

Plato, Pills and Prayer

I have had a passion for coaching for over 30 years. I think it began with my Industrial Engineering degree and position with General Motors where we focused on helping people be efficient in what they do. Then in my MBA we focused on strategic thinking and effectiveness, doing the right things at the right time. When I left General Motors and went to seminary, I was convinced all the Church needed was leaders who understood these perspectives. But God took me on a dreadful journey where he literally turned me inside out and for years, I gave up any confidence in knowing what God's church needed.

That is why I pursued my Doctorate degree in assessment, helping people to figure out why they do what they do. At that point, my coaching centered on giving people insight into their abilities and issues. These years of coaching pastors focused on giving them understanding into who they were. But I found that even once they understood themselves; most pastors still didn't know what to do. I then began to bring back some of my earlier strategic thinking to pastors. I tried to help leaders see how their gifts must be used strategically. But, unfortunately most pastors are under such intense pressure to perform; they really want a quick fix (a pill) to give them the one tool they lack. They go from seminar to seminar looking for that one thing. There are tools that help us in ministry, but usually these tools don't fix long-term systemic issues.

Life change occurs in the context of a trusted relationship.

Ironically it has been within the last 5 years that I have come back to integrate all of these important stages of the leadership process. It is critical to have a clear understanding from scripture of what needs to be done in the church (effectiveness), and you need to know how to structure ministry to accomplish it well (efficiency). Because there is so much to do, you must know what is primary and what is secondary (strategic). But, you must also know the part you play to make it happen (self understanding); while developing an accountability structure (coaching clusters) to keep you on course. Finally, the entire process must be submitted to the lordship of Christ, becoming his slave and leaving the results to him.

In Florida Church of God Ministries, we are committed to using this coaching model. It is how we do ministry in the state. This ministry you are about to begin has the potential to change your life and ministry forever. It has the potential to free you up to be the leader in your church and the Kingdom of God that God literally called you to fulfill. If you really put in the time and are open to changing the way you think, what you value and how you behave, these learning clusters and coaches can enable you to experience your calling free of what others think or want. So let us begin.

Florida Church of God Ministries Coaching Model:

1. Clarify the Mission/Vision/Values
 - Understand God's mission for the church and what it means to you
 - Understand God's vision for the church you serve and what it means to you
 - Understand what unique values you bring to the ministry
 - Understand how all of this relates to your call
2. Organizational Development
 - Understand the different needs of churches based on size & plateaus
 - Understand church life cycles
 - Understand how to develop ministries to grow the church
 - Understand structural issues of leadership/governance
 - Understand team leadership styles and needs
 - Understand transition and change
 - Understand culture of churches
3. Understanding yourself
 - Understand and better deploy your spiritual gifts in ministry
 - Understand your family of origin issues and how they impact your relationships and calling
 - Understand and improve your family relationships and their impact on your ministry
 - Understand your personality factors and how they impact your ministry
 - Understand your passions and calling as it relates to your church
 - Understand how you handle and impacted by conflict
4. Deepening your inner spiritual life
 - Take retreats for quiet reflection and meditation
 - Understand spiritual coaches and friends
 - Study different disciplines
 - Understand your unique spiritual profile
 - Develop intercessor teams within the cluster
5. Developing a LAMP
 - Coaching to identify specific, practical, achievable & measurable goals for life and ministry
 - Understand the importance of developing an intentional plan for professional and personal development
 - Cluster encouragement to fulfill the LAMP
6. Accountability in the context of friendship and peer mentoring
 - Develop trusted relationships with other pastors you know
 - Be committed to their finishing well as they will be to yours
 - Provide encouragement for the fulfillment of all of the above

Five Critical Relationships:

1. Supervisor
 - Time-Duration of the assignment.
 - Role-To ensure results
2. Mentor
 - Time-Several phases of ministry (10+ years)
 - Role-To speak into life issues (family, relationships, personal priorities, etc.) of the pastor through modeling and challenging.
3. Coach
 - Time-18-36 months
 - Role-To bring an expertise in multiple skill-sets to enable the pastor to grow in his/her leadership beyond their present impact
4. Trainer
 - Time-Episodic (as needed from 1 day to a month)
 - Role-To train in a single skill needed to expand the pastor's leadership influence
5. Therapist
 - Time-Episodic (as needed from several sessions to a year)
 - Role-To address life issues which require more expertise and time than a mentor can provide

Cluster Captain:

- Keeps group on task
- Makes sure cluster accomplishes goals/objectives for each meeting
- Makes sure resources are available
- Needs to discern issues and seek input of Coach

LAMP (Life And Ministry Plan):

- This is a document which will have goals set for your life encompassing the next three to five years (maybe longer). These goals must be specific, practical, achievable and measurable. They must also have a rationale underlying each, in other words, why should I have this as a goal?
 - i. Why will this goal help me be the leader God has called me to be?
 - ii. How will this goal cause me to lead my church the way he wants?
 - iii. What in this goal will cause me influence my community the way desires?
- The content will be derived from:
 - i. AI Ells—Orientation Retreat #2
 - ii. Life Mapping interactive CD by John Trent
- Accountability to develop and then to fulfill it will be provided by the cluster