



“Enter Into Strict Training”

A Spiritual & Ministry Disciplines Base Camp

*Everyone who **competes in the games** goes into **strict training**. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to **get a crown** that will last forever.*

*Therefore I do **not run like a man running** aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. 27 No, **I beat my body and make it my slave** so that after I have preached to others, I myself will **not be disqualified for the prize**.*

– 1 Corinthians 9:25-27

2 Timothy 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sits not down first, and counts the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you...

An NFL football player doesn't just go to classes and learn the art of playing football then land a job as a starting quarterback or lineman. No, there is a lot of hands on training and personal disciplines that go into making a great football player. Many naturally talented men have thought that they could go it alone fueled only by their innate abilities and they have failed to become great. The difference is training. Everyone needs a personal trainer and a coach who makes them do the hard things they would never do on their own. The same can be said for every sport, golf, tennis, boxing, baseball, etc.

Few pastors have the advantage of a mentor, trainer or coach. Many men simply sense the call of God on their life and then go to Bible School or Seminary to prepare them selves for ministry. Then they are called to a church and commence their ministry without the advantage of specific ministry disciplines and with little or no feedback on what they are doing. Is it any wonder that so many pastors fail and give up the ministry?

After 40 years of ministry as a pastor and missionary I look back on my ministries as wonderfully blessed times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. There were some very tough times and many struggles along the way, but in retrospect it was the disciplines of ministry that I learned from other men that made ministry tolerable, even fun. I have modeled my ministry after several people from whom I learned some secret disciplines that have served me well. I want to deliberately pass along to other men some of those key disciplines.

I would love to be your coach and trainer, not because I am better than you, not at all. I want to be your mentor/trainer/coach because I want you to be better than I ever have been, and have advantages that I never had. Over my 40 years of ministry I have pastored five churches. Each of those churches grew and became healthy and the pews filled to capacity as we served among them. I attribute those successes to God's grace and the faithful execution of disciplines I learned from great men, not the least of those is the discipline of prayer. I want you to have that advantage.

Here is what I propose: That you willingly enter into a year long "boot camp" of strict training that will build into your life those personal and pastoral disciplines that will help to make you successful. That means that during a 12 month period we will build a close relationship of mentoring and coaching. I will teach you what I have learned following the Apostle Paul's example and admonition to Timothy, "*The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*"

This coaching is limited to 20 men per year. I cannot coach a crowd. Only those who are willing to pay the price and commit to learn new disciplines, and un-learn old ministry habits, will be accepted. I prefer men young in ministry, if not in years. It is hard "to teach an old dog new tricks," meaning, if you are already set in your ways you will probably not be able to make the changes necessary to reconstruct your ministry life. There are exceptions of course. Some men recognize their bad habits and desperately want to change. They will learn. They will change. They will succeed.

What We Will Learn Together

Three times a year we will spend 2 ½ days together, from Monday evening to Thursday morning. There will be plenty of time to prepare for your Sunday message(s). You are committing yourself to be put into a strict training in ministry disciplines.

There is a cost for this coaching.

- A coaching fee of \$600 per person in the program.
- Each retreat will cost about \$100-\$150, plus your travel costs to get there.
- Total then is less than \$1,000.

We know that though this is far lower than most coaches charge it is still a stretch for young men just starting out in ministry. Therefore we urge that your church pay this fee, not you. Please approach your elders and board for funding. At your request, we will approach them for you.

If you and your church enter the *Parakletos: Alongside Ministries* program we you can get this coaching as ONE ON ONE in or near your own town when we come to speak and teach at your church.

(For a cost comparison consider what you would pay to attend one three-day seminar or conference that you have to fly to. You would pay a conference registration fee, the flight, 2-3 nights lodging, and your food costs. This is 9 full days of one-on-one coaching, teaching, guiding, and retooling you for a prayer-filled ministry.)

Here is what you will learn:

1. Personal Disciplines – an hour to rise, fixed hours of study, defined prayer habits, daily journaling, plenty of time alone with God, regular reading, in-depth study, Scripture memorization, etc. Anointing, get anointing!
2. Ministry Habits – solitude, prayer preps, sermon calendar, work schedule, Sat nights, posted work schedule, time with people, know your people, (pray, preach, love)
3. Praying Pastor – (Acts 6:4 prioritizes prayer above all other activities) personal, family, congregational for-with-over them, the pastoral prayer, personal prayer retreats, fasting, praying everywhere, and prayer at the altar.
4. Preaching Preps – daily listening/study, 4 hours daily, exegesis, cross ref, 3-“I’s’, illustrations, application, passion, pursuit of perfection, power point, notes, study guides, and much more.
5. Vision Casting – finding vision, plans, strategies, steps, visualizing, proclaiming, “by the grace and strength of God we will...” – purpose, mission, goals, strategies, steps, Prayer & Planning retreats three times per year.
6. Prayerful Planning – we teach you to do prayer and planning retreats for yourself and/or your staff so that vision and plans are no longer theories but actual specific plans.

“Plan your work and work you plan.”

5 Essential Pastoral Disciplines

1. Daily hour to rise – laziness has no place in the life of a pastor. Your people get up early to go to work, so should you!
2. Daily prayer alone with God – disciplined prayer time. “You can’t be a man of God and spend all your time with people!”
3. Daily study habits (3-4 hours), close the door, put the phone on voicemail, and focus!
4. Daily journaling – Everything gets into the journal. It is your conversations with God about everything.
5. Daily routine – daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly (prayer planner), to do list – “Tell yourself what needs to be done and give a time frame for it.”

What We Will Do For You

Just as a golf coach instructs you in the basics of your grip, stance and swing, then observes your practice swings and makes observations and recommendations to improve your swing, so too we will do for your pastoral disciplines and preaching.

- We will coach you in pastoral disciplines.
- We will be your spiritual director, listener, and prayer partner with regular e-mail and phone conversations.
- We will be your formal accountability partner. We will hold you accountable to implement these disciplines and changes in your swing.
- We will guide you in your planning and vision quest. You are not alone. We will walk with you in this quest for God’s direction and anointing.
- We will teach you to do your own quarterly prayer and planning retreats where you alone or you and your staff will seek the mind of God for His vision, and then set out specific strategies, goals, and plans to accomplish that vision.
- We will review your sermons (messages) 9 times during the year (one per month over nine months). We require that they be recorded, even videoed, for feedback purposes.
- We will seek to sharpen your preaching skills and add to your faith key disciplines that will serve you well for years to come.

For the next 12 months you are not alone. Someone experienced will be praying for you, talking with you, watching over your shoulder, whispering in your ear, advising you through troubled times, and watching your back. *“No man is an island, no man stands alone.”*