

Vineyard Leadership Skills: Organizational Development

Participant Guide

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Introduction

I once asked a group of pastors to come up with a list of leadership problems they were dealing with in their churches. They were able to brainstorm a long and diverse list of concerns. I wrote down each problem as it was mentioned.

Then I asked the group, “How many of these leadership problems are actually discipleship problems?” When we looked through the list, it became clear that well over two-thirds of the issues were actually discipleship problems rather than leadership problems.

To develop leaders, we need to begin with disciples. That’s why this set of guides is actually part two of the series. First come the discipleship guides—designed for all believers. Every believer is called to be a fruitful and growing disciple.

Building on that foundation, this series of leadership guides is a set of skills and competencies that need to be developed in those believers who may have a calling to leadership. Equipping believers with these competencies empowers them to begin leading effectively and living into the calling God has for them.

Don’t make the mistake of starting with leadership—assuming a foundation of discipleship—and then trying to develop leaders from those who are not disciples. You’ll find the majority of the pieces are missing.

However, if a foundation of discipleship is in place, this set of guides is intended to help you develop leaders at a grassroots level. The topics covered here comprise the qualities needed to help people who are living, growing, and multiplying as disciples be able to lead effectively. Although not every topic will be of equal use to every leader, this series of guides provides a broad foundation of leadership skills.

Each topic has both a participant guide and a leader guide, and is intended to be taught interactively in a small group environment.

Leadership Skills: Clarifying values, mission and vision

As leaders, we are leading out of something and we are leading toward something. That's true not only of Christian leaders, but of business and political leaders. As leaders state their values, people can decide whether those values are something they feel alignment with. People can also assess whether the mission and vision is something they want to move toward and contribute to.

The first step is clarifying values, mission and vision. State them succinctly and clearly so others can accurately determine whether they want to follow you and be a part of it. Here is an image that may be helpful: Values are like the roots of a tree. Mission is the trunk and main branches. Vision is the picture of the whole tree in the preferred future-- complete with fruit and a whole surrounding orchard.

Second-- and this is extremely important-- make sure your stated values align with your real values. If they don't, people will find out and you will lose trust. In wording your values, vision and mission, make sure they all accurately represent what you feel strongly about and what you are moving toward.

2 Timothy 4:1-8: Finishing the race

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ²Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ³For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ⁵But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

⁶For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

1 John 2:3-11, 4:19-21: The values of love and obedience

³We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

⁷Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. ⁸Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them....

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about value, mission and vision from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- How would you currently articulate your values? Your mission? Your vision?
- How many of the people you lead can recite them by memory?
- To what degree do your values underlie everything you do? If they changed, how would people know?
- Imagine your own memorial service. What would people say you stood for?
- What are the ways you continue to cast vision? List as many as you can.
- How do you check to see if you are still on track toward your vision?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take?

Leadership Skills: Visioncasting

The job of a leader is to be very clear and very consistent about the values they are leading out of, and the vision and mission they are leading toward. Make sure you are casting the vision in an appealing light... this is something everyone should want and hunger for. Also be sure to make it specific. Give examples, provide details of what it would look like if the vision become reality.

Sometimes it can feel repetitive, but the vision needs to continually be cast and re-cast. Without continued reminders of what we are moving toward, we lose vision. We forget. So first, be clear, precise, and motivating. And second, continually remind. The vision needs to remain in the forefront of people's minds.

Deuteronomy 30:11-20: Moses addressing the Israelites before they enter into the promised land

¹¹ Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. ¹² It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" ¹³ Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" ¹⁴ No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.

¹⁵ See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶ For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, ¹⁸ I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

¹⁹ This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰ and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Acts 2:14-24, 36-39: Peter addresses the crowd at Pentecost

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.

²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

³⁶ Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” ³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about visioncasting from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- Describe your vision in 30 seconds or less.
- How compelling is this vision? How specific is it?
- How have people responded to the vision so far? What does that tell you?
- In what ways are you able to cast and re-cast the vision?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take in visioncasting?

Leadership Skills: Gaining Ownership

It's not enough to design a mission statement or cast vision. We need to ensure that others are actually on board with that vision-- as committed to it as we are. They need to "own" the vision... feeling it is their own. How we go about doing this is a great test of leadership.

Sometimes leaders assume once we have said something, if no one speaks up against it, it's agreed upon. Not so. We need to do more than announce the direction and expect people to follow. We need to process people. That means talking with key leaders one-on-one about the idea, listening to their concerns and questions, allowing them time to think.

