what he said in his own words:

We do everything possible to create an environment that will promote unity. The more our players care, understand, and share a common purpose, the stronger the team. It's also important to affirm the players with encouraging words and gestures. Hopefully, with the proper support, they will develop a sense of confidence as a team.<sup>1</sup>

Wise pastor and Christian leaders would do well to practice what Coach Osborne preached. The bottom line of coaching athletes is one or more of the following metrics: improving skills and talent, finishing a contest, making the team, becoming part of the starting lineup, achieving a personal best, breaking a record, winning a trophy, claiming a championship, or wearing a gold medal. The emphasis is on performance enhancement and skill development. Good coaches in sports are indispensable for accomplishing these goals. They produce champions. Those who would coach ministry leaders to become champions would do well to learn from athletic coaches who produce champions and championship teams.

### **Coaching business leaders and managers**

Another form of coaching is business or management coaching. Business leaders and top-level managers use coaching to improve employee performance and increase the bottom line of their company. The Harvard Business Essentials book, *Coaching and Mentoring: How to Develop Top Talent and Achieve Stronger Performance*, describes business coaching this way:

Coaching is an activity through which managers work with subordinates to foster skill development, impart knowledge, and inculcate values and behaviors that will help them achieve organizational goals and prepare them for more challenging assignments.<sup>2</sup>

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Does business coaching work to improve performance and outcomes? Consider the following results of a study on the effectiveness of coaching in the business world:

In 2015, Price Waterhouse Coopers and the Association Resource Center were commissioned by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) to conduct a global study on individual executive coaching. The results reveal a return on investment (ROI) of seven times the initial cost investment in coaching. Over a quarter of clients who received coaching reported a stunning ROI of 10 to 49 times the cost. The study results also highlight the benefits to the client. Measurable benefits include the following: greater productivity; greater efficiency; higher employee engagement; higher employee retention; increased revenue; and increased profitability. Intangible but impactful benefits include: greater self-awareness; improved relationships; greater job satisfaction; healthier teamwork; less stress; and better health.<sup>3</sup>

The bottom line in business management is the financial return on investment, but the benefits for the coaching client and for the company culture may be even more important for helping leaders produce future creativity, growth, performance, productivity, and even survival.

Although only a few small studies have been done on coaching pastors and Christian ministry leaders, similar positive results have been discovered. What could be your church-wide and community-wide returns on your spiritual investment in coaching your ministry leaders?

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring is another set of skills that can be used to help others achieve their best in life and service. This kind of people-helping requires one-on-one conversations with someone who has more experience and wisdom helping another with less experience and wisdom.

Ron Lee Davis, author of the book, *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master*, defines mentoring this way: “(Mentoring is) a process of opening our lives to others, of sharing our lives with others; a process of living

for the next generation.”<sup>24</sup> Another author, Bob Biehl, adds to our understanding of Christian mentoring with his definition: “mentoring is a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential.”<sup>25</sup>

The good mentor is someone you appreciate and value for their experience, wisdom, character, and walk with God. You trust a mentor because they have a godly character and are a devoted Christ-follower. Think for a moment about your favorite Bible characters. Which ones do you consider to be your mentors?

Jesus is arguably my greatest mentor, but second to our Lord in my opinion is the apostle Paul whose stories and writings are found in the New Testament. The disciples and followers of Jesus and Paul when they lived in the days of the New Testament are numerous. Search the New Testament for the stories of Paul’s mentoring and you will discover many insights into the power and influence of mentoring. For example, I have learned much from reading the stories and writings of the apostle Paul about having courage and perseverance in the face of opposition. Following are some models from the life and ministry of the apostle Paul for effective Christ-centered mentoring:

Paul mentored young Timothy as you can see from the following Scripture text:

“I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (2 Timothy 1:3-7)

Paul also mentored Titus. Just look at his words in Scripture that reflect the fruit of his mentoring influence on Titus:

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I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps? (2 Corinthians 12:18)

Paul's relationship with the believers in Corinth is highlighted in Scripture as well. These powerful words give us insight into the heart of this great mentor: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1) The study of God's word is a good place to start to learn about mentoring ministry leaders.

