



God's Plan for Sustainable Development

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Timothy Leadership Training Institute
www.tlti.org

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Introduction

The manual God's Plan for Sustainable Development is part of the second level of TLTI training.

The subject of *sustainable development* has generated much interest and discussion around the world during the past decades. “*What does it mean for a person or a society to develop well?*” is one of the basic questions being asked.

Many other issues are also raised. For example: *Is it appropriate to call a country in which lakes, rivers and soil are highly polluted because of industrial growth a “**developed country**”?*

This manual gives you the opportunity to explore some of the basic issues related to personal and social development. Working through it you will:

- Interact with Scripture and your co-participants to better understand biblical teaching on sustainable development.
- Become familiar with three important aspects of sustainable development.
- Identify obstacles to sustainable development and ways to overcome them.
- Develop your ability to promote sustainable development in the family, the church and society.
- Practice what is learned through Kingdom oriented action plans related to this subject.
- Continue to develop skills as a TLT facilitator and receive feedback on that ability.

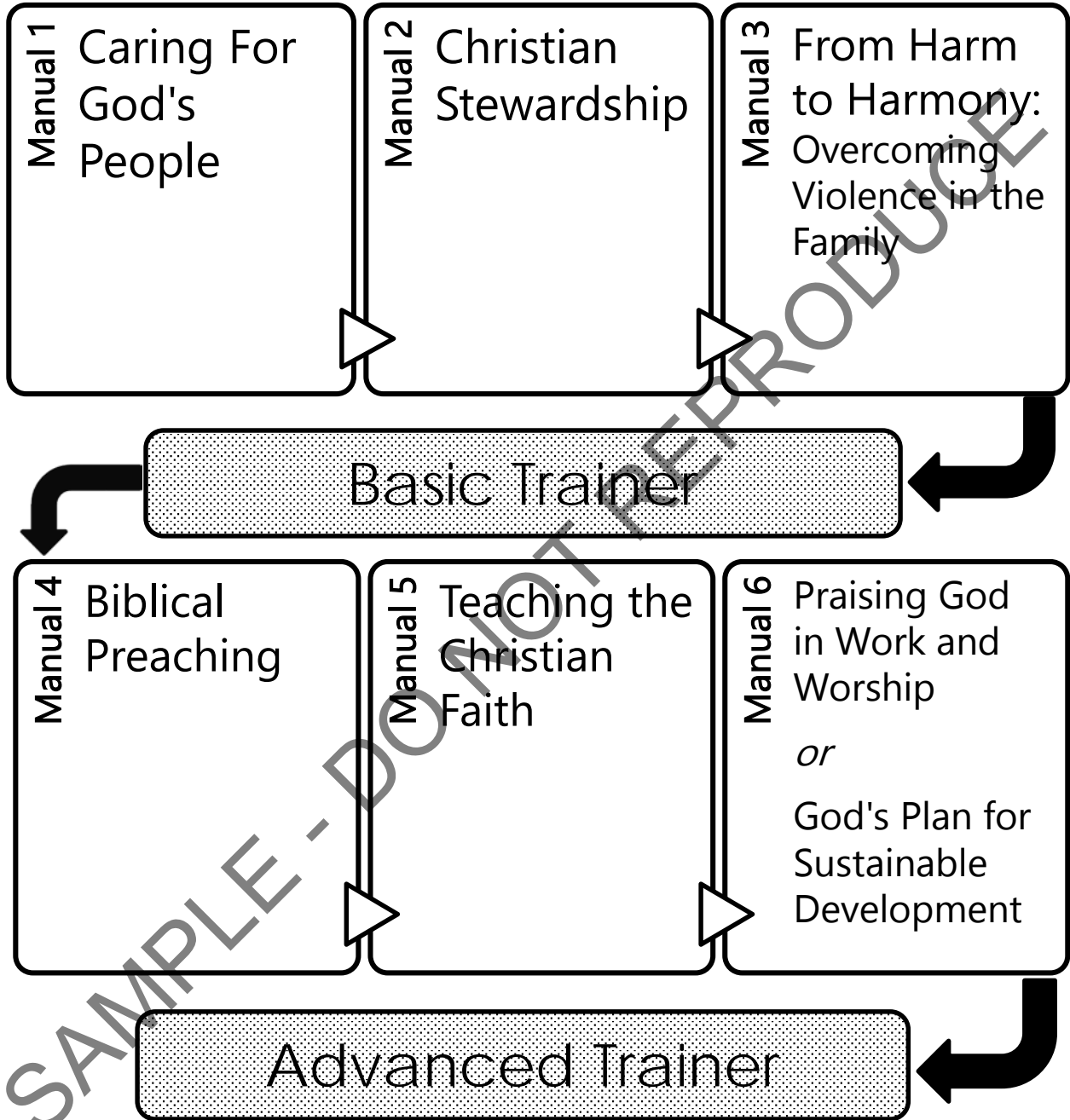
As you work through the manual you may find that some of the ideas presented are already familiar. If this is the case, think of others who you may train using the same manual in your local church or elsewhere. Whether you are a pastor, evangelist or lay leader, this manual provides you with a tool to train others on many different levels: parents, Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, elders and deacons. In your group, discuss how God may be preparing you to train others, even those from other countries and cultures.

