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## **Leading God's People God's Way**

**A Leadership Training Course by Stephen & Karen Negus**

### ***Lesson 23: The Law of Legacy***

#### **Introduction**

This is Lesson 23 in our course called *Leading God's People God's Way*. We are in the process of learning how to grow in our leadership ability as we study the laws of leadership. In this lesson we will learn about the **Law of Legacy**.

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When most leaders lead they are only thinking about today. They are asking themselves questions like: What must I do today?, Who must I meet with today? and Where must I go today? But leaders who want to leave a legacy also think about tomorrow. They also ask themselves the question, Who am I training and developing as a leader today that will be here after I am gone? When all is said and done, your ability as a leader will not be judged by what you did personally, or even by what your team or group accomplished while you were with them. Your lasting value will be measured by how well your team or group does after you are gone. That is what the Law of Legacy is all about. It is about leaving something behind after you move on.

Jesus' greatest miracle Jesus was not performed while he walked this earth, but after he left. It was the result of countless hours of training and modeling for his twelve disciples. Then he instructed them to go and practice this same art of mentoring and leadership. The miracle was that he got these relatively uneducated men to reproduce his miraculous ministry in such a way that they reached almost the entire known world within a very short period of time. Jesus spent the majority of his time with the Twelve, not with the masses. He was committed to developing men who would lead the church into the next generation. Jesus knew where his legacy would be found. His genius was not in his divine *miracles*, nor even in his direct *ministry*. It was found in his deliberate *multiplication*.

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The Law of Legacy says this: **A leader's lasting value is measured by succession.** The key verse for this law is Acts 1:8, which says: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Legacy has to do with what a leader leaves behind. As leaders, we will all move on from where we are today. We will either move on in the sense of going to another place where we continue to grow in our leadership. Or we will move on in the sense of leaving this world and going to be with the Lord. Either way, what will we leave behind when we move on? That is our legacy.

Here is something to think about. We all leave something behind when we move on. The question we must ask ourselves is, What will I leave behind? As we study this lesson we will learn that a lasting legacy, one that will stand the test of time, is built around people. It focuses on the people who will succeed us, the leaders who will come after us.

The fact is that someone will come after us. The question is what will they do, how will they lead, and what will their vision be? The good news is that today we can influence those things. Today we can help to build and shape the leaders who will come after us. But it will not happen by accident. We must build our legacy on purpose. And we must begin building it today. That is what Jesus did.

Our key verse for this lesson records the last words Jesus spoke to his disciples. These words are the essence of the legacy that Jesus left behind when he returned to the right hand of his Father. Let us think about what he said and why he could say what he said.

If you were to ask most people why they think Jesus was a great person, they would probably say something like this: He did many miracles, or He healed every sickness and disease, or He raised the dead, or He was a great teacher, or He lived a sinless life. All of these things are true about Jesus, and all of them do contribute to his greatness. But, perhaps, the greatest thing that Jesus did was to train leaders to follow after him.

You see, the first thing Jesus did as he began his ministry was to call men to follow him. He chose disciples. He chose twelve men into whom he could invest and pour his life. He knew that there would come a day when he would return to heaven. And he knew that he needed to have leaders in place who could carry on the work of the ministry that he had begun.

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From day one of his ministry, Jesus was thinking about legacy. He was thinking about what he would leave behind after he returned to his Father. He knew that his legacy would involve people, because his kingdom is about people. His legacy would not have anything to do with great buildings or military victories or the building of a wealthy earthly kingdom. It would be about him choosing ordinary people and empowering them to accomplish extraordinary things.

And so, as Jesus went about doing the things that he did, healing the sick, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and delivering people from the oppression of the devil, his disciples went with him. Everywhere he went, they went. And they were watching. You see, Jesus was not just healing the sick. He was showing his disciples how to heal the sick. He was not just preaching the gospel. He was teaching his disciples how to preach the gospel. And he was not just delivering people from the power of the devil. He was demonstrating for his disciples how to do it.

While Jesus was on earth, he set the example for his disciples, both then and now. He modeled ministry for them, and he mentored them. He not only showed them how to

do it, he also invited them to do it with him. And he sent them out to try it on their own.

