BIBLICAL MODELS FOR
CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP
Mr. Watanabe was the chairman of his department at his company. He knew how to guide people and to get the job done. So many people assumed that Mr. Watanabe would be a good leader for his small group. However, Mr. Watanabe failed as a small group leader. The other members of his group soon became discouraged and Mr. Watanabe could not figure out how to help them. As a result, Mr. Watanabe lost face and dropped out of the small group.

Discussion
Why was Mr. Watanabe an ineffective leader for his small group?

No person is born as a spiritual leader. A person may be born with talents and abilities that cause him to be capable of becoming a leader. He may also have financial resources, influence and physical attributes that cause other people to look to up to him as a leader. While these characteristics may be enough to make a person a leader in the secular world, they are not enough to make him an effective Christian leader. Effective Christian leadership is based on God’s calling, God’s equipping, God’s vision and God’s formation of the person’s character.

Read Exodus 3:1-10

God’s calling is essential to become an effective Christian leader. Moses was leading sheep until God called Moses to lead the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt. This call changed the direction and purpose of Moses’ life. It enabled Moses to begin doing something he had never before.

Peter and Andrew were fishing until Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). Then Peter and John gave up being fishermen to become Jesus’ disciples.

God’s calling is not limited to pastors, missionaries and other people doing full-time Christian work. Jesus calls every Christian to follow Him. The specific role or responsibility a Christian takes on grows out of his personal relationship with Jesus. As a person walks with Jesus, Jesus says to him, “Go do that for Me.” Then the person obeys Jesus and does what He commands.

Your own personal relationship with Jesus is the most important basis for you to become an effective Christian leader. You must be secure in your own relationship with Jesus in order to encourage other people to follow Him.
God’s vision provides direction for Christian leadership. Through God’s vision, God shows you the specific, unique task that He wants you to do for Him and for His people. God may give you a vision for evangelism, discipleship, service or worship. God’s vision will always be consistent with what He teaches in His Word. For example, God will not give you a vision to discourage people from believing in Jesus. This is because God’s Word teaches that people need to believe in Jesus in order to be saved. Also, God’s vision will always be consistent with the personality, talents and abilities that He gave you when He created you. God does not want you to become frustrated. Rather, God wants you to accomplish all that you are capable of for His glory.

God said to Moses, “So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:10). Because of this vision, Moses knew that he was to lead his people out of Egypt into the land God had promises to give them. This huge vision provided the purpose and direction for the next forty years of Moses’ life. Moses immediate response was doubt. Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt” (Exodus 3:11).

When God gives you a vision, it often will be to do a task that you are incapable of doing by yourself. The completion of the task will necessitate faith. You will have to rely on God to work through you. When God gives you a vision, you should not worry about your inadequacy for the task. God will equip you to fulfill His vision.

Discussion and Application
Talk about God’s calling and the vision He has given you to lead, encourage or serve other people. Encourage and pray for each other.

God’s equipping is essential for effective Christian leadership. Moses doubted that his ability to lead the Jews out of Egypt. But God promised to give Moses what he needed to be able to lead the people: a staff that could become a snake (Exodus 4:1-5) and Moses’ brother Aaron to serve as a spokesman (Exodus 4:13-17). Eventually Moses learned that God would speak and do many miracles through him. Moses needed to learn to trust in God’s power rather than his own ability.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 tells us: “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works over all and through all and in all.”

God equips Christians to do the work that He calls them to do. This includes unique equipping for those who will serve as leaders. If you have not done so already, now would be a good time for you to study the Toolbox unit Equipped by God to Serve. If you have already studied this unit you may want to review it now in order to think once again about your “S-H-A-P-E” for service.
God’s development of your character prepares you for effective Christian leadership. From the time of his birth, Moses had many experiences that uniquely prepared him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and brought up in the king’s household. He learned by observing his adopted grandfather the meaning of authority and leadership. Moses received the best available education in the ancient world. Later, after he was forced to leave Egypt, Moses learned about life in the desert while working as a shepherd. Moses would use everything that he learned from these life experiences to lead his people out of Egypt.

All of these experiences that prepared Moses for leadership were a part of God’s unique plan and purpose for Moses’ life. Psalm 139:16 tells us, “All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

God has given you your life experiences to prepare you for the vision that He has given to you. God is not finished. He will continue to give you experiences that will mold you into the person that God wants you to become. God is making you into a person who will resemble Jesus and who will give glory to God.

Discussion
Talk about how your “S-H-A-P-E” and experiences have prepared you to fulfill God’s vision. Pray for and encourage each other.

