



Christian Stewardship

Timothy Leadership Training Program
www.tlti.org

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Introduction

Welcome to this TLT training course. This is usually the second course in the TLT program.

TLT courses provide essential training for Christian ministry. Through this course, Christian Stewardship, you will explore the material gifts God has entrusted to us. You will also discover ways to use those gifts to honor God and be of service to others.

During certain periods of Church history, God's people tended to neglect these gifts. The Church taught that the invisible part of human life and the invisible spirit world were so important that the material, visible aspects of the Christian life were neglected and devalued.

Through a careful study of Scripture, we learn that the material world is of great value to our Creator God. As human beings, we are given the responsibility to manage and care for this material world. God takes this responsibility very seriously and we must also.

Whether you are a church leader or regular church member, this course will provide encouragement and guidance as you discover God's material gifts and put them to good use.

Working through this manual, you will:

- Interact with Scripture and other participants to appreciate all the gifts that God gives us.
- Become familiar with seven of God's gifts to us (7 T's).
- Identify specific areas of engagement for the development of the material world.
- Discover the principles and practice of joyful, generous giving in your personal and Church life.
- Continue to write, review and accomplish Kingdom-oriented action plans.
- Continue to develop your skills as a TLT facilitator and receive feedback on that ability.

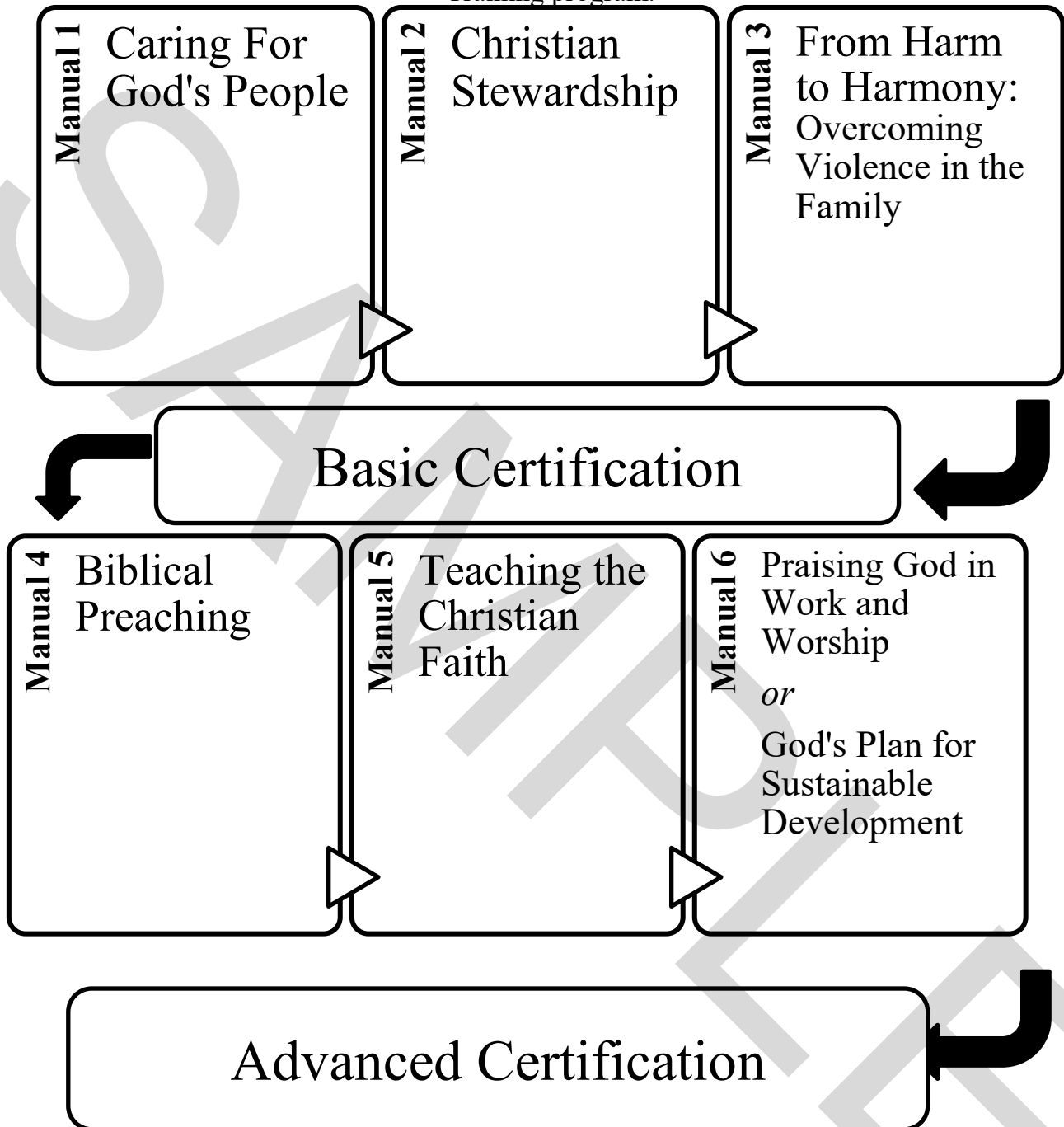
This course will provide you with a tool to train others: Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, other church members, elders, and deacons. As you work through this course, discuss with your group how God may be preparing you to train others.

As you engage in this training, we pray that it will open doors for growth and renewal—for you personally and for those you serve.



Timothy Leadership Training Certification

This is the path for Basic and Advanced TLT certification by the Timothy Leadership Training program.



Note: To receive an official TLT certificate you must be trained by a certified TLT facilitator following standard guidelines. Facilitators report trainings and request certificates through reporting@tlti.org or WhatsApp +1-616-438-5757.



