

TEAMS Elders Meetings 2024

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Impetus for Elders/Lay Training

To obey Christ's command to take the gospel to the world (Matthew 28:18-20), the local church needs more workers and a team approach to doing ministry. Jesus' words are still true today that "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Luke 10:2 NIV).

To fulfill the mission of Christ and reach new communities for God, local churches need more part-time and volunteer leaders who can preach, do the work of evangelism, administrate and care for the membership of local churches. These proficiency areas are covered with the TEAMS acronym with each letter standing for an area of training (T – Teaching/Preaching; E – Evangelism/Engagement; A – Administration; M – Member care; and S – Spirituality of the leader). This packet includes suggestive helps and resources to begin meeting the need for more lay training. A more in-depth training course is available for those wishing to pursue being a Volunteer Lay Pastor (VLP). Please feel free to contact your Pastor to express your interest in further trainings to pursue VLP ministry. More resources on preaching, and other areas of ministry, are available online at this web link:
<https://www.ministryteams.org/teams-resources.html>.

Purpose and Overview of this Material

Purpose: To provide basic proficiency in preaching concepts and a tangible process that can be repeated weekly, monthly or periodically when developing sermons for a local church's worship service.

Overview of sessions¹:

1. Biblical Rationale for TEAMS
2. Getting Started / Studying the Text
3. Drafting the Outline
4. Choosing Illustrations/Revising the Outline

Suggested Additional Reading:

Bresee, W. Floyd (1997). *Successful Lay Preaching*. Silver Spring, MD: The Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Robinson, Haddon W. (2001). *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages, 2nd Edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Wibberding, James Richard (2006). *Learn to Preach Before Next Weekend*. Telford, PA: Big Fish Publishing, Inc.

Web Based Resources: Go to www.ministryteams.weebly.com

¹ Some of the packet was developed by adapting materials produced by the North American Division that were accessed at this website: www.ifollowdiscipleship.org.

Session 1: Focus on Spirituality and Bible Concepts

Theme Song

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven And spoke your name into the night
Then through the darkness
Your loving kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven
The king of kings calls me His own
Beautiful savior, I'm yours forever Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the roaring lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me Jesus, yours is the victory, whoa!

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ, my living hope

Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow.
You washed it white as snow You are my living hope²

I. Spirituality of the Leader

A. Gospel of John Scripture Journal – Take some time to reflect on John 1:1-18. Ask

1. What are you saying to me through this text?

2. What specifically does this text have to do with my life?

3. What is your invitation to me from this text?

B. Share your answers as God leads

C. Resource: *God Still Lives: Even When You Wonder* by Don Maclafferty.

² From https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxkANq_oclo&list=RDkxkANq_oclo&start_radio=1. Accessed 12/8/2023.

II. Biblical Rationale for TEAMS

Old Testament Concepts

1. Genesis 1:26 – There appears to be a “counsel” that involved more than one Being as expressed by the word “us”.
2. Genesis 11:9 – There again appears to be a “counsel” where the Lord converses with others and says “let us go down, and there confound their language”. This occurs at the Tower of Babel which is an attempt to undermine a the team system of God because in Genesis 10:10 Nimrod is mentioned as the King. And it should be noted that this is a modification of the family focused/team approach that was to usher in the Messiah (Genesis 3:15).
3. See Chapter 2 of the Miller Dissertation document for more details on the plurality of God.
4. **Implication:** Man was made in the image of God (1:26) and therefore a plurality would exist in the planning and carrying out of the work God intended them to do.
5. What was the work of that God gave to man in Eden? Genesis 2:15 says to “tend” and to “keep” it (the Garden). There are some important nuances to note: a. “Tend” – same as in Exodus 3:12 and has a worship association b. “Keep” – “to guard” and linked to the Levitical system of work/worship in Numbers 3:7-8 and 18:7).
7. Humans were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and the statement of God that “it is not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18) is telling: the work of God was never intended to be a “solo” endeavor.
8. After the Edenic ideal was established and the fact that humans needed to work together to accomplish the tasks of God seems to have been forgotten at times. However, God never forgot this ideal! One can continue to see Him lift up the ideal of the family unit through patriarchs and prophets. And one paramount example later in the Old Testament is God’s attempt to re-establish the priesthood of ALL of His people when He brought them out of Egypt (more below).
9. **Implication:** ALL of humanity was to worship and work for the Lord in a team fashion.
10. Exodus 18-19: God tells Moses of His desire that all the people would be to Him a “kingdom of priests, and an holy nation,” and He wished to speak to them ALL directly (Exodus 19:9). However, this is clearly not realized as can be seen when reading the rest of the chapter and continuing on to the Ten Commandments in chapter 20. One wonders if leadership set up the nation to reject hearing directly from God. What I mean is: If Moses had waited for the Lord to work out the leadership structure instead of complaining and having the 70 elders appointed, would the nation have had a different perception of God’s magnificent appearance on the Mountain? Would they have understood that it was possible for them to hear directly from God and be His nation of priests? Or did leadership give the impression through their actions that only certain individuals would be able to do it? *This does not deny that there must be a leadership structure of some kind, but does deny the idea that God never wanted to have a nation of priests.
11. **Implications** – It appears that God has an ideal even when the work gets complicated and enlarged: that ALL would be involved with the work, even though there would be key leaders facilitating the work.

New Testament Concepts

1. Matthew 10 – Jesus did not “solo” the gospel commission but instead developed a team. He then sent them out 2x2. They replicated this model later as the Gospel spread (see Acts). This is why Matthew 28 is a commission given to ALL members – all were to be disciplemakers.
2. Pentecost a. Acts 1:12-14 – The Apostles AND others are together with the Lord b. Acts 1:15 – There are 120 awaiting the infilling and ALL were filled (Acts 2:1-4). c. Acts 2:17 – The infilling of Jesus’ disciples was a partial fulfillment of Joel. Joel 2 states that the ALL flesh will prophesy. Peter does so in Acts 2 and 3,000 respond as he points them to Jesus (2:41). These individuals were from various nations and spoke different dialects. They would be used by God to spread the gospel to those in their homelands and beyond.
3. Acts 2:42 – What holds the new discipleship teams/groups together? Jesus
4. Acts 3:11 – Peter and John are described as a ministry team (also in 8:14). The result of their ministry (and those of all the other disciples) is that multitudes of “men and women” were added to the Lord.

5. Acts 6:1-7 – Multitudes were added to the Lord and some needed assistance from others in the church. As a result, what we would call “deacons” were set aside. They were known to be godly and were amongst the “disciples” (6:2). The goal was a practical one: the Apostles would continue in the work of proclamation/healing while the service of needs would be done by this group. Here we see the beginning of the establishment of a two-designation leadership system: Apostles and Deacons. All were disciples, but there were now different functions due to the number of believers.
6. Acts 11:25-26 – Paul and Barnabas are mentioned as another team of Apostles.
7. Acts 14:21-27 – Apostles travel and encourage while in verse 23 it states that “elders” are ordained in “every church”. At this point churches are primarily meeting in homes with a public ministry seems to take place at the synagogue or other locations.
8. Acts 15:36-41 – Two teams are established as a result of some friction.
9. Acts 16:1-5; 18:5 – A triad of Timothy, Paul and Silas is established. It appears from the reading of the rest of the New Testament that these triads had a training purpose: two “seasoned” workers would have a younger apprentice that they would take with them in order to equip that person for future ministry.
10. Acts 18:1-4, 18 – Triad of ministry with Paul/Aquila and Priscilla. All three labored and found their sustenance from their trade.
11. Acts 18:24-28 – Triad of Apollos/Aquila and Priscilla.
12. Acts 20 – Paul prepared believers for 3 years, prayed for them and left for missionary work.
13. Acts 21-28 – The plural “we” is utilized by the author of Acts (Luke) and shows another “team” partnership: Luke and Paul.
14. **Conclusions:** The book of Acts appears to show the fluid and shifting nature of teams forming in response to the needs of the people that these teams are preaching to & healing. It also seems that while the ministry teams varied from 2-3 people, all disciples were to participate in the ministry of Jesus. Last, we begin to see the formation of a leadership structure in the book of Acts as the work progresses: Church planters/missionaries, ordaining elders in every church, deacons to assist with physical needs, and (though Acts 15 is not detailed in this overview), an administrative council of sorts for dealing with issues effecting the whole work. Administration and other levels of leadership are established in order to develop systems that will remove hindrances in the work – hence they have an important role. However, as history progresses, hierarchy and positions of power/influence begin to be emphasized over the commission given to ALL believers. Though hierarchical modality seemed to permeate Christendom, it did not possess it in totality.³

III. Lineage Season 1 Episode 2⁴

1. What kind of school was established by Columba? _____
2. In what practical ways could I be a “missionary” in the areas I have an influence in?
3. What ways can I have an influence for Christ beyond my immediate area?

IV. Website Resources⁵

1. Go to www.ministryteams.weebly.com and click on “Biblical Rationale”
2. Scroll down to 2nd category entitled, “Returning to an Early Adventist Model”. Read “Back to the Future”.

