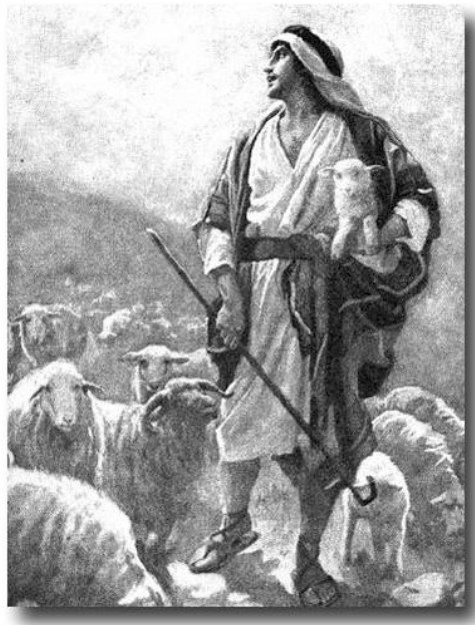


# *Feeding the Shepherds*

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A Handbook for  
Portable Bible School  
Lay Pastor Training



The Portable Bible School training manual *Called to Shepherd God's People*  
is available from:

EVANGELISM RESOURCES

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Any questions, comments or requests for assistance in implementing  
Portable Bible School training can be directed to the address above.

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# Chapter One

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## The Purpose of Portable Bible Schools

# ***The Purpose of Portable Bible Schools: Engaging Lay Leaders in their Pastoral Vocation***

## ***An Alternative Training Method***

Traditional theological institutions usually give priority to a high form of intellectualism created by and for the upper echelons of the Church. These institutions – their curricula, personnel and lifestyle – have largely emulated the university model. Today, pastoral education requires another method that is capable of training the pastors needed to penetrate the frontiers of darkness where the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ has never before shined.

Portable Bible School training has attempted to provide this new method by bringing together local lay leaders in their own contexts and developing their leadership skills with essential biblical, theological and pastoral tools for their ministerial vocations. The challenge is not to bring these local leaders “up to” the academic standards of accredited theological institutions. Rather, it is to adapt existing academic resources to the realities and experiences of village, slum and rural ministries. This adaptation avoids the act of merely passing on knowledge. In the attempt to stimulate and equip lay leaders to think through their own situations, the ministry and mission of their churches will be revitalized. In order to achieve this goal, pastoral education must return to its roots, where the everyday, practical experiences of ministry form the basis for learning.

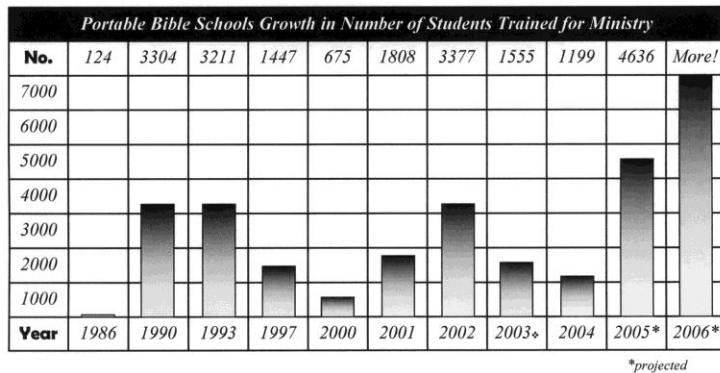
God sent the Holy Spirit through Jesus, as the *Parakletos*, or the “One who comes alongside to help.” Portable Bible School training reflects the role of “The Helper.” Therefore, PBS training requires a commitment of more than two months, involving both teachers and those being trained. This training is designed for use within a long-term working relationship between lay workers and their field supervisors. Denominations and missions agencies who intend to help develop lay leadership must think and plan in terms of years, not just two months. The two-month training provided through PBSes is just the first phase in the training experience. After graduation, field supervisors should commit to coming alongside lay leaders to give practical advice, encouragement and evaluation for at least six months.