Mentoring can also be done via the writing or recorded voice of someone who has more experience and wisdom than the person being mentored. Some of the best mentors for pastors and Christian leaders can also be people who are now with the Lord in heaven and therefore no longer with us. Who are the great preachers and writers that lived long ago but whose influence on your life is still there?

Think of some of the great men in ministry over the centuries including the current time. Here is a list of some I value as my mentors for life and ministry: Chuck Swindoll, John MacArthur, Billy Graham, Andrew Murray, Charles H. Spurgeon, George Muller, Hudson Taylor, Martin Luther, W.A. Criswell, Dwight Moody, Tim Keller, and Haddon Robinson.

These men have been mentors to me in various ways over my ministry career. Swindoll, Robinson, and Spurgeon have mentored me in expository preaching skills and techniques through their preaching through their recorded and written sermons and lessons. MacArthur and Luther have mentored me in the centrality of the Word of God in life and ministry through their writing and MacArthur's recorded sermons. Graham has mentored me in the priority of evangelism and the power of the gospel through his preaching, writing, and godly example. Murray and Muller have mentored me in the power of prayer through their books and writings. Taylor and Keller have mentored me in the importance of both local and global missions through their writings and Keller's recorded sermons and books. God has used these mentors and others to mold me and mentor me to be a servant of Jesus who loves my Lord and His church. Think of the men and women of God who have mentored you in various ways through their writing or recorded voices.

## *What is Leadership Coaching?*

I also think of some godly men who are maybe less known than those mentioned above, but more importantly, they are mentors that I have personally known and loved. These are men who have mentored me through their conversations, writings, teaching, preaching, godly lives, ministry, and friendship: Pat and Vinnie Carlson, two brothers who loved their Lord, their church, and their pastor, and considered my family and me to be part of their family. I also think of seminary professors Walt Kaiser and Ken Kantzer who always drove me to the text of Scripture, and modeled a deep love for the written and living word of God. Then there were laymen and brothers Mel and Ken Loge, real churchmen who fueled the flame of church planting within my heart and inspired me to be faithful until the end of this life and earthly ministry. I could mention many more mentors who had a great impact on my life and ministry and who continue to shape my life and ministry. I encourage you to think of those men or women of God who have mentored you and became a Barnabas or son of encouragement for you in life and ministry.

The bottom line of mentoring followers of Jesus is one or more of the following metrics found in those who have been blessed by one or more godly mentors:

- Growth in Christian character and maturity from instruction and example
- Servant leadership following the example of the mentor becoming a mentor to others
- Not repeating the sins and mistakes of others in positions of ministry leadership
- Improving ministry skills
- Overcoming the dark side of ministry and finishing well
- Having the benefit of a lifelong Christ-centered relationship with someone who is wiser and more mature

### **Discipling**

Discipling is a by-product of obeying the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ found in all four Gospels including Matthew 28:18-20. It

is part of the disciple-making commanded by our Lord Jesus and involves helping new believers grow into spiritual maturity, multiply disciples, and become more like Jesus.

Discipling, also known as discipleship, can be defined in this way: the process of helping a new Christian become a devoted follower of Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord. This is done through an intentional process of helping others grow and mature spiritually through spiritual disciplines while multiplying other disciples as followers of Jesus.

The work of disciple-making begins when you, as a growing follower of Jesus, initiate a redemptive relationship with someone by sharing your own life and testimony of becoming a believer. Prayer is essential in the beginning of discipling as well as throughout the process of helping that person take life-changing steps of faith in Jesus. Once that person personally receives the saving grace of God through faith in all that Christ is and has done, you continue to help that young believer walk with God and intentionally keep growing in Christ. Like the Apostle Paul, you say, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1) God’s plan is for disciples to make more disciples of Jesus who make more disciples. A disciple-making relationship can take many forms including the regular use of coaching conversations.