Personal Application
1. Write a personal vision statement. This should be about 1-2 pages in length. Include information about God’s calling, God’s vision, God’s equipping, and the experiences that God has given to you to develop your character for leadership.
2. Be prepared to share your vision statement with your encourager or group.
SESSION TWO
TYPES OF LEADERS

Discussion
1. Last week what did God teach you through the personal application?
2. Read Ephesians 4:11-13
3. Which of the following statements describes your “passion” as a leader? Explain your passion.
   * “I want to see new believers and new churches everywhere.”
   * “I want to see Christians grow in holiness.”
   * “I want to see as many people as possible saved through faith in Jesus.”
   * “I want to see people grow to become spiritually mature followers of Jesus.”

God needs different types of leaders to accomplish His will. So God prepares people to become each of these different types of leaders. As you learned in session one, God provided you with calling, vision, equipping and character formation in order to prepare you to become a Christian leader. God Himself has determined what type of leader you will become. When you understand your calling, vision, gifts and abilities, and life experiences, you will be able to see clearly what God wants you to do and how God wants you to do it. This will enable you to become effective and have a strong sense of fulfillment as you serve as a Christian leader.

You cannot do it all! God does not intend for you to be a “superman Christian” who does everything. God intends for you to use only the calling, gifts, passion and experiences that He has given you to lead others. God will raise up other leaders with different callings, gifts, visions and experiences to do what you cannot do.

Each of the four passions you have discussed comes out of the heart of a different type of Christian leader. Each passion reflects different calling, equipping, vision and even character development. Ephesians 4:11 uses the word “apostle” to describe a leader whose passion is to see new believers and new churches. A “prophet” is a leader whose passion is for people to grow in holiness. The passion of an “evangelist” is to proclaim the gospel to all people everywhere so that as many people as possible will be saved. Finally, a “pastor and teacher” describes a person whose passion is to see people grow into spiritually mature followers of Jesus Christ. All four types of leaders are necessary for the development of strong Christians and healthy churches.

Now we will look at each of these four types of leaders in more detail. You will have the opportunity to evaluate what type of leader you are. The most effective way to use the evaluation is to answer these questions about yourself, and then to have the other people in your group answer the questions about you. When God has given you the calling, equipping, vision and experience to serve as a type of leader, it will
be confirmed by both you and other Christians who know you well.

**Apostle**

An apostle is a person sent out by God to share the Gospel and begin new churches. Apostles lead the church to expand into new areas or into new groups of people that have not been reached with the Gospel before. Apostles often serve as missionaries. But an apostle can be any person that God has given the vision, talents and gifts to reach an area or group of people for Christ. When an apostle looks at a city or geographic area he will have a vision for many new Christians and new churches developing in that place.

**Evaluation**

1. Are you dissatisfied because there are so many people who are still unreached with the Gospel?
2. When you go to an area do you become excited by the potential you see for many new Christians and new churches springing up there?
3. When you are near a crowded train station do you think about places where new churches or small groups could meet?
4. Do like to talk about ways to share the Gospel and start new small groups?
5. Do you enjoy helping other Christians learn to share their testimony?
6. Do you like to start new small groups?
7. Do you like to multiply existing small groups of believers so that more people can be reached?

If your answer to some or all of these questions is “yes,” AND if your passion, gifts and experience point you towards sharing the Gospel and starting new small groups and churches, you may be an APOSTLE.

**Prophet**

A prophet is a person who speaks for God. Although in the Bible some messages by prophets foretold the future, most of the time prophets talked about moral and ethical issues. A prophet gives God’s perspective (the biblical teaching) on moral and ethical issues. A prophet is not popular because he speaks directly. He considers moral issues to be black and white. He may speak harshly because he wants people to hear the truth. A prophet condemns sin, but loves the sinner. He calls people to live in according to God’s will. As a result of doing what a prophet says, Christians will grow to become more like Jesus in their thoughts, motives, and actions.

**Evaluation**

1. Are you dissatisfied because of the immorality, injustice, and unethical actions you see in society and in the church?
2. Do problems like hunger, homelessness, AIDS and war cause you to become restless or angry?
3. When you see people doing wrong, do you want to tell them to repent?
4. Do you want to teach people what the Bible says about ethical issues?
5. Do you want Christians to place more emphasis on dealing with injustice and social problems?
6. Do you like to lead small group discussions on ethical issues?
7. Do you like to lead ministry projects to help people who are suffering and in need?

If your answer to some or all of these questions is “yes,” AND if your passion, gifts and experience point you towards helping people become more holy, you may be a PROPHET.