But there was one more thing that he did for them. He empowered them. And that brings us back to our key verse. Jesus told his disciples what was going to happen to them when the Holy Spirit, whom he promised to send, would come on them. He said they would receive power. Power for what? Power to be his witnesses to the world. In other words, they would receive the power that they needed to carry on the ministry that he had been demonstrating for them.

By empowering his disciples to be his witnesses, Jesus completed the building of his legacy. Now these men were fully trained, equipped, and empowered to carry on the work that he had begun. And they did. As you read the story of the early church in the book of Acts, you will find these same men, and others whom they trained in the same way Jesus had trained them, carrying on the work of the ministry. Over and over again, it says that the Lord added daily to the number of people who believed in Jesus.

The Law of Legacy says that a leader's lasting value is measured by those who come after him. Jesus was so successful in creating his legacy, that the value of his ministry continues today, almost two thousand years after he walked on the earth. Now that is a legacy, don't you think?

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Why don't you take a moment to pause the DVD and memorize the Law of Legacy and the key verse now?

*[Fade in PowerPoint Slide 3 – Pause DVD]*

*[Discussion – in pairs or groups of 3 or 4]*

- a) Jesus began working on his legacy right from the beginning of his ministry. Have you begun to work on your legacy yet? What things can you do to get started if you have not already started?*
- b) The legacy that Jesus built is centered on relationships. It is all about people. On what is the legacy that you are trying to build centered?*

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As we study the Law of Legacy in this lesson, we are going to look at the life of Jesus. Let us take a quick look at the setting for our story. If you look at the slide on the screen right now, you will see where our story fits into history.

In Malachi, the last book in the Old Testament, the prophet said that one would come who would be a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord." About four hundred years later, John the Baptist appeared on the scene. Matthew records that he was the one whom the prophet Isaiah foretold, and that he prepared the way for the first coming of Jesus.

So it was, after four hundred years of prophetic silence, that God began to speak again. As the writer of Hebrews tells us, in the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But now he has spoken to us through his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom he made the universe.

Jesus was born about 4 BC. Now you might ask, if BC means "Before Christ," how could Jesus, who is Christ, be born before Christ? That is a good question. The answer is that the men who figured out the calendar that we use today made a mistake in their calculations. But, unfortunately, we have to live with it.

We do not know very much about the childhood, teenage years, and early adulthood of Jesus. Most of what we know about Jesus has to do with his three years of ministry on earth. Luke tells us that Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. That means that he began his ministry in about AD 27.

As we have mentioned before, the focus of the ministry of Jesus was twofold. First, he came to do the work of the ministry. In other words, he came to heal people, deliver them, and tell them that God loves them. Reading about the ministry of Jesus is very exciting. To see how he performed so many amazing miracles and touched the lives of so many people is quite incredible.

The second thing Jesus focused on during his ministry was the selection and training of his twelve disciples. These would be the ones who would lead the church after he left; all of them except Judas Iscariot who betrayed him, of course. Everywhere Jesus went, his disciples went with him. Everything he did they were watching. And so, in just three short years, Jesus took these men who had no schooling and transformed them into leaders in his kingdom.

For approximately three years Jesus ministered and trained his disciples. Then in about AD 30 he was crucified, died, and buried. But he did not stay dead. He rose again on the third day. After that he appeared to his disciples and other believers for about forty days before he ascended into heaven to be seated at the right-hand of his Father.

Fifty days after Jesus was raised from the dead the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the believers as Jesus said he would be. On that same day Peter, one of the twelve whom Jesus had trained, stood up and preached the gospel to the people of Jerusalem. About three thousand people believed and the church was born. The men that Jesus had trained to carry on the ministry were now doing the ministry, just as they had seen Jesus do it.

Jesus knew that he was not going to be on earth forever. And he planned for the time when he would return to his Father by developing leaders who could carry on what he had started after he left. In so doing, he ensured that the value he added to the lives of people would continue long after he had moved on. In other words, his lasting value was measured by those who came after him. That is the Law of Legacy.

