

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THIS  
BOOK...

This book is by a practitioner who really believes in what he advocates. Not only does he believe in it—he does it! The book is full of practical advice, useful tips and valuable insights for training leaders. But what makes the book most special is that it takes us through 2 Timothy and, using this key part of the Bible's own leadership training school, inspires the reader to get training future leaders. I recommend it highly.

— WILLIAM TAYLOR, RECTOR ST  
HELEN'S BISHOPSGATE AND CHAIRMAN  
OF RENEW

I love this book! It's a book which needs reading many times to ensure its divine wisdom, Biblical teaching and relevant practice is received. I have known Paul as a Gospel colleague and good friend since his arrival in Sheffield; his personal humility and Godly passion jump out from the pages of this excellent book. It will, I believe, make a significant contribution not only to the vital ministry of training leaders, but also to raising up Biblical disciples. Thank you Paul!

— REVD CANON MICK WOODHEAD,  
TEAM RECTOR, STC SHEFFIELD

This is a brilliant book for those searching for a resource to train future leaders. It is full of razor sharp teaching on 2 Timothy and is crammed with insightful applications. It will provide all of us with a clear and workable strategy for the training of more gospel ministers. Get this book if you want to intentionally and practically raise up new leaders.

— LEE MCMUNN, MISSION DIRECTOR,  
ANGLICAN MISSION IN ENGLAND  
(AMIE)

This is a beautifully clear and compelling look at the Bible's own 'manual' for faithfully training leaders who are loyal to the gospel. Paul Williams draws on years of experience to illustrate and apply apostolic teaching on this crucial subject. If you want to get serious about handing on the baton to the next generation, this is a great place to start!

— LEE GATISS, DIRECTOR OF CHURCH  
SOCIETY, CHAIRMAN OF THE JUNIOR  
ANGLICAN EVANGELICAL CONFERENCE  
(JAEC), AND EDITOR OF *REACH, BUILD,  
SEND: A PATTERN FOR ANGLICAN  
MINISTRY.*

A month's worth of tasty short chapters savouring the apostle Paul's training priorities and patterns of ministry from 2 Timothy. From start to finish Paul Williams shares his own ups and downs in learning to apply apostolic training priorities today with a welcome realism and humility, and a strong plea to renew our commitment to a vital task.

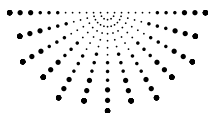
— JOHNNY JUCKES, PRESIDENT OF OAK  
HILL COLLEGE, LONDON

Too many church leaders do not make the vital task of developing faithful future leaders a priority in their ministry. Paul Williams has written this little book based on a thorough grasp of 2 Timothy in order to address this. It is easy to read and comes in a wisdom-like format of 30 short chapters. It is an excellent resource which will provide an existing leader with a practical framework for actually getting on with doing what we are in danger of only paying lip service to.

— MARK BURKILL, PAST CHAIRMAN OF  
REFORM

# TRAINING LEADERS

HOW TO ENSURE GOSPEL SUCCESSION FOR THE  
NEXT GENERATION



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EP Books are distributed in the USA by:

JPL Books, [order@jplbooks.com](mailto:order@jplbooks.com) [www.jplbooks.com](http://www.jplbooks.com)

100ofthose USA, [www.100ofthose.com](http://www.100ofthose.com) [sales.us@100ofthose.com](mailto:sales.us@100ofthose.com)

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data available

Print ISBN 978-1-78397-289-0

eBook ISBN 978-1-78397-290-6

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## INTRODUCTION: THE PRIORITY OF PRIORITIES

“ Unless you make training leaders a priority you’ll never do it.

I had been asked to address a group of pastors on the importance of evangelism in the local church. The staff team I was part of at the time agreed to give me their best thoughts on the subject. Helpful comments and godly wisdom were tumbling out of their mouths at a rate that left my wrist aching from scribbling furiously on my note pad. They were on a roll; it was one of those moments that reminded me what a joy it is to be part of a dynamic team of committed Christian workers. What’s more, my presentation would be considerably improved! Then, with the room positively buzzing with ideas, one comment silenced the lot of us. ‘Unless you make evangelism a priority you’ll never do it.’ Sheena’s offering flew across the table in a sentence containing the words ‘unless’ and ‘never.’ Sheena was not bombastic or dogmatic or overbearing. She was not one for hyperbolic overstatements. She was



measured, gentle, considered and wise. With Sheena you got the impression that every word had been carefully chosen. Yet here was an assertive declaration that left no room for manoeuvre. With all eyes now firmly fixed in Sheena's direction, she elaborated, 'The church family will knock on your door asking for your help through a pastoral crisis, or to lead their Bible study, or to chair another meeting, but you will never have unbelievers knocking on your door asking you how to become a Christian. So unless you make evangelism a priority you'll never do it.'

Of course, what is true of evangelism is true of almost anything. There are so many demands in Christian leadership that unless we are very clear what we must do above everything else we'll find essentials swamped by the immediate and urgent needs of the day. Without clear priorities we'll be influenced by who shouts loudest and we'll feel the pressure to respond to the desires of those we fear the most.

