

WORD

²³And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. ²⁴Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia, ²⁶and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled.

ACTS 14:23-26

In the book of Acts, we see that the Apostle Paul had a framework for planting churches: he would go to a city, share the gospel, and establish local leaders who would do the same. He led with the idea of leaving one day, and this day came sooner than later. In this lesson, we will look at how Paul developed other leaders in a short period of time. These biblical principles are still used in raising leaders in cross-cultural settings by many missionaries and in our own context and setting.

1 Identify strengths and calling.

. . . and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. **2 TIMOTHY 2:2**

Paul did not just preach the gospel in the cities he was in. He also helped locals discover their calling and strengths, and they were eventually raised to become leaders in their churches. Recount how someone helped you identify your calling and strengths. How are you using your strengths for God's purpose?

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2 Instruct with God's Word.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness . . .

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

Paul used the Word of God to train people to righteousness. If we are to raise leaders, the Bible is the best tool for instruction. God's Word also discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12). Why is the Word of God (not opinions or other sources) the ultimate standard for what we believe and do?

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3 Impart spiritual strength.

¹¹For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—¹²that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

ROMANS 1:11,12

It is through encouragement and prayer that we can impart spiritual strength to others. As we share how God has been faithful to us, we can also inspire others to believe God for their own answered prayers and breakthroughs. Who imparted spiritual strength to you? How are you learning to impart this to others?

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4 Intern new leaders for greater effectiveness.

But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

PHILIPPIANS 2:22

Timothy was one of the leaders Paul had raised. Paul had seen Timothy's willingness and desire to serve, so he took the younger man under his wing and gave him opportunities to lead. What was Paul's relationship with Timothy like? How do you think Timothy proved his worth?

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