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Before we go any further in our lesson, it would be good for you to read the scriptures pertaining to this story. Why don't you stop right now to take a moment and read the following scriptures?

*Scriptures to read: Luke 5:1-11; Luke 6:12-16; Luke 9:1-20; Luke 9:57 to 10:12; Matthew 28:16-20*

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As we have mentioned before, Jesus began building his legacy right at the beginning of his ministry, when he chose his disciples and called them to follow him. Luke records what happened when Jesus called his first disciples in the fifth chapter of his gospel.

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One day as Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

Simon answered, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have not caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

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Then, in the sixth chapter, Luke records the following about how Jesus chose the rest of his disciples. He also lists their names here for us:

One of those days Jesus went out into the hills to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Jesus called these twelve men to follow him. These were the ones into whom he would pour his life. These were the ones to whom he would entrust his legacy.

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After Jesus had spent some time with the Twelve teaching and mentoring them, he called them together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. And then he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them: "Take nothing for the journey - no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, and no extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them." So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.

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When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

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Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."

He replied, "You give them something to eat."

They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish--unless we go and buy food for this entire crowd." About five thousand men were there.

But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

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Here we see that Jesus did not just instruct his disciples. He did not just teach them, but he also gave them opportunities to do themselves the things he was doing. First he sent them out by themselves so that they could get some experience in preaching the gospel, healing the sick and casting out demons.

Then he performed a miracle in which they participated. When he fed the five thousand, the miracle did not actually occur until the disciples handed the food out. It was only then that it multiplied and fed the whole group.

As Jesus spent more and more time with his disciples, they began to realize who he really was. Many people had opinions about who Jesus was. Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ of God."

By this he meant Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God. Jesus was making progress in building his legacy. Now his disciples understood who he was, and they were learning to minister in his name. They were getting closer to being ready for when he departed.

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Jesus never expected his disciples to follow him without counting the cost. And he did not try to hide from them the price that they would have to pay in order to follow him. Luke goes on to record the following events. As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied to him saying, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

He said to another man, "Follow me."

But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

We should note here that the man's father was not dead yet. He was actually saying to Jesus, "Let me wait till my father dies so that I can bury him. Then I will come and follow you." In other words, his family was more important to him than following Jesus.

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After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town."

This was the second time that Jesus sent out his disciples to minister. This time the group was larger, but it is highly likely that the twelve disciples were included in the

group. Remember that Jesus was training them to be leaders, not just ministers of the gospel. The first time he sent the Twelve out by themselves to minister. Then they were just ministering to people, but now there was also an opportunity to lead others. Now the Twelve could take other disciples and show them how to do the work of the ministry. This was the next step in their leadership development, and also the next step in Jesus building his legacy.

When Jesus was crucified and buried, it seemed that all the work he had done in preparing his disciples might come to nothing. The disciples still did not understand that he was going to be resurrected. They were so discouraged that they returned to Galilee. One day Peter decided that he was going back to his old life. He said to the others, "I am going fishing." And they could think of nothing better to do, so they replied, "We will come with you."

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They fished all night and caught nothing. The next morning, Jesus was waiting on the shore for them. They did not recognize him at first, but then John saw that it was the Lord. Jesus told them to cast their nets in again, and they caught a large amount of fish. Peter must have remembered the first time that this happened. He knew then that it was the Lord.

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Over a period of about forty days Jesus appeared to his disciples at various times and in various places. Slowly but surely they began to understand that he was alive and not dead. Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go and he appeared to them once more. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some were still not convinced and doubted that it was him.

It was then that Jesus put the finishing touches on the disciples as he commissioned them with these words: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

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Here Jesus empowered his disciples by giving them authority in his name to go into all the world and make other disciples, just like he had done with them. And he promised to be with them always, to the very end of the age. When Jesus promised to be with his disciples to the end of the age, he was thinking about you and me. We are his disciple living at the end of the age. We believe that Jesus is coming back soon, but he is with us today just as he promised. In one way, Jesus finished building his legacy that day when he commissioned his disciples. But, in another way, he is still building his legacy today, through your life and mine.