Barely a day goes by when I don't ask myself, 'How am I going to get everything done today?' Most Sunday evenings I am full of heartfelt gratitude to God that I've made it through the week. On Monday morning, when I look at the week ahead, I find myself praying a genuine prayer of desperation about the demands of the next seven days. So on Sunday evening, as I walk through my front door, still standing despite all the demands of the past week, I have a sense of thankful relief: 'I made it. Thank you Lord.'

On the rare occasions when the week ahead looks reasonably manageable, and I'm lured into the optimistic hope that I might even start to tackle that lengthy list of long-neglected tasks, invariably something crops up to dash my hopeful aspirations. I can be super-organised, very disciplined

and incredibly efficient with my time (by saying ‘I can,’ please understand that I mean, in theory, I can!). I can have a clear understanding of my priorities. I can be stubbornly rigid in sticking to them. And still I can have my plans disrupted by the demands of pastoral ministry.

Ten days before Easter I had carefully worked out how I would arrive at Maundy Thursday prepared and ready for such an important and demanding weekend. Then at 10.15pm on Tuesday evening of that week, when I was just about to turn in for the night, the ping of a text message alerted me to a request to go to the hospital. An elderly member of the church family was dying. Of course I went. In the days that followed, my diary was consumed by that pastoral ‘crisis.’ Then came the funeral, in Holy Week of all weeks, which was already about as full as I thought I could cope with.

I cite *that* incident, but the thing is, I didn’t have to scratch around to think of an example of an important pastoral demand coming at an ‘inconvenient’ time. I could fill pages with examples of exactly that sort of thing because it happens all the time. There are always people knocking on my door (metaphorically and sometimes literally) asking for my help. In any normal week I find myself overwhelmed with all that has to be done. Then on top of that, the unexpected crashes in to my world.

My point is simple and reasserts Sheena’s comment—gospel ministry is demanding. Time is limited. There is always more to be done. So, unless we have clear priorities and then make our priorities a priority, they’ll easily be squeezed out. Unless we’re clear and convinced what our priorities should be, we’re toast.

I left theological college with very clear priorities: Bible teaching, evangelism, prayer, pastoral care. Or three ‘P’s’ if you

will, proclamation, prayer and people. From my first day in paid gospel ministry I ordered my diary around those things. The mornings would be given to prayer and preparation, afternoons to visiting people. Unbelievers interested in the gospel would always get my attention first, barring a genuine pastoral crisis. Other things, even important things and urgent things, would have to wait. All well and good, but there was something missing from my list of priorities. The glaring omission? Training. It doesn't begin with 'P' so it was never going to fit neatly into my alliterative list of priorities. But seriously, where was training as a priority? More specifically where did the training of the next generation of gospel workers fit into my schedule? And even more specifically, training the next generation of church leaders. I could argue that I was training every time I taught the Bible, and that is true (or at least it should be). But what about deliberately identifying, selecting, and then investing in the training of individuals to be Christian leaders? Ask me back then if I thought it was important and I think I'd have said it was. But was it important enough for me to make it a priority? I confess that in those early years, training leaders was far enough down my 'to do' list to result in me never getting around to it. Training leaders was another great idea that got buried under a pile of good intentions.

My guess is, I'm not the only one. Ask many Christian leaders who they are deliberately training to be future church leaders and they might talk about training in general terms. Push them further about being more targeted in the task of training leaders and they might bemoan the fact that they don't have any suitable candidates. They might even respond with a weary and heavy heart, 'don't you understand how busy I am?'

You, on the other hand, may be one of those who has made

training the next generation of gospel workers a prime concern. Brilliant. But, perhaps you're like me. Even when I did begin to make training leaders a priority, I did not have a clear strategy. You may well feel as if you're 'making it up as you go along.' At the risk of sounding patronising, let me commend you for at least having a go. When something is important it is better to improvise and throw something together on the fly than not do it at all. Besides, you're probably doing a better job than you realise. But that said, even better than winging it, would be to have a clear, defined and proven strategy; a training course if you will. Better still, imagine getting your hands on an inspired and infallible approach to training leaders. The good news is, you have. I'm not referring to this book (that really would be a ridiculously pompous and outrageous claim and enough to persuade you to immediately send this book to a charity shop!). No, the book I refer to is Paul's second letter to Timothy. It is my conviction that in this letter God has given us a training manual. As we see how Paul trained Timothy we have a paradigm to equip us to train leaders. It is also my conviction that Paul's charge to Timothy to train leaders, is a charge laid on every gospel minister.

From chapter 2 of this book we'll walk through the book of 2 Timothy and watch how Paul trained Timothy in gospel ministry. That, I believe, will give something of a blueprint for training all future gospel workers.

Of course, 2 Timothy is not the only Bible material given to us to equip us to train future leaders. First Timothy, Titus and Matthew's gospel all immediately spring to mind as Bible books that equip us to train others. So 2 Timothy is not a comprehensive training manual, but I hope to convince you it's a great place to start.

But before we begin our walk through the letter, we must first be persuaded that training the next generation of leaders is a priority we must adopt. So that's where we will begin. Seeking the conviction that training the next generation of gospel workers must be a prime concern of ours. Because unless you make training leaders a priority you'll never do it.