Sometimes it means reframing the perspective. What will it mean if we don't change? What do we have to gain by going in this new direction? We must bring people to the point that even without us, they would still continue toward this new vision... because it has become their own.

Galatians 2:1-2: Preaching the gospel to the Gentiles

Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. ²I went in response to a revelation and, meeting privately with those esteemed as leaders, I presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I wanted to be sure I was not running and had not been running my race in vain.

2 Samuel 12:1-10: Nathan confronts David

The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, ³but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

⁴"Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

⁵David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this must die! ⁶He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity."

⁷Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. ⁹Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'

1 Corinthians 1:10-17: An appeal for unity

¹⁰I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. ¹¹My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. ¹²What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ."

¹³Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶(Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about gaining ownership from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What new directions do you currently have in mind that will require gaining ownership?
- How do you plan to build buy-in for those new directions?
- Who are the key opinion leaders you need to talk with?
- What concerns might you need to address?
- What benefits would full ownership give you moving forward?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take?

Leadership Skills: Prioritizing

When we are faced with a problem, instead of moving directly to a fix, we are better off considering options and possibilities first. What could be done? What could we stop doing? Who is best positioned to meet this need? What are our long-term goals?

When we have considered these types of big-picture questions, we can then begin brainstorming options. Given the situation, what are some possible solutions? List as many as you can. Then list some more. Put down any that come to mind, even if they seem unworkable or impractical. Sometimes combinations of two different ideas can come together to create some good solutions.

After brainstorming multiple solutions, we need to prioritize our courses of action. If we have four ministry areas that need work, which are the most important? Which could be foundational to the others if addressed? Which could provide the most leverage for future change?

We can't do it all at once. So what should we do and in what order? That's the central question of prioritizing.

Acts 6:1-7: Choosing of the seven

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Matthew 19:26: The salvation of the rich

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about prioritizing from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What issues or problems are you currently facing that may call for brainstorming?
- What potential solutions/ideas can you think of?
- Who could help you think of more?
- Of the issues that you face right now, which feel most pressing? Which are most important to your long-term goals?
- List your current areas of responsibility. Now put them in order of priority. What do you see?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take?

Leadership Skills: Goal-setting

There's an old Yiddish proverb that goes, "Man plans and God laughs." Certainly that may sometimes be true. Our plans may be far from the mark of what God has in mind for us. Other times, the goals we have in mind are the right ones... God just has a more circuitous route for getting us there than we would like.

So what does this mean? Should we not set goals because God may have something else in mind? Not at all. Goal-setting, even when we don't have the right goal in mind, sets us in motion. When we are in motion, God can better direct our steps than when we are doing nothing. So we should set goals, trusting that God will reveal his will. If we take a posture of listening to the Holy Spirit and being open to new directions as we hear from him, God will guide our steps... even if it doesn't always look like it at the time.

And yes-- almost certainly-- the path will not look like what we expect.

Acts 19:21-22: Paul's plans to visit Rome

²¹After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also." ²²He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

Acts 23:11: God speaks to Paul

¹¹The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

Acts 26:28-27:2 Paul testifies before Agrippa and sails for Rome

²⁸Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

²⁹Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

³⁰The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. ³¹After they left the room, they began saying to one another, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment."

³²Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

Acts 28:16-23, 30-31: Paul preaches in Rome

¹⁶When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

¹⁷Three days later he called together the local Jewish leaders. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: “My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. ¹⁸They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. ¹⁹The Jews objected, so I was compelled to make an appeal to Caesar. I certainly did not intend to bring any charge against my own people. ²⁰For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.”

²¹They replied, “We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of our people who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. ²²But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect.”

²³They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. He witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus....

³⁰For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. ³¹He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

Scripture reflection:

- Taking the above scripture passages in chronological order, what can you glean about goal-setting through the experiences of the Apostle Paul?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What have you learned in the past about how God comes alongside you as you move toward goals you have set?
- What goals do you currently have foremost in your mind?
- To what degree do those goals dovetail with God’s specific calling on your life?
- What would success look like for you?
- What additional goals might you look toward?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take in celebrating?

Leadership Skills: Planning

As we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, we can begin to think strategically about what he may have next for us and where we should be focusing our energy. Planning and relying on the Spirit are not opposites; rather, they work together. As we listen for the voice of God, our direction often becomes clearer. We can see possibilities and then gear our actions to move toward those ends. That process is known as planning and strategizing, and we rely on the intelligence and creativity God gave us as we engage in it.