The key to developing church lay leaders is found in the process of strengthening their pastoral skills. Church lay leaders, whether in remote rural areas or bustling cities, have almost always learned by “doing.” This is the entry point for increasing their knowledge and skills. The use of Portable Bible Schools must go beyond pedagogical “rote learning” and emphasize experiential learning for mature adults. With the assistance of a field supervisor, ministry experiences can become avenues for learning. Ministerial leadership is produced more readily by combining field experience and classroom knowledge. Field supervision after courses are completed is best done with the help of an experienced senior pastor acting as field supervisor.

## *Portable Bible School History*

### *The Beginnings: The Democratic Republic of the Congo*

The concept of bringing pastoral education to rural churches was first conceived in the African nation now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo by Evangelism Resources. The Portable Bible School is so named because of its mobility. Its teachers go to the villages in order to instruct lay pastors in Bible survey, Christian doctrines, preaching, pastoral skills and personal holiness. These subjects are covered in 200 classroom hours over a period of eight weeks.



In the many nations which have held Portable Bible Schools, there has been a marked increase in the number of trained pastors in many different denominations. Since its inception in 1986, ER estimates that more than 50,000 people have completed PBS training, and these pastors are still at work in God's harvest fields around the world.

### *Portable Bible School Advances in India*

In 1991 Dr. Willys K. Braun, president of Evangelism Resources, and his wife Thelma traveled to India at the invitation of some of its key church and mission leaders. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the expansion of ER ministries in that great nation. The challenge to equip and revive India's rural pastors was taken up by several men, who through their vision and efforts trained more than 2000 lay pastors through Portable Bible Schools by the end of 1995.

The benefits in India and elsewhere from PBSes are myriad.

- ***Existing churches are helped and strengthened.*** Many rural churches around the world suffer from detrimental effects of ill-equipped leadership. PBS training strengthens these churches by allowing their pastors to acquire the skills needed for "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." (II Tim. 2:15)
- ***Grass-roots leadership for new churches is developed.*** PBS training is ideal for strengthening existing churches, but is also effective for preparing lay pastors for new churches. By example, the Banjara people in northern Andhra Pradesh, India are experiencing a great movement to Christ. This movement has greatly benefited from PBS training. Since 1993 over 1680 Banjara lay pastors have been trained in the PBSes to shepherd new congregations by a man who is himself a Banjara, Rev. Lazarus Lalsingh. He mastered the PBS concept at the Madras School of Evangelism, having graduated in 1993.
- ***Pastors are trained to minister on a "tribe and tongue" level.*** Many nations of the world have vastly different cultures and languages within a small geographical region. PBS training, by definition of the word "portable," is flexible enough to incorporate

pastors from many different tribes and tongues. More than 5000 students were trained in PBSes in 2005 and they now minister in their native tongue to members of their own tribal groups. This eliminates completely the long-standing obstacle to the gospel of evangelists first needing to learn a new tongue before their ministry can begin.

### ***How Does the Portable Bible School Operate?***

Portable Bible School training was designed specifically for lay leaders who shepherded small congregations with no full-time pastor. It is called “portable” because the training is brought to the learner and because it moves to different locations within remote rural areas. The school is centrally located to the Christians it serves. In a rural setting, training is conducted within a cluster of 10 to 40 villages needing pastors. The locations of PBSes are chosen based on need which is perceived by denominations and Christian leaders who request the training.

PBSes can use an existing structure such as a church, community hall or school building, or a temporary structure such as a tent, depending on the weather conditions. Simple accommodations for the students are arranged by the host missions agency or denomination.

The agency sponsoring the training provides qualified teachers for their Portable Bible Schools. The lay people chosen from each church attend the school for the two months using the text *Called to Shepherd God's People*, authored by Thelma Braun. Classes are usually conducted each weekday.