³ Find a full outline of the Biblical Rationale for TEAMS ministry online at www.ministryteams.weebly.com and click on the “Biblical Rationale” tab.

⁴ Available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yldHLLaMfIM>. Or you can go to www.youtube.com and do a search for “Lineage Journey” and look for episode 2 entitled, “St Columba & Iona Scotland - Celtic Church Missionary”. Accessed 12/8/23.

⁵ See Appendix for one article on how the Seventh-day Adventist Church formed it’s ministerial identity.

Staying Connected Devotional Guide

Praise: Begin time in your journal praising or complimenting God. Like compliments, praise is to ascribe “worth” to God. Not just thanking Him for what He has done (though this is important), but expressing gratefulness for WHO He is. Such compliments and appreciation are usually a part of deep relationships (more than between spouses = Ephesians 5:26-33). This involves at least two elements:

1. This takes time and stillness. It is talking and listening (Psalm 4:4; 46:10)
2. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him.—(*Gospel Workers*, 34, 35.)

Text: Write out the text word-for-word. Circle and underline parts that stand out to you. Draw pictures of what He brings to mind.

Questions: Write them one at a time in your journal and leave room to write under them what He says *through the text*.

1. Lord, what are you saying to me?

Ex: Psalm 91:1 - I AM your secret place. I am your shield and shelter.

2. What does this have to do with my life?

Ex: Today I will guide, direct and protect you.

3. Lord, what is your invitation?

Ex: Come to me. Spend time with me. . .

Praise: As you end a time with God, sing songs of praise. From your Hymnal/songbook, sing along with a audio/video version of a song, or just sing what God brings to your heart. Enter His court with praise and exit with praise.

Throughout the day: After the time with God, recall the text throughout the day. You may even find that God has prepared you for the day with the special text!

Sessions 2-3: Studying and Sharing the Bible

I. *Mini-Handbook on Bible Study* pages 23-26

Details to Watch for in Bible Study

Pay attention to details. They are often keys that help unlock the answers we're searching for.

Watch for Comparisons

Let's look at Malachi 3:2, 3: "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For **He is like** a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness."

In the passage above, the bold words highlight comparisons. Christ is compared to a refiner's fire. This is significant. If we research the old-fashioned process of silver refining, we learn that a silversmith must hold the silver under the hottest part of the fire to burn away all the impurities. This takes time. The silversmith knows he has accomplished his purpose when he sees a reflection of himself in the silver. Hence God seeks to refine and purify us, even through fire, that His righteousness might be reflected in us.

What meaningful insights may be found in simple comparisons! Look for others as you study.

Any ideas from this text/suggestion that you could share with others?

Watch for Contrasts

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, **but** of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

Here we see the “spirit of fear” contrasted with the spirit of “power and of love and of a sound mind.” Therefore, if we have the spirit of fear, we know we didn’t get that from God but from the enemy. That’s a valuable gold nugget we can apply to our lives today. Scripture abounds with other contrasts between good and evil, obedience and rebellion, light and darkness—pay attention to distinctions.

Watch for Cause-and-Effect Indicators

Whenever we see a word such as “therefore,” we need to ask ourselves, *What is the therefore there for?* Are two seemingly separate thoughts being tied together through cause and effect?

One example is the Sermon on the Mount, in which the *therefore(s)* connect passages that might otherwise seem unrelated. Consider Matthew 5:23, 24: “**Therefore** if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” This passage is often used alone, but the word *therefore* ties it to the preceding verses about anger. This bears further investigation.

Depending on your Bible version, other cause-and-effect words to look for include *so*, *hence*, *consequently*, *thus*, and *as a result*.

Any ideas from this text/suggestion that you could share with others?

Watch for Expressions of Time

Watch for words related to time, such as *when*, *before/after*, or *until*. They hold clues about chronology, and they may provide spiritual insights you would otherwise overlook. Take Acts 1:8 (KJV) as an example: “But ye shall receive power, **after** that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Note the word *after*. Unfortunately, we often try to become God’s witnesses *before* we have received His power. But if we pray, seek the Holy Spirit, and wait until *after* the Spirit has come upon us, we won’t be so futile in our endeavors. We are guaranteed the power, not just to be witnesses in our own community but throughout the earth. Now take note of the word *when* in the next verse (Acts 1:9). Do you see that this is the last promise Christ gave before He returned to heaven? Expressions of time reveal exciting truths throughout Scripture, especially in prophetic writings.

Watch for Types of the Antitype

A biblical *type* is a person, thing, or event in the Old Testament that foreshadows and shares characteristics with a person, thing, or event in the New Testament, called the *antitype*. The type (such as the Old Testament sacrificial system) might be considered a prophetic model that points forward to the antitype (such as the New Testament sacrifice of Christ on the cross). Types are more than straight metaphors; they are intended by God to prefigure the coming of Christ and the great spiritual truths of salvation.

As an example, consider the story of Abraham when called to sacrifice Isaac in Genesis 22. When he discovers the lamb in the thicket and sacrifices it instead, we recognize the lamb as a type that points to Christ, the Antitype, who would be sacrificed in our place. Search for more of these types as you read; for careful readers, this is one of the most exciting aspects of Bible study.

“There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme” (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 50).

Any ideas from this text/suggestion that you could share with others?

II. From Study to Sermon Part 1

Four Keys to Bible Interpretation

These four keys come partly from the book *Unlocking the Scriptures* by Hans Finzel as well as from a number of others too numerous to mention.

1. Start broad

Even though Scripture is “God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16), it is written in the form of human communication (2 Peter 2:21). You should seek to understand it on these terms. At present, that means understanding the whole before trying to explain the parts.

For example, in James 3 you should read the whole book to see how this discourse on speech fits into James’ broader message. As you do, keep a notepad handy to record your findings. Without getting too specific, we can quickly observe that two grand themes of the book meet in chapter three. First, James argues that faith must show up in your deeds (2:14). Second, he contends that these deeds should include kindness to each other (4:11). It is a message of practical godliness—the good deeds of a Christian must include kind words.

No doubt, there are many other helpful connections between James 3 and the rest of the book but don’t confuse yourself with too broad a study until you have written two or three sermons. The goal is simply to understand the larger framework of your anchor text enough to be sure you won’t distort it.

2. Collect all the facts

The second key to careful study is to collect all the facts. With notepad in hand, begin to read just your anchor text. Read it like a story and see what facts jump off the page. If the text is a story, then it won’t be hard to read it like a story—obviously. But, if you have a text like Paul’s dissertation on sin in Romans 7:14-25, it might not seem so obvious. Yet, every text is a story, whether or not it is written like one. There is a story behind key words the author chooses and the people he addresses and why he says what he does. Quite often, these “hidden” stories are indirectly told in the text—you just have to dig for them. As you collect your facts, to uncover the story, begin by listing the characters. Include all the names, of course, but other key players (like the tongue in James 3) are also characters in the story. List them among the cast, since they play leading roles in the story. After you have identified all the actors, note what is said about each one. Next, record any other facts you can see, like when the “story” happened and where. Finally, list key words—words that repeat or seem loaded with meaning. As you reflect on these facts, with much prayer, an overall story or theme will emerge.

3. Outline the text

The third key is to outline the text. This is not a place for creativity. It is like looking over the terrain to draw a map. In this case, the map shows how the biblical author gets from his starting-point to his real point. To preserve the stage metaphor, we might also say it is like cataloguing the scenes in a play. In the best stories, one scene leads to the next and no scene is really expendable to the plot. If you miss a few scenes, you might not get the full force of the story’s end.

As you write your sermon, this catalogue of scenes from the text may serve as the framework of your sermon. Whether it does is your choice, but the story’s end—the point of the text—must always be the point of your sermon. An accurate text outline helps insure this.

4. Condense the point

You don’t fully understand the text until you can pack its message into a single, simple, memorable statement (the homiletical idea). Haddon W. Robinson, one of the teachers of preachers in our time, explains this process very simply.

According to Robinson’s formula, you should ask two questions of the text (Robinson, 2001, p. 41):

- a. First, what is the main subject the text is talking about? This is also called the **subject**
- b. Second, what does the rest of text say about the main subject? This is also called the **compliment**.

Learn to ask them of every text in order to begin to formulate and condense the point.

Does what I have studied speak to a **Life Question**? Ex: Where is God when all this chaos is going on in the Middle East? How can we stay relevant in such a digital world? Can the Bible provide promises to help me through the struggle I am having?. . . etc.

III. From Bible Study to Sermon part 2: Choose How You Will Share

Three Sermon Design Schemes

Preaching experts have catalogued thousands of structural schemes but this, too, is really quite simple. Three design schemes form the structure of most good sermons.

They all can be used to answer questions you or your audience are asking: **Life Questions**.

1. Presidential soapbox/Topical

The presidential soapbox is straightforward. In a president's soapbox speech, there is little question what his point is, from the start. He lays out his argument, complete with conclusion, and spends his speech telling you why he is right. The virtue of this design scheme is its clarity. You get the point. Its weakness is that curiosity dies. We know what he said so why listen? If you give the biblical answer early in your sermon, you will need other elements to keep people listening. Good stories or compelling applications will do the trick.