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*[Discussion – in pairs or groups of 3 or 4]*



- a) *Jesus called his disciples to follow him and then he invested his life in them. In whom are you investing your?*
- b) *Jesus modeled the ministry for his disciples and gave them opportunities to minister both when he was there and by themselves. Then he commissioned them to go out on their own. What are you doing to train and develop those who will carry your legacy?*

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We have seen how, from the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus focused on training leaders who would carry on the work of the ministry after he returned to his Father. In doing this he was making sure of his legacy. And his legacy has lasted to this very day.

Let us take a closer look at the principles of legacy that we can learn from the life of Jesus. We will focus on four main observations, which are:

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1. More important than leaving an inheritance is leaving a legacy.

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 13]*

2. Legacies are not left by accident.

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 13]*

3. Leaders deposit their legacy in people.

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 13]*

4. A leader's legacy: your toughest job and your deepest joy.

Let us get started with our first observation.

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The first observation about legacy that we can make from the life of Jesus is this:

### ***1. More important than leaving an inheritance is leaving a legacy.***

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When most people think about Jesus, the first things that come to their minds are the miracles he performed. In doing so, they miss the most important part of his ministry. They forget the fact that Jesus strategically created a legacy by developing leaders to carry on the ministry after he was gone.

Deep down, all people would probably like to leave something behind that will live on after them. That desire is stronger for leaders than it is for the average person. But not everyone sees the issue the same way. People are most likely to leave behind three kinds of things as they finish the most productive period of their lives:

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## **1. Souvenirs**

No one wants to depart from this world without leaving a trace of having been in it. But some people are so preoccupied with surviving or with pursuing happiness that they do not accomplish anything. They satisfy themselves by collecting souvenirs.

Souvenirs are little more than markers; they commemorate events, milestones, or activities that people have experienced. There is nothing wrong with having souvenirs. My wife and I like to travel, and when we do, we like to buy a small souvenir, usually a Christmas ornament, that reminds us of the place we visited. In and of themselves souvenirs are not bad. But, the fact is, they have no essential value.

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## **2. Trophies**

Other people strive to capture trophies. Where souvenirs are records of existence, trophies are records of achievement. They show that we did something that separated us from the rest of the pack.

Trophies have many forms. Some are actual trophies or awards, like an Olympic gold medal. Others are trophies of a different kind, such as an impressive building, or a profitable business bearing our name. Trophies give their winners prestige and recognition, but in and of themselves they have no real, lasting value.

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## **3. Legacies**

The third thing people strive to leave behind are legacies. A legacy is different from a trophy or souvenir in that it does not just mark something that happened in the past: it lives on and continues to make an impact in the present. It is a gift given to the next generation.

When a legacy is created by a leader, it is more than the giving of an inheritance. It specifically includes the passing of the leadership baton. It means succession from the leader to his replacement. That makes a leader's legacy a tremendous gift.

Jesus purposefully created his legacy. He spent most of his time during the three years of his ministry with his twelve disciples, not with the crowds who sought him. He strategically prepared his disciples to carry on his ministry after he would depart. The gospel was his message, but legacy was his method. Everything depended on the job he did with those twelve men.

People believe in Jesus today and call him Lord because he made it possible for the disciples to carry on his work. And they, in turn, trained others to continue in their place. He practiced the Law of Legacy, and so did they. If he had not, then

the message of the gospel and its method of transfer would have ended in the first century AD.

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The second observation about legacy that we can make from the life of Jesus is this:

## **2. Legacies are not left by accident.**

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 15]*

Have you ever been asked how you want to be remembered? You may not have, depending on your age. I think it is the kind of question most people do not hear much before they turn fifty. When most people are asked how they will be remembered, they fumble for a moment and say something like, "Well, I do not know. I have tried to do my best. History will have to answer that. I hope history will be kind to me."

While it may be true that history judges the results of our actions, we are responsible for our efforts. No one leaves a legacy by accident. We can not hope for the best. Every positive legacy ever created by a leader was planned and pursued with purpose.