Before working through this manual in your group, we encourage you, once again, to briefly review Lesson 1 of the manual Caring for God's People: *Great Things with God*. We are confident that God can continue to bring significant changes to your church and your community through this training.



Timothy Leadership Training Certification

This is the path for Basic and Advanced Trainer certification by Timothy Leadership Training Institute.



*Note: to receive an official TLTI certificate you must be trained by a TLTI certified trainer following standard guidelines. Trainers report trainings and request certificates through reporting@tlti.org.



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Participant Testimonies

The following testimonies come from participants around the world. More such testimonies are available on the Timothy Leadership Training website.

ASIA

Mongolia

I learned to treat with care the things God has given me. I understand now how to be responsible, how to protect and how to increase and develop these things.

Vietnam

One church volunteered to fix a local public road. A group of members at another church helped out other church members in harvesting their crops. When this was finished, the whole church went and helped the government leader in their village harvest his crops. Government leaders are now proud of these church members and realize that believers are not bad.

AFRICA

Uganda

I am a fisherman. We are running out of fish from excessive fishing. After training, I went back and started cultivating my piece of land. I planted pineapples and yams. I have encouraged others pastors to involve themselves in farming. Today I keep myself busy with the church and farming. I am now able to hire someone to do the fishing for me. My job is to supervise and negotiate prices for the fish.

Cameroon

We Christians used to think of ourselves as being necessarily poor. Now we have begun income generating projects, like making bricks.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Our church contributed manpower and money to improve the roads in our neighborhood.

AMERICAS

El Salvador

A recycling project was begun by a cell network, and an average \$150 US was raised monthly. This was used to bless the poorest of the network.

Peru

One pastor reports that because of this training his church began to understand their responsibilities to the community. They started an urban garden and opened a food pantry. They now also provide assistance to six poor families.

United States

After training, I began fund raising for an orphanage in Kenya by using a simple form to get my organization set up.



Reminder to TLT Trainers

Lesson Procedure

TLT lessons follow 4 steps:

- 1) **Report** - At the beginning of each lesson (except for the 1st lesson) each participant presents the report of what was accomplished since the last lesson.
- 2) **Reflect, discover, and discuss** - Then, participants read Scripture and discuss together the related questions. It is often helpful to read the Bible texts in their context. Group discussion trains participants to listen carefully to each other and to present their ideas clearly.
- 3) **Plan** - Participants write a plan to put into practice what they have learned. They report on that plan at the beginning of the following lesson.
- 4) **Pray** - At the end of each lesson, participants commit their plans to God.

TLT training is for those who are prepared to make plans, to put their plans into action between the lessons, and then report on them during the next lesson. Most TLT learning takes place between the lessons as participants work their plans.

Inductive training

TLT training is not like classroom teaching when the teacher stands up in front of the class and talks while students listen and take notes. TLT training is interactive and *inductive*. *Inductive* means that during a lesson participants talk more than the trainer. An inductive trainer asks good questions and then gives participants time to reflect and discuss. A TLT trainer is like a good mathematics teacher who gives the class a problem to solve ... and then leaves the students **time to reflect** to find the answer instead of just giving them the solution!