2. Explorer's quest/Narrative

The explorer's quest does exactly the opposite of the presidential soapbox. You keep them guessing 'till the end. In this design scheme, the guiding question takes over. You guide the audience through a string of discoveries that lead them ever closer to that eureka moment when they find the biblical answer. The entire sermon still builds toward a single, simple point but the listener doesn't know how the pieces fit together until the end. Suspense is the strength of this scheme because it keeps interest. Its weakness is that it takes more work to keep your purpose clear. The audience needs constant reminders of what you are searching for (i.e. what question you seek to answer).

3. Text-led sermon/Expository

The third scheme is the text-led sermon. You simply pick up the story of the text and tell it. That means, after you document the logical steps, or scenes, of the text, you simply build your sermon from its outline. Paint the scenes, add a few illustrations, make practical applications, and you have a sermon. This is the easiest design scheme to preach without notes. As you preach through the text, it reminds you of illustrations, transitions, and the rest. The downside of this scheme is that the approach of your specific text may not fit your audience, and you must make sure none of the bright ideas that occur to you in route are rabbit trails, lengthening your sermon for no good point. Note: To make the text fit your audience when it does not naturally do so is a term called eisegesis. This means that you are reading into (eis) the text rather than letting the message emerge from the text (exegesis). If you are always trying to make the text say what you want, then this is no longer about the Word of God, but the word of _____ (put your name here).

Which one to choose?

When a subject is complex, you need the clarity of the presidential soapbox scheme. If your audience is hostile to the message and you need to convince them before they know it, use the explorer's quest scheme—it allows them to see the real issues before they sign you off. And, if the text's structure answers well to these concerns,

use it. Once you have used each design, feel free to combine and experiment. For example, an explorer's quest may turn presidential soapbox half way through.

IV. Drafting an Outline or Using an Outline

A. Sample Outline

Freedom

Key passage: Luke 5:12-14

Subject: A man full of leprosy comes to Jesus seeking to be free from his disease

Compliment: Jesus touches him, speaks healing words and heals him.

Preaching Idea: No matter what shackles us or how alone we may feel at times, we can come to Jesus and find freedom!

Sermon Style: Explorer's Quest (Narrative) with some Text-Led and Presidential Soapbox components.

I. Introduction:

Depression, anxiety and suicide are on the rise since Covid-19 has become a prolonged reality [SOURCE_____]. Some of us as we continue in this mode will need counseling, a friend to pray with, etc., but what if that is not enough? **Where do we turn during times like these if we are feeling isolated, alone or shackled by fear?** [LIFE QUESTION]. I believe that as we look at an encounter with Jesus that we will find an answer for our situation today. . . *That no matter what shackles us or how alone we may feel at times, we can come to Jesus and find freedom!* [PREACHING IDEA]

II. A story of Freedom in Jesus

- A. A man that was "full" of leprosy "saw" and came to Jesus (Luke 5:12). We know from the context that he is an Israelite for he is familiar with the process and offering prescribed by Moses (5:14). But what *could* his journey have been like? Join me in considering what could have led up to this encounter with Jesus. I have chosen to call this man Abraham (Abraham).
- B. Prelude to the healing
 1. How would a man full of leprosy come to Jesus?
 2. Possible information that a commentary, Rabbinical writings or Desire of Ages sheds light on regarding the possible journey a leper could make to come to Jesus.
 3. Context of Luke 5 – Information before and after the passage.
 4. Imagine the journey to Jesus. . . !
- C. Freedom in Jesus
 1. Let's read Luke 5:12. He is willing to let Jesus do whatever He deems best for his situation. Are we willing to do so now? He trusts that Jesus can do what he deeply desires for his life, but places it in a simple trusting entreaty to Jesus.
 2. Luke 5:13 – Jesus doesn't just speak the word, He touches the leper. If we think that Jesus cannot touch our situation, then we are mistaken. That is the very reason why He came to this world – He did not give up anything, He risked all for US!
 3. Luke 5:13 – Freedom from the disease, the isolation, the feeling of condemnation comes – immediately! The rest of the story is a sermon for another time, but what a great journey Abraham has just begun!
 4. This experience can be ours, even now with this Covid-19 situation we are in. . .
- D. A story from my journey
- E. **No matter what shackles us or how alone we may feel at times, we can come to Jesus and find freedom! Whatever has befallen you, just come to Jesus and He can set you free.** [ANSWER TO THE LIFE QUESTION]

III. Conclusion: [APPLICATION OF THE LIFE QUESTION]

- A. Review the news article chosen[_____]. . . Jesus has an answer for this doesn't He?
- B. Apply it to my congregation: those who are fine right now, those who know Jesus and are lonely/struggling and those who do not know Jesus.
- C. Memorable concluding poem plus repeating the preaching idea: *No matter what shackles us or how alone we may feel at times, we can come to Jesus and find freedom!*

B. Your Outline

Text Chosen_____

What is the main idea of the text?_____

Draft an outline that includes: Life Question, Biblical Answer, Life Application.

- I. Introduction (strong story or illustration) that transitions to the Life Question
Story/Illustration chosen_____
- II. Life Question_____ (you or others could be asking)
- III. Biblical Answer: Let's turn to _____
 - A. Text _____ and illustration(s)_____
 - B. Text _____ and illustration(s)_____
 - C. Text _____ and illustration(s)_____

IV. Conclusion/Life Application

- A. Story or illustration that leads up to the application_____
- B. Practical application/call or conclusion_____

Choose what specific practical applications you will make:_____

Do you have a story or illustration that will lead up to this?_____

C. Bible Marking Outlines⁶

- 1. Are "topical" sermons.
- 2. You can take them and mark your Bible
- 3. Add opening and closing stories/illustrations and comments throughout. Practice. . .
- 4. Tie it all together with an application

⁶ This Bible marking series is authored by Jac Colon and used by permission. Email the pastor for a copy of all of these Bible Marking Outlines.

REVELATION NOW

REVELATION NOW

Bible Marking Lessons

By Jac Colon

- | | | |
|---|------|-------------------|
| 1. Creation | 1-CR | John 1:1-3, 14 |
| 2. The Fall of Man | 1-FM | Rev. 12:7-9 |
| 3. The Way to Life | 1-WL | 1 John 5:13 |
| 4. Israel in Prophecy | 1-IP | Gen. 3:15 |
| 5. The Lords Day | 1-LD | Rev. 1:10 |
| 6. The Law and Grace | 1-LG | Matt. 22:36-40 |
| 7. The First Day of the Week | 1-FD | Matt. 28:1 |
| 8. Keeping The Sabbath | 1-KS | Exodus 20:8-10 |
| 9. Life After Death | 1-SD | Gen. 2:7 |
| 10. The Second Coming of Jesus | 1-SC | Matt. 24:5 |
| 11. Signs of the End | 1-SE | Matt. 16:3 |
| 12. The Punishment of the Wicked | 1-PW | 2 Peter 3:7 |
| 13. The Three Angels | 1-TA | Rev. 14:14-20 |
| 14. The Antichrist | 1-AC | Rev. 13:1-3 |
| 15. The Mark of the Beast | 1-MB | Rev. 13:1,2 |
| 16. The Heavenly Sanctuary | 1-HS | Exo. 25:8,9 |
| 17. The Judgement Day | 1-JD | Ecclesiastes 3:17 |
| 18. The Church | 1-CH | Eph. 1:22 |
| 19. The Fall of Babylon | 1-FB | Rev. 14:8 |
| 20. Heaven | 1-HV | John 14:1-3 |
| 21. Bible Baptism | 1-BB | Eph. 4:4, 5 |
| 22. The Christian Life
(dress, entertainment, tithe) | 1-CL | Phil. 2:5-8 |
| 23. Christian Diet | 1-CD | 1 Cor. 10:31 |

Bible Marking Lessons

By Jac Colon

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|---|------|-------------------|
| 1. Creation | 1-CR | John 1:1-3, 14 |
| 2. The Fall of Man | 1-FM | Rev. 12:7-9 |
| 3. The Way to Life | 1-WL | 1 John 5:13 |
| 4. Israel in Prophecy | 1-IP | Gen. 3:15 |
| 5. The Lords Day | 1-LD | Rev. 1:10 |
| 6. The Law and Grace | 1-LG | Matt. 22:36-40 |
| 7. The First Day of the Week | 1-FD | Matt. 28:1 |
| 8. Keeping The Sabbath | 1-KS | Exodus 20:8-10 |
| 9. Life After Death | 1-SD | Gen. 2:7 |
| 10. The Second Coming of Jesus | 1-SC | Matt. 24:5 |
| 11. Signs of the End | 1-SE | Matt. 16:3 |
| 12. The Punishment of the Wicked | 1-PW | 2 Peter 3:7 |
| 13. The Three Angels | 1-TA | Rev. 14:14-20 |
| 14. The Antichrist | 1-AC | Rev. 13:1-3 |
| 15. The Mark of the Beast | 1-MB | Rev. 13:1,2 |
| 16. The Heavenly Sanctuary | 1-HS | Exo. 25:8,9 |
| 17. The Judgement Day | 1-JD | Ecclesiastes 3:17 |
| 18. The Church | 1-CH | Eph. 1:22 |
| 19. The Fall of Babylon | 1-FB | Rev. 14:8 |
| 20. Heaven | 1-HV | John 14:1-3 |
| 21. Bible Baptism | 1-BB | Eph. 4:4, 5 |
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1 Creation