One of the keys to the success of this training is that it does not interfere with church and family responsibilities. This is because the school comes to the learner instead of requiring the lay pastor to travel to a distant location for training. Practical experience is included in PBS training, which takes place after regular class hours. Trainees practice their pastoring and witnessing skills in the immediate locale. On weekends they return home to apply what they have learned in their own churches. After the two-month on-site instruction is completed, the graduates are then assisted by a field supervisor for a minimum of six months.

### ***Needs of Lay Pastors: Skills and Knowledge***

Denominational leaders around the world express growing concern about inadequate training for rural lay pastors. These concerns are often shared by local congregations and the lay pastors themselves, confirming the need for more preparation. The number of untrained lay people leading village churches is significantly higher than that of ordained professionals in most denominations. Therefore there is a need for improving the training of grass-roots pastoral leaders. Those chosen for Portable Bible School training commonly lead regular church functions, including worship, group prayer, Bible study and evangelism. Many of them have had no formal training, or were nominally trained in the distant past.

Training recommendations for lay pastors and elders are primarily based on skill sets needed in general for any Christian leader. They are classified into six major areas of performance:

- ***Teaching the Bible*** - PBS curriculum contains introductory instruction in a survey of Bible books and biblical doctrine.
- ***Explaining the gospel*** – Instruction is also given in understanding the biblical basis for evangelism and the acquisition of techniques for personal, group and cross-cultural evangelism.
- ***Preaching good sermons*** – Lessons are presented teaching homiletics, how to prepare and deliver biblically sound messages.
- ***Leading worship*** – PBSes teach the lay pastor the biblical basis for worship, and guide the pastor in the various approaches to worship appropriate in the pastor's denominational and cultural context.
- ***Leading a prayer meeting*** – Instruction is given in leading corporate prayer and guiding the pastor in planning and facilitating prayer meetings.
- ***Maintaining personal spiritual growth*** – An emphasis is placed upon personal holiness, character development, and personal and family spiritual formation.

### ***Benefits to Denominations of Portable Bible School Training***

- ***Economical use of funds*** – A trained team of lay leaders can eliminate the need for staffing the church with a full-time pastor. The use of a team of lay leaders in place of a salaried pastor will save both time and money.
- ***Leadership creation and retention*** - If the denomination has many small churches with no paid pastor, or is planning to plant new churches, Portable Bible School training can help fill leadership positions in a relatively short time. In addition, studies have shown that leaders raised up from and for the local church will be retained for a much longer period of time than a pastor hired from outside the community.
- ***Increased growth and discipleship*** – Successful performance of pastoral tasks is a major requirement for meeting the evangelism and discipleship goals of denominations and missions agencies. Failure to reach these goals can often be attributed to a deficit of leadership skills at the local church level. Giving lay leaders the knowledge, skills, and motivation to pastor, as well as helping them to develop the moral character required by God of spiritual leaders, will increase the overall effectiveness of discipleship and evangelism efforts of the denomination.



# Chapter Two



## Training Design

# ***Design of the Portable Bible School Training Program***

## ***Populations Targeted for Training***

PBS training is designed for untrained lay leaders who shepherd churches in the absence of full-time, salaried pastors.

These are:

1. Lay elders who form a leadership team (usually men)
2. Women who teach and lead ministries

They minister in:

1. Existing, established churches, or
2. Newly planted churches, or
3. Newly formed churches of unorganized believers

Within the small churches of denominations being blessed by the PBS training program, both rural and urban, there are many which have no full-time, trained pastor. An ordained professional may have responsibility for a cluster of five to twenty or more of these small churches. At best he ministers in each church under his charge once a month. These churches *must* rely on lay people to lead the ministries of the church.

These lay people are usually a group of male elders who share the responsibility of shepherding their congregation. There is also a group of female lay leaders who have shepherding responsibilities, usually with women and children. In most cases, both groups have had little or no formal training because they can offer little time to formal study due to job and family responsibilities. The on-site training intends to serve these two groups, giving them basic knowledge and skills for pastoral ministry.