If you desire to create a legacy, you need to be strategic and intentional. These guidelines can help you get started:

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### **1. Decide ahead what you are willing to give up**

The Law of Sacrifice states that a leader must give up to go up. Being a leader has a price. Being a leader who leaves a legacy has an even greater price because when you work to create a legacy, your life is no longer your own.

That is why it is so important to know what you are willing to give up so that others can go up. Jesus taught this principle. He told his disciples, the very ones who would be required to continue his legacy: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it."

What are you willing to give up? How much of your time? How much of your money? How many opportunities? You probably have a lot of dreams. How many are you willing to set aside to ensure that one or maybe two of them survive in the lives of others? Do not go into the process blind.

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### **2. Take the initiative to start the process**

If you are a great leader, good leaders will flock to you. Resources will come your way. People will come to you with ideas they want to see fulfilled. But no one will create your legacy for you.

The followers of Jesus all had various agendas. Some, like Simon the Zealot, wanted him to lead a revolt against Rome. Others, like James and John, wanted positions of power for themselves. Even Peter, whom Jesus called "the rock," tried to dissuade Jesus from the very act that would release Peter and the other disciples to follow in his footsteps.

If you want to create a legacy, you will have to initiate the process. And there will be times when you will have to fight for it.

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### **3. Know your goals with each person**

The process of creating a legacy relies primarily on people. It requires the selection of the right people and the right development process for each individual.

Jesus carefully chose those who would carry his legacy. Scripture says he picked the twelve he wanted very intentionally. He did not take the first guys who showed up. And he did not treat all of them the same. I believe that he had a specific development process for each person. For some of those men, we know what Jesus was trying to overcome. With Peter it was his impulsiveness and hotheadedness. With James and John, the sons of Zebedee, it was their selfish ambition. With Matthew the tax collector it was materialism.

As you find the right people to whom you will entrust your legacy, remember that you have a different job with each person. You want to help all of them become better leaders, but you will need to develop specific strengths and address particular character issues.

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### **4. Prepare to pass the baton well**

Once you have prepared your people, then you need to prepare for the upcoming transition. There is a real art to preparing a successor for a transition. And it does not always go smoothly.

1. Even Jesus had trouble handing the baton to his followers. He appeared to them after his resurrection and gave them the Great Commission, yet some of them still did not get it. John, admitted that he, Peter, and James returned to fishing after they saw Jesus resurrected! As you prepare to hand off your leadership to a successor, do everything you can to make for a smooth transition. And then, plan to offer additional assistance without getting in the way.

It is never too soon to start thinking about leaving a legacy. If you feel that you do not have something worth handing off, then work harder on your ministry today. But as you do, keep your eyes open for the people who will someday carry on the

work you have begun. The only way to build anything of real value is to give it away.

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*[Discussion – in pairs or groups of 3 or 4]*

- a) *People leave different things behind after they move on: souvenirs, trophies, or legacies. What are you leaving behind?*
- b) *A legacy is not created by accident. If you want to leave a legacy, you must create it on purpose. What are you doing today to leave your legacy tomorrow?*

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The third observation about legacy that we can make from the life of Jesus is this:

### **3. Leaders deposit their legacy in people.**

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 17]*

If you wanted to change the lives of people a hundred years from now, how would you go about it? What would you do? How about a thousand years from now? Or two thousand? Would you create a time capsule? Would you build a library? Would you found a university? How would you touch the lives of people one hundred generations after your death?

That is the task Jesus faced and accomplished. He did it without writing any books, building any schools, or founding any institutions. He did it by training men to carry on his work after he was gone. Lasting success calls for successors.

It is one of the greatest ironies that Jesus chose people as the instruments through which he would reach the world. Think about it; he was God. He could have done anything to make sure that everything went exactly as he planned. But he chose to use human beings, who often make mistakes, for such an important task. If Jesus chose to deposit his legacy in people, then should we not learn his method and practice it as best we can. Here are the four steps that Jesus used for working in the lives of people:

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 17]*

#### **1. Instruction**

Jesus was constantly teaching, most often with parables. He taught the masses. He educated and rebuked the Pharisees. And he carefully instructed the disciples. More than half of the Gospels' content is concerned with the teaching of Jesus.