Key: CR

1CR	John 1:1-3, 14	Who Was the Creator of the heavens and the earth? All things were Created by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father and the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2) were present at creation (let us make man in our image, v 26), but it is important to acknowledge the Son, before He became man, as Creator. See also Col. 1:15, 16
2CR	Gen. 1:1-5	What did God create on the first day? How long was a creation day? Evening and Morning (Darkness and Light) means one 24 hour day.
3CR	Gen 1:6-31	What did God create on days two through six? How long did it take God to create everything?
4CR	Gen 2:2,3	What did God do on the Seventh day? God did not rest because he was tired but he rested in his finished work, much like an artist rests when he puts down his brush and enjoys the work he has created.
5CR	Psalms 33: 6,9	How did the Psalmist view the time it took for Creation?
6CR	1Tim 6:20,21	He Spoke and commanded and it happened. Instantly. The Bible warns against false science, such as evolution.
7CR	Job 12:7	Many things in nature contradict evolution, but nothing about earth or nature contradicts the creation story.
8CR	2Peter 3:3-7	Many deliberately forget the flood and creation story because they realize that if God destroyed the world by flood He will again destroy it by fire. He destroyed the ungodly, those who disobey Him. If we accept Him as our Creator, we have an obligation to obey him.
9CR	Rom. 1:18-32	We are seeing the results of the denial of God as Creator in our society today.
10CR	Rev 14: 6, 7	God has an answer to evolution. Every nation and person will have invitation to worship God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, before the end.

CR end

Notice the Spiritual parallels between creation and salvation. The earth was without form and void and darkness covered the face of the deep. Then God's Spirit moved over the waters and after he first created light, he daily brought order and beauty from the chaos.

Likewise, we are born in the darkness of sin, but as the light of Jesus pierces through the darkness, through the power of the Creator, we are born again.

From the waters of baptism, God gradually brings order out of chaos in our own lives as we daily strive to grow more and more into the image of God, our Creator and Saviour.

2 The Fall of Man

Key: FM

1FM	Rev. 12:7-9	Where did sin originate? Who is the Dragon, and where was he cast down to?
2FM	Isa. 14:12-15	Why was he cast out of heaven? The throne is the seat of government, and the heart of government is it's law. Lucifer challenged God's law.
3FM	1 John 3:4	Sin is breaking God's law.
4FM	Deut. 30:16	God's ways are love and his laws are love.
5FM	Mat 22:37-40	The first four of the ten commandments reflect on our love for God: Thou shalt have no other Gods before me. Thou shalt not worship idols. Not take the name of the Lord in vain, remember the Sabbath day. The last six reflect on our love for fellow man: Honor your father and mother; not to murder; commit adultery, steal, lie or covet.
6FM	Prov. 14:12	Man's ways always seem right even when he is wrong.
7FM	Isa 55:8,9	Human reasoning is not capable of determining God's ways of love.
8FM	Gen. 2:9, 16-17	God is a God of Love and true love involves choice. He put the tree in the garden in order to give them a choice as to love and trust him or to go their own way.
9FM	Gen 3:1-6	Satan tempted the woman to become like God. To use her own knowledge to determine good from evil instead of trusting God's ways of love. When she ate the fruit, she was simply showing that she did not trust God.
10FM	Gen 2:17	The penalty for choosing to reject God is death. Not because God wants anyone to die, but because if He ever hopes to have peace and harmony in the universe again he must remove sin, and since man has the choice to sin, if he chooses to sin, he must die.
11FM	Gen 3:15	But God gave Adam and Eve another chance. He promised them that one would come who would be victorious over Satan, and eventually crush him. This is the first prophecy or promise in the Bible. The seed of the woman was to be Jesus Christ.
12FM	Rev 12:17	The book of Revelation is the final grand climax of the battle between Christ and Satan. Satan makes his last attempt to destroy the last of the seed of the woman, Those who are faithful to God's laws of love. Don't you want to be among those who are faithful to God's laws of love?

FM end

3 The Way to Life

Key: WL

1WL	1 John 5:13	1. Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where if you were to die right now you would know for certain that you would have eternal life? 2. Suppose that you were to die tonight and when you meet God, if He were to ask, "Why should you have eternal life in Heaven?" What would you say?
		We can have the assurance of eternal life in heaven.
2WL	Eph. 2:8,9	Eternal Life is a free gift. We can't earn it by obedience.
3WL	Rom. 3:23	All have sinned
4WL	Rom. 6:23	We all deserve to die.
5WL	John 3:16	God doesn't want us to die. He wants everyone to live. So He sent His son to save us.
6WL	John 1:1, 14	Jesus was really God, who became man for us.
7WL	Rom. 3:25	He presented Jesus to be a sacrifice for us to die in our place so he can save us and still be a just God.
8WL	2 Cor 5:21	What really happened on the cross? Jesus was made to be sin for us. So that when he died, he was actually guilty for our sins. He didn't ever sin, but God took our guilt from us and placed it on Christ. Then God gives us the perfect life that Christ lived. This is our fitness for heaven. If we receive the free gift of Christ's perfect life and the forgiveness for our sins, we can know that we have life.
9WL	1 John 5:11, 12	How can I know that He really did this for me ? All we need to do is invite Jesus into our lives, and if we have Jesus, we have Eternal Life.
10WL	Matt. 7:21	Asking Jesus into your life is more than simply saying the words. We must invite him in as Lord and Master as well as Savior. We must be willing to be obedient to him. Not that our obedience saves us but when he saves us he gives us a new life and a new desire to be in harmony with God's ways of love.
11WL	2 Cor 5:17	We become a new person
12WL	1 John 1:9	He forgives our sins
13WL	1 John 3:1	We become sons and daughters of God Do you see what Jesus left heaven and died on the cross to do for you?
14WL	Rev. 3:20	Do you want to open the door and let Jesus into your life right now?

WL end

4 Israel in Prophecy

Key: IP

1IP	Gen 3:15	Immediately after Adam and Eve plunged the world into sin, God promised a descendant to crush the head of the serpent.
2IP	Gen 12:1-7	God repeated the promise to Abraham saying all nations of the earth will be blessed through him and adding that his descendants would possess the land of Canaan.
3IP	Gen 16:1-4, 11, 12	Abraham and Sarah felt they were too old to have a child, so he took the maid Hagar, she conceived and bore a son named Ishmael.
4IP	Gen 17:19	God said the covenant would not be fulfilled through Ishmael but Sarah would have a son, Isaac and it will be filled through him. Why did God exclude Ishmael and include only Isaac?
5IP	Gen 25:21-26	Isaac Married Rebecca (24:67) and gave birth to twins, Esau and Jacob. God's promise was to be fulfilled to Jacob and not Esau. The fact that God excluded Esau and Ishmael and choose Isaac and Jacob, means the requirement for the promise had to be something more than simply flesh and blood descendants of Abraham.
6IP	Gen 32:28	After Jacob's conversion experience, God gave him a new name. Israel, a name with spiritual meaning.
7IP	Deut 28:1-2	After over 400 years of slavery in Egypt, God raised up a leader, Moses to deliver them, lead them in the wilderness to Mt. Sinai and finally the banks of the Jordan river, ready to enter the promised land. In his last sermon he gives the key to the promise for Israel.
8IP	Deu 28:15, 64	If they obey God, they will be blessed in the land. If they fail to obey God, they will be scattered. They did disobey God, and crucify His son and were scattered.
9IP	Rom 9:6-7	The promise was not made to Abraham's flesh and blood descendants, but to the children of the promise.
10IP	Gal 3:7,8	Only those who believe are children of Abraham regardless of their family heritage.
11IP	Gal 3:16	Jesus is the descendant God was referring to in Genesis.
12IP	Gal 3:26-29	We in Christ are the true descendants of Abraham.
13IP	1 Peter 2:9	The new nation of Israel is Spiritual Israel the church.
14IP	Heb 12:22,23	Mt. Zion in the NT is the church of Jesus Christ
15IP	Rev 14:1	The 144000 on Mt. Zion is the last church redeemed from the earth.

IP end

D. Full manuscripts

1. **Read and KNOW** the manuscript well enough that you can improvise based on time constraints, impressions by the Holy Spirit, etc. *Pro tip: You can know it so well that you combine it with other sources to develop your own manuscript.
2. **Acknowledge:** I came across a message by Derek Morris that was very meaningful to me. I have adapted it and made it my own and pray God will use it to speak to your heart today.
3. Read it or use it with natural **enthusiasm**.
4. See sample from Derek Morris on the following pages-→

E. Other Resources: Go to www.ministryteams.weebly.com and click on the “TEAMS Resources” option in the drop-down menu and look for Teaching/Preaching.

