

# **DEVELOPING A POWERFUL LAY MINISTRY**

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## **1. BEGINS WITH THE PASTOR**

The pastor must see his job description as “preparing God’s people for works of service” (Ephesians 4:11,12); as ministering through people, instead of ministering to people. The pastor must see himself as an “equipper of the saints.”

Jethro saw his son-in-law, Moses, trying to do it all himself and guided Moses to develop a lay care ministry system for meeting the needs of people (Exodus 18). Today’s pastor is called to do the same.

## **2. ACCEPTED BY THE CONGREGATION**

To have a truly powerful lay ministry, the people of the church must see themselves as a nation of priests, and be willing to give and receive ministry as trained lay people. As long as the congregation expects the pastoral staff to do the care ministry of the church and ignores its own role of lay ministry, the church will continue to operate with limited power and effectiveness.

## **3. TRAINING IS THE KEY**

Jesus said, “Go and make disciples. . .” Disciples are made, not born. Being a Christian does not automatically equip a person for ministry. Observe how Jesus spent most of His time training His disciples. He has now transferred that task to us through the Great Commission.

How Can I Help? Is a complete lay training system that:

A. Equips lay people in the skills of personal care ministry, crisis intervention, support counseling, evangelism, behavior and lifestyle change.

B. Helps churches establish or enhance various forms of effective lay ministries:

One-on-one peer support ministry

Support groups

Recovery groups

Home fellowship groups

Visitor retention  
Telephone ministry  
Hospital & home visitation.

#### **4. IDENTIFY GOD GIVEN MINISTRY**

After providing training in basic ministry skills, *How Can I Help?* explores various forms of lay ministry. It is important that the church help their newly trained lay person find their special place of service.

Care should be taken to match the ministry responsibilities with the person's spiritual gifts, personality temperament, interests, abilities, experience, and passion and not simply fill a position that is open.

It may be that one woman has the gift of hospitality and enjoys baking and delivering cookies to the home of church visitors, making them feel welcome. Another woman may have the gift of mercy and best serves as the leader of a cancer support group. Take the time to get to know the individual and match the person to the ministry. What is God calling the person to do? What is the desire of his or her heart.

#### **5. PROVIDE ADVANCED TRAINING AND ONGOING SUPPORT & SUPERVISION**

Once lay people are actively engaged in care ministry, they need advanced training to equip them in dealing with a wide range of problems they will confront. Without this training and support, rapid burnout and volunteer turnover occurs.

*Guidelines For Helping People* has been developed to meet this need. *Guidelines* provides the structure for bimonthly in-service volunteer meetings.

In the first hour of the meeting, advanced training is provided through videos and speakers. Topics include: alcohol, marital problems, divorce, grief - 32 topics in all.

In the second hour of the meeting, volunteers come together in small groups with their Team Leader. Twice a month, the lay care workers report on their ministry activity and receive support, encouragement, and guidance.

Each lay care worker has a copy of *Guidelines For Helping People* to use as a quick reference when helping people and as their study text in preparation for the next

volunteer in-service meeting.

## **6. EXPECT GREAT RESULTS**

Too often, the church has handed off simplistic tasks to the lay person, assuming that the laity did not have the necessary skills for “real” ministry.

In reality, many of the laity have the desire to do much more, and are capable of accomplishing significant ministry.

If we don’t give our laity the opportunity for significant ministry, they will serve somewhere else - in secular organizations, parachurch ministries, or other churches.

Christian Helplines <http://www.laytraining.com/>