Through our strategic planning, God is at work through us. Consider David's strategy as he fought Goliath. Consider Joseph's years-long planning as he won the favor of the Pharaoh in Egypt. Consider Nehemiah's planning and strategy as he sought to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Consider the examples below.

Esther 4:12-5:13: Esther's request to the king

¹²When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, ¹³he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. ¹⁴For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

¹⁵Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶"Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

¹⁷So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther's instructions.

On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. ²When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

³Then the king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you."

⁴"If it pleases the king," replied Esther, "let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him."

⁵"Bring Haman at once," the king said, "so that we may do what Esther asks."

So the king and Haman went to the banquet Esther had prepared. ⁶As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, "Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted."

⁷ Esther replied, “My petition and my request is this: ⁸ If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king’s question.”

⁹ Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. But when he saw Mordecai at the king’s gate and observed that he neither rose nor showed fear in his presence, he was filled with rage against Mordecai. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home.

Calling together his friends and Zeresh, his wife, ¹¹ Haman boasted to them about his vast wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king had honored him and how he had elevated him above the other nobles and officials. ¹² “And that’s not all,” Haman added. “I’m the only person Queen Esther invited to accompany the king to the banquet she gave. And she has invited me along with the king tomorrow. ¹³ But all this gives me no satisfaction as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king’s gate.”

Acts 13:1-5: The sending of Barnabas and Saul

¹ Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about planning from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What are you hearing from God?
- What is your current planning moving toward?
- How do those two answers intersect?
- How is your plan aligned with your end goal?
- What other ends do you need to create a strategy to move toward?
- How are you praying for wisdom in your planning?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take?

Leadership Skills: Modifying

Life seldom goes according to plan-- no matter how good the plan may be. As leaders, we need to continue to monitor and evaluate progress. If some areas are going well, how can we make best use of that momentum? What principles can we apply to other areas? What more can we invest in what is working? Likewise, if some areas are not progressing as we had hoped, what can we do to improve matters? How can we determine the core problem? How might we redirect our energy instead?

We also need to adapt to continually changing circumstances and environments. The world in which we are carrying out our plans is not static. What seems like a good strategy one day may be a terrible strategy the next if the situation has changed. For example, say you have a celebration planned, but a national tragedy takes place the day before. You may need to modify. That could mean canceling the event, rescheduling it, or changing the way you present it. Context and conditions matter, and sometimes we must shift course in response.

Nehemiah 4: Nehemiah encounters resistance to his rebuilding of the city walls

When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews,² and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?”

³Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!”

⁴Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity.⁵ Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of the builders.

⁶So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

⁷But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

⁹But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

¹⁰Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.”

¹¹Also our enemies said, “Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.”

¹² Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, “Wherever you turn, they will attack us.”

¹³ Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows. ¹⁴ After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.

¹⁶ From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah ¹⁷ who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, ¹⁸ and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me.

¹⁹ Then I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. ²⁰ Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!”

²¹ So we continued the work with half the men holding spears, from the first light of dawn till the stars came out. ²² At that time I also said to the people, “Have every man and his helper stay inside Jerusalem at night, so they can serve us as guards by night and as workers by day.” ²³ Neither I nor my brothers nor my men nor the guards with me took off our clothes; each had his weapon, even when he went for water.

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about modifying from the chapter above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What plans do you have currently in process that need evaluating?
- What questions do you need to ask to evaluate accurately?
- Based on current progress, how might you need to redirect energy?
- Given the current context, what changes might you need to make?
- Who do you need to have on board in order to modify effectively?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take?

Leadership Skills: Celebrating

As leaders, we are often prone to charging on toward the next task without stopping to catch our breath. Not only is that not good for us personally—as time spent in reflection and celebration is essential for moving forward well—but it’s also very difficult for those we lead. As we lead others, we must stop at points of accomplishment to celebrate, encourage, and refresh. We need to look back on what we have done and how far we have come in order to have fresh energy for the journey forward.

During a celebration, we can take time to reflect on our accomplishments, on what God has done, and on what we have learned through the experience... even the parts of the experience that didn’t go according to plan. It’s important as leaders that we take the time to facilitate celebration for those we lead.

Matthew 25:21: From the parable of the talents

²¹“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

Genesis 28:16-19: After Jacob’s dream of angels

¹⁶When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.” ¹⁷He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

¹⁸Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

Exodus 15:1-6, 11: After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

“I will sing to the LORD,
for he is highly exalted.
Both horse and driver
he has hurled into the sea.

²“The LORD is my strength and my defense;
he has become my salvation.
He is my God, and I will praise him,
my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

³The LORD is a warrior;
the LORD is his name.