Gary Rohrmayer describes the process of discipleship in a tract I highly recommend you use in discipling titled, “The Spiritual Journey Guide.”<sup>6</sup> It offers a description of moving from being a searcher to becoming a follower of Jesus. In this process, Rohrmayer identifies the following seven stages:

1. A searcher who is not interested – they may be aware of Jesus but may not be very interested in knowing more. This is the resisting stage.
2. A seeker who is curiously seeking – they may realize there is more to life than what is seen. This is the questioning stage.
3. A seeker who is searching assertively – they are taking needed steps to find answers. This is the responding stage.

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4. A person who makes a faith commitment – they do so because of the realization that they are powerless to achieve God’s forgiveness. This is the embracing stage.
5. A believer who has begun to experience new life– they have entered into a mentoring relationship with another believer. This is the adjusting stage.
6. A believer who is growing in community – they are growing in intimacy with God through prayer, Bible study, and a deepening relationship with other Jesus followers in a local church. This is the stabilizing stage.
7. A believer who is living missionally – they crave intimacy with God through spiritual disciplines and share their faith and disciples others. This is the reproducing stage.

A disciple of Jesus helps others to become disciples in obedience to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) and the Great Commandments to love God and love others (Matt. 22:37-39). Christian leaders need to excel with God’s help in being examples for others in knowing and following Jesus.

You might agree that any ministry leader needs a ministry coach and one or more mentors, some of whom may be with the Lord in heaven already. You may also agree that a Pastor or ministry leader needs to have one or more ministry peers to help them continue to grow in maturity in Christ through discipleship. And since God has designed us as adults to learn best by doing, you probably agree that God’s Great Commission commands us to help make and multiply disciples while we are being coached, mentored, and disciplined. But what is the difference?

## **HOW DOES MINISTRY COACHING DIFFER FROM MENTORING OR DISCIPLING?**

God has given us many ways to help one another grow as followers of Jesus and become more effective at leading churches or ministries whether large or small. But I want the remainder of this book to focus

on coaching ministry leaders and developing leaders through ministry coaching. Let's wrap up this chapter by looking at the uniqueness of coaching in a ministry leader context.

Unlike mentoring, coaching puts the one being coached first. The skillful coach asks questions of you while you are being coached and then spends up to 80% of the time listening intently to answers in a coaching conversation. Coaching is not about the knowledge or wisdom of the coach – it's about the person being coached having their own ideas, hopes, dreams, and plans generated by the Holy Spirit and acting on them, all in the context of a helping and encouraging relationship.

Here is the key difference between mentoring and coaching. In mentoring, either the mentor or the one being mentored sets the agenda, and the mentor provides wisdom, knowledge and skill training for the one being mentored where needed. In coaching, the person being coached sets the agenda, expectations, goals, and actions, not the coach.

Ministry leadership coaching can take place in a variety of settings. The most commonly used setting is in one-to-one meetings. Ministry coaching can also be used effectively in small groups or ministry teams. Examples include transition teams, church boards, pastor search teams, and ministry team leaders, to name a few.

The kind of coaching we are talking about in this book can also occur among peer groups where the participants coach one another, provided those participating receive some training or basic orientation in coaching skills. To be most effective, it is recommended that peer groups who meet for coaching by one another be limited to two or three people who are committed to a healthy coaching process.<sup>7</sup>

Ministry coaching focuses primarily on skill development and planning. Coaching is uniquely designed to help the one being coached develop, sharpen, and use leadership skills while setting and achieving goals. Accountability is built into effective ministry coaching by the use of questions or statements during the coaching conversation such as

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“What challenges did you face in completing the assignment you were given during our last meeting?” and “What was your biggest takeaway from reading that website I suggested?”

The coach in a ministry relationship focuses on the primary skills of intercessory prayer, asking effective coaching questions, listening intently, and helping the person being coached to formulate and apply a plan of action to accomplish his or her vision.

Finally, ministry coaching is short-term while mentoring is long-term, even for a lifetime. Generally speaking, a coaching relationship is based on a contract with a focus determined by the person being coached. Because of the specific focus, coaching may last for only one session or it may go on for up to about two years. The coaching relationship, focus, and effectiveness needs to be evaluated by the client in collaboration with the coach at an agreed upon time to see what can be improved and how much longer the coaching is to continue.

