

Recognizing Our Priorities -Tim Burow

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s we approach the end of 2021 I am impressed with all that our God has chosen to do through the people who have been trained by Sunset over the years. It has been six full decades since those very first students gathered to attend classes taught at this new experiment taking

place on the south plains of Texas. Since that day we have graduated about ten thousand from our various disciplines, and our alumni have ventured to about 115 countries for the sake of proclaiming the gospel. This is the goal of all the training that takes place at 34th & Memphis and beyond. We want all those who pass

> through these halls to be as fully equipped as possible to do this one thing.

We praise our God for the way He is using our people to ease the suffering of those whose

souls are precious

our King. During earthly ministry, Iesus often heard the desperate cry for help wherever he went. While it was not the ultimate reason for which he came

(For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10) Jesus nonetheless gave much of his dear time to easing the pain of those he encountered. No doubt it pained Him to see man in this condition as He remembered back to the day He created the first of us. The Lord's servants must not turn a deaf ear to the cries for help in our day. We may not be able to heal as He did, but we can still bring relief to our world. This too is a priority of

the training at SIBI.

Make no mistake about it, Jesus dearly loves His church. If you are unsure of that statement, think on Calvary and ponder the words of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:25-27. Our graduates-our fruit at Sunsetmust possess a love for the precious church of Christ. That same love that Jesus has must permeate our ministries to the body, even during the toughest time. We must find faithful men who will be able to join us in this love and concern for her and pass along what we have been taught (2 Tim. 2:1-2). True, biblical, sacrificial, servant leadership needs to exist in our hearts and minds and we need to be diligent to see that this kind of leadership is established in every congregation of the Lord's church.

In this edition of LifeLine you will encounter each of these important elements. It is my hope that you will be encouraged that SIBI remains true to sharing these things with our students, but I also hope that you will be encouraged to do more and more in your own ministry and in your own congregation to see these important ACTIONS developed. God has been so gracious to us here in Lubbock, and I believe He will be equally gracious to you in giving you all you need to grow in these things. May you be truly blessed! Preach the word!

Sin Burou

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outhern Haiti experienced three earthquakes in less than two months. The strongest quake (7.2 magnitude) took place on August 14, 2021. Many people were injured or killed. The Haitian people needed food, water, and shelter. After a similar magnitude earthquake struck Haiti in 2010, SIBI collected funds to help provide for physical and spiritual needs. Haiti was one of the countries set to benefit from the Solar Mission with hundreds of hours of Bible training translated into Creole loaded onto solar-powered audio players. Despite the difficulties presented by this tragedy, God provided a way for SIBI and God's people to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of the people hurting in Haiti.



In September, Luis Melendez, Dean of International Training for Latin America, and Princeton Palmer, Dean of International Training for Asia, traveled to the Dominican Republic to purchase food to be taken into Haiti. It was stressed over and over by SIBI and the brethren that Luis and Princeton should not enter Haiti. Due to the political unrest in Haiti, organized crime made things dangerous and made it hard to get the needed food and water into the country.

Without the help of God and the cooperation of the churches, SIBI would not have been able to work in the Dominican Republic. Two brothers in Christ joined Luis and Princeton to help them. Jacques is a Haitian preacher and a humble and good man. He was very helpful during this trip. Berlot is also a Haitian preacher who lives in Santiago who joined them as well. He immigrated to the Dominican Republic many years ago but continued to have heart for those suffering in Haiti. The plan was to arrive in Santiago de Los Caballeros on the first day so that the following morning they could travel with Berlot and Jacques to Dajabon, which is on the border with Haiti. Once there, the group would meet a delegation of Christians from Haiti who would bring a truck to fill with food and take back into Haiti. They met Jacques, his wife and daughter, and Berlot at the hotel. After breakfast, they got into Berlot's van and headed to Dajabon, about a three-hour drive away. They had to go through two customs checkpoints. Haiti lay just beyond them through a gate. Luis continually reminded their hosts that they were not to cross in Haiti. The customs and gates were very confusing, and the pair from SIBI kept

Above and left is the first truck loaded to go to Haiti. On the right side is the truck crossing past the border guards into Haiti.

asking if they were in Haiti. The brethren reassured them that they were still in the Dominican Republic. A strike delayed the truck coming from Haiti, but eventually it arrived. After purchasing cereal, beans, rice, and other commodities, they began to load the empty truck. Once loaded, they supplied the Haitian brethren with a few solar players in Creole. The brothers from Haiti also received money so that if thieves stole the food, they could buy more. Then Luis and Princeton sent them away to Haiti with prayers of praise and thanks to God. The shipment arrived safely, blessing many families. How do you help in a situation like this? What exactly can you do? The pair from SIBI tried to do what they could as they were sent with a specific mission – to buy food supplies. As they went from store to store to buy oil, rice, sugar, sardines, canned tomatoes, and tomato sauce, Princeton

and Luis realized this would not be enough food. Later that afternoon they returned to Santiago to purchase more food for another truck that a brother would take into Haiti. The second shipment did not leave the Dominican Republic until Luis and Princeton had returned to the United States. Not only did Haiti have a massive earthquake in August that destroyed numerous cities, but the Haitian president was assassinated in July. The country was in chaos from these two events. There is little or no government assistance for the people. They have to fend for themselves. The team was afraid the second shipment would never make it, so the people taking the second shipment requested a police escort into Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. The Christians in Santo Domingo supplemented the assistance from SIBI for the Christians in Haiti. They had a little convoy that went with them. By the grace of God, the convoy delivered



the aid to the people in the affected area. Princeton recounted this personal story:

[Worshipping with the brethren] is probably my favorite part of the entire trip. And you are probably thinking, "Didn't you go there to buy and send stuff?" Yes, we did all that. It was great. I loved it. But this was probably my favorite part of the trip, and here's why: I am not from here. I was born in India and spent all my childhood there. I spent some time in India, some time in the States, and some time in Mexico. But I always feel at home in all these different places because of the Body of Christ. Being in the Dominican Republic, a place I had never been before..., I felt about at home in this place as I ever did anywhere else. It was the most natural thing to be in the presence of people praising God.