The account of Jesus telling the parable of the sower gives us insight into how he worked. Using parables, he taught the masses and tested their hearts. But

with the disciples, Jesus gave much deeper instruction. When they asked him about the meaning of the parable, he explained it to them, revealing the insightful truth contained in the story. He told them that he wanted them to know and understand what he was teaching them.

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## **2. Demonstration**

But Jesus did not rely on instruction alone. If he had just taught the disciples and done nothing more, they never would have carried on his legacy. Instead, Jesus shared his life with them.

As you examine how Jesus did this, you can see that the relationship Jesus had with his disciples went through three phases:

- *Come and see.* In the first phase, Jesus invited them to observe him and his priorities. It was an invitation for them to evaluate him, and themselves, in light of what he was doing.
- *Come and follow me.* During the second phase, Jesus asked for a greater level of commitment. For example, he asked the Galilean fishermen to leave their nets and follow him. The disciples were to do more than observe; they were to associate with him.
- *Come and be with me.* The third and final phase, which occupied most of Jesus' three years of ministry, required the disciples' commitment and companionship.

The most important kind of teaching Jesus did was modeling, for some things can only be caught, not taught. Once the Twelve moved to the highest level of connection with Jesus, they were present with him always. They were present with him as he taught, traveled, prayed, ate with 'sinners,' healed the sick, and raised the dead. They saw that there was consistency between his teaching and his actions, and they learned the how and why of all he did.

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## **3. Experience**

After Jesus had modeled good leadership to the disciples and taught them spiritual truths, he did not turn them loose and move on. He gradually worked them into positions of independent leadership by giving them valuable experience.

You can see the way Jesus progressively involved the disciples in his ministry. After they had spent enough time with him, he gave instructions to the Twelve, invested them with authority, and then sent them out to do ministry in his place. You can read about it in Luke 9:1-6. Then, not long after that, he sent out seventy disciples in similar fashion (see Luke 10:1-16). Though Scripture does

not state it, the twelve disciples were probably included in that group. Jesus was giving them an opportunity to practice what he had taught and to practice leadership of other disciples as they did.

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#### **4. Assessment**

Jesus repeatedly evaluated the progress of his disciples. For example, after the return of the seventy whom he had sent out, he debriefed them, gave them instruction concerning priorities, and celebrated with them (see Luke 10:17-24). Jesus also gave individual assessment to his disciples, which included specific feedback concerning their character and their capabilities. Such was the case with Peter, whom he praised for his great faith in Matthew 16:17-19 and also rebuked for the great weakness of his denial in Matthew 26:33-34.

The disciples might not have always understood everything Jesus told them, but they knew where they stood with him. And when they were not acting in a way that was consistent with what they had been taught, Jesus let them know.

If you possess the desire to leave a legacy, then you must look to people to carry it for you. You need the right people and the right process for preparing them. Only as you have poured into them will they be able to pour out themselves for others. No one can give what he does not have.

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The fourth observation about legacy that we can make from the life of Jesus is this:

#### **4. A leader's legacy: your toughest job and your deepest joy.**

*[Click PowerPoint Slide 18]*

Many leaders who leave a legacy never get the privilege of seeing it carried forward in their lifetimes. But if you can begin building your legacy early enough, it is possible to catch a glimpse of it before you move on to be with the Lord.

When a leader wants to create a lasting legacy, a lot of things need to go right. You have to find the right leaders. Then you have to take them through an effective development process. You will also need the agreement of the people and the favor of God. And then, when the time comes, you have to let go and get out of the way.

If God has given you a vision for something that will outlive you, be willing to pay the price for it. A legacy is a dream that changes not only your life but also the lives of other people it touches. You pay a high price to live for people other than yourself. But it is worth it.

Jesus did what was necessary for him to develop his disciples to make sure that they were ready to lead after he left. Here are twelve leadership ingredients that Jesus used as he built his legacy.