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Participant Testimonies

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

ASIA

Bangladesh

Before TLT, 9,000 taka was collected at the women's society annual camp. But after the women's leader received TLT training, she taught about Christian stewardship during visits to churches and regional meetings. Because of these visits, and by God's grace, they collected 16,000 taka at the next annual camp.

India

A village pastor working in his remote village surrounded by hills took very seriously what he learned in TLT about God's gift of creation and how we can be good stewards of it. In response to deforestation, he began teaching his church what he had learned. They took action to stop the deforestation and plant trees. The Department of Forestry heard about what was happening and gave 40 acres of government land to the village to begin growing coffee.

LATIN AMERICA

Cuba

Two families in a congregation were unemployed and in great need. To one, the congregation provided a small loan, and with those funds this family raised a couple of pigs. To the other family they offered a cleaning job. Both families are now in a better financial situation.

El Salvador

One pastor reported that he asked each Bible study member in his church to give a small amount of money each week as a love offering for the poor. These funds were used for job training and buying food baskets for the most needy. Eleven people were trained for various jobs.

AFRICA

Zambia

One pastor says his church has been able to give more than ever before. This church stands as the first one in the diocese to buy a motorcycle for the pastor to do visitation. They are now also constructing a church building.

Kenya

"My church has a budget now. Once a month I read the church's financial report to the congregation. I also planted bananas and bought a dairy cow to support my family and the church. After completing training, two of my church members are now selling local products to support their families."



LESSON 2

Barriers to Good Stewardship in the Church

1. **SHORT ACTION PLAN Reports** (can be done in small groups or in the larger group)
 - Did the change you wanted and prayed for in Lesson 1 happen? How do you know?
 - Did you accomplish the activities you planned in Lesson 1?
 - Did you encounter any obstacles which prevented you from accomplishing your activities? If so, how can you overcome those obstacles, by God's grace?
 - Did anything unexpected happen?
2. **Barriers to good stewardship.** Divide into six small groups. If your group is less than 18 people, divide into only three small groups, with each group taking two sets of questions. Complete the following:
 - Appoint a reporter for each group.
 - Read together the barriers and texts assigned to your group. For each barrier:
 - Discuss: Is this barrier present in our church?
 - Decide: From our Bible readings and discussion, what is one thing we can do to overcome this barrier?
 - Prepare to report to the larger group what you have learned from the Bible and in your discussion about barriers to good stewardship.

Group 1

- 1) Barrier: The church seems more interested in getting people's money than helping them develop their talents and being productive. **1 Peter 5:2-3; Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 1:11-12**
- 2) Barrier: Offerings are presented as a burden rather than an opportunity to thank God. **1 Chronicles 29:14; Psalm 50:9-12; 2 Corinthians 9:7, 15**

Group 2

- 1) Barrier: Pastors or other church leaders give the impression that their own work is more important than the ordinary tasks of others. **1 Corinthians 12:21-26; Acts 20:34-35; John 13:14-15**
- 2) Barrier: Church leaders do not set a good example of work, generosity, and contentment. **2 Thessalonians 3:7-10; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 6:19-21**

Group 3

- 1) Barrier: Church leaders do not teach that daily work is important and that it glorifies God. **Genesis 1:28; 2:15; Colossians 3:17**
- 2) Barrier: We do not teach that everyone has something to give. **Mark 12:41-44; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5**



Group 4

- 1) Barrier: We do not provide for our children and our neighbors in need. **James 1:27; Matthew 25:31-46; Deuteronomy 24:19**
- 2) Barrier: Church members do not adequately support their evangelists, pastors, and other church workers. **1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Corinthians 9:11-14**

Group 5

- 1) Barrier: We do not teach that God blesses those who give generously. **Proverbs 22:9; Proverbs 19:17; 2 Corinthians 9:6-11**
- 2) Barrier: We do not teach that tithes and offerings are important signs of obedience and faith. **Malachi 3:6-10; Matthew 6:2-4, 31-33**

Group 6

- 1) Barrier: The financial matters of the church are done without the knowledge and participation of church members. **Proverbs 15:22; Acts 4:33-35; Acts 6:1-6**
 - 2) Barrier: Tithes and offerings are not carefully counted, recorded, and reported. **2 Corinthians 8:16-21; Proverbs 11:1-3**
- 3. Report.** Back together in the main group, each reporter presents in five minutes or less what they learned, and a way to overcome one of the barriers. Listeners are invited to ask questions of the reporters or groups concerning the barriers they presented.

4. Read John 10:10-11 and Matthew 9:35-36.

Based on these passages, what were Jesus' reasons for coming to earth and freely giving to those in need?

Jesus shows us the proper reasons to give. He also forgives us when we are sorry for and repent of any barrier to good stewardship. The Holy Spirit will help us to be more and more like Jesus in our giving.

Grace is God's unearned favor to us through Jesus Christ. All we have and do is by his gifts and his grace in Jesus Christ!

How has God helped you overcome a barrier to giving in your own life? Share your answer briefly, with a partner or in the main group.



5. SHORT ACTION PLAN

Situation: Write a problem or an opportunity that has come to your mind from this lesson:
(Example: *Pastors or other church leaders give the impression that their own work is more important than the ordinary tasks of others.*)

Goal for Kingdom Change: Write a change you want to see happen by God's grace when this situation receives your attention:

(Example: *Carpenters in my church will be honored for the work that they do throughout the week.*)

Activities: Write one or two things you will do with God's strength before the next lesson to help accomplish this goal:

(Example: *I will talk with the church leadership team. On Sunday, we will tell the church how carpenters are improving the community by God's grace. We will pray for God's blessing on them.*)

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