It's amazing. I didn't understand a word of what they said. They speak Creole, French, and Spanish, in that order. A lot of people in the church do not speak Spanish. I studied French for five years in school. I didn't understand a word of what they said, but it didn't matter. To hear them sing praises to God, we felt we were just a part of that Body. Isn't that one of the beauties of the Church? All of the things we think will matter don't: where you are from, what your experiences are, the languages you speak, the food you eat, the clothes you wear, the way you look – all the ways that humans try to separate, distinguish, and categorize themselves. God says, "I will tell you what matters: put your faith in My Son, and I will save you." That is the one thing that connects all of us. So being in this place was incredible. And then later to visit with them in a prayer meeting that they were having on that Friday night, and then to visit with them and try to converse a little bit somehow in broken Spanish and a tiny bit of French or this and that, I was reminded that, despite our differences, they are our brothers and sisters. Just think that at any given moment, there are people around this world - different parts of the world and different countries - all doing the same thing that we do here: singing praises to God, reading from the Word of





"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" (Matthew 25:40 NIV). That was the point of the mission; that is why they went. SIBI could have written a check and sent it to Berlot. It would have been easier to do that. Why did Luis and Princeton have to go? Why did they have to go through the trouble themselves? We wanted to buy provisions for the immediate needs of the people. But we also wanted to show solidarity and love to our Christian brothers and sisters in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Nothing equals that. SIBI was able to move quickly to help the Christians in need because of generous donors who wanted to see physical and spiritual needs met for those who suffer devastating circumstances. If you would like to participate, you can donate to the Global Relief Ministry of SIBI so that when a disaster happens, SIBI can mobilize quickly to help our partners in need.

Adapted from the report given by Luis Melendez and Princeton Palmer at SIBI Chapel on September 28, 2021.

Above is the second van being loaded. To the left is Luis preaching in Santiago.

Leadership Succession Plan for the Local Congregation

The Sunset Graduate School helps many ministers who are actively working to better serve their churches. Included here is a paper by Thomas Maxwell wrote for a leadership class taught by Bob Turner, Director of Sunset Academy of Leadership Training. Thomas has his Master of Biblical Studies degree and is now pursuing his Doctor of Theology. We believe his paper will be an encouragement due to its academic quality and practical application.

LEADERSHIP DEFINED

eadership is vital to any organization or group that desires to be successful. When problems arise, people look to leaders. When things go well, leaders often get the credit. "Everything rises and falls on leadership. The world becomes a better place when people become better leaders."

Leaders must have a vision for where they and the group they lead are going. According to James Kouzes and Barry Posner, the second most common question asked of new leaders is "what's your vision?" Followers want to know what the future holds, and they look to the leader(s) for such answers. Leaders must focus on what is to come rather than allowing themselves to be mired in the daily issues that arise. The leader is to focus on the future and continually remind others of the purpose and goal for the church to move forward. 3"Great leaders...are able to inspire people to act. Those who are able to inspire give people a sense of purpose or belonging that has little to do with any external incentive or benefit to be gained. Those who truly lead are able to create a following of people who act not because they were swayed, but because they were inspired."4 This means that church leaders must

1 John C. Maxwell, Developing the Leader Within You 2.0, (Nashville, TN: HarperCollins, 2018), 1, Kindle.

2 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, The Truth About Leadership, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint, 2010), Loc 789, Kindle

3 Ibid., 869.

4 Simon Sinek, Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire

understand the purpose of the church's existence and have a clear vision for where the church is going. Not only do they have this vision, but they also need to be able to communicate this clearly to the congregation to inspire action.

Leaders are willing to do what is necessary for the good of those they lead. "True leaders are servants who die to themselves so others may flourish. True leaders go forth, not for themselves, but for others." This is ultimately seen in Christ through the way He lived, the prayers He prayed, and His sacrificial death for His people. A leader who cares nothing for followers should not expect to have followers for long.

In addition to caring about their followers, leaders must demonstrate their competence in accomplishing the task at hand and as a leader. John Adair states, "that in any situation people will tend to follow or obey the man or woman who knows what to do and how to do it."6 A leader also needs to demonstrate competence in leading a group through understanding the abilities of the different individuals in the group (including himself). While the leader needs to be competent in all that the group is doing, he needs to know which individual can do each task the best and allow that person to do what they are skilled in doing. The leader also needs to know the tasks for which he is uniquely responsible and concentrate his efforts there. We see this demonstrated in the apostles in Acts 6 when a problem arose. While they could have competently handled serving food, they understood their unique responsibility of communicating the teachings of Christ. In this, they demonstrated competency in leadership through their delegation of the task to

Everyone to Take Action, (New York: Penguin Group, 2009), 6. 5 Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, Designed to Lead, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2016), 5, Kindle

6 John Adair, How to Grow Leaders: The Seven Key Principles of Effective Leadership Development, (London, UK: Kogan Page Limited, 2005), Loc 640, Kindle.

others who could satisfy the pressing need. ⁷ In leadership, as in other things, "those who are the very best became that way because they spent more time learning and practicing, not less time learning." The best leaders are not the best because of innate talent but because of the time and effort to learn the skill and stay up-to-date.

Leaders are those who model what they expect of others. Leaders are those who lead by example rather than executive decree. Charles Swindoll speaks of this in a military context in stating that the presence of leaders becomes more important as battles become more intense. "Continued aloofness among military leaders weakens the morale of those under their command." The apostle Peter also speaks of elders as those who are "among" the church and as those who are "examples" to the church (1 Pet. 5:1-4). Leaders are to be present and active with those they lead if they are to be effective.

This is important because leadership depends on credibility. People may follow one without credibility,

but only to a certain extent. "Before anyone is going to follow you...he or she wants to know that you are honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent." To be credible, a leader not only has to model behavior, but he also has to be true to his word. Behaviorally this means that someone does what they say, according to the research of Kouzes and Posner. Within the church, this means that the leader needs to visibly show that he

believes what he says – that he trusts in God, believes the words of the Bible, and is a person of prayer.

Ultimately, leadership is all about influence. Without influence, there are no followers. Without influence, there is no leadership. In defining leadership concisely, I believe John Maxwell said it best: "Leadership is influence. That's it – nothing more, nothing less. That's why my favorite leadership proverb is 'He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk.' For you to be a leader, someone has to be following you." 12

PLAN FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

Who will be involved?

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A leadership training and succession plan must be led by and supported by the eldership if it is to have any chance at success. Leaders train leaders, so having the elders as the primary drivers of this program is not optional. In addition to the elders, the preacher should be involved as one who is actively studying leadership. The first group to train to go further in leadership responsibilities will involve the deacons.