WORDS FROM THE CROSS - PART 1: Forgiven!

Dr. Derek Morris⁷

Preaching passage: Luke 23:34

Subject: What request Jesus made to His Father as He was hanging on the cross

Complement: Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. Exegetical idea: When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they were doing."

Preaching idea: Jesus wants to forgive all your sins! Purpose: To encourage my hearers to accept the forgiveness that Jesus offers them.

About ten days ago, Pastor Dany Hernandez stood at the bedside of a 24 year old young man who was dying. Standing by Pastor Dany's side was this young man's fiancée and also his parents. As you can imagine, it was a very intense and emotional visit. At the end of their time together, Pastor Dany mentioned that, in a couple of days, he would be speaking to a group of about 400 young adults and asked this young man if he would like to share any words with that group. The young man spoke in a voice that was barely audible, but the message that he shared brought tears to Pastor Dany's eyes. Two days later, Pastor Dany shared those words with the hundreds of young adults gathered for worship at our Deeper service and many lives were forever changed.

You can learn a great deal about people by listening to their last words. I've heard patients in the hospital cursing God until their dying breath. That tells you a great deal about a person's heart. I learned this past week the last words of the great English preacher, John Wesley. He ended his earthly life with these words: "The best of all is, God is with us!"

Yes, you can learn a great deal about people by listening to their last words. Today, I invite you to stand with me in your imagination beside another young man who is dying. This young man is 33 years old. He isn't lying in a hospital bed in Orlando, Florida. This young man is hanging on a cross outside of Jerusalem. His name is Jesus. I invite you to listen to the words that Jesus speaks from the cross. His voice may also be barely audible at times, but if you listen carefully, your life will be forever changed.

No one Gospel writer records all of the words of Jesus from the cross. Matthew records one saying. Mark records that same saying. Luke records 3 additional sayings of Jesus from the cross and the apostle John records 4 more sayings. Eight sayings in all, though some commentators link two sayings together in order to speak of the seven last words of Jesus from the cross. I'm thankful that the Holy Spirit inspired each of these Gospel writers to record their testimony because we can learn valuable lessons from all of these words of Jesus from the cross! It is my prayer that as we make this journey together, our lives will be forever changed!

It appears that the first words of Jesus from the cross are recorded in the Gospel of Luke. If you read the Gospel record, you'll discover that Jesus has just been through a mockery of a trial. He has been beaten and abused. False witnesses have testified against Him, even though Pilate has declared "I find no basis for a charge against this man." Jesus has been spat upon and flogged, and now, having stumbled up Golgotha's hill, He is being nailed to a cross. As you may know, Dr. Luke was not present at the cross. According to his own testimony, he gathered information from eyewitnesses as the Holy Spirit guided him in the writing of record of the life and teachings of Jesus. We don't know which eyewitness Luke talked to. Was it Mary, the mother of

⁷ From the website <https://www.trilogyscriptureresources.com/resources>.

Jesus, or Mary the wife of Clopas, or Mary Magdalene ? Or perhaps it was the Roman centurion who would later declare, “Surely this was a righteous man!” We’ll have to ask Dr. Luke when we gather together in the kingdom of heaven! But I’m thankful that Dr. Luke records the first words of Jesus from the cross because those words of Jesus have changed my life! 3 Those words are recorded in Luke 23:34. “Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.’”

The first words that Jesus speaks from the cross are a prayer. “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Notice the first word in that prayer of Jesus—Father. This is not the first time that Jesus has prayed to His Father. In Luke 10:21, Jesus prayed, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.” Shortly before His arrest, Jesus had prayed, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.” John 17:1 And in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus had prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” Luke 22:42

Jesus had also taught His disciples to pray to “Our Father in heaven.” And now, hanging on the cross, Jesus prays to His Father. But Jesus is not praying for Himself. Jesus is praying for others. Let’s listen again to His words. “Father, forgive them.” Who is Jesus referring to when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM”? Well, let’s look at the context in Luke chapter 23. Roman soldiers have just crucified Jesus, pounded huge metal spikes through his hands and his feet and then suspended him naked between heaven and earth. Luke records that those same soldiers stood at the foot of the cross and mocked Jesus. “If you’re the king of the Jews, save yourself!” Cold, callous words from cold, callous hearts. They also gambled for His clothing, totally unconcerned about His suffering and shame. Perhaps Jesus is referring to those Roman soldiers when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.” What do you think?

But there are others gathered at the foot of the cross who can hear the words of Jesus. We read in the second part of Luke 23:35, “The rulers even sneered at him. They said, ‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.’” These rulers had seen clear evidence that Jesus was no ordinary teacher. They had heard Pilate declare, “I find no basis for a charge against this man” (Luke 23:4). The false witnesses that they had bribed to testify against Jesus couldn’t even agree on their false testimony. And now these rulers are standing at the foot of the cross sneering at Jesus: “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.” Perhaps Jesus is referring to them when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.” What do you think?

Matthew records in Matthew 27:41-43 that the chief priests and teachers of the law are also gathered at the foot of the cross, along with the elders. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.” But even if Jesus had come down from the cross, they would not have believed in Him. That had seen evidence upon evidence that He was the Christ. The sick had been healed. Demoniacs had been set free. The Gospel had been preached. But the hearts of the chief priests and many of the teachers of the law were hardened against the truth. And now they stand at the foot of the cross, mocking Jesus: “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.” Perhaps Jesus is referring to them when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.” What do you think?

But there are others listening to the words of Jesus from the cross. Luke records in Luke 23:39, “One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: ‘Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!’” Matthew records, in Matthew 27:44 that both criminals who were crucified on either side of Jesus heaped insults on him. They were being executed for crimes that they had 5 committed, but Jesus was without fault. Yet still they

hurled insults at Jesus! Perhaps Jesus is referring to them when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.” What do you think?

But there are others passing by the cross. Matthew records that these passers by had something to say. We read in Matthew 27:39, “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!’” Perhaps Jesus is referring to them when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.” What do you think?

And then there are those, according to Luke, who stood watching. (Luke 23:35). They said nothing, but just stood there in silence. They could have said something. Many had witnessed the wonderful works of Jesus. Many had listened to His powerful teachings about the kingdom of heaven and had testified that Jesus spoke with authority unlike their teachers of the law. They could have spoken up in defense of Jesus. They could have given their testimony, but they just stood watching, in silence. Perhaps Jesus is referring to them when He prays, “Father, forgive THEM.”

So which of these groups is Jesus referring to when He says, “Father forgive them”? Well, the answer is found in the text! We passed quickly over the verb at the beginning of Luke 23:34. That verb helps us to answer our question. To which of these groups is Jesus referring when He says, “Father, forgive them”? What does it say in your Bible? “Jesus said.” In the Greek text, that verb is in the imperfect tense (iterative imperfect). The imperfect tense implies repetition or continued action. In English, we might say, “Jesus kept on saying, ‘Father, forgive them.’” As Jesus was nailed to the cross by the calloused Roman soldiers, Jesus breathed a prayer to His Father in Heaven: “Father, forgive them.” As He was mocked and scorned by the rulers, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them.” As criminals crucified on either side of Him heaped insults on Him, Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them.” As passers by ridiculed Him, Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them.” As He looked down at the people stood silent at the foot of the cross, some of whom may even have experienced blessings from His hand, and yet they stood silent rather than speaking up, when Jesus saw them standing at the foot of the cross in silence, He prayed, “Father, forgive them.”

So who is included in this prayer of Jesus from the cross? The soldiers, the rulers, the chief priests and teachers of the law, the criminals crucified on either side of Jesus, the passers by who mocked Him and those who just stood there, silent—they’re all included in the prayer of Jesus, aren’t they? “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

But you say, “They knew what they were doing!” Didn’t they? Did they really believe that Jesus was a criminal, worthy of death? They knew that what they were doing was wrong. It was evil. They knew what they were doing, didn’t they? Or did they really understand the immensity of their guilt? “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Did they comprehend that they were brazenly mocking the One before whom angels bow and cry “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty”? Did they comprehend that they were killing the Author of life? Did they really understand what they were doing? Did they understand any more than our first parents understood the torrent of sadness, sin and death that would be unleashed on the human family?

“Father,” Jesus prays from the cross, “forgive them for they know not what they do.” “Father, forgive the soldiers, the rulers, the chief priests and teachers of the law, the criminals crucified on either side of Jesus, the passers by who mocked Him and those who just stood there, silent. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

But are they the only ones included in the prayer of Jesus on the cross? “Father, forgive them.” What about us? What about you? What about me? Are we not included in the prayer of Jesus? “Father, forgive them.”