It is recommended that churches led by lay pastors have a “pastoral team” of lay people who share the responsibility of shepherding the church. The main reason for this is the fact that most lay leaders have full-time work and family responsibilities. Having just one person to tend to all the duties of running various church ministries would be unrealistic, creating too great a burden of time and energy. If your denomination is willing to support the trainee financially as a paid pastor, then the idea of sending one trainee is sensible. But if no substantial salary is being offered, it makes more sense to train a team of three to five lay people for one pastor-less church.

## ***People Not Targeted for Training***

Portable Bible School pastoral training is intended for unpaid lay leaders. It is not a training program or a refresher course for field evangelists or paid, professional pastors. Nor is it an extension Bible study course for the average church member who simply desires some theological knowledge. These are all legitimate training needs of the church, but there are other institutions and programs already in place to address these needs.

### ***Entry-level Requirements for Trainees***

1. The trainee must be adequately literate in the medium of the training – able to read, write and speak clearly in his native language.
2. The trainee must be recognized as a leader called by God for pastoral service, both by his/her home congregation and by his/her denominational superior(s) who recommend him/her.
3. The trainee must be recognized as a mature leader according to the spiritual qualifications for leadership outlined in I Timothy chapter 3 and Titus chapter 1.

### ***The Portable Bible School Performance Statement***

#### End Result Objectives

By the end of training, the graduate will identify the basic duties of a pastor and his/her vital role in the spiritual well-being of the church. The graduate will understand the general content of the Bible, including identification of its basic themes and doctrines. The trained lay pastor will orally communicate the learned themes and doctrines of the Bible clearly to the congregation and the community at large.

#### On-the-Job Objectives

With the help of the leadership team, the graduate will increase the qualitative and quantitative growth of his/her church. Toward these purposes he/she will display the following skills: teaching, preaching, evangelizing, leading worship and leading prayer meetings. Through personal devotion to Christ and to those he/she shepherds, the pastor will exhibit a pattern of Christ-centered servanthood to the community at large.

#### Importance of a Training Performance Statement

It is of extreme importance that everyone involved with the Portable Bible School training understand the objectives stated above, including the senior field supervisor, the PBS coordinator, the teachers and the students. These training objectives offer a framework for the entire process of planning, implementation and evaluation for the program.

### ***Program Stipulations***

#### Duration

200 hours of on-site training will be combined with six months of field supervision and observation.

#### Recommended Classroom Format

Five one-hour sessions per day will be held for 40 days.

#### Practical Assignments

Student lay pastors will apply what they learn in their respective churches through assignments given when they return home for the weekends. In addition, practical assignments will take place daily after classes.

### Number of Participants

The recommended number of participants per training site is a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 40.

### Selection of Participants

Sponsoring church and para-church field leaders will select the lay persons for training. In cases where there is a pastor-in-charge of a cluster of churches, his recommendation of trainees would be best, since he already knows the lay leaders and will be expected to supervise them after training.

### Portable Bible School Teachers

Teachers will be selected and assigned by the sponsoring agency. A variety of teachers will be needed for the different subjects. They may be agency leaders, or others can be recruited who have a vested interest in the training, such as local pastors, professional teachers from a denomination's Bible school or seminary, or seminary students recruited through a practical service program.

### Field Supervisors

It is recommended that field supervisors be assigned by the denomination to assist and observe trainees, both during the training (weekends), and for at least six months after completion. Field supervisors should assist no more than ten trainees, assisting at least two per week on a rotation basis. If the trainee is already under an ordained pastor, this person would naturally serve as a field supervisor.

### Food

Members of local congregations can supply their student lay pastors with food on a weekly basis during in-residence training. This will greatly save on program expenditures. The food should be collected when the trainees are home on weekends and brought on the return trip to the training site on Sunday evenings.

### Mini-Library

Sponsoring agencies should provide lay pastors with study aids to start a small library. Reference books for studying the Bible should be easy to understand, practical and basic. The following books are recommended, all in the student's vernacular language if possible:

- A Bible
- Reference tools shared by the lay team
- The PBS textbook, *Called to Shepherd God's People*.