The elders, both individually and collectively, will have to be involved heavily through spending time with those being trained. This will involve their visiting with the younger men individually as well as having them in elders' meetings to share wisdom and experience of what being a leader means. This will largely need to be a mentoring kind of relationship between current leaders and future leaders. While

the elders already serve as shepherds to these men, there will need to be more if they are to be trained. "Shepherds feed, protect, and care for sheep; mentors pull up alongside human beings and model behavior, values, and faith through the shared life." ¹³

After the deacons, the next likely candidates within the 25-45 year age range would be men who have shown insight into the word of God as evidenced through their interest in Bible class, good

participation, and willingness to serve in various ways. In addition to these men (current and future leaders), their wives would also need to be involved in the training in some specific ways that we will explore later

Why is this program needed?

Paul told Timothy that he passed on what he had learned to others who could, in turn, continue to pass that on to even more (2 Tim. 2:2). "Christ initiated the process of succession planning for the Christian church by selecting and developing the apostles, who later selected and developed others." This program is necessary because leadership succession is central to the Christian religion from the very beginning. It is imperative, then, that congregations work on having a plan in place to prepare the next generation of leaders because, as John Maxwell states, "everything rises and falls on leadership." ¹⁵

13 Lynn Anderson, They Smell Like Sheep Volume 1: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century, (New York: Howard Books, 1997), 51

14 Thomas D. Hollinger, "Leadership Development and Succession Planning: A Biblical Perspective for an Ethical Response," Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership (2013): https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jbpl/vol5no1/9hollinger.pdf 15 Maxwell, ix.

⁷ Andy Stanley, Next Generation Leader: Five Essentials For Those Who Will Shape the Future, (Sisters, Oregon: WaterBrook Multnomah, 2003), 31, Kindle.

⁸ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, Loc 1676

⁹ Charles R. Swindoll, Hand Me Another Brick: Timeless Lessons on Leadership, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 33.

¹⁰ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, Loc 508.

¹¹ Ibid., Loc 1429

¹² Maxwell, 3.

In many congregations this program, or one like it, is needed because there is no real plan for leadership succession. Having leadership such as a preacher and elders has been taken for granted by some for many years because there has never been a leadership vacuum as there is today.

In short, this program is needed in order to get the church in line with God's design and the example set in scripture. After speaking with leadership in local congregations, I am convinced that a plan for training and succession is needed for the long term growth and health of the Lord's church.

What will this program offer?

The structured aspect of this program will take place over six three-month sections as those being trained are taught different aspects of what leadership involves. During this time they will be challenged to study more deeply and apply what they learn in specific ways. These classes will be closed in nature, and as such, they will involve much deeper study and require more outside of class than traditional Bible classes.

The first section will involve the men who are good candidates for leadership and their wives L being taught an adaptation of the spiritual disciplines class from the Sunset curriculum with a special emphasis being given to prayer, study, and

service to specific people in need. Foundational to leadership is one's relationship with God. This class will seek to create daily habits in these men and their wives to start them on a lifelong journey of continual growth of knowledge of God's word and closeness to Him. The textbook for the course (in addition to selected Bible passages) will be Celebration of

Discipline by Richard Foster. The students in the class will be required to read selected chapters in preparation for lessons to be ready to discuss. This course will also include assignments concerning specific types of prayer they are to engage in throughout the week and service projects for members of the congregation and community members in need. The men and their wives will be assigned to work on these together to build their relationship with God and one another.

The second section will also involve a Sunday morning class. The second class will include only the candidates. The topic of this course will be leadership and will deal with how to successfully lead others. This class will be based on the book *The* Truth About Leadership by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. This class will run for 13 weeks, with one week dedicated to each truth in the book. Extra weeks will be given to the studies on values and vision. During the second week of studying values, the class will be asked to list the values they have (or want) within

their families and to list what they believe the church's values are (both current and desired future values). The second week studying vision will be spent looking at some of Simon Sinek's material in Start with Why and discussing the purpose of the church and what they believe our vision for the future should be as a congregation. The 13th week will be a review of what has been discussed throughout the class and will give time for further questions and discussion the leader may have overlooked.

The second section will begin involving the elders in a more active role by inviting these men to attend several elders' meetings. During this stage, the men being trained will mostly observe and ask questions in order to see what actually takes place among the congregation's leaders. They will also be told of the need for confidentiality of many things that come up in elders' meetings. This will allow the younger men to see that leadership is not always easy, and that the elders often have to do the best they can with incomplete or imperfect information. This aspect of the program will also introduce the younger men to the elders' dedication to prayer. They will join the elders in their regular prays for individual specific needs of members and in sending handwritten notes to those for whom they have been praying.

During the second section, the wives of the

younger men will be asked to be in their own class to prepare them for being involved in this way with the leadership of the church. This class will include topics found in 1 Tim. 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5 as well as a practical explanation of the need for discretion as they may sometimes find themselves in possession of sensitive information (intentionally

or otherwise). This class will also include a discussion concerning the need to respect the confidentiality of elders' meetings. The elders (and sometimes others) involved in these meetings cannot share much of what they learn in these meetings, and it can only cause problems at home and in the congregation if a spouse tries to pry. The elders deal with difficult and sensitive issues regularly, and they need support and encouragement in the home to do this well.

The third section will involve another Sunday morning class that will look at leadership from Selected Biblical passages. These passages will include the qualifications of elders and deacons (not just as a checklist, but the overall picture painted by Paul of who these men are to be), Moses' commission to Joshua as the next leader of Israel (Num. 27:15-23), David's charge to Solomon (1 Kings 2:1-9), The Great Commission, and other passages as selected mutually by the elders and preacher (with special attention being given to Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus and

Foundational to leadership is one's relationship with

God.

the book of Nehemiah). During this class, the students will be asked to read selected chapters of Charles Swindoll's book *Hand Me Another Brick*.