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## **1. Initiative**

Jesus took the initiative to build his legacy. He did not wait for someone else to do it for him. As we have seen already, one of the very first things he did as he began his ministry was to choose twelve men to follow him. In Luke 6:12-13 it says that Jesus went off into the mountains by himself to pray. He talked to his Father all night, and the next day he called the Twelve to follow him.

Jesus knew the most important aspect of his ministry and time on earth was to build his legacy. In other words, it was to find, train, equip, and empower those who would succeed him. And he took the initiative to do that. But he did not do it in his own strength or wisdom. He spent the whole night in prayer, talking to his Father about the men he would choose. And once he heard from his Father, he did not waste any time. He acted the next day when he called those he had chosen to follow him.

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## **2. Proximity**

Why did Jesus choose his twelve disciples? Mark 3:14 tells us why. It says that Jesus chose the twelve so that they could be with him and that he could send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. Jesus chose his disciples first so that they could be with him. He wanted them close to him. He wanted their companionship. But he wanted more than that.

Jesus wanted his disciples to be near to him so that they could learn how to do the work of the ministry. In Luke 8:1 we see that as Jesus traveled from town to town and village to village proclaiming the good news, his twelve disciples were with him. They were watching, observing, learning. When Jesus preached the gospel, healed the sick, and cast demons out of people he did so to set people free. But, he also did so to demonstrate to his disciples how to do it. For them to learn in that way, they needed to be with him. They needed to be in the same proximity as he was.

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## **3. Friendship**

Jesus knew that leadership is more than having a position or a title. It is really about relationship. Jesus connected with his disciples and the crowds who followed him. He showed them that he cared for them. He added value to their lives. He built relationship with them.

Towards the end of his time on earth, Jesus said these words to his disciples, which are recorded in John 15:15. He said to them, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I call you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

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#### **4. Example**

Everything Jesus did was an example, not only to his disciples when he was on earth, but also to his disciples today. Jesus is our example. He is the one who has set the standard by which we must live our lives, and by which we must lead in his kingdom.

In John 13:15 Jesus said to his disciples, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." He said this in the context of washing the feet of his disciples. In other words, he was saying to them that, just as he had served them, they were to serve others. That is the essence of leadership in God's kingdom. To be great, to be a leader in the kingdom, you must become the servant of all. That is the example that Jesus has set for us.

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#### **5. Commitment**

Jesus was fully committed to those who followed him. Why? Because he was fully committed to the plan and the purpose that his Father had set for his life. In John 13:1, just before he washed the feet of his disciples, it says that, "Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love." Jesus loved his disciples. And he loves you and me. Somebody said it this way: "I asked Jesus how much he loved me and he went to the cross, stretched out his arms, and said, 'This much.'" Jesus is so committed to us that he died for us. That is total commitment.

Not only is Jesus fully committed to us, he also expects the same commitment from us. In Matthew 16:24 he said these words: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Jesus expects total commitment from us. Making a decision to follow him is not a one-time event. It is something we must choose to do every day of our lives, sometimes more than once in the same day. Each day we must die to ourselves and choose to follow his plan and purpose for our lives. It is not about what we want; it is about what he wants.

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#### **6. Responsibility**

After Jesus had spent some time teaching his disciples and showing them how to do the work of the ministry, he sent them out two-by-two to give them a chance to practice what they had learned. When he did, he gave them authority over evil spirits. Mark 6:7 records this for us. This was no small thing. The disciples now had the same power that they had seen Jesus use to cast out demons.

When Jesus gave his disciples authority to cast out evil spirits in his name, he was giving them responsibility. He was asking them to do something in his name. With that request came the responsibility to use the authority that he

had given them in the appropriate way. Leadership always comes with responsibility. As leaders we are always accountable to God for the way in which we lead those that he has entrusted to our care.

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## **7. Knowledge**

One thing that Jesus did a lot of was to teach his disciples. He wanted them to learn and to know all about his kingdom. In Luke 8:9-10 Jesus clearly told his disciples that his desire was that they would know and understand the principles of his kingdom. He said that others would see and hear but still not understand. But that was not what he wanted for his disciples. He wanted them to know and to understand.