Seven hundred years before Jesus hung on that cross, the Holy Spirit inspired the prophet Isaiah to write these words, recorded in Isaiah 53:4-6. “Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” The prayer of Jesus from the cross is also for us! “Father, forgive THEM.” We are included in that prayer, aren’t we? Yes! Praise God, we are included in that prayer! Father, forgive them. Father, forgive _____[insert your name]. Father, forgive Susan. Father, forgive Daniel. Father, forgive Gene. Father, forgive the members of the _____[insert your church location] Church family. We are all included in that prayer of Jesus from the cross! “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do!”

The prophet Isaiah testified in Isaiah 53:12, “Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” Forgiveness is extended. Forgiveness is provided—for all of us. Will you choose to accept that forgiveness for your sins? The apostle John who also stood with the mother of Jesus at the foot of the cross and heard that prayer of Jesus, the apostle John testified, as recorded in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Someone ought to say, “Hallelujah!” Someone ought to say, “Thank you, Jesus!” “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” Jesus prayed for you on the cross. And for you, and for you, and for me. Jesus prayed for us on the cross. “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Will you accept that forgiveness? Will you confess your sins to Jesus your Savior today and rejoice that He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.? And He will do more than forgive us. He will do more than purify us. He will save us by His grace to spend an eternity with Him. But that is another topic in our series on Words from the Cross. And I hope that you’ll join us for part 2 in this series.

But **today**, I pray that this truth will sink deep into your mind and heart. **Jesus wants to forgive all your sins.** Did you hear me? **Jesus wants to forgive all your sins.** He does not want to hold your sins against you.

He wants to forgive you and purify you. He wants to make you clean. Jesus suffered all of the agony of crucifixion, the public humiliation and shame of the cross. He endured the cross, despising the shame, all because of love. And while hanging naked on that cross, bleeding and bruised, He prayed for you and He prayed for me: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. You will bring great joy to the heart of Jesus if you accept His gracious offer of forgiveness. You will bring joy to the heart of Jesus if you let Him purify you from all unrighteousness. **Jesus wants to forgive all your sins.**

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Seventh-day Adventists and the formation of ministerial identity: Lessons from our past

While the message, organization, and other factors have played a vital role in the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the role of the minister has been overlooked.¹ Joseph Bates and James White contributed from 1848 to 1850 to the core theological framework of the fledgling denomination. Based upon my research, there were 51 ministers within the Sabbatarian Adventist movement from 1846 to 1863.² At the time of organization in 1863, there were 31 active ministers. This number rapidly swelled to 276 by 1881.³

The period from 1863 to 1881 should be considered as the seminal period for Seventh-day Adventist ministerial identity. The handful of founding ministers, those who, like James White and Joseph Bates, played a leading role in the initial phase during the 1840s and 1850s, was followed by a second generation of recruits (including ministers who converted). Early Sabbatarian Adventist men and women felt compelled to proclaim the Adventist message.

This article sheds light on an important aspect of Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology by examining the development of the Seventh-day Adventist ministry from the time when the

denomination formed in 1863 through 1881—an arbitrary year that coincides with the death of James White. During this formative time, many precedents were set about the nature and role of the minister, the relationship of the minister to other church members, the financial support of the ministry, and even the development of the practice of ordination among early Seventh-day Adventists.

Ministerial composition and challenges

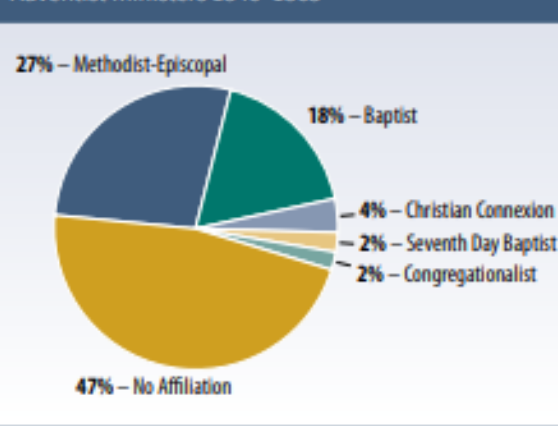
Of the 51 active Seventh-day Adventist ministers between 1846 and 1863, 14 were affiliated with the Millerite revival. Of those who had some sort of denominational affiliation, most were linked with some branch of Methodism (14 ministers, or 27 percent). This was followed by believers affiliated with one of the Baptist traditions (10 ministers, or 19 percent), including at least one minister who grew up

in a Seventh Day Baptist home.⁴ Other ministers included two prominent leaders, James White and Joseph Bates, who were ordained Christian Connexion ministers, a branch of the Restorationist movement committed to a return to the purity of the New Testament Church, and at least one Congregationalist convert.⁵ Early Seventh-day Adventist ministers reflected the wide diversity of socioeconomic and religious backgrounds out of which Adventism was born (see figure 1).⁶

Early challenges

During the late 1850s and early 1860s, leaders such as James White

FIGURE 1: Religious backgrounds of Seventh-day Adventist ministers 1846–1863



faced two challenges. The first came in the form of a few ministers who claimed to be bona fide Seventh-day Adventist clergy in order to solicit donations from unsuspecting church members. Such individuals were merely scam artists. Several *supposed* ministers duped early believers during a time when genuine ministers were often self-supporting and depended upon the generosity of believers to help defray their travel expenses.⁷ A second challenge came from some ministers who defected. Thus Moses Hull, who became a Spiritualist, as well as B. F. Snook and W. H. Brinkerhoff, formed the offshoot “Marion party.” Some did not defect but, like J. B. Frisbie, simply became discouraged and, for a time, gave up the ministry. Such losses diminished the ranks of Adventist ministers during the 1860s.

Each situation was extremely problematic. Once they defected, the typical pattern was to use their sphere of influence to draw others away from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These problems necessitated that it was a sacred duty, according to James White in 1871, for church members to check ministers for their ministerial credentials.⁸

Ministerial identity

Church organization, therefore, played a crucial role in the formation of early Seventh-day Adventist ministerial identity.⁹ Ministers were credentialed through the local conference.¹⁰ Part of the purpose of the local conference was to provide a mechanism for aspiring ministers through which they received a “ministerial license.”¹¹ Such an aspiring minister would typically be expected to raise a congregation.¹² By 1869, there were sufficient aspiring ministers that the two-tier system was noticeable. After sufficient experience, a young minister received “ministerial credentials” in conjunction with the ordination service, which recognized their call to the gospel ministry.

As the church grew, so did the need for ministers. During the 1860s, letters published in the *Review and Herald* frequently contained appeals

for ministers to visit isolated church members. It was not uncommon for believers to go many months, or even years, without such a visit. Some ministers did show up for a “monthly” or “quarterly meeting” that were regional gatherings of believers; these meetings reflected earlier Pietistic gatherings from Evangelicalism in the eighteenth century.¹³ Such meetings were rich times that re-created the earlier “holy fairs” of Scotland.¹⁴ Such gatherings featured the minister, who was allowed to preach as much as possible, and the services typically concluded with the administering of church ordinances: a baptismal service and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper on Sunday evening at the conclusion of the weekend. The Lord’s Supper became a special “Advent ordinance” that expressed faith in the efficacious blood of Jesus Christ along with the command of Christ to continue to do this until the Second Advent. Thus, the communion service reflected these dual *foci* within Adventist theology, looking both past and forward.¹⁵

Life was fragile then. Many ministers succumbed to disease, which only increased the need for ministerial help. From 1846 to 1863, 18 ministers, by the formation of the denomination in 1863, were no longer active in ministry. Of the 18, 3 defected due to apostasy; the remaining 15 could no longer minister due to poor health or old age. From 1863 to 1881 the leading cause of death, based upon a random selection of obituaries in denominational publications, indicates that approximately 80 percent of church members died from tuberculosis. Even the adoption of the health message did very little to slow down the ravages of this disease. Thus, a prominent role of early Seventh-day Adventist ministers, in addition to itinerant preaching, was to conduct funerals. Yet with so few ministers, church members were admonished to seek ministers from other denominations because this proved to be too great a strain on the limited number of ministers.

The primary work of the minister was twofold: to make sure that local churches functioned properly and to

pursue evangelistic objectives. The first was accomplished by making sure the church was organized at the local church level. As a result, a basic structure was developed between 1863 and 1865: the spiritual leader of the local congregation responsible for leading out in services each week was chosen as the elder,¹⁶ a deacon who looked after the physical welfare of the congregation, and a church clerk who took care of finances and kept track of official church records, including the official membership list of the congregation and minutes from church business meetings. Unless the church was particularly large, only one elder or deacon was necessary for any congregation.