The third section will also bring in greater involvement in the elders' meetings for the men being trained. During this section they will do more than observe and ask questions. At this point, they will be challenged to think through some of the real issues the elders face. They will be asked to meet amongst themselves and come up with a solution to one or more problems that the elders face within the church. This will include maintaining confidentiality about the issue, proposing a solution or course of action to be taken, and finally reporting their decision at the next elders' meeting. This will give the men a more up close and personal view of the challenges of leadership. Through this increased responsibility the goal is to create a sort of crucible to help these men develop. "Crucible experiences, when properly set up, managed, and mined, can help aspiring companies develop their next generation of outstanding leaders."16 This also helps their development in leadership through handling real-world leadership issues. It is one thing to deal with a hypothetical issue in a classroom; it is quite another to be faced with the real thing. "Leaders learn how to lead from experience. Formal training can help, but it's no substitute for learning on, and off, the job."17

The fourth section will focus on mentoring relationships. The class taught for this section will focus on how Jesus interacted with His apostles, explaining things privately to them and allowing them to question Him. We will also look at how Paul mentored Timothy from the point of conversion to the time when he trusted him enough to leave him in a vital leadership role in the church in Ephesus. The book that will be read in addition to selected Bible passages will be *Mentoring 101* by John Maxwell. Since this book is a little shorter than the others, it will be read in its entirety.

The fourth section will also include a time of mentoring between the elders and those being trained. During this time, each of the elders will be asked to have each of the men and their families into their homes for a meal. The goal is to begin drawing the elders closer on a personal level with each of the men who are being trained to take over church leadership in the future. The elders will be encouraged to speak with each of the younger men at least a couple of times a week outside of the church's regular assembly.

The fifth section of the class will be spent on a specific aspect or task of leadership – teaching and preaching. Leaders within the church are to

be able to teach, but this is often one of the scariest things people are asked to do. We will use the material by Jane Vella about how to teach effectively in this class. We will also incorporate Biblical examples of effective teaching (such as Acts 17 – Paul's sermon on Mars Hill). This class will prepare the students to teach once they complete the program. It will be explained during this class that what we are doing is more than academic. After the program, they will be asked to gradually take on more teaching responsibility within the church (starting with filling in for absent teachers and working into teaching for a whole section).

The fifth section will involve continued relationship-building between the preacher and elders and the men being trained. The elders will be asked to continue having these men into their homes, and I plan to do the same with them to instill that this is more than just a formal program/job training – it is building leadership for the family of God.

The sixth section will be similar in focus to the fifth except that it will focus on preaching rather than teaching. During this section I will teach these men a basic homiletics class using material from *Biblical Preaching* by Haddon Robinson and *Preaching: Man and Method* by Stafford North. During this class, the students will be asked to read *The Elements of Preaching* by Warren and David Wiersbe. The assignment for this course will be to prepare a sermon over an assigned text during the course and present it on a Sunday to the congregation. This section will also continue the same relationship-building between the elders and the men being trained.

Once the program is officially completed, the goal is for these men to be more spiritually disciplined and spiritually minded and to take a more active role in the work of the church. Another goal is for them to have a closer relationship with the elders (individually and collectively) and to have enough exposure to and education about church leadership to be better prepared to take on that role of elder, deacon, teacher, or minister in the future. Because this program is designed for men aged 25-45, it is not likely that many (if any) of these men would be appointed as elders immediately after going through it. For this reason, continual deep study and leadership training will be needed after the initial year and a half. This would be accomplished in one of several ways (to be decided by elders and men being trained). One option would be to have a twice-monthly in-home study with these men and their wives in which topics such as hermeneutics, Christian evidences, and Biblical textual studies are covered. The topics to be studied in this setting would be largely flexible based on the specific needs and desires of those involved. One topic that I would encourage in this part of the program, though, is further discussion on mentoring and how these men can begin to mentor younger (high school/college

¹⁶ Robert J. Thomas, "Crucibles of Leadership Development," MITSIoan Management Review (Spring 2008): http://sloanreview.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/saleable-pdfs/49308.pdf 17 Ibid.

age) men in the congregation to prepare them to go through the program too. Another option would be to have a quarter per year in which they have their own Bible class taught by an elder, the preacher, or one of the men themselves. The goal of the initial 18 months of constant work is to work on healthier prayer and study habits and service to the congregation, while the goal of the less intensive studies after this is to encourage them to continue in these new habits.

How will this program be evaluated?

This program will need continuous evaluation through "getting on the balcony," as Ronald Heifetz states. What this means is intentionally assessing how students are learning and absorbing what is being taught and modeled and adapting classroom discussions as necessary. In other words, as this program unfolds, I will constantly observe how each individual seems to be grasping what is taught and how they are responding to it. 18

Another way this program will be evaluated is through asking for regular feedback from the elders. Since the goal of the program will ultimately be to realize their vision for the congregation through training others to lead, I will regularly ask them for their observations on the progress being made in those being trained and what they think can be improved or changed. This will likely be done at the end of each section and be based on their interactions with the men in elders' meetings and individual interactions. At the end of each section, I will ask for their feedback both on their observations of the men being trained and for their feedback if they have chosen to attend the Sunday morning class. Just as the men will not grow without training, my ability to teach them will not either. This is another reason I will encourage elder participation in the classes.

Through getting this kind of feedback, the program will be able to be constantly changed and improved so that it can be of more benefit after it has been used a few times than it will be at first. "In the world of athletics, nobody performs his way out of needing a coach. In the world of leadership, however, we operate under the misguided assumption that because we are leaders, we don't need to be led."19 Feedback will be one of the most important parts of this program to keep it up to date and relevant. Without feedback from multiple sources and adaptation, the program will eventually be of no real benefit.

How could this program be strengthened and better utilized in the future?

This program could be useful in other congregations specifically through the principles that will be taught. The basic structure is transferrable, but many of the specifics may not be. This program was originally designed with a specific congregation in mind, so some parts may not transfer well to other congregations.

Leaders in the church need to be men of spiritual discipline, men of regular study and prayer. This is not a localized truth, but a universal one. Leaders need to have an understanding of the universal truths of leadership that will be taught in this program along with an understanding of leadership principles seen in the Bible. Leaders in the church throughout the country also can benefit from the material in this program that deals with how to teach and preach. Leaders must know how to handle people in a classroom and how to articulate the truth of the gospel. These parts of this program would be of benefit to many congregations.

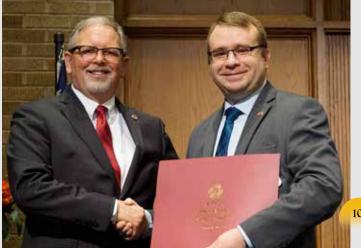
The basic structure of this plan could be adapted to fit many congregations throughout the United States. This is especially true of more rural congregations like the one this program was designed for.