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## **8. Vision**

When Jesus called his first disciples in Matthew 4:19 he said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Right from the beginning, Jesus began to cast a vision for them, teaching them what his ministry was all about. It was about bringing people into the kingdom of God. The first disciples were fishermen. When Jesus told them he would make them fishers of men, they understood exactly what he was talking about.

Later on, in John 4:35 gave them another picture. He talked to them about the harvest. Israel in those days was primarily an agricultural society. All of the disciples understood the concepts of farming and bringing in the harvest. In fact, there were a number of feasts around harvest time each year, so everyone would know the significance of the harvest. Again Jesus used this picture to help the disciples understand that the work of his kingdom is about bringing people in, just as the harvest is brought in during the harvest season.

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## **9. Trust**

Not only did the disciples trust Jesus, but he also trusted them. We see this in Matthew 10:1-8 when Jesus called his disciples together and gave them authority over the devil and to heal every sickness and disease. Then he sent them out to preach the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy, and drive out demons.

When Jesus sent his disciples out like that, he was investing his trust in them. He had just given them authority in his name. That is an amazing thought--the king of the universe giving men his authority to do things in his name. Just imagine the trouble they could have got into. But Jesus trusted them and they did not let him down.

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## **10. Evaluation**

Another time Jesus sent out seventy followers of his just as he had sent the twelve out before. In Luke 10:17-24 it records how excited they were when they came back and reported to Jesus what had happened. They told him that even the demons submitted to them in the name of Jesus. Jesus told them not to rejoice in that, but rather to rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

After Jesus gave his followers a task to do, he spent time with them to evaluate the results. This is a very important part in the development process. If you never take time to evaluate, you will never learn anything from your mistakes.

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## **11. Power**

We have already looked at two passages in which Jesus empowered those that he sent out to minister. But he did it again at the end of his ministry. Before he ascended into heaven, he told his disciples these words recorded in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jesus never asked his disciples to do anything that he did not empower them to do. Every time he asks us to do something he also enables us to do it. He gives us the power, the strength, the ability to accomplish the things he asks us to do. It is never about us, but always about him. The only ability Jesus asks from us is our availability.

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## **12. Launch**

The final thing that Jesus did, after spending three years with his disciples training and equipping them, was to launch them into the ministry. Before he returned to his Father, he commissioned his disciples with these words recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

When Jesus launched his disciples, he told them exactly what to do and where to do it. And he gave them the authority that they needed to get the job done.

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*[Discussion – in pairs or groups of 3 or 4]*

- a) *Building a legacy that will last is primarily about investing in and developing people who will carry on the work after you are gone. Who will carry your legacy?*

- b) *Few leaders have the privilege of seeing their legacies in their lifetime, but some will catch a glimpse of what it will be like. Can you imagine what your legacy will look like?*

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That brings us to the end of this lesson which is also the final lesson in our course on *Leading God's People God's Way*. We hope that you have enjoyed learning these lessons as much as we have enjoyed preparing for and teaching them to you.

Remember, God has an incredible plan and purpose for your life. One of the best ways to make sure you accomplish that plan is by growing in your leadership skills. Just because you have finished this course does not mean you can stop learning and growing as a leader. You will be growing as a leader for the rest of your life.

Let us pray as we bring this lesson, and this leadership course, to a close.

Heavenly Father, you are so amazing. I want to thank you for the way in which you so gently work with me and help me to grow and become more like Jesus. Thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to be my Guide, my Comforter, my Helper; the One who comes alongside me to lead me in your ways. Father, I want to fulfill your purpose and plan for my life. Please help me to listen to you so that I can know, each step of the way, what your will is for my life. And give me the courage and boldness to do whatever you say to me. Lord, I want to be like Jesus. Make me a leader of legacy. Give me a vision that is worthy of my life and legacy. Send me the right people, the right leaders, to fulfill the vision that you give me. Help me to pour myself into their lives, to train, equip, and empower them just as Jesus did for his disciples. And, when it is time for me to move on, help me to do so with grace and courage. Help me to not stand in the way of those you have called to succeed me. Father, I want glorify your name in and through my life, just as Jesus did. I ask that you would help me to do that. Thank you, Lord. I pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen!