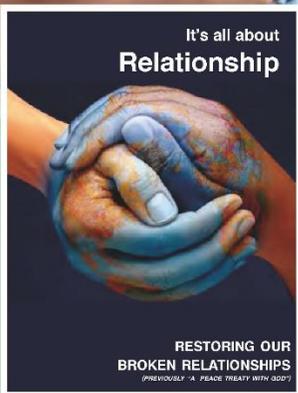


# Disciplining Christians

with the Spiritual T.E.A.M.



John Hendee &  
Dr. James Scott, Jr.

Companion Material

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# Welcome to your Rookie Season of

## Discipling Christians With the Spiritual T.E.A.M

A study was conducted to determine the percentage of Americans who own running shoes but don't run: *87 percent!*

From running shoes to a piece of exercise equipment gathering dust in the garage, it's easy to have what you need to keep you healthy and fit, but never use it to actually keep you healthy and fit. The same is true in our spiritual lives. It's easy to have a faith in Jesus Christ but rarely exercise it.

The purpose of "*Discipling Christians With the Spiritual T.E.A.M*" is to put you on a team that will provide you with hands-on training for living out your faith on a daily basis so that you are spiritually fit and healthy. Your Coach will lead you through Game Plans, Strategy Ideas, and Daily Training Verses designed to provide you with *Training, Exercising, and Maturing* for your spiritual development.

The elements of your training consists of:

- **Game Plans** – Each week you will be challenged by a short teaching on a specific topic to help reveal to you what God's game plan is for everyone on His team.
- **Strategy Ideas** – A Game Plan that isn't executed doesn't accomplish anything. So each week you will be challenged with Strategy Ideas for executing the Game Plan.
- **Personal Planning** – Space is provided in your T.E.A.M. materials for making notes on how you can implement into your life any ideas from the Game Plan and execute your weekly Strategy Ideas.
- **Daily Training Verses** – On a daily basis, you'll be challenged by a specific verse of Scripture to further train you in what the Bible teaches, provide a method of exercising how to understand the passage of Scripture, and reviewing your work with your Coach and teammates will help you mature in your knowledge and application of the Bible.

Every team consists of a Coach and at least three team members, with as many as six members on a team with a Coach. Your Rookie Season consists of 13 weeks of training; to be a member of the team, you will be asked to participate fully each week. There are no benchwarmers in Spiritual T.E.A.M.! You will be expected

to do all the work and be active in your weekly T.E.A.M. meetings. To make this a real commitment, you'll be asked to sign a T.E.A.M. covenant. At the end of your training, you will have the option to sign on for a Veteran Season of Spiritual T.E.A.M. to take your training even deeper. If you complete the 13 weeks of the Veteran Season, you will be challenged to become a Spiritual T.E.A.M. Coach!

### *How to use your training materials ...*

During your first meeting, your Coach will help everyone get to know each other. He or she will then review the T.E.A.M. terms stated in the paragraph above. You will then be asked to sign a T.E.A.M. covenant as a means of expressing your commitment to the training and your fellow T.E.A.M. members.

Next, as a team you will read through Game Plan 1 and your Coach will guide any discussion.

The Strategy Ideas are for you to execute during the coming week. Your Coach will read through the section with you and make sure everyone understands the challenge of the Strategy ideas.

The Personal Planning space is for your use to make any notes from your Game Plan discussion or plans for executing your Strategy Ideas.

Then, during the coming week you will read through the Daily Training Verses and, as you do, you will fill in a set of "TRAIN" boxes for that daily scripture. Practice doing this as a T.E.A.M. during your first meeting by using John 1:1 and John 3:16 and together answer the "TRAIN" questions for these two verses.

That will complete your first meeting as a T.E.A.M. Your training has begun!

During the coming week, be diligent about executing your Strategy Ideas, reading your Daily Training Verses, and filling in your "TRAIN" boxes for your daily verses. You may want to review the Game Plan as you start the week.

During your next meeting, your Coach will briefly review Game Plan 1, and then have T.E.A.M. members share about how they executed the Strategy Ideas. The Coach will then have someone read a daily verse, and T.E.A.M. members will share some of their notes they made in their "TRAIN" boxes --- much of your T.E.A.M. meeting discussion will focus on your "TRAIN" notes.

Your Coach will wrap up your time together by reading through the next Game Plan and Strategy Ideas

with you and make sure you understand your Strategy Ideas challenge for the coming week.

### *The value of good training ...*

Good training makes a difference, as Lori Andersen revealed in a tidbit for “Reader’s Digest”:

“As a professional animal trainer, I was disturbed when my own dog developed a bad habit. Every time I hung my wash out on the clothesline, she would yank it down. Drastic action was called for. I put a white kitchen towel on the line and waited. Each time she pulled it off, I scolded her. After two weeks the towel was untouched. Then I hung out a large wash and left to do some errands. When I came home, my clean clothes were scattered all over the yard. On the line was the white kitchen towel.”

Thorough training makes a difference!

The Spiritual T.E.A.M. helps provide you with a thorough spiritual exercise program by:

- Providing you with Game Plans that offer teaching insights.
- Giving you Strategy Ideas to help you learn that living out your faith isn’t just an intellectual exercise but calls for action!
- The Personal Planning space challenges you to think about and be creative in working out specific ways you will apply what you’re learning.
- The Daily Training Verses helps you develop the habit of studying the Bible on a daily basis in a way that not only builds your knowledge but helps you expand your understanding and look for ways to apply what you’re studying.
- And being a part of a T.E.A.M. provides you with the fellowship of other followers of Christ who will encourage, support, and challenge you.

If you have any questions about your training or being on your T.E.A.M., speak with your Coach. He or she is there to help you make the most of your training and to have a fruitful and enjoyable Rookie Season.

Remember, the purpose of joining a Spiritual T.E.A.M. is to exercise and mature your faith, so train hard!

### *One more thing: these are companion materials ...*

In Matthew 28, Jesus provided His church with the Great Commission. That set of commands consisted of going into all the world and *making disciples*, then baptizing them, and then teaching them everything He taught us (commonly referred to today as “discipling” the believer, or “discipleship”).

These Spiritual T.E.A.M. training materials are provided to help you with that last aspect of the Great Commission, but what about the first part, Christ’s command to go *make disciples*? After all, that is the mission of the church!

Before initially developing the original version of this material, John Hendee first developed a complete disciple-making model originally called “*A Peace Treaty With God*.” For more than three decades, that disciple-making model (which comes complete with a methodology and a highly effective disciple-making tool) was used by Christians, pastors, church planters, and missionaries in a variety of cultures around the world to lead thousands of people to a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. Additionally, we have seen churches grown organically by making new disciples specifically by using this disciple-making model, and we have also seen the implementation of this model be a key ingredient for transforming stagnant and even dying churches into growing disciple-making churches.

Today, John serves as Chair of World Evangelism at Hope International University in Fullerton, California, where he teaches an online course called “Relational Evangelism” that trains people in a version of this highly effective disciple-making model which has been revised, updated, and renamed as “*It’s All About Relationship*.” The course can be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit, or there are a few options for taking the course at a greatly reduced cost if you don’t want or need the college credit.

Whether you’re an individual Christian wanting to be equipped to effectively make disciples, or a church or ministry leader who would like to equip a team or your entire church or organization, we can provide the training you need to be ambassadors for Christ who are very effective at making new disciples.

For more information about Hope International University’s online “Relational Evangelism” course and how it could help you, your church, or your ministry, email John directly at [johnwhendee@gmail.com](mailto:johnwhendee@gmail.com).

These Spiritual T.E.A.M. training materials make a great companion resource for training new disciples you make as an equipped ambassador for Jesus Christ, or for use with people who have been followers of Christ for a long time.

# Introduction

## What can you expect from this conditioning program?

When you start a new exercise program and use muscles you haven't been using, they will get sore muscles, you'll get out of breath, and maybe even sweat a little. You might even be afraid to try some new things!

When beginning a new *spiritual* exercise program, you might experience some similar symptoms:

- Pain and discomfort. Disciplining yourself to new things can be difficult.
- A desire to quit (see Galatians 6:9).
- A sense of lack of progress. At times you might think, "I'll never get it right," "It's not worth it," or "It's not doing any good."

In a physical exercise program, you're willing to endure pain for the sake of the desired results. The same is true with a spiritual exercise program.

The desired results you hope to gain include:

- New self-discipline.
- Accelerated growth.
- Fulfillment.
- Challenge.
- Positive changes in your life.
- Joy.
- Peace.
- New spiritual strength.

You'll be working as a **team** rather than solo. The experts in weight training suggest you work out with a partner rather than alone for best results. When there are two or more, each can encourage the other on to greater things! You're accountable to each other. You're less likely to cheat on some of the routines you need. You've got someone there to help you when you need it!

*Read the following passages for some intended results:* Philippians 4:9; Colossians 1:28; 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8; Philippians 2:21.

What other benefits can you see from this program? What potential problems can you see that you'll need to avoid or overcome?

As you get into Scripture and begin looking at your life in many different ways, you will likely

become aware of many shortcomings in your life. Don't focus all your attention on them. The goal of this conditioning program is not to focus our attention on our sins or shortcomings. Instead, we want Jesus to be the center of our attention. Our goal is to be like Him. As we look at Jesus, many of our weaknesses will be revealed. Picture viewing your shortcomings with the same purpose members of a football team watch video of their last game. They watch to learn from their mistakes and correct them in order to learn how to play more effectively. You give your attention in order to learn how to execute better! The Apostle Paul didn't condemn himself for his shortcomings. He just determined to give all the more attention to being like Jesus.

When you come to the Lord's Table, confess your weaknesses to Jesus! Praise Him for His perfect love and His promise to help you grow, and renew your commitment --- pledge allegiance to Him and His cause! At the Table, focus your attention on His sacrifice, shed blood, resurrection, and promise to come again. Leave that place stronger and more determined to be like Jesus.

As you read the Scriptures, your life will be touched by the Spirit.

*"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"* Ephesians 6:17.

*"The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart,"* Hebrews 4:12.

The Spirit uses the Word to perform surgery on us. His desire is to cut out cancerous areas of our lives. The Spirit, via the Word, will reveal those areas. We must choose to eliminate them. The Word also shows us Christlike attitudes and actions to transplant into their place.

*"Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it --- I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while --- yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you*

*became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in*

*this matter. So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong or of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are. By all this we are encouraged," 2 Corinthians 7:8-13.*

If there is Godly sorrow in your life, let it be the motivation to cause you to be persuaded to act more like Jesus!

## Live A Little Recklessly

If you stop giving the moment it begins to hurt, you never discover true generosity.

If you stop serving the moment it pinches you, you never discover sacrifice and its rewards.

If you quit loving the moment it becomes difficult, you never discover compassion.

If you refuse to forgive in the moment that cries for revenge, you never discover the grace of unconditional forgiveness.

If you hesitate to share yourself the moment it costs, you never discover intimate fellowship.

Joy comes to those who don't know when to quit, who can't draw a line, who live, give, and forgive a little recklessly.

- David Augsburger  
Moody Press

# Spiritual T.E.A.M. Covenant

Knowing what is expected of a Spiritual T.E.A.M. member, I promise, to the best of my ability, to fulfill the requirements of being on a Spiritual T.E.A.M.

I will be open to growing, caring, maturing, and obeying God's will in my life. I will seek to support those on my T.E.A.M.

T.E.A.M. member signatures

Date

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Coach

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# Game Plan 1

## Paying The Price

### What You Are Beginning

You are starting a spiritual conditioning program. We've a world to win! We can't do it if we are spiritually weak, soft, flabby Christians. The Marines pride themselves on strength and conditioning. Winning teams are in condition and prepared for their games. We are in a spiritual conflict. Christ has won the ultimate conflict, yet there is a job to do until He returns. We must go beyond mediocrity in carrying out this job. We must challenge ourselves to greater creativity. The only reason Jesus has not returned is to give us more time to win people to Him (2 Peter 3:9). We must be disciplined to this task!

This spiritual conditioning program is designed to get you out of the bleachers and onto the field. If you are already on the field, it is designed to better condition you for the game you are already playing. There will be no armchair quarterbacks here!

We must ask ourselves what we really want out of life. Most want to be winners. People love

cheering for winners and being fans of winning teams. Yet most aren't willing to pay the price to be winners. It is easier to watch someone else do all the work and secondhandedly share the victory. But for the Christian, there never comes a time of sitting back permanently. There are times for rest and recreation, but there is no service-ministry retirement program spelled out in the Bible. Our jobs may change, but the work is never done.

A big problem many of us face is contentment with good things. We can become so pleased with the "good" that we don't realize we are missing the "best." The Apostle Paul prayed the Philippians would be able "to discern what is best" (Philippians 1:9-10). Sometimes we quit when we have achieved the good rather than pressing on for the best. This may be true of our relationships, our morals, our giving, our service, or any other aspect of our faith. The purpose of this conditioning program is to help us go beyond the good to seek out the best.

### Strategy Ideas

Set aside one hour this week when you can be alone with the Lord (in a room, the park, your car, or some other private place) with no distractions (phone, TV, people, or anything). Spend that hour talking to the Lord about your life. Don't dwell on past failures, but look at where you are now! What are the good things? How could they be better? Use that time to envision great dreams. Spend the time praising God. Confess your sins to Him. Thank Him for all you are thankful for in life. Pray for yourself and others. Renew your pledge of love and loyalty to Jesus.

### Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 1 Timothy 4:7-8
2. 1 Corinthians 9:24-25
3. 2 Timothy 2:5-7
4. Luke 6:38
5. Galatians 4:19
6. 2 Corinthians 13:11

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 2

# Team Members' R&R

The only way to build a meaningful relationship with someone is to spend quality time with that person. In this day and age, it can be tough to find that time with phones ringing, texts buzzing, emails chiming, and TV's droning; not to mention doorbells, cars, sirens, schedules, and long agendas. As tough as it may be, though, it's also true that a person can and will make time for what he or she wants to do. We allow or make time for work, eating, sleeping, TV, updating social media, church, school, hobbies, appointments, friends, and outside activities.

If we want a strong relationship with Christ, we need to make time to be alone with Him. Before we will be successful at that, we must have a consuming passion to be with Him (Psalm 43:1-2). When we spend time with Him, we'll begin to be like Him. We'll start thinking like Him and then start acting like Him. Our having a quiet

time with Christ is a way to demonstrate that we love Him and desire to be with Him.

A quiet time is to our spirits what refueling is to a car, what breakfast is to the body, or what a date is to a couple in love. It's what practice is to an athlete: a time to train, grow, and share. This time can include Bible study and prayer. (ACTS is a simple format for your prayer time: Adoration – Confession of our sins – Thanksgiving – Supplication, praying for others.)

Jesus had quiet time (Matthew 14:23, Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16), as did David (Psalm 5:3) and Daniel (Daniel 6:10). Are you stronger than any of them? Christ called us to fellowship (1 Corinthians 1:9). We need to go to Him for that fellowship. Plan a time and a place for it and meet Him daily. You can't live on yesterday's food. We must eat today for strength today.

## Strategy Ideas

1. Pick a time for your quiet time.
2. Pick a place to be your sanctuary, your retreat; a room, your car, or any quiet place.
3. Meet the Lord daily.
4. Write a letter to God each day for this week. Tell Him daily what is happening in your life.

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Colossians 2:6-7
2. Colossians 3:1-3
3. Philippians 4:8-9
4. 2 Timothy 3:14-17
5. James 1:22-25
6. Luke 6:46-49

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - Rebuke

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 3

## A Winner's Time Training Schedule

The Bible says, *"The length of our days is seventy years --- or eighty, if we have the strength,"* Psalm 90:10.

If you are 20 years old and will live to be 75, you have 20,088 days left.

If you are 30 years old and will live to be 75, you have 16,432 days left.

If you are 40 years old and will live to be 75, you have 12,784 days left.

If you are 50 years old and will live to be 75, you have 9,131 days left.

If you are 60 years old and will live to be 75, you have 5,479 days left.

If you are 70 years old and will live to be 75, you have 1,826 days left.

Our days are definitely numbered. Occasionally, someone asks people how they would act if they were told they only had six months to live. Responses generally indicate that we'd be more intense about really getting with it, doing what's really important, with our remaining time if we knew our time was short.

We are all going to die. We should be investing the number of days we do have for the best results. The

Apostle Paul told us to make the best of our time. Don't waste it. Don't kill it. God gave us time, a life with which to be creative and purposeful.

There seems to be an endless number of items that make demands on our time. If you don't have a clear understanding of God's priorities for your life so that you can plan to use the time you do have to meet those priorities, life at its best will be frustration. God wants to be first in our hearts; He wants us to care spiritually and physically for our families; He wants us to love other Christians and win the world for Christ.

As you look at the numbers at the beginning of this page, not knowing if you will live to be 75, you must determine to make the most of your time. The world's attitude is, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" Paul, talking of his expected death, said that he would rather be with Christ, but as long as he was alive, it would be to continue for others' progress in Christ and joy in their faith (Philippians 1:23-26).

The challenge is for us to be good stewards of our time! Do you plan the use of your time for God's ends, or do you let others plan it all?

### Strategy Ideas

1. Use the following time planner, or something similar, for the next week.
2. Plan your week ahead of time. Plan time to do the important things you need and want to do. List what reading and study you have to do for the week. Is there someone you need to be thinking about to witness to? What ministry plans do you have or want to make for the week? What plans would you like to make with your family? Do you need to email or phone someone?
3. Transfer all that to the daily calendar before the week starts.
4. Notice the two rows at the top. Plan your quiet time with the Lord, and your special times with your family members.

Reading/Study	Witness Plans	Ministry Plans	Family Plans	Emails/Phone Calls

## PUT IT TOGETHER ...

On a daily basis, keep track below of the time you spend alone with your Lord.

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On a daily basis, keep track below of the time you spend with others (spouse, kids, friends, others).

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

**Daily Training Verses**

1. Ephesians 5:15-16
2. Psalm 90:10-12
3. James 4:13-17
4. Romans 13:11-14
5. Proverbs 13:16, 14:8, 19:2, 27:1, 31:27
6. Philippians 1:27

**T – TEACH**

What does this passage teach me?

**R - Rebuke**

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

**A – APPLY**

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

**I – INITIATE**

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

**N – NEEDS**

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 4

# The Ultimate Game Plan: Seeing The Big Picture

Sometimes it seems that trying to find God’s will is like finding your way through a maze. Some people go about seeking God’s will in strange ways. God really didn’t want it to be all that complicated or strange.

Right now there are some things you can know God wants. If He wants it, then it is His will! His will today is that you do what is needed to achieve what He wants. His will today is that you keep the New Covenant, which is to be Christlike. For example, God wants/wills:

- for all to repent (to be saved) - 2 Peter 3:8-9
- for all Christians to help bring others to Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
- for us to be holy – 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
- for us to imitate God – Ephesians 5:1-2
- for us to be thankful – 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- for us to be servants of Christ – Romans 12:4
- for us to do good works – Ephesians 2:10
- for us to be united in Christ – Ephesians 1:9-10.

These and other matters are quite clear! If it is clear, the matter of His will is greatly simplified. Then we just decide if we want to do His will or not.

What about a decision that isn’t spoken about in the Scriptures specifically? What about an area that is not an issue of right or wrong, but a choice from among good options? The Apostle Paul addresses this issue in Philippians 1:9-10. Paul said to pray that our knowledge of God’s plan will grow so we will be able to “discern what is best.” On any issue not clearly answered in the Bible, we can ask, “How will this affect the cause of Christ?” If it will harm it, we know God doesn’t want us to do it. If it will help it, I can trust that it is okay. If both directions will help, which one will help more? Do it! If there is no difference, take your pick and do it in faith and trust as a maturing child of God. Having difficulty making a decision is not a sign of spiritual immaturity (Philippians 1:22-23).

## Strategy Ideas

Check any of the following areas in which you need to follow God’s will more closely. How will you do it? When?

<b>Caring for family</b>		
<b>Heart</b>		
<b>Money</b>		
<b>Time</b>		
<b>Talent</b>		
<b>Friendliness</b>		
<b>Service in church</b>		

<b>Bible study</b>		
<b>Prayer</b>		
<b>Witnessing</b>		

### Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 1 Timothy 2:3-5
2. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2
3. 1 Corinthians 6:12-13
4. Romans 14:1-8
5. Romans 12:1-2
6. Romans 14:14-19, 22, 23

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - Rebuke

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 5

# The Team

The church is the family of God. It is the TEAM! But in modern times, the church has often been misused, misrepresented, misguided, confused, and carelessly divided. It doesn't have a very good reputation in many circles. We might ask ourselves in the midst of so many varieties of churches, what is the church and what is it to be doing?

The church began on Pentecost, A.D. 30 (Acts 2:1), in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 2:5). It was founded by Christ (Matthew 16:18), who is the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). The church is to fulfill His wishes, wants, desires, and goals.

The church consists of those who are in Christ: Christians (Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38-41; 4:4; 5:14).

The church is to Christ what the body is to the brain.

The church is to Christ what soldiers are to a general.

The church is to Christ what a team is to a coach.

The church is to Christ what an executor is to a will.

The church is to Christ what an ambassador is to a foreign country.

The point? We are to advance the wishes and the cause of Christ together. His will must be more important than ours.

The church is to encourage (Hebrews 10:25-26, Ephesians 5:19-21).

The church is to preach (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

The church is to train others to pass on the Word (2 Timothy 2:2).

The church is to guard the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:13-14).

The church is to contend for the faith (Jude 3).

The church is to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).

The church is to serve, equip, work, grow up (Ephesians 4:11-16).

The church is to be the hands, feet, eyes, mouth and heart of Jesus in the world.

Christ appointed that local congregations have leaders known as elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7) to serve as spiritual servant-leaders. Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) are to assist the elders in the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4:11 identifies other servants in the ministry of the church.

Jesus Christ is the creed of the church (2 Timothy 1:2). A model of life together for the church is seen in Acts 2:42. To be most effective, a group of believers must surrender to Christ and submit to each other in order to advance the cause of Christ. We should be united in Christ together, disciplining together, giving together, preaching together, teaching together, praying together, supporting together, meeting together, sharing together, and being brave together.

## Strategy Ideas

1. How can you make the church more important in your life without letting it damage your other priorities also?
2. How can you carry out your responsibilities to the church more effectively?
3. What is your part in the life of the church now? Could it be stronger? How?

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Ephesians 1:22-23
2. Acts 20:28-31
3. Colossians 1:18
4. Ephesians 2:19-22
5. Ephesians 3:10:12
6. Ephesians 4:15-16

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 6

# The Athlete's Pledge of Allegiance

One of the events at the Olympics every four years is the great march at the opening ceremony. All the athletes enter the arena in their distinctive dress, following athletes who are carrying their nations' flags. Marching behind their flags shows where their allegiance lies. Each athlete competes for his nation. He is to be loyal to his nation. He is to do his best for his nation.

Later in the games, at every medal ceremony, the flags of the three winning athletes or teams are flown while the national anthem of the gold medal winner is played. This is a moving experience. The athletes are displaying their loyalty, allegiance, and ties with their homeland.

A Christian lives and marches in the name of Jesus Christ. He is our King, Lord, Master, and Savior. He has provided us with a means by which we can regularly let our colors fly, a time to renew our commitment to Him, and to be reminded of a variety of important issues. This time, event, or activity is known as the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper was initiated by Jesus (Matthew 26:26ff.). It consisted of bread and wine. It was a ceremony designed to remind the Christians of Jesus' presence with them till the second coming. It was a time to remind them of their unity in Christ. They were many people, but one body (1 Corinthians 12:20). The Lord's

Supper was a time to confess sins and give thanks to the Lord for His mercy and forgiveness. It was a time of renewing their pledge of allegiance to Jesus, which they first demonstrated at Christian baptism.

Mont Smith, in his book, *"What The Bible Says About Covenant"* (College Press, 1981) wrote: "In the same way, the Eucharist ('the Thanksgiving') was sacramental. What it pictured was happening. The service was not merely a memorial. It was participation in the blood of Christ. It was joining with, or a touching of the blood of Jesus. The blood cleansed from all sin (1 John 1:7-10). The contents of the cup were not changed into Christ's blood as a physical element. But in result, it was as if one had made Christ's redeeming blood part of his body ... at the Lord's Table, God acted in heaven to further remit sins done by the believer as the Christian partook of His blood and body as a pledge renewal."

We are renewing our pledge to Jesus to help the church advance, and to live a Christlike life by seeking what is best for the church and those who are members of it. It is renewal to reach out to those who are separated from Christ and seeking to bring them to Him.

Overlooking the importance of our life in Jesus and our responsibility to Him and the significance of what He did for us may result in spiritual illness and death (1 Corinthians 11:27-31).

## Strategy Ideas

1. Look at 1 Corinthians 11:24. What can you do to help remember and thank Jesus during the Lord's Supper?
2. Many have a hard time concentrating on the Lord during Communion. If this is your problem, pick out a passage of Scripture about Jesus ahead of time and read it during Communion. You can also use the ACTS guide for what you pray about. These simple plans will help make the time more meaningful.

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Matthew 26:17, 26-30
2. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
3. 1 Corinthians 11:27-32
4. 1 Corinthians 10:14-16
5. Acts 2:42
6. Acts 20:7, 11

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 7

## Our Model For The Game Of Life

The Christian has pledged to seek to become like Jesus. To do so is God’s will for us. If we are like Jesus, we will be the kind of people who will have the most rewarding and abundant life possible. We will also be doing what God needs people doing — reaching out to others with the Gospel.

*“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps” 1 Peter 2:21.*

*“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory” 2 Corinthians 3:18.*

Paul encouraged the Corinthians to “aim for perfection” (2 Corinthians 13:11). Perfection is Jesus. Aim to live, think, and act like Jesus. Sin means “missing the mark.” To sin is to live and act in an un-Christlike way. Knowing we will sin is not a rational excuse to try to miss the target intentionally. Keep aiming for it. When you sin, confess your sin to God, and you will find Him faithful and

just. He will forgive you of your sins and purify you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Consider Paul’s words, *“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus ... Only let us live up to what we have already attained.”* (Philippians 3:12-14, 16).

John said, *“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure”* (1 John 3:2, 3).

When we see Christ, we will, in fact, be perfect in all ways, for we will be like Him. Until then, we are to strain to be like Him. We are to continue to aim for Christlikeness — which is purifying ourselves.

### Strategy Ideas

The following chart will help us see more clearly what Jesus was like. In order to aim for His likeness, we must know what He is like. As you read the contrasts, write in the middle column any way you see you can be more like Jesus. The focus is not on our shortcomings, but Jesus. Keep your eyes on Him. The purpose of this exercise is to help us get a better view of what we are aiming for. Have a good time shooting!

WHAT JESUS DID	WHAT WE CAN DO	WHAT WE SOMETIMES DO
Jesus went everywhere spreading the good news about God’s love		We drive thousands of miles just going everywhere
Jesus thought it essential that He spend time every day in prayer		Many don’t take time for prayer, but leave it up to someone else to do it for them on Sunday
Jesus sought time alone with the Father		By the time we’ve updated our social media, turned off the TV, had our second snack, run to all our meetings, and put the dog out, we don’t have any alone time for Him left
Jesus was known to always be in the Lord’s house on the Lord’s Day (the Sabbath)		Many don’t think worship is important, and suggest that to stress it is stuffy, legalistic religion
Jesus said man’s life doesn’t consist in the abundance of his possessions		But many buy, charge, gather, collect, and hoard in an apparent frenzied attempt to prove Jesus wrong

Jesus said to seek first the kingdom of God “and all these things will be given to you”		We often toil, strain, and ulcerate ourselves to add all those things and more to our lives, and then give the leftover energy and attention to seeking His kingdom
Jesus prayed for daily bread		Many pray for daily bread, and prime rib, and bigger homes, and mountain cabins, and boats, and pools, too. They seem disappointed if they only get bread
Jesus said a wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none would be given it except the sign of Jonah		But some lives as if they have to have a miracle a day or their faith in Jesus is shaken. To them, lack of signs is a sign their faith is weak
Jesus said, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”		We usually do unto others as they do unto us --- or <i>before</i> they do unto us
Jesus gave Himself to making disciples, and commanded us to make disciples of all the world		We’ve often spent more time making committees, planning programs and parties, and attending potlucks and luncheons, all of which have not contributed to making disciples
Jesus worked to see the kingdom grow, and sent His followers onto the roads and by-ways to invite all to His heavenly banquet		Christians often become so inebriated in isolated Christian fellowship that they actually get bent out of shape when their congregation grows and faces the resulting growth problems
Jesus walked from village to village to contact and to touch people, and boldly preach the good news		Today, many will talk about the Good News only in their multi-million dollar buildings, or use bumper stickers and secretly leave tracts, send missionaries overseas, and support Christian multi-million dollar TV programs to reach others. The most effective approach, the personal approach, is often widely neglected
Jesus knew the Scriptures so well that He could converse intelligently about it when He was only twelve years old and could defeat temptation by recalling it even after not eating for forty days		Most Christians don’t spend five minutes a day reading the Bible
Jesus believed the people of God should give a tithe of all their financial holdings to the Lord		Even though He gave His life for them, many Christians find it incredible to think about giving 10% to Him. Even though they owe their salvation to Jesus, they give a bigger percentage of their bill to waitresses
Jesus was tempted in all the ways we are, and yet He didn’t sin		We fiercely resist sin, so long as it’s not something we really want to do.

Jesus drew some very definite lines between right and wrong		We do, too. We've just erased and redrawn some of the lines. We enjoy too much allowing ourselves to be temptingly tantalized with glossy, sophisticated sin
Jesus believed that heaven and hell are very real and that what we do in this life determines in which place we will spend our eternity		Many of us are so wrapped up in this world we would rather not think about eternity
Jesus said, "Follow Me"		Some boldly say, "Yes, Lord, I really will get with it, after college that is" ... after the baby, that is" ... "after the kids are in school" ... "after the kids are out of school" ... "after retirement." Apparently, what some mean is, after they are dead!
Jesus was willing to give attention to all the people He met		The attention we give people is often in direct proportion to what we think they can give to us or do for us
Jesus didn't test God. He trusted Him and His judgment		Some tell God what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. If they don't get it, they pout, whine, and sit in the corner, not understanding God's "poor judgment"
Jesus was obedient, and it resulted in suffering		Some preach, "Simply be obedient, and success and prosperity will be yours"
Jesus forgave those who abused Him		We wait for the other to apologize five times; then maybe we'll forgive, but we'll never forget!
Jesus invested His life in others and entrusted His work into the hands of others		Many do it all themselves, being sure others couldn't possibly be as reliable, capable, intelligent, mature, or trustworthy as they are
Jesus came to do the will of God, even if it meant sacrificing energy, sleep, wealth, life, and limb		We usually give ourselves to God's will, too, so long as it's at our convenience, in our time schedule, at the right place, with the right people, and at the proper price
Jesus came to serve, not to be served		Many search for a church like a grocery store. They have no intention to work there; they're only thinking about the conveniences it affords them
Jesus gave of himself to help the needy, the sick, the rejected, the ugly, the crazies, the hungry, the poor, the guilt-ridden, the despicable, and the filthy		We are usually too disgusted with most of these to help them. In our estimation, they are just irresponsible and incapable of caring for themselves or being decent citizens

Jesus took time to stop and speak with a child, a widow who lost her son, a prostitute, a paralytic, an outcast, and those of other races		Our crowded days and stuffy attitudes often interfere with our knowing these people even exist, or making time to care for them
Jesus, speaking of His return, said, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” Matthew 24:36		Some spend hundreds of hours studying the Scriptures and current events in an apparent attempt to show they know more than Jesus, the Word!
Jesus always talked to people about God, His will, His kingdom, His love		We always talk to people about the weather, the Rams, the economy, the President, the newest movie, and a dozen other eternally unimportant ideas
Jesus said, “If you hold to my teachings you are really my disciples”		Some seem to hold more tightly to the teachings of Luther or Calvin or Campbell, Shaffer, Lindsey, and a host of others
Jesus preached the good news even though it resulted in His being called names, spit upon, beaten and killed		We are willing to be quiet and retreat if we think someone will simply think less of us
Jesus commanded, “Love thy neighbor as thyself”		Easy! I just don’t consider that obnoxious person as one of my neighbors!
Jesus said to Peter: “Do you truly love me? ... Feed my lambs.” “Do you truly love me? ... Take care of my sheep.” “Do you love me? ... Feed my sheep”		Our, “Yes, Lord, I Love You,” words often wash out when in reality our shepherding is often limited to a welcome line, new member letter and packet, possible invitation to a Sunday school class, and assignment to a shepherd who seldom, if ever, crosses the threshold of that family’s door

*Thanks to John Greenely for the idea of this comparison.*

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Colossians 1:28-29
2. Romans 8:28-29
3. 2 Corinthians 3:18
4. 1 Peter 2:21-25
5. Philippians 1:27
6. Philippians 2:5-11

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 8

## Our Inner Strength

When Jesus was preparing to leave His disciples, He assured them He would not abandon them or leave them as orphans (John 14:18). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ come to live in us (2 Corinthians 3:17).

The ministry of the Spirit is to testify about Jesus (John 14:26; 15:26, 27). The Spirit convicts by declaring who Christ is (John 16:8-11, 14).

The Spirit dwells in all Christians (1 Corinthians 6:19). We received Him at conversion (Acts 2:38).

To be “filled” with the Holy Spirit is to be like Jesus. It is to act and think like Jesus (Ephesians 5:18-19; Colossians 3:16).

When we become Christians, we still have free will. To surrender to God and His Spirit doesn’t mean giving up the operation of our will. It means harmonizing our will with God’s will. The Spirit is not functioning if there is no thinking, feeling, or choosing for God’s will.

The Spirit convinces through words — the Word! Did Jesus ever persuade someone or change someone other than by words? Jesus was the Holy Spirit face-to-face with man. If we have free will intact, and we are determined to be like Christ, the best help the Holy Spirit

can give us is a good, clear picture of exactly what Christ was like, what He thought and felt, and the basis upon which He made decisions. We have such help. It is called “the Word of God.” It is the Bible. The Bible is the mind of Christ.

We may quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19), grieve the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30), and blaspheme the Spirit, which is rejecting His message about Jesus. The person who is most filled with the Holy Spirit is the one who lives most like Jesus and talks about Jesus.

We would rather have God mysteriously turn knobs in us to produce great growth overnight. That way, any lack of growth is His fault. Obeying the Bible is being led of the Spirit. The Spirit converts and edifies through the Word. Do we have to plead for the Spirit to work? NO! The Spirit has a greater interest than we do. Do we have to know how the Spirit works to be effective? NO! Do I have to feel the Spirit to know He’s working? NO! The Spirit can move matter and circumstances to convert, but He respects a person’s will too much to force a change. He tries to persuade all people’s minds by the words of the Gospel through the church.

### Strategy Ideas

On a scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (strong), rate yourself on each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit. Which do you need to grow in? How would your mate, kids, parents, and best friend rate you? Self = S, M= Mate, K = Kids, P= Parents, F = Friend.

LOVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
JOY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PEACE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PATIENCE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
KINDNESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GOODNESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FAITHFULNESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GENTLENESS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SELF-CONTROL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

### Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Galatians 5:22-25
2. Galatians 5:16-18
3. John 6:63
4. 1 Corinthians 3:16
5. 1 John 2:20-27
6. Ephesians 4:30-32

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 9

# The Playbook

The Bible is to a Christian what blueprints are to an engineer, what a road map is to a trucker, what an X-ray is to a surgeon, what a playbook is to a quarterback.

Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Do you want to build your faith? Then get into His Word. The Spirit of God works through His Word to persuade people. His Word is powerful and true (John 6:63). The Spirit functions apart from the Word in physical matters, but in order to leave people with free will and moral choice, He uses His Word, the Bible, to convince and persuade (Hebrews 4:12).

The Bible is able to equip a Christian *“for every good work”* (1 Timothy 3:15, 16). *“The Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword,”* Hebrews 4:12). The Bible is our guide to certify whether people’s messages are from God (1 John 4:1-6). The Bible

assures me that Christ is Lord (Acts 17:31). The Bible assures me that God loves me (Romans 5:8). The Bible assures me that I have the Holy Spirit in me (1 Corinthians 12:12, 13). The Bible helps me to avoid sin (Psalm 119:11).

The New Testament is God’s record of His present agreement or covenant, by which people can be saved. It’s like our contract, spelling out what God has done for us, what He has planned for us, and what He wants us to be doing for Him.

It’s our guide, our road map, our flashlight, our spiritual supper table, our rod of discipline, and our love letter from God Himself.

Study to show yourself approved. A winning quarterback knows his playbook!

## Strategy Ideas

1. Lay out a weekly Bible reading schedule for yourself.
2. Set your alarm to loud, three feet beyond your reach, one half hour earlier than usual. After you get out of bed, go sit down for study. (Don’t lie down!)

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
2. John 1:1-2, 14
3. 1 John 1:1-2, 5
4. 1 Peter 2:2-3
5. Romans 15:4
6. 1 Corinthians 10:6-11

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 10

# Keeping In Touch With The Team Owner

Warm, personal, intimate relationships are at a premium today. We've learned to get everything at the turn of a switch, the drop of a credit card, the pop of a lid. Add water, push the button, turn it, and you've got it now!

Close, warm, personal, intimate relationships are not instant. They are built over a period of time as people share regularly. God wants us to have a close, warm, personal, intimate relationship with Him. Prayer is a key to that relationship.

Prayer is to the Christian what frosting is to a cake and what sweat is to an athlete. It's both sweet and sweat. It's a blessing, and it's also work! Because most people are not born natural communicators, it

takes time to develop a good prayer life. You must work at it.

*"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need"* Hebrews 4:16.

This is God's open door policy. He's never too busy for us! Prayer can be open, honest! We can't shock God. He's bigger than our questions, fears, and doubts. Prayer can be intimate, light, deep, chatty, crying, pleading, praising, uplifting, comforting, sharing, work, and rewarding.

Prayer is not trying to make God into a genie in a lamp. Prayer is not telling God or bossing Him. It's asking, pleading, confessing, and loving!

## Strategy Ideas

Try an experiment for the next week. Pick your favorite TV program for each evening. When the show comes on, go to a quiet place and pray.

During your prayer time, do the following:

- List your prayer requests and answers.
- Choose two different people with whom to share any answers to your prayers.
- Pray for your neighbors.

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Philippians 4:6-7
2. Colossians 4:2-6
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18
4. Matthew 18:19-20
5. James 1:5-7
6. Romans 8:26-27

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 11

# Tumbles On The Field Of Life

When an electrician wires a house, he seeks to get all the electrical connections functioning by making tight connections and eliminating shorts, thus getting full power utilization.

In our lives, sin is like a loose wire, a short, a breakdown. The power isn't getting through.

Sin is disobeying God. It's acting un-Christlike. Sinning is having an action or attitude that hinders the advancing of the cause of Christ. When we sin, we lose something. God loses something. The world loses something.

God's desire and goal for our lives is for us to be like Jesus. If we sin, we have forgiveness because we are in Jesus (1 John 2:1, 2). He continues to cover for our shortcomings. We can live in praise of that fact, choosing not to abuse it (1 Peter 2:16).

A Christian is often tempted to sin. These temptations may be from within (Mark 7:20) or from without (1 Peter 5:8). The struggle to resist may get rugged, but we can win (1 John 5:3-5). Sin can be very attractive to us. We may seek to justify our sins so they won't look like sins! In Mark 7:9, Jesus said of the

Pharisees, *"You nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition."*

God won't give us His power for us to sin. Thus, when we walk contrary to His will, we have that much less power for victory in life. But He will give us power to resist sin if we stay in the Word and desire to be victorious. Being tempted is not sinning. A man once said, "You can't stop the birds from flying over your chimney, but you can keep them from building a nest there."

In order to be victorious, we must resist sin (1 Peter 5:9). We must realize Jesus died because of sin (Hebrews 12: 3, 4). We must have a passion to be like Jesus and avoid any behavior not like His. We must fill our mind with His Word and CHOOSE to act and think like Christ regardless of how we feel. He won't fail us!

In order to be strong in Christ, I have to want to obey, even if it requires sacrifice (going against my feelings, wants, or other desires). Jesus' life and goals are the plan, the direction, and the model. When you fail, confess it, thank Him, stand up, and move on! A life pursuing sin can ultimately result in our rejecting Jesus as Lord!

## Personal Planning

# Strategy Ideas

Use this chart to evaluate and plan different areas of your life that may still be causing you to stumble in your Christian life.

<b>EVALUATE:</b> Am I doing anything that is weakening or harming my commitment to Christ in the following areas:	<b>WHEN WILL I STOP OR CHANGE?</b>	<b>PLAN:</b> What can I do in each of these areas to strengthen my walk with Christ?	<b>WHEN WILL I BEGIN TO SET NEW PATTERNS?</b>
What I watch: * TV * Movies		What can I watch that will help?	
What I read: * Books * Magazines		What can I read that will help?	
What I listen to: * Music * iPod playlists * Podcasts		To what positive things can I listen?	
What I eat and drink		What can I eat and drink?	
How I spend my time		How can I better spend my time?	
How I use my money		How can I better use my money?	
Where I go		Where can I go?	
The thoughts I dwell on		How can I think differently?	
People with whom I spend my time		With whom can I spend more time?	

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

**Daily Training Verses**

1. 1 Corinthians 10:13
2. 1 Peter 5:8-10
3. 1 Peter 2:11-12, 15-16
4. James 1:13-15
5. James 4:1-3, 7-10
6. Hebrews 12:1-11

**T – TEACH**

What does this passage teach me?

**R - REBUKE**

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

**A – APPLY**

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

**I – INITIATE**

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

**N – NEEDS**

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 12

## Expanding The Team Roster

Fishermen are a fascinating breed. Jesus used them as a model for Christians who are called to be “fishers of men.” A fisherman has the following traits and attitudes. A fisher of men should, too!

1. A tremendous desire and love for fishing.
2. A willingness to spend hours doing it.
3. Continual study to improve their skills and success.
4. Use of the best methods possible.
5. A deep love to talk about their fishing experiences.
6. Endurance of adverse circumstances to fishing.
7. Sensitivity to where the fish are biting.
8. Relaxation while fishing.
9. Willingness to get up early to go fishing.
10. Willingness to go anytime, day or night.

*(From Charles Dunn, “Upstream Christians in a Downstream World,” Victor Books, 1979.)*

Evangelism is the task and responsibility of the church. *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ,*

*not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God,” 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.*

Do the ten descriptions of the fisherman describe you as a fisher of men? Where do they reveal areas of needed growth as a disciple?

Christians are commanded to produce fruit. That means make more Christians! Evangelism is not just being nice, it’s seeking to tell other people about Jesus. One man said, “If you’re not fishing, you’re not following.”

We must believe, as Jesus taught, that those outside of Christ are lost and doomed! If we don’t prepare ourselves and learn how to share the Gospel, how will our relatives, neighbors, and friends come to share eternity with Christ?

We must be more concerned with what Jesus wants of us and thinks of us than what others think of us, or our fear of rejection will stifle us. We must be willing to risk rejection from others for the possibility that they’ll be grateful to us for eternity.

### Strategy Ideas

List the first names of people you see any given day of the week that you know aren’t Christians or aren’t sure of (people you work with, family members, neighbors, relatives, business associates, gas station attendant, grocery store clerk, clients, and others. If you don’t know a name, give a brief description, i.e., “mechanic”).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

1. List on the next page three persons from the above chart.
2. Begin to pray for them regularly.
3. Give them a church brochure and invite them to church.
4. Share the Gospel with them. Earn the right to be heard. Pray and look for an opportunity to share Christ with them.
5. Use the charts below to plan your strategy.

### Current Situation

NAME OF PERSON	MATTERS YOU HAVE DISCUSSED	BASIC NEEDS OF THE PERSON	HOW CAN YOU HELP MEET THOSE NEEDS?
1.			
2.			
3.			

### Strategy For Future Contacts

NAME OF PERSON	QUESTIONS TO ASK/ SUBJECTS TO DISCUSS	WAYS TO OFFER HELP	WAYS TO BE FRIENDLY
1.			
2.			
3.			

### Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Matthew 18:18-20
2. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
3. 1 Peter 3:15
4. Romans 10:13-15
5. 2 Timothy 2:1-3; 2:24-26
6. 2 Timothy 4:1-5

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 13

## Supporting The Team

Giving has its origin in God himself. Having created the world in the beginning, God passed the responsibility of the management of His creation to Adam. Man down through history has grappled, sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully, with his responsibility of being a steward of his God-granted possessions.

Jesus stressed the importance of putting to good use the things we have been given. Jesus knew that the abundance of life does not lie in the gaining of material wealth, but it comes as we share our own possessions. Realizing that what we have is not our own is one reason for consistent giving. Another is the nature of the gift we have been given through Christ. Hebrews tells us that the New Covenant is much superior to the Old Covenant. If this is true, our giving should reflect an attitude of thankfulness for the greatness of the gift we have received.

Furthermore, giving provides a medium by which growth can take place in our innermost selves. As we begin to practice a selfless way of life with our possessions, we grow more into the unselfish people that God would have us to be.

Finally, giving is for the purpose of making disciples of all nations. As we commit ourselves to the furthering of the Gospel as Christ's disciples, we make a commitment of financial responsibility also. For unless we as members of God's church support God's purpose financially, the Gospel cannot be furthered.

My giving is a reflection of how seriously I would like to see the world won! There's no way around it. Does saving the lost mean \$5 a week to me, \$50 a week, \$100 a week, or what? Giving ought to be joyful. Sacrificial giving is an example for all serious disciples to consider.

### Strategy Ideas

Set up a ten-year plan of stewardship by deciding on a present percentage figure to start with now. Plan where you would like your giving to be in ten years. Now plot the method of giving in between in order to help you reach your ten-year goal. Plan out progressive increases. Circle your projected percentage goal for each year.

20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_ 20\_\_

### Personal Planning

Percentage of income to give for the year:

20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Estimated year's income:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Year's giving:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

What would your total dollar giving be, at the projected rate, over a ten year period? \_\_\_\_\_

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Acts 20:35
2. 1 Timothy 6:17-19
3. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8
4. Luke 12:15
5. Luke 16:8-11
6. Luke 21:1-4

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



Welcome to the  
**Veteran Season**  
of  
*Discipling Christians*  
*With the*  
*Spiritual T.E.A.M.*

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## Welcome to your Veteran Season of Discipling Christians With the Spiritual T.E.A.M.

Congratulations for having successfully completed your Rookie Season! Your decision to take on a Veteran Season of Spiritual T.E.A.M. means you've already endured the challenges and rigors of 13 weeks of spiritual Training, Exercising, and Maturing. Way to go!

And, your willingness to extend your spiritual training into a Veteran Season for another 13 weeks indicates a strong personal desire on your part to continue exercising and maturing your faith with a supportive T.E.A.M.

Maybe you've learned the same lesson a boxing great learned. The editors of *"Homiletics"* recounted Muhammad Ali's answer to the question of what was the greatest lesson he had learned.

To answer, Ali told the story of a heavyweight title bout against Sonny Liston in 1964.

"Liston was the strongest man I'd ever fought. Every time I hit him, it hurt me worse than it hurt him. I gave him everything I had. When the sixth round ended, I was completely spent. I couldn't even raise my arms. I couldn't even stand up to go back into the ring. 'I'm goin' home!' I told [trainer] Angelo Dundee. 'I'm not going back in there.'

"Hearing this, Dundee demanded Ali get ready to go in. Ali refused. The bell rang, and still Ali didn't leave his seat. Dundee pushed him and shouted, 'Get in there and don't come out until you're the heavyweight champion of the world!'

"Ali struggled to his feet. Liston didn't.

"At the end of that fight, Muhammad Ali, then Cassius Clay, was the new heavyweight champion of the world.

"The greatest lesson I've learned,' Ali said, 'is to have someone pushin' you and makin' you do things you don't think you can do.'"

As you were challenged by the Game Plans, Strategies, and Daily Training Verses in your Rookie Season, you may have needed the push and encouragement of your T.E.A.M. members to face and finish your challenges. But you made it!

Your Veteran Season holds the promise of more challenges and exercises for your faith that might require the support of your teammates to see you through, but the result will be more growth and development in your faith that will help you better live each day as an ambassador for Jesus Christ.

Once you've successfully completed your Veteran Season, we want to encourage and challenge you to consider becoming a Spiritual T.E.A.M. Coach. Your experience in exercising and maturing your faith can help new Christians become established in their faith.

If you have any questions about your Veteran Season or being on your T.E.A.M., speak with your Coach. He or she is there to help you make the most of your training and to help you have a fruitful and enjoyable Veteran Season.

### *One more thing: these are companion materials ...*

In Matthew 28, Jesus provided His church with the Great Commission. That set of commands consisted of going into all the world and *making disciples*, then baptizing them, and then teaching them everything He taught us (commonly referred to today as "discipling" the believer, or "discipleship").

These Spiritual T.E.A.M. training materials are provided to help you with that last aspect of the Great Commission, but what about the first part, Christ's command to go *make disciples*? After all, that is the mission of the church!

Before initially developing the original version of this material, John Hendee first developed a complete disciple-making model originally called *"A Peace Treaty With God."* For more than three decades, that disciple-making model (which comes complete with a methodology and a highly effective disciple-making tool) was used by Christians, pastors, church planters, and missionaries in a variety of cultures around the world to lead thousands of people to a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. Additionally, we have seen churches grown organically by making new disciples specifically by using this disciple-making model, and we have also seen the implementation of this model be a key ingredient for transforming stagnant and even dying churches into growing disciple-making churches.

Today, John serves as Chair of World Evangelism at Hope International University in Fullerton, California, where he teaches an online course called "Relational Evangelism" that trains people in a version of this highly effective disciple-making model which has been revised, updated, and renamed as *"It's All About Relationship."*

The course can be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit, or there are a few options for taking the course at a greatly reduced cost if you don't want or need the college credit.

Whether you're an individual Christian wanting to be equipped to effectively make disciples, or a church or ministry leader who would like to equip a team or your entire church or organization, we can provide the training you need to be ambassadors for Christ who are very effective at making new disciples.

For more information about Hope International University's online "Relational Evangelism" course and how it could help you, your church, or your ministry, email John directly at [johnwhendee@gmail.com](mailto:johnwhendee@gmail.com).

These Spiritual T.E.A.M. training materials make a great companion resource for training new disciples you make as an equipped ambassador for Jesus Christ, or for use with people who have been followers of Christ for a long time.

# Spiritual T.E.A.M. Covenant

Knowing what is expected of a Spiritual T.E.A.M. member, I promise, to the best of my ability, to fulfill the requirements of being on a Spiritual T.E.A.M.

I will be open to growing, caring, maturing, and obeying God's will in my life. I will seek to support those on my T.E.A.M.

T.E.A.M. member signatures

Date

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Coach

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# Game Plan 1

## Who Said It Would Be Easy?

Marathon runners seem to agree the pain in a twenty-six-mile run can become excruciating at points. Some of them also say there are certain times in the race that are predictable drop-out times. If you get past them and don't quit, then you are home free. One can apparently experience a euphoric state when the body shrugs off pain and freely glides along almost mechanically. To run the marathon takes desire, training, and willingness to hang in there when it hurts!

The same can be said of the Christian life and service. To run the race for Christ one must also have desire, training, and a willingness to hang in there when it hurts. Jesus never said it would be easy.

Paul had the spiritual endurance of a distance runner. He was often hurt, but he never gave up. He kept going even when it was rough. Read the following passages, and list some of the kinds of difficulties he had:

- 2 Corinthians 1:7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 2:1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 2:2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 11:24-29 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 12:21 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Thessalonians 2:9 \_\_\_\_\_

- 2 Timothy 4:10 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Timothy 4:14 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Timothy 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

A poll showed that in a recent professional football season, the player/injury ratio was 1/1. Some had more than one injury, which made up for the ones who had none. I suppose if we took a year's survey among Christians and found what the servant/injury or "hurt ratio" was, it would be at least 1/1. Do you ever get scraped, rejected, or hurt in your ministry for Christ? Do you ever grieve, hurt, or have sleepless moments on behalf of others? If not, you are probably watching the game from the bleachers. It's hard to get hurt from there. It's hard not to get hurt when you're on the field.

In 2 Timothy 2:3-6, Paul said, "*Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus ... if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.*" All three of these groups are willing to sweat, risk danger, and sacrifice now for the anticipated victory in war, winning of the game, or harvesting of the crop. What should you do when you are hurting? Tell God. He'll help, He won't abandon you. You'll learn more things to do in the passages this week.

## Strategy Ideas

Take a piece of paper and with a pen or pencil create three columns. In the first column, list any of your recent or current trials, stresses, problems, temptations, or struggles, e.g. trouble with job/business, kids, marriage, friend, health, your failures, others' failures, loneliness, or some other. Then, in column two, be frank about your own responsibility or fault in making the situation a problem. Finally, use the third column to plan a means of improving the situation(s).

**Problem:** What did you do, or are you doing, to add to the problem? What will you do to improve the situation?

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

**Daily Training Verses**

1. John 16:33
2. John 14:1-4, 27
3. John 16:20-23
4. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, 10-11
5. 1 John 5:3-5
6. Galatians 6:7-10

**T – TEACH**

What does this passage teach me?

**R - Rebuke**

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

**A – APPLY**

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

**I – INITIATE**

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

**N – NEEDS**

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 2

# What's A Successful Player Look Like?

Not too many people set out intentionally seeking to be failures. Not very many people who set out intending to be successes are. Part of the difficulty is that many of us have no idea what success really is. Many end up achieving what they had been led to believe was success, only to find what they've pursued to be very empty. God and the average person have been known to have a slightly different idea and perspective as to what success is.

According to the magazine ads, the TV commercials, the radio spots, and the visible thrust of the American culture, success is any or all of the following: social status, good looks, to be sexy or macho, intelligence, to dress fashionably, to have the "right" friends, to have lots of friends, to have good health, to be funny, to be rich (big home, new car, etc.), to hold high positions (to have power), to have a good job, to have control over people, to dine on gourmet food, and/or to be able to travel extensively.

God's view of success is a little different. Most of the above only allow one to accumulate checks on their mental chart for having compiled external achievements by hard work, luck, or pressure. To the one who accumulates these, disaster comes in their loss, and misery is the byword for one who seeks but never finds them. But thanks be to the Lord! Life, its enjoyment, its fulfillment, and its richness, are not dependent on any of

those. They may add a different dimension to life in some way, but they are not the essence of life.

According to the Scriptures, including Jesus' own life and teachings, success is developing and retaining the following in one's life: contentment in any situation, inner joy, leading a pure life, loving a neighbor as oneself, putting oneself in someone else's place, being persecuted for doing right, being sorry for sin, striving for peace, having right relationships, and self-control. (See Matthew 5:3-10.)

According to the world's view of success, Jesus was a failure: social status (He died as a criminal); looks ("He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him," Isaiah 53:2); sexy/macho (He gave up marriage and sex for a mission); intelligence (didn't flaunt brains, but was very wise); clothes (had few); the "right" and many friends (His friends all abandoned Him); being funny (a man of sorrows," Isaiah 53:3); rich (wasn't); high position (King without a people); good job (unemployed rabbi). Jesus was no failure. He was the ultimate in success. He came to do the will of His Father, and He did it perfectly. That brought sorrow and suffering to Him, yet it resulted in perfection, joy, and eternal life for all who accept His grace.

Whose standard of success are you going to spend your life seeking? The better you know Jesus, the better understanding and model of success you will have.

## Strategy Ideas

God is not opposed to a person looking nice, being intelligent, dressing neatly, having friends, being healthy, etc. The issue is, are these the end purpose of life, or are they things we are to use to help us as we seek to fulfill God's will of winning the world? (See 1 Corinthians 7:30, 31; Philippians 3:17- 21; 4:11.) Do you spend more time seeking the items in column A or B in your life? Which would your family members think is more important to you by what they see you do?

A	B
Social status, good looks, sexy/macho, intelligence, fashionable, lots of friends, "right" friends, good health, funny, rich, high position, good job, control people, eat gourmet, travel	Content in any situation, inner joy, leading a pure life, loving neighbor as self, putting self in another's shoes, persecuted for doing right, sorry for sin, striving for peace, right relationships, self control

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Matthew 6:25-34
2. Matthew 13:44-46
3. Luke 12:13-21
4. Luke 18: 18-30
5. Luke 16:19-31
6. Matthew 25:31-46

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 3

# Loving The Unlikable Team Members

Along with many outstanding individuals, you may encounter some pretty dislikable people in the church. (Of course, that would never be us. Who could not like us?) Just for a minute, think about a few of the possible unlikable traits in the lives of other Christians:

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| self-righteousness     | disagreeableness |
| unfriendliness         | immaturity       |
| negative attitude      | cruelty          |
| wealth                 | carelessness     |
| gossip                 | poverty          |
| messy habits           | dishonest        |
| pride                  | laziness         |
| hypocrisy              | impatience       |
| procrastination        | funny looks      |
| habitual tardiness     | not reliable     |
| funny voice/bad breath | critical spirit  |
| accent                 | not fashionable  |
| talkative nature       | funny            |
| gripping               | quiet nature     |

And so it goes. You may even know some character who seems to be a well-balanced composite of all these!

Now consider the fact that Jesus commanded us to love them! YIKES! How on earth can you possibly love anyone so unlikable? It helps to understand what love is. It is not a feeling or an emotion. Jesus never commanded

us to have an emotion, but He did command our actions and attitudes. It's not a question of the others' being lovable, but whether we are loving!

Love is doing what is best for the other person, regardless of how you feel about them. That is the only way you can love your enemy. You may not have good feelings for them, but you can treat them in such a way to help them grow toward Christ. Jesus held our love for our fellow Christians (and for all people) as a very high priority.

John said, *"This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another"* 1 John 3:11. Paul worked with the Thessalonians and gave of himself to them in love. *"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us"* 1 Thessalonians 2:8. They had learned from Paul's example. He said of them, *"Now about brotherly love, we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more"* 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10. They couldn't love too much!

If another Christian seems very obnoxious, revolting, annoying, critical, or irritating to you, remember he is a great opportunity for you to demonstrate your love and maturity in Christ!

## Strategy Ideas

List some people you don't like: they've irritated you, rejected you, or in some way hurt you	What did they do, or what are they like, that you don't like?	How did or do you react to them?	Is your reaction to and treatment of them Christlike? If no, how could you make it so?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

List some people from whom you are now alienated	In your view, what caused the alienation?	Was and is your reaction to them Christlike?	What can you do to reconcile the relationship?
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. John 15:9-14
2. 1 Peter 3:8-12
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15
4. Philippians 2:1-4
5. Colossians 3:12-14
6. 1 John 3:14-18

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 4

# Making The Other Players Look Good

To the average person, the word submission immediately prompts a mental image of a wife running around frantically trying to fulfill her husband's every wish and whim. It's a distasteful image, and thus a distasteful word. This is unfortunate. Submission is a part of every Christian's life (not just wives'), but it is much different from the picture just described. It is certainly not blind obedience.

In a sense, submission means the same as *love*, *serve*, or *obey*. The common ground in all these words is a willingness to advance the best interest of another, even at the expense of one's own interests. When I love someone, I do what is best for him, even if I have to sacrifice some of my own time, money, or effort. Jesus said, "*Love each other as I have loved you*" John 15:12.

Submission to another means helping that person become like Christ by treating him as Christ would. It means to encourage, set an example, or support. (See Galatians 6:2.)

In that sense, even leaders submit to the persons who follow them. Real authority has a submissive nature. (See 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12.) Having one in submission to you doesn't mean you give arbitrary commands; it means you submit your own interests to the good of the whole, to the purpose for which you were called to lead.

First Peter 5:1-5 and Matthew 20:24-27 point out the submissive (servant) nature of real leadership.

A disciple must not put his own interests before the best interests of another. For a disciple, submission means he will not press his own will, but will subject his will to the interests of another disciple and of the church as a whole, Christ's body. In other words, he submits his will to Christ.

The best interest of every disciple is to be like Christ. Thus, I will do nothing to detract or interfere with another's growth. I'll do what I can to help others grow into Christlikeness.

Christians are commanded to submit to one another - Ephesians 5:21, Philippians 2:4. Wives are to submit to their husbands - Ephesians 5:22, 1 Peter 3:1. Men are to submit to older men - 1 Timothy 5:1, 1 Peter 5:5. Christians are to submit to authorities, such as government - 1 Peter 2:13, Romans 13:1. Christians are to submit to church leaders - Hebrews 13:7.

In the New Covenant, one is called to a way of life that requires that we submit to all our fellow disciples, to do all we can to help them become more Christlike. There is no room for selfish ambition in the church. We all cooperate, support, and encourage one another to make everyone a success.

## Strategy Ideas

Notice the mutual submission in the following pairs of statements:

1. The *church* is to submit itself to *Christ*, to accomplish His will on earth (Ephesians 1:22, 23). *Christ* submitted himself to the *church*, to make it a success (Ephesians 5:25).
2. *Husbands* are to submit to their *wives*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 5:21-25). *Wives* are to submit to their *husbands*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 5:21-25).
3. *Children* are to submit to their *parents*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 6:1ff). *Parents* are to submit to their *children*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 6:4).
4. *Slaves* are to submit to their *leaders*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 6:5-8). *Masters* are to submit to their *slaves*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Ephesians 6:9).
5. *Church leaders* (elders) are to submit to their *members*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Hebrews 13:17). *Church members* are to submit to their *leaders*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Hebrews 13:7).
6. *Citizens* are to submit to their *governors*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Romans 13:1, 5). *Governors* are to submit to their *citizens*, making them a success in Christ's eyes (Romans 13:3-4).

Now complete the following chart to determine ways you can be submissive in a scriptural way. Then read *“Being an Actor Instead of a Reactor,”* which follows.

Person	What are you doing to help them become like Christ, to advance their best interests, or to help them be successful in God's eyes?	What could you do to demonstrate love/submission?
Mate		
Child/Children		
Parents		
Church Leaders		
Government Leaders		
Neighbors		
Boss		
Employees		
Poor/Rich		

## Being An Actor Instead Of A Reactor

by Sidney Harris, syndicated columnist

I walked with my friend, a Quaker, to the newsstand the other night and he bought a paper, thanking the newsman politely. The newsman didn't even acknowledge it.

"A sullen fellow, isn't he?" I commented.

"Oh, he's that way every night," shrugged my friend.

"Then why do you continue being so polite to him?" I asked.

"Why not?" inquired my friend. "Why should I let him decide how I'm going to act?"

As I thought about this little incident later, it occurred to me that the operating word was "act." My friend "acts" toward people; most of us react toward them.

He has a sense of inner balance lacking in most of us frail and uncertain creatures; he knows who he is, what he stands for, and how he should behave. No boor is going to disturb the equilibrium of his nature; he simply refuses to return incivility with incivility, because then he would no longer be in command of his own conduct, but a mere responder to others.

When we are enjoined in the Bible to return good for evil, we look upon this as a moral injunction, which it is; but it is also a psychological prescription for our emotional health.

Nobody is unhappier than the perpetual reactor. His center of emotional gravity is not rooted within himself, where it belongs, but in the world outside him. His spiritual temperature is always being raised or lowered by the social climate around him, and he is a mere creature at the mercy of these elements.

Praise gives him a feeling of euphoria, which is false, because it does not last and it does not come from self-approval. Criticism depresses him more than it should, because it confirms his own secretly shaky opinion of himself. Snubs hurt him, and the merest suspicion of unpopularity in any quarter rouses him to bitterness, aggressiveness or complaint.

Only a saint, of course, never reacts. But a serenity of spirit cannot be achieved until we become the masters of our own actions and attitudes, and not merely the passive reactors to other persons' feelings. To let another determine whether we shall be rude or gracious, elated or depressed, is to relinquish control over our own personalities, which is ultimately all we possess. The only true possession is self-possession.

My friend is a model of balanced conduct, and few of us can hope to attain his kind of surefootedness. But we can at least adjust our weight to lean less heavily upon the world's giddy gyrations.

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Ephesians 5:21
2. 1 Peter 5:1-5
3. Matthew 20-24-28
4. 1 Timothy 5:1-2
5. 1 Peter 2:13, 17; 3:7; 4:8
6. Philippians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 16:16

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 5

# The Critic In The Bleachers And On The Bench

Have you ever had the experience of going to an organized sports game and watching the fans in the bleachers and the players on the bench? Every team has fans who do nothing but sit in the bleachers criticizing every move of the coach and every action of the players. They seem assured that they know how to play the game better, and they are quite vocal about making it known. (Notice, though, that they never play the game, they just criticize. Apparently, they think that buying their tickets earns them the right.) You can also find players on sports teams who are continually critical of the coach and the other players.

Well, sorry to disappoint you, but even if you failed to notice, there are critics in the church. They are like self-appointed theater critics who major in (and seem to delight in) tearing down others. They remind us of buzzards searching for dead flesh. When they spot the decaying remains of some hapless creature, they get their friends together to feast on the foulness. “Why couldn’t they be more like honeybees?” we wonder. Bees are very particular about finding only the sweetest and best nectar as they fly among the beautiful flowering plants.

There are both bees and buzzards in the church, and you can be either one. It just depends on what you look for. Do you look for foulness or sweetness? The buzzard and the bee both find what they look for.

There are many bees in the church, a number of good examples of positive team members who are encouraging and uplifting. One man who is like a bee is Dale Hudson. Dale worked as a counselor at Mesa High School, Mesa, Arizona, and served as an elder at Central Christian Church in Mesa. Dale has the rare and genuine habit of greeting many people with, “Has anyone told you how much they appreciate you today? Well, if not let me.” Or, “Has anyone told you what a good job you’re doing?” He is an encourager, an appreciator, and, in turn, a motivator.

An interesting difference between bees and buzzards is this: Bees are too busy doing what they are supposed to be doing to tear into others. Buzzards only eat off what others do. Ever see a buzzard do his own hunting? No, he survives off what others do. There are, unfortunately, examples of buzzards in the kingdom; but, to give an example of one here would be acting like a buzzard. You know your own examples.

John Powell made a statement in one of his books that may help you understand the buzzards: “Every obnoxious quality in another person is their cry of pain and plea for love!” Kids become discipline problems in order to get attention when love is lacking. Adults simply develop obnoxious adult behavior to get attention when what they really want and need is love. Don’t let the buzzards get you down. They are in the bleachers and on the bench of every team. Just love them to death. And maybe the buzzard will die and a honeybee will be born!

## Strategy Ideas

Jesus had an illustration not unlike the bees and the buzzards. It is the story about the log and the speck (Matthew 7:3-5). How much easier to see the log in another’s eye! If you see logs in others’ eyes, be careful. Jesus said the log is really in yours. The following chart is a worksheet to help you grow. It is a mirror on paper. Give it a try. Pick an individual like your spouse, child, parent, or boss. Make a list of some of their major faults. (Yes, you get to play buzzard!) Now make a list of all of your poor responses or reactions to each fault. That is, start identifying some areas in which you need to grow in your life. Do it quickly; that will take the attention off the others and onto you. (Buzzard game is over.) Then make a list of how you can positively change your responses to each of their faults. You will be a much happier, sweeter person!

List six faults of one person	List at least six of your poor reactions to each of their faults	List how you can change your response to these characteristics
<p><b>EXAMPLE:</b> Wife – she doesn't pay enough attention to me</p>	<p><b>EXAMPLE:</b> 1. Withdraw 2. Try to get even 3. Talk about her (gossip) 4. Don't forgive her 5. Put my energy in other things 6. Belittle her 7. Nag</p>	<p><b>EXAMPLE:</b> 1. Pay attention to her anyway 2. Dress nicely for her 3. Smile at her 4. Talk nicely to her 5. Express my love for her 6. Be physically affectionate 7. Be verbally praising and polite</p>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Ephesians 4:29
2. James 3:9-12
3. James 4:11-12
4. Luke 6:37-38
5. Proverbs 10:14, 31-32
6. Matthew 7:3-5

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 6

# Knowing Your Position On The Team

The church is the representation/extension of Christ in the world. When Jesus confronted Saul of Tarsus for persecuting the church, Jesus asked Saul, “*Why do you persecute me?*” The church is “the body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:27). The body of Christ is here to carry on what Christ would do if He were here Himself — reconcile men to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

In order to get that task done, we must function as a whole, healthy body. Any less means we won’t reach God’s goal as effectively and fully as desired by God. All Christians are part of the body. Each of us has a specific God-given role, task, or function. The God who designed our bodies, with all of their various dependent, interacting parts, yet differing functions, is the same God who designed the church body. If a physical body doesn’t cooperate with the will of the mind, if certain functioning parts of the body do not work, we say it is handicapped or crippled. In both cases, the body may still function and even excel in some areas, but it likely will not reach the potential it could have if it were whole.

In 1 Peter 2:4-5, Peter says we are spiritual stones being built into a spiritual house. In building a house, there is an entire army of people involved in the various stages. For example: financiers, developers, city planners, inspectors, architects, surveyors, graders, road crews, carpenters, electricians, cabinet makers, appliance crews, air conditioning/heating workers,

plumbers, landscapers, carpet crews, cleaning crews, interior decorators, and real estate people. How many of these people would you like left out of the construction of your house? Not many! The quality, efficiency, and looks of the house would seriously be affected if workers started saying, “Oh, I’m just a plumber; I’m not important; they don’t need me!” “Nobody will miss me, I’m just an electrician, they can get along without me” or “I’ve got more important things to do than build the frame for that house!”

In order to get the spiritual house built, all the stones must be in place. If they aren’t, there will be holes all over the house! God doesn’t want or deserve a shabby house! Let’s not let our neighbors in the community draw bad conclusions about the owner of the house (God) because the house looks unkept and unfinished because some aren’t doing their jobs.

We all need to discover our gifts or ministries for Christ and use them. We can try different ministries, seek the opinions of other Christians about ourselves, train and develop ourselves for Christ. *What we are is God’s gift to us, and what we become is our gift to God.* Our gift has been given to us because it is needed in the body! Each is to appraise his own talent intelligently and use it. Are you a functioning part of the body, or are you spastic, “doing your own thing,” or are you a cripple? As one preacher said, “Either you have a gift, or God is a liar!”

# Strategy Ideas

List any talent, skill, ability, or gift you have that can be used for the body and help advance Christ's cause. Ask T.E.A.M. members for their ideas and insights.

How can you use these gifts to the greatest extent? In the "Use" column, list ideas for using your gifts. Then number them in order of their priority and importance to Christ and the church.

GIFT	PRIORITY	USE

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 1 Peter 4:10-11
2. Mark 10:45
3. Colossians 3:17, 23-24
4. Ephesians 4:11-16
5. Romans 12:3-8
6. 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11-13, 18, 24-25, 27

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).





Do you encourage them? How?

Do you pray for them? How often?

Do you share with them? In what ways?

Do you have Christlike care for them? How?

Do you cooperate with your leaders?

How can you be more faithful to those with whom you are now serving?

Do you need to be serving in a ministry with others more than you are now? If so, how?

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Hebrews 10:24-25
2. 1 Thessalonians 2:7-11
3. 1 John 3:14-19
4. Romans 13:8-10
5. Galatians 6:1-4
6. Romans 15:1-3

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 8

# Getting The Most Out Of Doubles

God never planned that marriage be the relationship that provides two people with all they need in life (2 Corinthians 9:8-10). No spouse (no matter how attractive, charming, intelligent, or talented that person is) can do what God can do for you (provide eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Spirit). But God certainly did want marriage to be a meaningful, good — yes, even a *great* — relationship. He wanted it to be a human object lesson of our relationship with Him.

A marriage can move into a rut, or it can be a growing romance. Every husband and wife contributes to making the marriage one or the other. After Christ, God wants your spouse to be the most important person to you. If you are married, you need to ask, “Am I really making my marriage a high priority? Am I giving my best to my spouse? Or am I sitting around complaining, whining, and pouting that I’m not getting all I want from my mate; so I’ll use that as an excuse not to give my best?”

At a wedding, two people promise to give their best to each other regardless of their feelings or their careers, during good times and bad times, regardless of each other’s good or bad traits. God wants us to have good marriages. In order to have one, a person needs to be the best spouse he can be. What should he be and do? Read God’s Word, He’ll tell us what to do to have a good marriage. A married person needs continually to ask whether he is doing what God wants him to do to make the marriage the best it can be. If married couples do their Godly best, they’ll be surprised what their marriages will be like.

Charlie Shedd, a minister and family/marriage writer and speaker, told about a man who came to his office and moaned about how unloving, unromantic, and cold his wife was. He even suspected she was frigid! Charlie’s response to the man was something like, “Well, Fred, after 25 years of marriage, you have just gotten what you deserve.” That wasn’t exactly what the man wanted to hear, but it was true. What one’s spouse is like after 25 years is a picture, most often, of what he has been to his spouse.

What will your marriage be like in five, 10, 20, or 30 years? You are having a big influence on it right now. Even if you are single, your actions, attitudes, and morals now will have an impact on any future marriage you enter. Are you looking at what you can get from a marriage, or are you concentrating on giving? Are you more concerned with what your spouse is or isn’t, or with what you are or aren’t? If you are immature and selfish, you will concentrate on the imperfections of your spouse to justify yourself. If you are mature, you will focus on what you should be, regardless of what your spouse is. You won’t use your own good conduct and kindness as a reward system for your spouse’s nice actions or hold back kindness as a punishment.

Someone once said, “Marriage is when you agree to spend the rest of your life sleeping in a room that’s too warm, beside someone who’s sleeping in a room that’s too cold.”

## Strategy Ideas

### For Singles:

1. What are the strengths in your life that would contribute to a strong marriage if you married?
2. What about you would need to change the most to help make a marriage succeed?
3. If you were to marry, what would you do to see that your marriage would be healthy?

### For Marrieds:

1. Ask forgiveness of your spouse for your failing in any particular areas (that you are aware of).
2. Share the wedding vows sheet with your spouse this week. Plan a special time to do this.
3. At least once a month, plan a special, fun date. Try to do this weekly, if possible.
4. Plan a getaway with your spouse for a yearly honeymoon. If a honeymoon was good once, why not again? (Don’t take the kids on these getaways.)
5. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Using the form below, put your name in the blanks. Read it as if you were your spouse, kids, parents, and friends. Would they say yes or no to each item in regard to you? What areas do you have to grow in regarding your love toward your spouse and others?

Write your name in each blank below. Would each of the following (A) agree or (D) disagree with each statement?

	Self	Spouse	Kids	Parents	Friends	Enemy
_____ is patient						
_____ is kind						
_____ does not envy						
_____ does not boast						
_____ is not (selfishly) proud						
_____ is not rude						
_____ is not self-seeking						
_____ is not easily angered						
_____ keeps no record of wrong						
_____ (done to him or her)						
_____ does not delight when evil happens to others						
_____ always protects						
_____ always trusts						
_____ always hopes						
_____ always perseveres (hangs in there with)						
_____ never fails						

## Personal Planning

## Wedding Vows Sheet (for use by married couples)

Write your names in the vows and look at each other with some meaning as you repeat and renew your vows. (It might be something to share with your kids, too, they might get something special from it.)

**Husband:** I \_\_\_\_\_, take thee \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish til death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and, thereto, I pledge you my love.

**Wife:** I \_\_\_\_\_, take thee \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish til death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and, thereto, I pledge you my love.

For a deeper time (if you think you can do it without getting defensive and turning it into an attack time), recall some of the following times in your life together in light of your vows:

To have and to hold	Are you holding each other enough?	Could you improve this some way?
For better	What have been some of your better times?	What could you do to have more?
For worse	What have been some of your worst times? Don't attack, just share. Don't resurrect a dead issue.	What can you do to avoid worst times?
In sickness	Has the sickness of one or the other of you Ever caused the other extra responsibilities? How have you handled it?	What could be done to make sick times more pleasant?
In health	Do you take your health for granted? How can you appreciate each other's health more?	Are there things you could be doing to help each other have better health?
To love and to cherish	What does your spouse do to love and cherish you?	What could you do to show your love and affection more?

Share with each other the things you are grateful for in your life together and the things you appreciate about the other.

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
2. Ephesians 5:21-33
3. Colossians 3:12-14
4. Proverbs 5:15-21
5. 1 Corinthians 7:1-4
6. 1 Peter 3:8-9

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 9

## Not On The Schedule

It's too bad that something as good as sex is enjoyed by so few. In fact, sex probably brings more anguish than it brings happiness. That's not the way it's supposed to be. Sex is supposed to bring physical, emotional, and spiritual fulfillment. In a day when sex is pursued by so many who think it will bring them ultimate fulfillment in life from its physical dimension alone, it is really enjoyed by very few.

The problem is one of breaking the schedule determined by the Coach. Sex in its proper use, by God's schedule, is fulfilling. But the abuse of sex brings heartache and emptiness. Our culture (like many throughout history) is trying to squeeze all it can out of the physical dimension of sex, but it just can't find what it's looking for. The pursuit is like that of a water-starved man in the desert who finds a canteen with only a few drops of water in it. He desperately shakes it empty, to the very last drop, but he is not satisfied. In fact, his craving for water has increased. Pursuing the physical dimension of sex alone is equally unfulfilling.

Still, many are engaged in that pursuit. From the looks of our movies, cable and network TV, books, and magazines, sex seems to have become our society's new indoor sport. Some people play the game the way they play racquetball: whenever, wherever, and with whomever they can! They search for the "thrill of victory" but by pursuing sex outside the context God designed for it, they ultimately find only the "agony of defeat."

God really does intend for sex to be delightful and enjoyable — even fun! But He put it in the context of the safety and security of marriage. He designed it, as He designed us. He knows better than we what is best for us in this regard. We try to judge by our experience, but our experience is limited. Only God has the omniscience of

the Creator. He can be trusted, His Word is reliable. And He says that sex is for married couples only.

Christians are not immune to sexual temptations and struggles. In fact, for them the struggle may be more intense. Guilt becomes part of the problem, whereas a non-Christian may feel no guilt because he has no moral values regarding sex.

As a Christian, you know that sex at its best is confined to one mate in a growing relationship of love and trust (marriage). Yet you need not feel guilty because you have normal human sexual drives, attractions, or even temptations. At the same time, you must not think you are harming yourself by disciplining those drives. Every athlete denies himself certain attractive things in order to perform and achieve at his best. He does so at the direction of his coach, whose judgment and experience he trusts. God, our great Coach, wants what is best for us. He has scheduled sex to occur only in marriage with one mate. That's what is best.

Sexual abuse is sin: against Christ, against oneself, and against the other person involved (1 Corinthians 6:13-20). Why? It robs everyone of the best! The answer to strength in sexual discipline is Christ and growing in Him. It is found in loving Him, your spouse (or your future spouse), and yourself enough that you will not damage the possibility of being the best later in order to have a fling now.

Misuse of sex and lack of self-discipline can ruin your ministry and effectiveness for Christ. Don't give in to it. If you already have, confess your failure and repent. God can, and will, forgive. He can restore you to a role of service for Him. He can heal your damaged relationships.

Don't tempt yourself. Be careful about what you read, watch, and listen to. Strengthen yourself by growing in Christ. Stick to His schedule.

### Strategy Ideas

### Dealing With Sex

What do you <i>watch</i> that may tempt, weaken, or compromise your becoming Christlike? (movies, TV shows, pictures, etc.)	What do you, or could you, <i>watch</i> to strengthen yourself in regard to a healthy Christlike view of sex?
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<p>What do you <i>listen</i> to that may tempt, weaken, or compromise your becoming Christlike? (music, stories, people, radio stations, etc.)</p>	<p>What do you, or could you, <i>listen</i> to in order to strengthen yourself in regard to a healthy Christlike view of sex?</p>
<p>What do you <i>read</i> that may tempt, weaken, or compromise your becoming Christlike? (magazines, novels, stories, etc.)</p>	<p>What do you, or could you, <i>read</i> to strengthen you in regard to a healthy Christlike view of sex?</p>
<p>What do you <i>do and/or dwell on</i> that may tempt, weaken, or compromise your becoming Christlike?</p>	<p>What do you, or could you, <i>do</i> to strengthen yourself in regard to a healthy Christlike view of sex?</p>
<p>Where do you <i>go</i> that may tempt, weaken, or compromise your becoming Christlike?</p>	<p>Where do you, or could you, <i>go</i> in order to strengthen yourself in regard to a healthy Christlike view of sex?</p>

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Ephesians 5:3-7
2. Titus 2:11-15
3. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8
4. 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
5. Philippians 4:8-9
6. 1 John 5:3-5

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 10

# Running The Farm League

In this wild twenty-first century world, a quality relationship between parent and child beyond the childhood years doesn't exist a great deal. Families fail to share meaningful dialogue and seldom express appreciation for each other. A family needs to provide the love, respect, and understanding that remains for the most part absent in the insensitive outside world. Family members can improve the quality of their relationships with the rest of their family by verbalizing their appreciation, striving to understand the others' feelings, and helping other family members to understand their feelings.

Parents need to develop the ability to see through their children's bad traits to appreciate their many good qualities and deeds. These qualities can be affirmed with a smile, a wink, a squeeze on the hand, a kiss, a note on a pillow, an arm across one's shoulder, or a big bear hug. Parents can imagine their child is someone else's for a moment. That fresh perspective should enable them to find many positive qualities. Kids can do the same for their parents. If family members treated each other with the courtesy they do outsiders, the atmosphere in most homes would really improve.

Dr. Alice Ginott recommends that parents speak a loving language that makes their kids feel wanted and appreciated. That kind of language is foreign to many of us. Family members need to work at trying to understand

the others' positions in life and to understand their feelings. Parents can often forget what it was like to go through the childhood and teen years. Kids often give little or no thought about the task of being an adult and parent. A little understanding can go a long way. It wouldn't hurt family members to read books written for parents and/or for kids on understanding other family members and how to improve family life.

Parents and kids alike need to remember that parents aren't running for a popularity contest. There are times they have to make decisions that won't be popular with the kids. The kids will not like their decisions. But the parents still have to make those decisions, and both they and the kids have to live with those choices. The parents must not fail to discipline because their kids will react negatively.

Families need to plan to spend time together. They need to plan to do things that years later they will look back on with fond memories. Kids need to be allowed the freedom to do their own things and go their ways as the years roll along, but some good family times to experience together and look back on will enrich any life.

A successful family life is filled with difficult times. It takes a lot of understanding, gentleness, patience, and work. It demands a lot of forgiveness and overlooking the other's weaknesses in some areas. It takes a desire to treat the others with respect.

## Strategy Ideas

### For Parents:

1. Hug each member of your family every day this week. Tell them that you love and appreciate them. This may feel strange if you haven't been doing it, but do it anyway.
2. Make a date with each of your children this month. Take them out to eat, to a movie, shopping, or something else, something special that they like to do. Do it monthly.
3. Read a book on family relationships/communication in the family.

### Recommended Reading:

1. *Preparing for Adolescence*, Dr. James Dobson.
2. *Promises to Peter*, Charlie Shedd.
3. *Good Times for Your Family*.
4. *Getting Your Family Together*.

*For Kids:*

1. Hug each member of your family every day this week. Tell them that you appreciate them and love them.
2. Make a list of how you can be more appreciative, supportive, and courteous to your family. What could you do to show your love to them?