How could this program be strengthened and better utilized in the future?

The first and most obvious way this program will be strengthened in the future is through listening and adapting based on observations and feedback. Another way that this will be strengthened is through bringing those who have been trained to teach and train others in the program. As time passes, the goal is for there to be more men qualified to teach and mentor others (2 Tim. 2:2).

Another way this program could be better utilized in the future is through community outreach. Because the material being taught is relevant in many ways to business and the home as well, the class on The Truth About Leadership could be adapted and offered to the community. This would help build the church's reputation in the community and build contacts for sharing the gospel.

Thomas Maxwell, Jr., Master of Biblical Studies in Congregational Ministry 2020



¹⁸ Sharon Daloz Parks, Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World, (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation, 2005), Loc 802, Kindle. 19 Andy Stanley, 105.

THE PIPELINE How Three Different Ministries at SIBI Touched the Heart of a Church 1,000 Miles Away

round SIBI, we often talk about the "pipeline" of young men and women who start studying in Adventures in Missions and later return to receive additional training for ministry. As the many different ministries of SIBI have reached out over the years, it is always amazing to see how people interact with one part of SIBI and learn more about another area where they can grow and serve. This past August, three girls from a small church in West Virginia started Adventures in Missions. But this was not their first interaction with a ministry of SIBI. Their story starts back with a preacher seeking encouragement and renewal. Joseph Pauley has been the minister for the Church of Christ in Belle, West Virginia since 2000. He attended the SIBI Workshop in 2017 and there became interested in DiscipleTrips.

I sat down with Joe and discussed how he and his family became connected closely with SIBI.

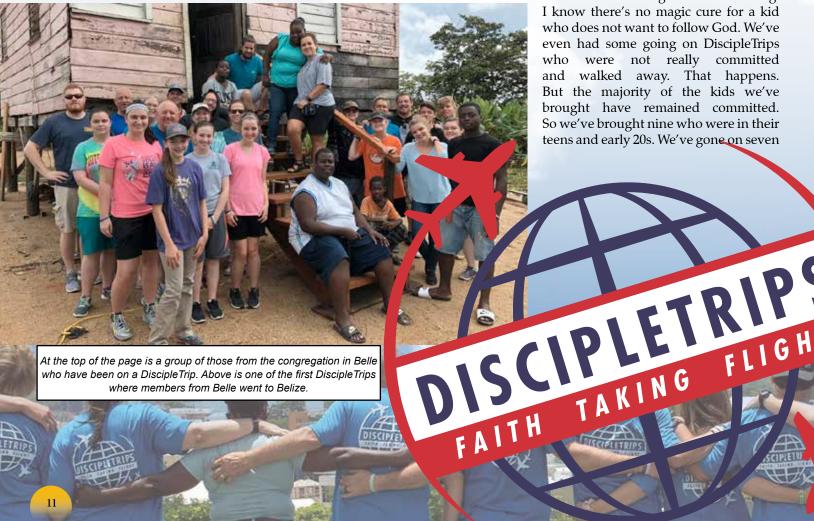
What brought you to the workshop?

I kept seeing ads in the Christian Chronicle and the Gospel Advocate. For the 2017 workshop, the theme was *Unashamed*. Being in ministry, I was looking for something for me, and I already knew about Sunset. Some guys from around here came through Sunset School of Preaching in the 70s and 80s. One time in Tulsa, I saw the flag presentation by AIM. So that's why I came.

What was it about DiscipleTrips that made you choose them?

In our leadership at church, we've

been talking about how do we keep our kids. In the past, the emphasis was that if we taught them the correct doctrine, they would not walk away. We did our selfstudy dating back to 1975. We had lost 47% of our young people, many of whom still lived in the area. Our congregation size was about 80 members. In part of my own Bible study, my conclusion was that the young people need to have a heart for God, and they need to have a heart for the mission, something bigger than our church and bigger than this area. I was walking around the booths at the workshop, and the DiscipleTrips booth caught my eye. I didn't know what it was. I just picked up some literature, and it seemed simple. I came back later but didn't catch Jeff when he was at the booth. Later I called him, and we talked about the possibilities. It fits into this heart for God thing we were missing.



different trips. Three of the girls who have gone on the trips are now in AIM, and we have a couple more maybe looking at it. There's another girl who just went by herself on a DiscipleTrip. She didn't know anyone else except for Jeff. She went to Seattle all by herself, and she's seriously thinking about AIM too, but she's got a few more years of high school. Nothing has grabbed them and impacted their hearts for the Lord and His mission more than DiscipleTrips.

Joe and the congregation in Belle have been a part of DiscipleTrips to Belize; Guatemala; Detroit, Michigan; Seattle, Washington; and Homestead, Florida. Through their experiences, God has transformed hearts and given the church new energy for Hiskingdom.

What did they bring from DiscipleTrips into your church?

The most obvious thing is a greater commitment. Being a smaller church, the opportunities are very different. They have stepped up and taught kids' classes. Whatever we've asked them to do, they've been involved in. Something else they brought was saying that we need to do something [more], which I think is big. I've been at this congregation for 22 years, and it's good to have some younger people who have a lot more energy for that. So we have done some service things that maybe we wouldn't have done before.

One great thing happened after that first trip to Belize. On that trip, Jeff taught what he called the blood study. It was an evangelistic, through the Bible, chain reference type of study. One girl who was not on that trip has a different story from the other girls at our church. Her parents are her older

sister and brother-in-law, and they've adopted her because her parents were into drugs and gave up their rights at one point. Her new family was related to the longest-standing members of the congregation, but this girl had trauma from not being brought up in the Christian environment. She and my daughter became friends pretty quickly, and they started using that study, and the girl was baptized. It's not the only thing that led her to Christ, but my daughter never would have done that had that trip not equipped her. That's where she gained the confidence to be able to do something like that. She had a tool that was translatable to a 13-yearold girl. I've never thought that way, but she did because of that study. That's when I was completely sold. I want my kids in the congregation to know how to share their faith with others.