## **HOW DO I BEGIN TO PUT COACHING INTO ACTION?**

Effective ministry leadership coaching can help you move from being a follower to a leader to a ministry champion in your church or ministry. If coaching ministry leaders is new to you, start with self-coaching. At the end of each chapter in this book, there are some suggested self-coaching questions that might be of help to you. But first try with the following example.

Take a look at your personal mission and vision statements if you have them. Ask God to help you evaluate how you are doing in accomplishing them. Then consider what is your next step arriving at your destination as stated in your mission and vision statements if you have them written. This will help you determine how ministry leadership coaching might help. If you have not written your personal mission or purpose and vision, your next step should be where you start in developing a God-given direction for your life and ministry.<sup>8</sup>

## Creating Ministry Champions

Ask yourself some hard questions about your mission and vision statements. For example, “How did I include prayer and Bible study in arriving at these statements?” “How do these statements accurately reflect who I am in the eyes of God?” “How do they reflect what I believe God has planned for me to accomplish for his glory?” “How do they provide me with a foundation on which to plan my life and ministry in stages of spiritual growth and development?” And, after reading my statements, “How do they help me answer the questions, ‘What business for the Lord am I in?’ and ‘How’s business?’ ”

Then begin or continue your coaching adventure by using a coach to come alongside you in life and ministry, or find one and begin a new coaching relationship. Every pastor or leader of a Christian group or organization needs a good coach. Finally, share with another what coaching is all about and how you can help them through coaching.

The next chapter in this book will unfold what is needed in the heart and mind of a coach of ministry leaders and teams. It will help you answer the question, “Where and how do I see the qualities mentioned in my life and ministry at the current time?” But before you jump to the next chapter, try out the ministry self-coaching questions at the end of this chapter based on what you’ve just read. Each chapter will have some more self-coaching questions to help you take action as well as a short list of coaching questions or statements to use with a friend, all derived from the contents of your reading.

**MINISTRY SELF-COACHING QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 1:**

- What issues am I currently facing that need the help of a personal ministry coach?
- What areas of my personal life need some coaching help if I am to grow as a follower of Jesus and disciple-maker?
- Who can I contact about being my ministry coach if I don't currently have one?
- How has personal ministry coaching been of help to me and/or my church or ministry in the past?
- What have I learned from coaching in the past that might be of help to me right now as I lead my ministry, church, or organization?
- Who am I currently coaching? Or, who might I contact about coaching them in ministry leadership?
- Take a moment to reflect on who my top mentors have been in my life and ministry (Select one who is currently mentoring me; select another who has mentored me through their writing or recordings). For each, list the top three lessons learned and applied in my life.
- What would it take for me to increase my effectiveness as a ministry leader by 20%?
- What three things can I do now to challenge and support people in achieving their personal and organizational performance objectives? What has to change in my life for that to happen?
- What's the first step I need to take in order to structure my church or ministry so that ministry team leaders are coaching their teams?

## **COACHING QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER 1 TO USE**

### **WITH OTHERS:**

- What is your personal mission statement or purpose and how has that influenced your personal leadership?
- What is your church or ministry mission statement or purpose and how has that influenced your personal leadership?
- If you do not currently have a ministry coach, who can you contact to discuss your need? Give at least three options.
- What are your personal metrics for evaluating your ministry leadership performance?
- List areas of your life and ministry that you are dealing with right now where you would benefit most from a coach?
- What character from the Bible has been your best biblical mentor? What is the best lesson about ministry leadership you have learned from that leader that you have begun to apply in your life and ministry?
- What is the most important issue you are currently facing in your ministry leadership that could best be addressed with the help of a coach?
- What would it take for you to increase your effectiveness as a ministry leader by 20%?
- Who are three ministry leaders with whom you would like to start a coaching relationship so that they can benefit from your coaching?
- What three things can you do now to challenge and support people in achieving their personal and organizational performance objectives? What has to change in your life for that to happen?