### ***Attitude Formation***

Issues of personal character should be addressed through chapel services and through promotion of the personal spiritual disciplines of Bible meditation, prayer and worship. Most importantly, spiritual maturity is best learned through the modeling of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) by instructors and field supervisors.

Daily chapel or group devotional time should be planned with the idea of developing the personal character of the students. Also, personal devotions can be programmed, where all of the trainees study and meditate on the same lessons on spiritual formation. Some suggested themes are:

- Spiritual Qualifications of a Christian Leader
- Developing a System of Personal Accountability
- Biblical Requirements of Moral Conduct
- Maintaining Personal Spiritual Growth
- Developing and Using Biblical Authority
- Living in Spiritual Freedom and Victory

# Chapter Three

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## Methodological Perspectives

## *Methodological Perspectives*

### *The Way Adults Learn*

It must be stressed that the PBS is a training program for *adult* learners. The lay leader trainees may range in age anywhere from 21 to 65 years of age. The age and experience of PBS students must be taken into consideration when formulating effective methods of training.

Approaches to adult education are vastly different from teaching children and teenagers. Much typical classroom teaching and learning has taken pedagogical (literally, “for children”) principles as the basis for training. Those attempting to teach adults should consider the differences that adults bring to the learning process. Listed below are some of the characteristics of adult learners which need to be incorporated if learning is to be effective:

- **Motivation** – Adults tend to pursue studies from some personal desire, to reach some personal goal, rather than from a socially imposed routine. Consequently they are self-motivated and are usually eager to participate.
- **Experience** – Adults’ experiences are broader and tend to be unique for each individual. They want to base their learning on their experience, using the past as a source to prepare for the future.
- **Autonomy** – Adults have achieved a degree of independence and expect to be involved in setting goals. They wish to participate in the process of selecting how to reach stated goals. They are self-directed.
- **Transitions** – Adults frequently choose to study because of some life change, and they want to cope with these changes. They may experience anxiety from not having studied for many years, or from missing formal education. The desire to study may be related to their conversion or rededication to their faith and calling.
- **Utility** – Adults see time as important, especially as the years pass. They want to learn what will be useful now, not for some vague future application.
- **Classification** – Adults, due to having used language longer, often have more established themes and stereotypes. At the same time they may be aware of their limited ability to verbalize their adult experiences. This paradox may be an obstacle to certain types of learning.
- **Teaching** – Adults want an environment of respect and trust where they can express themselves and not be seen as subordinates of the teacher or facilitator.

The question posed to those operating Portable Bible Schools is, “Are we treating adult learners as experienced adults, or as large children?” We should examine our teaching methods and materials in order to adjust them to the characteristics of the adult learner. To do this, teachers and facilitators must take their lessons and review them with respect to the seven criteria listed above.

In addition, the teachers, facilitators and students should meet to examine and discuss the lesson methods and materials before the start of training. After this, adjustments may be made along with a final approval of all involved. The following questions may help to guide this process.

1. Do the learners have any choice with respect to what they will be expected to know and do, and how will this be carried out?
2. Do any of the lesson activities to be carried out involve students' own experience and knowledge? Will they relate the information/activities to their daily life and ministry?
3. Do adult learners know why they are studying a particular subject? Does it relate fully to their ministry or is it just an abstract exercise to fulfill program requirements?
4. Are students learning to think critically about improving their performance, or are they merely expected to absorb material for parroted responses which will eventually be forgotten?
5. What experiences of the learners are called into play by each of the courses?

### ***Experiential Learning***

Most of what anyone knows or is able to do has been learned by experience. For example, the ability to speak and understand a language or to behave appropriately with others reveals this. These human adaptations to a particular cultural or environmental context is considered a learning process. The same holds true when someone takes on a new job with an unfamiliar organization. An assortment of unwritten rules about how to behave, how to do tasks and how people relate to one another are learned through adapting to the new work context.