Some of the trips are different from others. We did Bible studies in Belize. On many trips, you're doing inner-city work, not setting up studies. You're doing a lot of service work, which is good to open their eyes to things. The group that went to Guatemala was ladies in our congregation, not teens or 20s, but 40s and 50s. That trip made an impact because they worked alongside AIMers. To that point, none of them knew much about Adventures in Missions. My wife, Misty, was not very much in favor of our daughter coming to Lubbock and then going to who knows where until she went on a trip. The one who impressed her the most was Matthew Wilson. My wife came back, and she said, "OK, I understand." That was the biggest impact of that trip. Misty had done a mission trip to Honduras many years ago with a very

similar culture, so it wasn't eye-opening in that respect. Her eye-opening moment was being with the AIMers who were there. There was another AIMer, Jacqui, who came to AIM and did not have her full support. Misty was just blown away that this young lady would step out in faith, and here Misty was, not wanting to send her daughter.

What do you see as the future?

We're a part of this larger mission, and the seeds that will be sown just by the little that we have done is a lot more than we would have done had we not invested in our kids this way. What is it going to look like for their children? I think that the ones who have made this decision will see great things in their families and what they will do.

We praise God for the great things he has used the ministries of SIBI to accomplish. From a workshop to short-term mission trips to apprentice missionaries, God has joined the church in Belle, West Virginia, with the things we have been doing at SIBI. We look forward to seeing what God will do in the future as more people find ways to grow in Christ using the ministries of the "pipeline" at SIBI.

Jeff Rader

Jeff Smith, director of DiscipleTrips, poses with the girls from DiscipleTrips who are now AlMers: Halee Ring, Abby Pauley, and Jaeden Smith.



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DEPARTURES

Linvel Baker ('77) was born on April 23, 1956, and went home to be with his Lord on September 10, 2021. After losing his baby brother, Leslie, to Hodgkin's Disease, Linvel went on a search to find out who God truly is. With guidance and wisdom from Nelson Lewis and Truman



Stinson, Linvel went to the Sunset School of Preaching and found what he was looking for. He developed an even deeper faith and conviction in God, which would shape his life and impact hundreds of others.

Don Berry (AIM '74) left this earth as a good and faithful servant on August 29, 2021, to be with our Heavenly Father. Don was born January 21, 1955, in Idaho Falls, Idaho. After graduating from high school Don joined the first AIM (Adventures in Missions) class. While



in AIM Don traveled to Ireland where he later relocated for 13 years. Ireland was like a second home to Don. He ran summer camps, youth groups, classes, and clubs. Many of the people that Don ministered to are still faithful members of the Lord's Church.

Charles Bowers ('70) passed away July 12, 2021. Charles and Katherine lived in Tomball, Texas.

Kerry Burkey ('91), 65, passed away peacefully September 20, 2021. Kerry will be lovingly remembered by his wife and best friend of 44 years, Belinda. He and the family moved to Rockledge, Florida, and served as the minister for Rockledge Church of Christ for 28 years.



Kerry received his education from Sunset and a bachelor's degree from Southern Christian University.

Jimmy Bynum ('74) of Hillsboro, Texas, passed away Thursday, August 26, 2021, at his residence at the age of 74. Following graduation from high school, Jimmy attended preaching school at Sunset School of Preaching and became a minister. He preached in Smyer, Texas; Sedona, Arizona; Maypearl, Texas; and Dalhart, Texas.



Stentson Carpenter ('80) graduated to glory on Sunday, November 7, 2021, after a short fight with cancer. Stentson and Dianne had a vision for helping people who were in need of love and life-long care. They began Rainbow Omega in Eastaboga, Alabama, for their son who had precial needs and new it houses needs 100 resi



special needs, and now it houses nearly 100 residents. One parent said, "Rainbow Omega is an answer to a prayer that I didn't know how to pray."

Joe Carrasco ('10), 49, of Olton died Tuesday, July 27, 2021. Joe was an evangelist for 14 years and changed many lives while serving in Kermit, Texas, for three years before moving back to Olton in 2014. For the last seven years, Joe served at Main Street Church of Christ in



Olton and at Northwest Church of Christ in Plainview. A humble and generous soul, Joe would greet you with a big smile, a huge hug, and a reminder that you should always be ready to meet the Lord.

Vera Jeanne Petty Carrizal (wife of Steve, '66) of Round Rock, Texas, passed from this life on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at the age of 79. After graduation from Abilene Christian, she was part of the group known as Exodus Bayshore that moved to Long Island, New York, to plant a new



church. After two years, Vera Jeanne got engaged to Steve Carrizal, who was attending the Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas. They celebrated 55 years together. She lived a beautiful life, shaped by the transforming love and amazing grace of God.

Walter Cunningham ('84) was found deceased on June 24, 2021. Walter had graduated from Sunset through the deaf studies program and was divorced from Mary Jo.

Kenneth Dinkins ('69) passed away November, 11, 2018, in Lonoke, Arkansas, where Geraldine still resides.

Lyndall Jackson ('73) passed from this earth into eternity on August 25, 2021, at his home in Lawn, Texas. In August 1971, the family moved to Lubbock, Texas, where Lyndall attended the Sunset School of Preaching and the School of Missions, graduating in January 1974. As



a missionary in Worcester, Massachusetts, for almost 12 years, he shared the Gospel message and converted many to Christ. In 2006, Lyndall, Judy and her father moved to Lawn in order to be near their daughter. He began working in Abilene at Care Inn, and then at Acadia Health Care in maintenance for seven years. After retiring, he continued to mow lawns and do small jobs for several in the community. In 2007, he became an elder for the Lawn Church of Christ and continued preaching part-time and teaching Bible classes until January 2021.

Paul Laman ('68) passed away at his home in North Little Rock, Arkansas, on Friday, October 1. Please keep Paul's wife, Mary, in your prayers.

Alpha Ledgerwood passed away peacefully Wednesday, July 7, 2021. Alpha's husband, Ron, was an elder at the Sunset Church of Christ for 27 years.

Lee Mays was born on January 31, 1929, in Hutchinson County, Texas, on the Four-Six ranch in Dixon Creek and passed away at his home in Troy, Texas, on September 7, 2021, at the age of 92. Lee was a faithful donor to



Sunset for many years and provided the furnishings for the remodeled Bruce Thornton Mission Center in 2010. He was a successful businessman, rancher, and land developer. Lee was a member of the Northside Church of Christ, and he has donated his time and resources to many Christian causes and projects in his lifetime.

Micahel Peitzmeier ('85) passed away December 6, 2021. He preached the word in Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Iowa, and then in Carlinville, Illinois, until his passing. Faithful until death he has now gone to receive the unfading crown of glory.



Hal Pendergraft of Arlington, Texas, went to be with the Lord on November 9, 2021. During his retirement years, Hal dedicated his life to mission work and to serving others. In 2002, Hal was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease,



and his relentless focus on research and the search for a cure was an inspiration to many. He dedicated his life to serving God, others and his country. His love for his work, his family, and his Lord and Savior was an example to all who knew him. He was a great friend and supporter of SIBI.

Randolph Pritchett ('66) of Roanoke, Virginia, went to be with the Lord on June 8, 2020, after a short illness. He told everyone he was going to graduate to glory. Randolph preached full time for 43 years and continued as needed. He held preaching schools at every place he preached and worked in prison ministry for 19 years. Jeanie and Randolph were married 67 years.

Deborah L. Reed (Sr. AIM), 69, passed away on Sunday, September 12, 2021, followed by her adoring husband of over 50 years, **David H. Reed Sr. (Sr. AIM)**, 75, on September 15, 2021. David was a longtime employee of the Lubbock



County Detention Center as a clerk until his retirement in 2016. David enjoyed a variety of hobbies including being a part of the Senior AIM Class, reading Christian books and reading his Bible. David's other great love was his Boston Terrier, Libby. Deborah was a longtime employee of the Lubbock Police Department, working in the Records office. David and Deborah were both members of Sunset Church of Christ.

Travis Snyder (AIM '92) passed away from brain cancer on May 31, 2021, in Rogers, Arkansas. Travis was raised on a farm near Prague, Oklahoma. Travis attended Adventures in Missions and served with Jerry Newberry, missionary in Volgograd, Russia.



Brian Stewart, of Groesbeck, Texas, went to be with his Heavenly Father on May 20, 2021. In 2015, Brian enrolled and studied to become a minister by attending as a full-time student at a SIBI Satellite School, Central Texas School of Biblical Studies. Clif Fox administrated the



school at Groesbeck Church of Christ. He was a dedicated student and had completed over half his classes toward a bachelor's degree.

Mike Talley ('76) was born December 17, 1948, in Lubbock. He began his life-long career in ministry in Dodge City, Kansas, as a youth minister. He then spent two years in Lubbock attending Sunset to further prepare himself for ministry. It was there that he met Clovia Riggan, and they married January 29, 1976.



Together they went on to serve in Churches of Christ in Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. The Talleys have lived the past ten years in Plainview where they have enjoyed the supportive fellowship of their Garland Street Church of Christ family.

Lin Van Winkle (wife of Tom, '78), 86, passed away November 11, 2021, in Lubbock, Texas. While teaching at an air force base in the Canadian province of Newfoundland, she met and married a dashing, young pilot,



Thomas R. Van Winkle, Jr., on December 27, 1959. As a devoted military wife and mother, she was well practiced at making her house a home in the 20+ places the family moved. Lin was a longtime member of Sunset Church of Christ, dating all the way back to the time her husband studied at the Sunset.

Ken Wilde ('89) of Lubbock, Texas, went to be with his Lord on October 27, 2021, after a recent surgery. Doris and family live in Lubbock.



James "Jim" Winner ('83) of Searcy, Arkansas, passed away on July 8, 2021, at the age of 68. After becoming the first Christian in his family, Jim had a calling to minister to others and attended Sunset School of Preaching. Jim ministered for over 30 years with the



support of Jamie, and he was able to fulfill his passion for preaching. Jim had many different jobs throughout his life, but his true passions were preaching and his family.

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E HELPERS

part of the Adventures in Missions (AIM) training experience is to take trips around the United States and to provide assistance wherever possible. In mid-October, the current AIMers training in Lubbock took their first extended trip, during which they learned more about themselves and provided some much-needed assistance to an area of the country that continues to suffer from natural disasters.

On the first day, AIM was hosted by the Windsong Church of Christ in North Little Rock, Arkansas, for a two-night stay that included Sunday worship and meals. We are so grateful for the kind, hospitable spirit so often expressed and demonstrated anytime we travel around the States. Staying with host churches helps develop the bond between AIM students and Christians around the world. AIM traveled to Harding University Tahkodah (HUT), a Missions Training Village. For two days, Oneal Tankersley and his staff challenged the AIM students with various simulations to help them better grasp the real-world challenges of

others. The facility helps mission students understand the challenges millions of people around the world face every day. After leaving HUT, we headed south to Beaumont, Texas, where the Westgate Church of Christ hosted us and served as a home base for the next several days as we helped with hurricane relief work in the area. We had coordinated with Brian Spicer (AIM '89 & SIBI '94) to lead us through two full days of service. Brian is the Associate Director of Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort (CCDRE) based in Nashville, Tennessee. Brian has worked many years helping those in need after major disasters in the Gulf Coast area. He was in Louisiana when Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit in 2005. It was during that time that Brian was introduced to the work of CCDRE and got involved by requesting, unloading, and distributing supplies. He also helped those in need after Hurricane Ike, the BP Oil Spill, the flooding in 2016 along the Louisiana-Texas border, and Hurricane Harvey in 2017. In 2019 he helped after the flooding from Hurricane Barry and Tropical Storm Imelda before he began working for CCDRE in September. Brian and his family





currently live in Louisiana, and he travels to speak to congregations and work with disasters in Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. While we had anticipated serving families in the community impacted by flooding in southern Texas and Louisiana, our help was needed elsewhere. Brian explained that due to the frequency of relief efforts over the past several years, the CCDRE warehouse at the Church of Christ in Sulphur, Louisiana, required maintenance to keep operating safely. Orchestrated by Brian, the AIMers reorganized the warehouse, replaced old fencing, painted and cleaned the church building, spruced up the grounds, installed new lighting, and disassembled pallets. One AIMer commented, "it is so cool to have the opportunity to help those who so selflessly serve others." It was an exhausting but exhilarating two days of helping the helpers. Before leaving the Westgate congregation, we helped with the church's fall festival. AIMers donned costumes, made signs, and created and ran games for the community to enjoy for several hours. After the bus started the following morning, it was obvious something was not quite right. After further investigation, an integral piece on the motor had failed. The bus was undrivable. Westgate leadership quickly

mobilized vans and cars to transport us to DeRidder, Louisiana, where AIM would lead worship. We arrived in DeRidder in

just enough time to facilitate the class and for Cory Burns to preach. The next day, with borrowed vehicles, we drove back to Lubbock so the AIMers could begin their second term of classes. Upon returning, we determined that we would need to purchase a new bus. As this goes to print, a generous donor is currently working to provide AIM with a replacement bus that will hopefully last for many years. It was a whirlwind 10-day trip full of cultural experiences, lessons, challenges, new faces, and friends. We are thankful for all those along the way who fed, housed, hosted, and blessed each one of us.