Participants in TLT training discover new ideas and practices through their **own** reflection and discussion. And then they use what is learned to formulate and accomplish their **own** action plans for Kingdom change.

When you begin TLT training, you may find it difficult to teach in an inductive way. You may be talking more than other participants during a lesson. In that case, you must work to develop a more *inductive* style. It is often helpful to break into smaller groups so that each participant can reflect and discuss what is being learned.

A good trainer has already put into practice what is taught in the manuals and can tell how TLT brings change in the church and community. Good trainers also show that each participant is a valued member of the group and provide individual encouragement and assistance, even between training sessions.

Reminder: The last two lessons, the 4-6 Month Action Plan and its Report, are very important and should not be skipped!



LESSON 1

Creation

God created the world so that it would develop well

A WORLD TO DEVELOP

- 1. Genesis 1:1** The first verses of the Bible describe God as being productive.
In what way was God productive?
- 2. Genesis 1:12, 22, 24** *What were the plants and animals created to do? What did God do in v.22 so that they would develop well and be productive?*

How are human beings like plants and animals?

God created Adam and Eve and blessed them so that they would develop well and lead productive lives, like the plants and animals. God also called Adam and Eve to do something **more** than the plants and animals.

- 3. Genesis 1:27-28** *Who were Adam and Eve created to be like?*

v. 28 *What were Adam and Eve called to do that made them like God, the Great Ruler?*

In the Bible, to **rule** means to develop well and be productive in a special way. It doesn't mean that human beings can create things out of nothing, like God. Humans are called to be God's special partners, to manage the world so that it will develop well and be productive.

Another word for "rule" is "manage". What are other words?

*What ruling (managing) work was given to Adam and Eve according to Genesis 2:15?
How does this work enable the world to develop well and be productive?*

Adam and Eve were given two responsibilities:

- to develop well and be productive themselves
- to manage the world so that it also would develop well and be productive

Imagine that Adam and Eve had said to God: "We like things just as they are. We don't want anything to change or be developed?" *How do you think God would have reacted to that?*

TO DEVELOP WELL AND BE PRODUCTIVE: CULTIVATE

- 4.** *What is another word for "cultivate"?*

Genesis 2:8-9 *Who first cultivated the earth to show that this was important work?*

For what two reasons did God cultivate the earth in the Garden of Eden?



Genesis 2:15 God called Adam and Eve to **cultivate** the garden so that it would continue to be a productive place.

How does the earth provide for us when it is cultivated well? Give examples. Think of natural resources in your area and country.

TO DEVELOP WELL AND BE PRODUCTIVE: CARE FOR

5. Genesis 2:15 God also called Adam and Eve to **care for** the garden so that it would continue to be a place of delight and enjoyment.

How does the earth give us delight and enjoyment when it is well cared for? Give examples.

What are other words for “care for”?

6. Genesis 2:18, 21-24 God also called Adam and Eve to **care for** each other. *What words in these verses show that Adam and Eve valued each other and were created by God to **care for** each other?*

TO DEVELOP WELL AND BE PRODUCTIVE: LISTEN AND OBEY

7. Genesis 1:27, 28, 31 God spoke with Adam and Eve. *What did God say:*

- *So that Adam and Eve knew they were **valued** by God?*
- *So that Adam and Eve knew what God **expected** of them?*

Genesis 2:16-17 *What did God **warn** Adam and Eve against?*

8. SUMMARY

Adam and Eve were partners with God for the good development of the world. God blessed them and gave them three resources to manage so the world would develop well.

- 1) **God’s Word and presence**
- 2) **each other**
- 3) **the earth**

God promised that Adam and Eve—and the world around them—would develop well and be a blessed and productive place if they used these three resources well.

- 1) Listen to and obey **God**
- 2) Value and care for **each other** and reproduce
- 3) Cultivate and care for the **earth**

9. MY PLAN

Activity: Write one thing that you will do before the next lesson to use one of the three resources to lead a more productive life. When will you do it?

Goal for Kingdom Change: Write one change that you expect to happen, by God’s grace, before the next lesson, because of what you will do.

10. At the end of the lesson, share your plan with another person and pray together.