Evangelist
An evangelist uses every available opportunity to share the Gospel with nonbelievers. An evangelist also encourages other Christians to share the Gospel. This includes leading other Christians to share their faith through the evangelist’s own example of personal witnessing. An evangelist is effective in training other Christians to share the Gospel using their testimonies, the Bible, tracts and other evangelism methods.

Evaluation
1. Are you dissatisfied because so many people have not heard the Good News of Jesus Christ?
2. Are you dissatisfied because so few Christians share the Gospel with nonbelievers?
3. Do you like to share your testimony with other people?
4. When you are talking with a lost person do you automatically look for an opportunity to talk with the person about Jesus?
5. Do you easily think of new examples to use to explain the Gospel and Christianity to nonbelievers?
6. Do you regularly lead people to become Christians (5 or more people per year)?
7. Do you like to encourage other Christians to share their faith?
8. Do you like to lead training seminars on how to share the Gospel?

If your answer to some or all of these questions is “yes,” AND if your passion, gifts and experience point you towards helping people become believers in Jesus Christ, you may be an EVANGELIST.

Pastor and Teacher
A person who is a pastor and teacher wants to help people experience the blessings that result from a mature relationship with Jesus Christ. A person who is a pastor and teacher may not serve as a pastor of a church. This person has compassion. A person who is a pastor and teacher may be good at evaluating the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of people. He is willing to help people deal with their problems. But he also wants to help people overcome their problems and to become mature, complete human beings. A person who is a pastor and teacher knows how to help people apply biblical truths to the unique
situations that they are facing. He enjoys training people who are then able to train other people.

Evaluation
1. Are you dissatisfied because of the spiritual, emotional and spiritual needs of the people you meet?
2. Are you dissatisfied because of the spiritual immaturity of Christians?
3. Do you like to help people with their problems?
4. Are you good at encouraging people when you visit them in the hospital?
5. Are you good at responding to questions about the Bible? If you hear a question about the Bible or Christianity you can’t answer, do you go find the answer?
6. Do you like to teach people to apply the Bible to their everyday lives?
7. Do you like to train people so that they can train others (discipleship)?

If your answer to some or all of these questions is “yes,” AND if your passion, gifts and experience point you towards helping people become spiritually mature Christians, you may be a PASTOR AND TEACHER.

Personal Application
1. Use the results of today’s evaluation. Make a plan to do one activity that expresses your passion as a leader (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, or Pastor and Teacher).
2. Do the activity that you planned.
3. Evaluate what you did and be prepared to talk about it with your encourager or group.
SESSION THREE
THE GOAL OF LEADERSHIP

Discussion
1. Last week what did God teach you through the personal application?
2. Read Ephesians 4:11-13
3. According to Ephesians 4:11-13, what is the goal of Christian leadership?

Miss Ueno was the leader of a small group. She was able to get many new people to come into the group. She taught them deep Bible studies and challenged her small group to do ministry and share the gospel. However, when Miss Ueno moved to another city, no other leader could be found to take her place so the small group died.

Discussion
Did Miss Ueno reach the goal of Christian leadership in her small group?

The goal of Christian leadership is to encourage every person to attain spiritual maturity. This spiritual maturity can be defined as “attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). This means that a spiritually mature person is a person whose character resembles the character of Jesus. This person’s thoughts, attitudes and actions are like Jesus. He is motivated by the same thing that motivated Jesus, namely, God’s love. Ephesians 5:1-2 tells us, “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

The way to reach the goal of Christian leadership is found in Ephesians 4:12: “Prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ will be built up.” People grow spiritually through doing “works of service.” Good leadership involves helping people to understand their own calling and giftedness so that they can do “works of service so that the body of Christ will be built up.” As people serve they will develop spiritual maturity so that they become more like Jesus.

Discussion
1. What could Mrs. Ueno have done differently in order to reach the goal of Christian leadership in her small group?
2. How can you use your calling, passion, equipping, and character to reach the goal of Christian leadership in your small group?

Christian leadership is not only about learning about your calling, passion and equipping for leadership. It is about helping every person under your care to learn about the calling, passion and equipping that God has given to them for service in the Body of Christ. Christian leadership is about your spiritual growth inspiring those around you to grow, and your service inspiring those around you to serve. Christian leadership is about encouraging
every person to grow to spiritual maturity through doing works of service for the glory of God.

Personal Application
1. Evaluate the training needs of your small group or those you encourage spiritually. Choose one Toolbox unit that meets one or more of the needs of these people. Lead your small group or those you encourage spiritually through this unit.
2. Talk about what you learned from this experience with your encourager.

Reflection
1. What did you learn about Christian leadership through this study?
2. What questions did you learn about Christian leadership?
3. What is your plan to share what you learned about Christian leadership with another person?