The only exception, at least up to 1881, was the Battle Creek Church, which had two elders for a time when the congregation had more than 400 members. During this time, the elder and deacon were ordained. If an ordained deacon became an elder, that person must be ordained once again. Only an ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister could do this ordination.¹⁷ Additions to the local church could be done only by a unanimous vote by the congregation.¹⁸

The earliest detailed job description for an Adventist minister dates to 1873. In this document, the minister is admonished to examine church records, check the list of members and ascertain their spiritual condition, take proper action about those who are backslidden, send letters to those who are absent, learn who should join the church, and inquire after those keeping the Sabbath but not at church. They were also expected to celebrate church ordinances, examine the financial books to make sure they are accurate, encourage people to contribute for the support of the church, make sure that local members subscribe to church periodicals, encourage members to support institutional endeavors (at this time by purchasing shares of stock in church institutions such as the fledgling Health Reform Institute), look after family prayers, supply publications, and

make sure that those who are poor also have those same publications.¹⁹

In another description, ministers were admonished to make sure they conducted the nominating committee when they visited the local church. Frequently, there were “church trials,” so the minister was a more neutral person who could help to settle squabbles between members. According to the earliest guidelines, the minister selected the nominating committee by appointing “two brethren of good judgment who with him shall act as a nominating committee to nominate candidates . . . and their nomination is to be ratified by a threefourths [sic] vote provided that no valid objection is raised by those not voting in the affirmative.” Church members were encouraged to nominate people and vote by secret ballot.²⁰

Thus from 1863 to 1873, ministerial identity was closely connected to both evangelism and the local church. The primary task of the minister was outreach: ministers must preach the gospel and hold evangelistic meetings. This was particularly true of young aspiring ministers. At the same time, the role of the minister was closely connected to ecclesiology and to the life of the local church. As the ministers traveled, they were responsible to ensure that order was maintained.

Ministerial growth

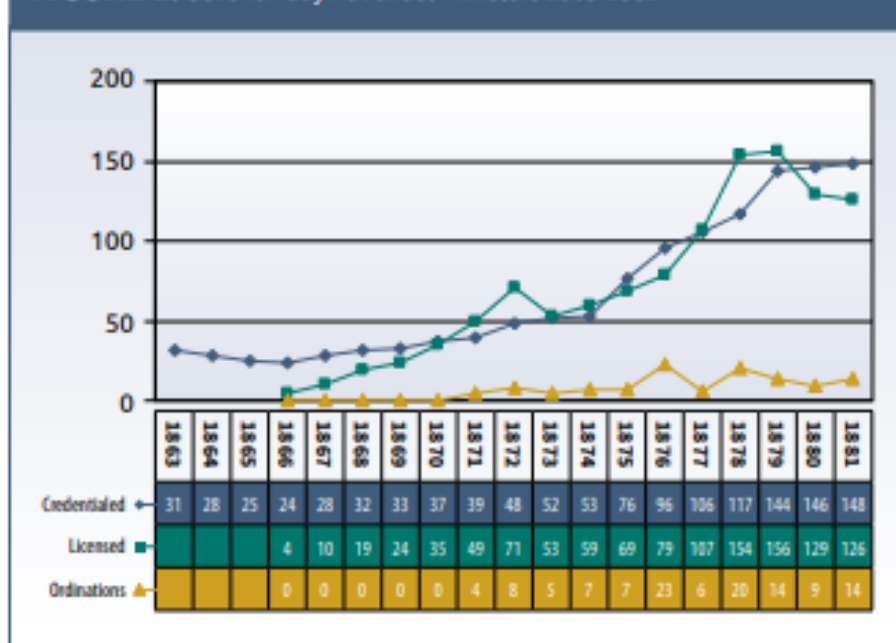
A series of defections by prominent ministers coupled with the expansion of the work only accentuated the need for ministers. Both James and Ellen G. White, from 1869 to 1873, repeatedly called for Seventh-day Adventist young people to prepare themselves for service. This was a significant reason why church leaders supported the educational endeavors of Goodloe Harper Bell, beginning in 1872, that culminated in the founding of Battle Creek College in 1874. A close corollary to this was the Bible lectures by *Review and Herald* editor Uriah Smith. He complemented his daily Bible class with short *Biblical Institutes*, in which area ministers, and their spouses, could come for brief

intensives. These were so popular that the Whites encouraged him to travel to California and New England to train pastors. Smith’s book *Biblical Institutes* was the first theological textbook for this early generation of Seventh-day Adventist ministers and served as a ready reference about Adventist beliefs.

In response to the repeated appeals by church leaders, a new generation of

church leaders took her counsel about the sacred role of ministers, and the need to train such ministers, very seriously. As a result, these same church leaders curbed the rapid expansion by restricting ministerial licenses. James and Ellen G. White, for their part, called not only for ministers but for “laborers” who had a sense of the sacrifice necessary to be truly successful in ministry.

FIGURE 2: Seventh-day Adventist Ministers 1863-1881



young men and women aspired to the ministry. This wave of new ministers really took off in 1871 (see figure 2), when the number of new recruits for the first time exceeded the number of ordained ministers. The 1870s witnessed two large waves of ministers: the first from 1871 to 1873 and a second from 1877 to 1879. Ellen G. White, in particular, had a series of admonitions for ministers during the 1870s.

Both she and James White were troubled that young ministers did not appreciate the spirit of sacrifice that characterized earlier ministers. Her cautions for young ministers, especially those from 1874 to 1875 and again around 1879, correspond with calls to limit ministerial licenses for aspiring ministers, and consequently the number of ministerial recruits also slowed down. It appears that the majority of

The rapid expansion of ministers during the 1870s (see figure 2) brought with it new challenges. One such problem was what title to give Adventist ministers. The title of reverend was quickly repudiated. James and Ellen White both referred to early clergy as “ministers,” and less frequently as “pastors,” but they were more concerned that they were “workers” or “laborers.” James White, for example, referred frequently to the role of *minister* but described himself also as “pastor” of the Battle Creek Church—even though he was largely absent from that congregation due to the constraints of his leadership role.²¹

Earlier problems during the 1860s resurfaced once again during the 1870s. Although the number of clergy was increasing quickly during the 1870s, there was still a severe shortage of

ministers. Obituaries in the 1870s frequently list ministers from other denominations as having conducted the funeral. Church members were encouraged to make use of ministers from other churches who did not emphasize doctrinal differences.

Even more challenging, as Seventh-day Adventists adopted Adventist lifestyle practices such as health and dress reform, was the problem of some ministers who were “addicted to the habit of tobacco.” The matter was referred to the “resolutions committee,” which proposed that “it is inexpedient for our churches to allow ministers of other denominations who are addicted to the use of tobacco, or who are avowedly hostile to important features of our faith.”²² While the use of ministers from other denominations was a stopgap measure as the church grew, new expectations along with lifestyle practices necessitated the formation of a distinctive Adventist ministerial identity.

From 1875 to 1881, Adventist ministerial identity matured somewhat further. Conference leaders admonished all ministers to send in regular reports, many of which were published in denominational periodicals. Ministers were instructed to procure copies of *Robert's Rules of Order* so that they could properly conduct church business meetings.²³ Understanding and applying these rules would help to alleviate local “church trials,” as churches were encouraged to hold annual elections to appoint local church leaders.²⁴ And if they could not obtain education any other way, a practice of developing a list of readings for ministers began in 1881.²⁵

Ordination

Perhaps the most interesting practice related to early Seventh-day Adventist ministers was that of ordination. The earliest ministers were previously ordained ministers. Thus, the first question in the development of a unique Seventh-day Adventist ministerial identity concerned ordination. James White argued in 1867 that just

like baptism, “when this is done to and by the proper persons, once is sufficient, if the candidate does not apostatize.”²⁶ My survey of ministers from 1863 to 1881 found only two examples where Seventh-day Adventist ministers were reordained. While this was apparently an option, it appears that by and large early Seventh-day Adventists recognized the ordination given by other denominations as still valid.


This changed as young ministers who aspired to the ministry proved themselves worthy as ministers. While not everyone who aspired to the ministry was ordained, of those who did, it appears that it typically took between four and six years of service, thus starting a precedent for a young minister that continues up to the present. The earliest ordinations that I found occurred in 1872, the same year in which Ellen G. White was first listed with other ordained ministers as having ministerial credentials.

Of the 117 ordinations I was able to document from 1872 to 1881 (there could have been other ordinations prior to 1872, but I constrained my search to those published in the *Review and Herald*), there appears to be a fairly uniform practice.²⁷ In all of the descriptions, clearly the ordination service was a solemn and sacred event. The event involved an “ordination sermon” that contained some aspects of personal admonition to be faithful. This was followed by a prayer, often by a different minister, in which the ministers who participated in the ceremony laid hands on the one to be ordained. And then this was followed by a charge that uniformly mentioned the “right hand of fellowship” in recognition of their special role.

Observations

James White repeatedly admonished that Seventh-day Adventist ministers should not hover over churches. Ministers seldom remained in one location for more than two or three years. More often, they operated as itinerants who maintained a route of churches. This was because the primary task of the minister was that

of evangelism. Both church members and ministers who failed to share their faith became spiritually weak. Church leaders recognized that there was a balance in which the minister did have a responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the flock entrusted to their care, but neither should the minister do the work for them. This dual focus between supervision and evangelism shows an inherent tension that characterized the life and work of the early Seventh-day Adventist minister.