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. Proverbs 22:6
2. Deuteronomy 6:4-9
3. Ephesians 6:1-4
4. Colossians 3:18-21
5. Proverbs 13:24, 19:18
6. Proverbs 23:13-14, 29:17

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 11

# The Coach Won't Always Be There To Push You!

Abraham Lincoln, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Billy Graham, Louis Pasteur, Helen Keller, Ben Franklin, Winston Churchill, the Apostle Paul, Johnny Unitas. These individuals, like most who succeed or achieve in sports, politics, science, business, or the arts, have a common trait. It is called self-discipline or self-control. One won't be successful at marriage, parenting, a career, athletics, or ministry without it. Many factors can keep us from being self-disciplined or self-controlled: laziness, abuse of luxury, too much TV, wrong goals, sinful desires, irresponsibility, feelings, and a number of others.

Everyone is self-controlled! It's simply a question of what we allow to control the self. That's entirely our choice. We can let selfish ends, laziness, comfort, wealth, popularity, pleasure, pride, power, or Christ control self. Living for the flesh is living for self only. Spell flesh backwards and eliminate the "h."

We can't be like Jesus without self-control!

Self-control is bringing myself under the control and discipline of Jesus! The Marines claim to build men. Football coaches claim football builds character. What they both build is discipline.

As one submits himself to the authority and direction of the sergeant or coach, he is helped to become what he needs to be and to get the job done. It's the same with Jesus! An undisciplined person can ruin a job, a marriage, a friendship, a Sunday school class, or a church. Self-discipline is saying no to those things that would interfere with achieving God's will and saying yes to what will advance it.

A lack of self-discipline is watching TV when I should be praying, studying, visiting, or playing with my kids.

A lack of self-discipline is working when I need to be playing.

A lack of self-discipline is playing when I need to be working.

A lack of self-discipline is reading when I need to be talking.

A lack of self-discipline is talking when I need to be reading.

A lack of self-discipline is spending when I need to be giving or saving.

A lack of self-discipline is hoarding when I need to be spending.

## Strategy Plans

What am I failing at or underachieving in now because of a lack of self-control/self-discipline?

	Yes	No	If yes, what can I do to be more self-disciplined?
			In my ministry?
			In my work?
			In my home?
			With my health?
			In my relationship?

What might I do if I were more self-disciplined? Dream some dreams! What might I do ... ?

in souls won \_\_\_\_\_

in ministry \_\_\_\_\_

in missions \_\_\_\_\_

in what I give \_\_\_\_\_

in my marriage \_\_\_\_\_

with books read \_\_\_\_\_

in friendships built \_\_\_\_\_

in other useful achievements \_\_\_\_\_

in writing articles, books, poems, letters \_\_\_\_\_

in exercising \_\_\_\_\_

with new skills \_\_\_\_\_

with quality time with the kids \_\_\_\_\_

REMEMBER, they didn't build Rome in a single day! How about a little at a time? What could you do with one half hour a day for five days a week? In five years, that would equal more than 650 hours!

## Personal Planning

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

## Daily Training Verses

1. 1 Peter 4:7
2. 2 Peter 1:6, 8-9
3. Galatians 5:22-23
4. Titus 2:11-12
5. 1 Thessalonians 5:6
6. 2 Timothy 1:7

### T – TEACH

What does this passage teach me?

### R - REBUKE

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

### A – APPLY

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

### I – INITIATE

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

### N – NEEDS

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



## Game Plan 12

# Playing With Pain

Suffering is an aspect of life that all of us have to deal with. As Christians, we are not less susceptible to suffering than are those who are not in Christ (Matthew 5:45). It may be that at times, we suffer more in many different ways than we did before we became Christians. We are told by Scripture that we share at least in part with the sufferings of Christ because we are one with Him. But what sets us apart from others is the joy we have because we can be victors over suffering; and suffering can actually be used as a vehicle for spiritual growth and a deeper relationship with Christ. In essence, situations that potentially could destroy our lives can be turned into growing experiences. This is why the Apostle Paul could say in Romans 8:37 that *“we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”* Suffering will remain until mortality puts on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51-54). God’s ultimate glory will be ultimate victory over all sin and evil (Revelation 21:1-1).

Suffering is not always caused by sin or a lack of spirituality (Job 1:6 -2:10, 1 Corinthians 4:9-14, John 9:1-3).

Suffering can be a warning system, an indicator or deterrent to continued bodily or emotional harm.

Suffering causes us to focus our hope on the future (1 Peter 1:6, 13).

Suffering allows us to comfort others who suffer (2 Corinthians 1:3-11).

Sufferings are temporary (Romans 8:18-21).

Suffering can be used by God to refine, perfect, strengthen, and help us from falling (Hebrews 2:10, 12:10, Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-4).

Suffering can be positive or negative depending on how you respond.

Suffering can be used by God to strengthen us, or by Satan to turn us aside (1 Peter 5:8-10).

Suffering teaches obedience and self-control (Hebrews 5:8).

Suffering voluntarily is a way to show love to God (2 Corinthians 8:1-9).

## Strategy Ideas

List instances when you have gone through suffering or adversities in recent years. Then list your responses and the results of your responses. Finally, list how you could have responded with a more Christlike attitude. How would that have made a difference in your growth?

Occasion of Suffering	Response and Results	Better Response/Possible Results

## Personal Planning

# God Leads A Pretty Sheltered Life!

At the end of time, billions of people were scattered on a great plain before God's throne. Some of the groups near the front talked heatedly, not with cringing shame, but with belligerence!

"How can God judge us? How can He know about suffering?" snapped a joking brunette. She jerked back a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp. "We endured terror, beatings, torture, and death!"

In another group, a black man lowered his collar. "What about this?" he demanded, showing an ugly rope burn. "Lynched for no crime but being black! We have suffocated in slave ships, been wrenched from loved ones, and toiled till only death gave release!"

Across the plain were hundreds of such groups. Each had a complaint against God for the evil and suffering He had permitted in His world. How lucky God was to live in Heaven where all was sweetness and light, where there was no weeping, no fear, no hunger, and no hatred. Indeed, what did God know about what man had been forced to endure in this world? "After all, God leads a pretty sheltered life," they said.

So each group sent out a leader, chosen because he had suffered the most. There was a Jew, a black, an untouchable from India, an illegitimate person, a person from Hiroshima, and one from a Siberian slave camp. In the center of the plain, they consulted with each other. At last, they were ready to present their case. It was rather simple: before God would be qualified to be their judge, He must endure what they had endured. Their decision was that God "should be sentenced to live on earth — as a man!"

But, because He was God, they set certain safeguards to be sure He could not use His divine powers to help himself.

Let Him be born a Jew.

Let the legitimacy of His birth be doubted, so that none will know who is really His father.

Let Him champion a cause so just but so radical that it brings down upon Him the hate, condemnation, and eliminating efforts of every major traditional and established religious authority.

Let Him try to describe what no man has ever seen, tasted, heard, or smelled.

Let Him try to communicate God to men.

Let Him be betrayed by his dearest friends.

Let Him be indicted on false charges, tried before a prejudiced jury, and convicted by a cowardly judge.

Let Him see what it is to be terribly alone and completely abandoned by every living thing.

Let Him be tortured and let Him die! Let Him die the most humiliating death — with common thieves.

As each leader announced his portion of the sentence, loud murmurs of approval went up from the great throng of people. When the last had finished pronouncing sentence, there was a long silence. No one uttered another word. No one moved. For suddenly, all knew: God had already served His sentence!

## "I COULDN'T CARE MORE!"

—Jesus

God is with us. That is no answer for suffering. It is an answer to the sufferer.

God gives us no platitudes, no proverbs. He gives presence.

When Jesus spoke of suffering, He gave no easy answers. He told us simply that God is with us. He knows and notices the smallest things: a sparrow's death, a falling hair, a wilting lily.

Jesus gave no logical, philosophical explanation of how tragedies may strike or why. He only assured us that it was not His Father's will that anyone, not even the littlest of us, should perish.

Jesus gave no theological justification for all the evil and pain that surround us.

He gave us Himself, the clearest demonstration of how far God's suffering love will go.

by David Augusburger Moody Press

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

**Daily Training Verses**

1. Romans 5:3-4
2. James 1:2-8
3. 1 Peter 1:6-7, 5:10-11
4. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
5. Romans 8:18-21, 35-39
6. Hebrews 12:3-4, 7

**T – TEACH**

What does this passage teach me?

**R - REBUKE**

Does the passage correct me in any way? Am I satisfied with the extent to which I am applying it?

**A – APPLY**

If I applied this passage to my life, would I start or stop anything? What? Visualize it.

**I – INITIATE**

If I can start or stop something, when will I do it? Today? How? With whom?

**N – NEEDS**

I need to pray (follows the ACTS pattern: Adore, Confess, Thank, Supplicate).



# Game Plan 13

## Knowing The Opposition

As we strive to live our lives committed to the purpose of advancing the cause of Christ in our own personal lives and throughout the world, it is important to realize our efforts are being opposed at every possible point by Satan. As Paul tells us in Ephesians, we are not struggling against mere human beings, but against spiritual forces. In order to fulfill our purpose as Christians, we need to recognize who our adversary is in this struggle. We need to learn what we can about the opponent from our scouting report (the Bible).

Satan was first one of the most important beings in Heaven, but he was cast out because of sin (Luke 10:18). Even though Satan has been defeated through Christ (Colossians 2:15), he has been trying to shipwreck the plan and purpose of God by seeking to cause man to reject God (2 Corinthians 4:4), or to stumble, or to compromise in his life with Christ. Satan's desire is to be like the most high, he wants to be God! His program is to keep men as his subjects, to satisfy them so they won't desire to be in God's kingdom.

The word *devil* means slanderer. The devil's plan of attack is to slander God to man (Genesis 3:1-7). He also seeks to slander man to God (Job 1:9-12; 2:1-7). Man has the choice in his life of being the servant of one of two kingdoms, God's or Satan's (Acts 26:17-18, Colossians 1:13).

The need for the Christian is to deal with the problem of how to withstand the opposition successfully. Paul, in speaking to the Ephesians, outlines the armor of God that the Christian needs to wear to withstand the attacks of the devil successfully.

Put on the full armor, not just part of it. Wear the belt of truth. Truth is the Word. Wear the breastplate of righteousness. Jesus is our righteousness. Have your feet fitted with readiness that comes from the Gospel. Take the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation. Wield the sword of the Spirit. The Word of God is the sword. Pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests ... Be alert, and always keep on praying for all the saints (Ephesians 6:11-18).

Jesus defeated the devil with Scripture! In their well-known encounter recorded in Matthew 4, Jesus answered Satan's every temptation with, "*It is written*" (vs. 4, 7, 10). Jesus didn't have any magical response. He knew the Scriptures. They were His sword to defeat Satan. Maybe the reason we are not more victorious in our defeating temptation is that we don't know the Word well enough.

Finally, we need to realize the fact that not only has Satan been defeated, but in the final Judgment, he will be banished from God's presence eternally (Revelation 20). Jesus is the victor!

### Strategy Ideas

### Personal Planning

### Satan Match

Draw a line from the passage to the title.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Matthew 13:39       | 1. The evil one                              |
| 1 Peter 5:8         | 2. Your enemy the devil, a roaring lion      |
| Revelation 12:10    | 3. The tempter                               |
| Matthew 13:19       | 4. The enemy, the devil                      |
| John 8:44           | 5. Great dragon, ancient serpent             |
| 1 Thessalonians 3:5 | 6. The accuser of our brothers               |
| Revelation 12:9     | 7. Liar, father of lies                      |
| John 12:31          | 8. Prince of this world                      |
| 2 Corinthians 4:4   | 9. The god of this age                       |
| Ephesians 2:2       | 10. Ruler of the kingdom of the air          |
| Ephesians 6:11-12   | 11. Angels who abandoned their home          |
| Matthew 25:41       | 12. Rulers, authorities, ruler of dark world |
| Jude 6              | 13. The devil and his angels                 |

# TRAIN

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16

**Daily Training Verses**

1. 1 John 4:4
2. Isaiah 14:12-15
3. 2 Corinthians 11:13-14
4. 1 John 3:8
5. 1 Peter 5:8-9
6. 2 Corinthians 2:11

**T – TEACH**

What does this passage teach me?

**R - REBUKE**

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