Patrick Sheaffer, AIM Advancement Director

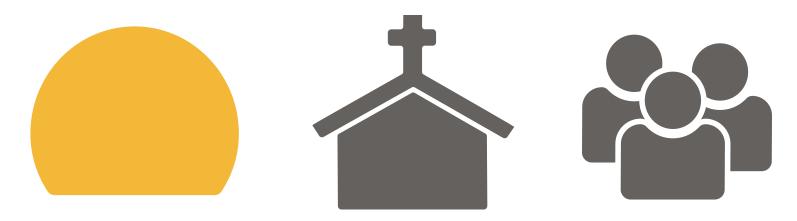
Above left is Jaeden Smith, Hannah Abarca, Katelyn Abarca painting in Sulphur. To the right is Lisa Henry, Libby Tharp, Naomi Torres, Emily Serrano cleaning the church building. Below is the current AIM bus in the parking lot of the Westgate Church of Christ.





Incorporated in 1994, Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort immediately responds to any major disaster in the continental United States by sending truckloads of emergency food, water, cleaning, and other supplies to disaster victims. The organization has distributed more than \$106 million in emergency food and supplies in response to 301 disasters in 42 states. Churches of Christ Disaster Relief only works through the local Church of Christ in the community or town, where the disaster has occurred. If there is no Church of Christ in the town, Disaster Relief will contact the nearest town that has a Church of Christ and ask for help.





A RENEWED CHURCH RESOURCE

These past couple of years have meant change for so many of us in so many ways. At SIBI, things are no different. Virgil Yocham passed away back in February after serving for decades with SIBI and developing the External Studies from its beginnings in the early 1970s. Jerry Pruitt also retired from SIBI in September. These two men were the foundation of the Sunset Satellite School ministry that helped so many congregations.

SIBI wants to honor the legacy of these great men and build upon the foundation of Biblical education that they began. In recent years, SunsetOnline.org began integrating more and more of the testing and evaluation of the Satellite School students. This integration led SIBI to consolidate and better unify all of our classes. Satellite Schools are a part of this unification. We are trying to simplify the pathway for students to get their education from SIBI and achieve their educational goals.

Increased Accessibility of Resources

The SIBI Bookstore has reduced the price of the entire library of Sunset Studio Class DVDs and CDs by 70%. That means DVD courses that were \$259 before are now only \$77.99. Our goal is for SIBI to be a resource for your church. We do not want our courses to be a financial burden to anyone.

You can purchase course study guides directly from the **SIBI Bookstore** (https://extensionschool.com). You have the freedom to order as a group to save on shipping or allow your students to purchase from there directly. If you would like to order by phone, you can contact the bookstore during their business hours

at 1-800-687-2121 (Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.).

SIBI also realizes that many places may not have a DVD player any longer. For that reason, we are making the videos available in a digital format, both online and offline, that can be viewed from a computer system or by most smart TVs. We will communicate with you as this becomes available. If you need digital video files for an upcoming class, please let us know so that we can meet your needs.

Certificate and Degree Students

Moving forward, all certificate and degree students will no longer need a certified administrator to be a part of the class. Any student in Satellite School classes wanting to enroll for either a certificate (Level II) or degree (Level III) will pay for the course online at SunsetOnline.org. The student can participate with the rest of the Satellite School class and then fulfill the requirements for that course. All student fees and coursework will be between the student and SunsetOnline.org. All certificate and credit students must create an account at SunsetOnline.org to access material and submit assignments. We want our Satellite School Administrators to be free to participate with the class and focus on the role of mentor and encourager.

Audit Students Are Free

There is no longer a need to register audit students with SIBI. Audit students in the Satellite Schools do not need to register and pay for the audit class at SunsetOnline.org unless they want access to the videos outside of class meetings.

Steps for Beginning and Leading a Satellite School Class

- 1. Find out how many students will be taking the class.
- 2. Order study guides for the entire class from extensionschool.com and any DVDs needed. Students who use SunsetOnline.org have a digital copy of the Study Guide included with the course. They do not need to order a Study Guide unless they want one for in-class use.
- 3. Instruct students wanting the challenge of the certificate level or degree level to enroll and pay for the same class at SunsetOnline.org.
- 4. Mentor students as they study and encourage them to stay on schedule.

Again, the goal of this change is to ease the burden of Satellite Schools. We want to provide more access to the resources that so many churches have utilized for the past few decades. Feel free to contact us to help you and your school make this transition.

Purchase Resources – SIBI Bookstore – 800-687-2121 – info@extensionschool.com

Certificate and Credit Students – Online Studies Department – 806-788-3273 – onlinestudies@sibi.cc

Questions About Moving Forward – 806-788-3282





FAREWELL TO TWO FAITHFUL SERVANTS

erry and Patti Pruitt came to Sunset and graduated in 1994. Since then, this couple has worked in many different roles in External Studies. Jerry began working soon after graduation and worked side-by-side with Virgil for 28 years. Jerry and Patti traveled countless miles over the years carrying books and Bible study materials to brotherhood events across the United States. At so many events like the Tulsa Workshop and Red River, Jerry and Patti were the warm, familiar faces that greeted so many alumni and friends of SIBI. Jerry oversaw the bookstore for many years and, more recently, was responsible for the Satellite Schools. Patti started as the secretary for the residential dean, but from 2000-2016 everyone knew Patti as SIBI's Librarian. It is impossible to count how many people have been impacted by the smiles and hugs from this sweet couple.



To help churches, the SIBI Bookstore has reduced the price of all the DVD and CD sets from SIBI. *This is not a sale. These are the new prices!* SIBI is committed to making sure churches are given as much opportunity as possible to access these classes for use in an existing Satellite School or in leadership development or to help the congregation grow in their knowledge of the Word of God.

Start the new year with a curriculum that has been used to help churches establish a strong Biblical foundation for almost 50 years.

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