⁴ Pharaoh's chariots and his army
he has hurled into the sea.

The best of Pharaoh's officers
are drowned in the Red Sea.

⁵ The deep waters have covered them;
they sank to the depths like a stone.

⁶ Your right hand, LORD,
was majestic in power.
Your right hand, LORD,
shattered the enemy.

¹¹ Who among the gods
is like you, LORD?

Who is like you—
majestic in holiness,
awesome in glory,
working wonders?

Scripture reflection:

- What can you glean about celebrating from each of the passages above?
- What do you notice?
- What surprises you?
- What is God highlighting for you?

Coaching questions for discussion:

- What do you currently have to celebrate?
- How might you lead celebration for your team?
- How can you incorporate remembrance and reflection?
- What kind of celebration will provide renewed energy for the journey ahead?
- Who do you need to publically recognize and honor for their Kingdom contributions?
- What have you learned about God through this journey?
- What action steps are you sensing God would have you take in celebrating?

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Personal development

Continuing in spiritual formation: engaging in ongoing personal growth as a fruitful and holistic disciple of Jesus

Managing time: discerning what is important and focusing your time so it aligns with God's priorities for your life and ministry.

Managing money: recognizing that your money is not your own and consequently handling it with both wisdom and generosity

Engaging in life-long learning: committing to ongoing learning and growth

Focusing personal ministry contribution: bringing together your gifts and the world's needs into a focused personal calling

Developing leaders

Identifying potential leaders: being intentional about looking for potential leaders to develop and invest in

Recruiting leaders and workers: bringing aboard and orienting potential new leaders

Training leaders and workers: helping new leaders learn hands-on skills in ministry contexts

Deploying leaders and workers: releasing new leaders into areas of responsibility and challenge

Monitoring leaders and workers: supervising the work of new leaders to help them stay on track with effective ministry

Nurturing leaders and workers: providing ongoing encouragement and support for new leaders as they continue to grow in their ministry skills

Leading teams

Building community: knitting together a group of people who work, play and worship together well

Leading meetings: designing and facilitating effective meetings that have a clear purpose and agenda

Facilitating learning: noticing teachable moments and helping people learn from their experiences through reflection

Delegating: developing others and freeing up your own time by intentional giving away of tasks and responsibilities

Supervising leaders: providing the necessary oversight to lead others in effective ministry

Coaching leaders: coming alongside a person to help them discover God's agenda for their life and ministry

Ministry and money: handling ministry money with integrity and transparency

Organizational Development

Clarifying values, mission and vision: knowing what you're aiming for as you move in new directions

Vision-casting: painting a picture of a preferred future in a way that helps others see what it could look like

Gaining ownership: helping people get on board with the direction you're leading

Prioritizing: generating multiple options and then prayerfully deciding which to pursue

Goal-setting: establishing goals that are helpful, realistic and challenging

Planning: creating strategic plans that will achieve the desired ends

Modifying: evaluating progress and making adjustments for greater effectiveness

Celebrating: publically recognizing progress and contributions, and acknowledging how God has been at work

Communication skills

Listening: actively helping others unpack their best thinking

Asking questions: probing in ways that promote mutual discovery and insight

Providing feedback: knowing when and how to speak into someone else's life in a way that is helpful

Having hard conversations: being willing to be honest and vulnerable with your feelings and ideas

Resolving conflict: working to mend rifts and coming to agreement with others who see differently

Relating cross-culturally: seeing through another person's eyes a perspective that is not culturally your own

Pastoral skills

Shepherding: providing comfort, care and encouragement to the hurting

Mentoring: pouring into another in a life-on-life context that includes sponsoring, guiding, and investing relationally

Public speaking: learning to present your ideas clearly and articulately before others

Facilitating small groups: leading others well in the context of small group discussion

Fostering Kingdom cooperation: working together with other ministries, churches and leaders toward common ends

About the Author

Dr. Bob Logan has worked in full-time ministry for over thirty years as a church planter, pastor, missions leader, consultant, and ministry coach. He is internationally recognized as an authority in church planting, church growth and leadership development. Bob invests his life to equip people to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus to make disciples and multiply churches.

About Logan Leadership

Our vision is every person living, growing and multiplying together as disciples of Jesus who demonstrate the Kingdom of God among all peoples.

Our mission is catalyzing leaders to accelerate their movement toward this vision.

Our approach integrates biblical principles with social science insights by helping leaders...

- sharpen thinking skills
- focus actions
- contextualize solutions
- create reproducible processes
- increase ministry capacity