Furthermore, the early pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were pragmatists. Organization was a matter of necessity, and the need to recognize ministers contributed to the need for denominational organization. Church leaders accomplished this goal by issuing ministerial credentials through local conferences, thus placing the focus of authority for approving ministerial candidates one step beyond the local church. It was far too easy for early Seventh-day Adventists to be duped by scam artists or dissidents. As several ministers defected, the late 1860s and early 1870s witnessed a surge of young ministers who received a ministerial license. The ability to share their faith was seen as the litmus test of God's call. With time, church leaders developed more intentional ways to train ministers, all of which were closely tied to Seventh-day Adventist education. The early pioneers of the church believed that such an education would only enhance their effectiveness. Such a minister should be set apart to the work of the gospel ministry through ordination, a recognition of God's call that affirmed the sacred role of the minister within Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology. 

1 Recent contributions by David J. B. Trim and Denis Kaiser now help to nuance and augment this picture on the role of Seventh-day Adventist ministers in early Adventism, particularly in relationship to recent discussions pertaining to ordination. This paper focuses instead upon the broader milieu of ministerial development. See D. J. B. Trim, “Ordination in Seventh-day Adventist History,” paper presented to the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, 2013 (<http://www.adventistarchives.org/ordination-in-sda-history.pdf>); “The Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Policy and Practice,” paper presented to the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, 2013 (<http://www.adventistarchives.org/the-ordination-of-women-in-seventh-day-adventist-policy-and-practice.pdf>); Denis Kaiser, “Setting Apart for the Ministry: Theory

- and Practice in Seventh-day Adventism (1858–1920)," *Adventist University Seminary Studies* 51, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): 177–218.
- 2 A search of the *Review and Herald* page by page indicates that the following ministers were active from 1846 to 1863: J. M. Aldrich, J. N. Andrews, D. Arnold, H. F. Baker, E. L. Barr, J. Bates, J. Bozwick, J. C. Bowles, A. C. Bowditch, D. T. Bourdoux, W. H. Brinkerhoff, H. G. Buck, J. Byington, H. S. Case, M. E. Cornell, R. F. Cornell, S. Cresser, D. T. Evans, E. Events, J. Fisher, J. B. Fieble, N. Fuller, H. Gaunt, D. P. Hall, J. R. Hart, G. W. Holton, J. Howlett, M. Hall, A. S. Hutchins, W. S. Ingham, R. J. Lawrence, H. Loftrop, J. N. Loughborough, W. Morse, S. Pierce, D. C. Phillips, E. A. Poole, S. W. Rhodes, J. Sanborn, B. E. Snook, C. W. Sperry, J. M. Stephenson, T. M. Steward, A. Stone, C. D. Taylor, J. R. Towle, J. N. Van Gunde, J. H. Waggoner, I. Wheeler, J. White, and J. G. Wood.
 - 3 These statistics are based upon a detailed compendium of Seventh-day Adventist ministers that I compiled. See Michael W. Campbell, "Compendium of Seventh-day Adventist Ministers 1863–1881," unpublished manuscript, 2013.
 - 4 *Christian Connection* (2): James White, Joseph Bates, Methodist-Episcopal (13); David Arnold, Harry G. Buck, Samuel Cresser, J. B. Fieble, Nathan Fuller, John Howlett, J. N. Loughborough, Moses Hall, B. F. Snook, Washington Morse, Frederick Wheeler, Methodist-Wesleyan (1); John Byington, Baptist (9); J. H. Waggoner, R. J. Lawrence, A. C. Bowditch, D. T. Bourdoux, John Fisher, A. S. Hutchins, Stephen Pierce, T. S. Steward, A. Stone, Seventh Day Baptist (1); R. F. Cornell, Congregationalist (7); Ezra A. Poole.
 - 5 Ministers from 1863 who were known to be active in the Millstone revival include (6): James White, Joseph Bates, M. E. Cornell, R. J. Lawrence, David Arnold, and Washington Morse.
 - 6 James White celebrated this diversity; see [James White], "Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 24, 1871, 148.
 - 7 As an example, see the warning listed in *Review and Herald*, Oct. 15, 1872, 144.
 - 8 [James White], "Organization," *Review and Herald*, Aug. 22, 1871, 76.
 - 9 See Tim, "Ordination in Seventh-day Adventist History," "The Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Policy and Practice," and Nancy, "Setting Apart for the Ministry."
 - 10 "Those who feel it their duty to improve their gifts as messengers or preachers, shall first lay their exercises of mind before the Conference Committee, to receive a license from them, if the Committee consider them qualified." See "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863, 205.
 - 11 In article 1, sec. 2 of the "Model Constitution" for Conferences (1863) is the following provision: "Those who feel it their duty to improve their gifts as messengers or preachers, shall first lay their exercises of mind before the Conference Committee, to receive a license from them, if the Committee consider them qualified." See "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863, 205.
 - 12 A case in point is that of D. M. Cairright, whom James White upheld as a model young minister in 1871. See description by James White, "What Shall Be Done? Laborers Wanted," *Review and Herald*, Dec. 12, 1871, 204.
 - 13 Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 30, 31.
 - 14 For an overview, see Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Sustained and the Making of American Revivalism*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2001).
 - 15 For an overview of these gatherings, see Michael W. Campbell, "A Holy Spell: Worshiping With Early Adventists," *Adventist Review*, Oct. 22, 2009, 35–38.
 - 16 H. A. St. John, "Local Elders," *Review and Herald*, Jan. 13, 1876, 11.
 - 17 See question along with answer, presumably by Utah Smith, in *Review and Herald*, Aug. 16, 1864, 96.
 - 18 Cf. *Review and Herald*, June 6, 1871.
 - 19 "Pastoral Responsibility," *Review and Herald*, June 24, 1871, 13.
 - 20 "Answers to Correspondents," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 28, 1871, 160.
 - 21 [James White], "Battle Creek," *Review and Herald*, Aug. 8, 1871, 60.
 - 22 *Review and Herald*, Oct. 14, 1880, 253.
 - 23 Cf. "Illinois Conference," *Review and Herald*, Sept. 30, 1880, 237.
 - 24 General Conference Committee, "A Change of Church Officers," *Review and Herald*, Jan. 4, 1881, 11.
 - 25 "Report of Committee on Course of Reading for Ministers," *Review and Herald*, Dec. 30, 1881, 395.
 - 26 James White, "Re-Ordination," *Review and Herald*, Aug. 6, 1867, 120.
 - 27 As one of the more detailed examples, see the ordination of Sarah H. Lane. "Ordination," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 1, 1872, 128. See also the ordination of Santee, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 21, 1878, 164.

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General Survey and TEAMS Proficiency Questionnaire

General Information

Name of Church you are an elder/leader at _____

What are some topics that you would like to see covered at a future Elder's TEAMS meeting?

Would you be open to going to a location (no further than 3 hours away) for a weekend retreat?

Ministry Beliefs

Please rate your beliefs in response to the following statements:

I believe that is very important to have consistent devotional time with the Lord and family worship (if applicable) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

I believe my church encourages its members to have regular devotional, prayer or Bible study time*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

I have personal devotions several times per week *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

I believe it takes special giftedness and skill to teach regularly at the Church (from Cradle Roll up through the Adult lesson or giving the sermon)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree
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Though someone with giftedness or special skill may have an easier time teaching, I believe that there are basic skills of sharing God's truth with a group that all Christians should have

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree
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I believe we are living close to the end of the world and want to do all that I can (in word and deeds) to share the Gospel with those around me

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree
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In order for my church to have the most impact on our community, I believe each member should be involved in some way in winning people for Jesus or nurturing them when they attend the church

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree
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I believe that, though members should be able to share the message of Jesus with an public audience, it is more effective when the Pastor or a professional evangelist does so

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree
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I feel that the primary responsibility of administrating the church (leading prayer meeting, chairing the Church Board, drafting budgets, composing plans, etc.) belongs to the Pastor – or in their absence the Head Elder

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Agree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Disagree
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I feel that it is necessary for each church to have its own pastor in order to be successful caring for its members and ministering to community needs

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

Member Ministry Capability Self-Evaluation

Please rate how capable you CURRENTLY feel in the following areas.

Personal Spirituality (time with God, family worship, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable

People Skills (interacting and talking with people in a variety of situations)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable

Spiritual Leadership (spiritual guidance or counsel you provide in a home and/or local church setting)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable

Teaching Skills (teaching Sabbath School, giving Superintendent remarks, leading prayer meeting, preaching, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable

Evangelism - personal (giving personal Bible studies, doing acts of kindness, sharing literature, following up on interests, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable
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Evangelism - public (preaching an evangelistic series, hosting a video series, giving a public presentation, facilitating a meeting in a home)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable
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Administration (leading a department, leading a ministry, being a Board member, chairing boards/committees, planning, scheduling, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable
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Member Care (fostering corporate prayer, visiting people of all ages in a variety of settings, showing thoughtfulness when a member of the church is in need, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Capable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Capable
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Ministry Hopes & Vision

What are some hopes that you have for your church?

What would you like to see your church doing (if resources were not a problem) two years from now?

What are some activities that you would like to see take place to better your community?

What are some ways that you are currently involved in your community?