Learning through experience shapes the values and behavior of the learner. This is surely true in the experience of pastoral ministry. Village lay leaders have learned ministry by doing rather than out of a book or in a formal classroom setting. This learning style need not be minimized or rejected by the Portable Bible School facilitator. Rather, this learning pattern should be appreciated and fully utilized in the training. PBS students are active, committed lay leaders with many experiences from which to learn. Unless the material in the courses connects with the daily life and ministry of these leaders, the most valuable learning does not take place. How then can they learn from experience and connect it with the PBS courses?

The purpose of the PBS training is to provide the connection between books, materials, lesson plans and life and ministry experiences. For this reason Portable Bible School facilitators should be people with broad ministry experience at the grass roots level. Facilitators such as these are essential in helping students see and make connections between classroom information and field experiences.

Some tips for connecting students' experiences with cognitive information:

- Before teaching a course, list the ways it utilizes students' specific ministry experiences such as pastoral visits, evangelistic contacts, leading prayer, worship, etc. The purpose of this is to anticipate students' perspectives on the course material.
- Encourage students to observe and record their experiences. Have them keep a log or journal, or supply them report sheets, checklists, etc.
- Choose certain times in the teaching schedule to discuss pertinent experiences in respect to the daily lessons.
- Provide exercise for sharpening students' in-field skills in observation, listening, and responding to questions.



- Attempt to systematically draw out students' experiences and help them make connections between course material and these experiences.
- Try to bring all aspects of life into an experiential understanding of ministry. Recognize the importance of social, economic, environmental and political issues and problems as well as personal and family issues and problems.
- At the end of each course facilitators/teachers should meet to review how well students' experiences were integrated into the academic work, determining what was actually learned. They should take into account any new suggestions and ask how they might fit into future instruction.

### ***Field Experience Training Format***

To effectively guide trainees in discovering ways to apply new knowledge, immediate field experience under a supervisor is necessary. Supervised field experience will take place both during and after classroom instruction.

The eight-week classroom training will be interspersed with weekend assignments in order to promote experience-centered learning. At the end of the classroom phase, trainees will be required to work in a supervised ministry experience. This will allow students to learn from more experienced people in the field. Field observation and experience will be followed by times of reflection and analysis with field supervisors. This will foster critical thinking skills in the trainee through the integration of theory and experience.

Since many pastor-less churches are rural, most of the training will naturally target rural churches. The emphasis on rural ministry should not overshadow the need for trained lay leaders in burgeoning urban centers. Urban lay workers also require training for shepherding ministries, and Portable Bible School instruction will provide them with a meaningful learning experience.

### ***Culturally Relevant Training***

Effective training at the grass-roots level demands that teachers be fluent in the local language and highly familiar with the culture, customs and learning style of the local body of students. Ideally, those coordinating and teaching should belong to the same people group as those being taught. If not, language fluency and contextualization skills are a must. Teaching must be both biblically and culturally relevant.

An adequately contextualized Portable Bible School curriculum should clearly reflect the particular situations, problems, needs and perceptions of the church and culture where it is based. Since the program may be taught in various locations over a vast geographical region, some guidelines for contextualization are offered below.

*Tips for adapting teaching to the local culture:*

1. Adjust the vocabulary of lesson material to the reading level of trainees.
2. Be certain that illustrations match local experiences.
3. Be sure teaching methods match the learning style of the students

4. As you teach, be sure that lessons address the cultural world-view of those to whom the students will minister, keeping in mind that the Bible is the definitive authority for Christian living.
5. Solicit feedback from learners to improve methods and content.
6. Use speech at a level appropriate for the students. Cultivate a simple style, but do not “talk down” to students. Even marginally literate adults are not children and must never be treated as intellectually inferior.
7. Try to avoid theological jargon when a simpler word will do just as well. Theological and specialized terms may be used as needed, but should always be explained and illustrated to aid comprehension.
8. Use culturally meaningful humor where appropriate.
9. Use stories and short anecdotes to illustrate main points.
10. Avoid any allusions, figures of speech, idioms, etc. which may not be understood by students.

### ***Avoiding Student Alienation from the Home Culture***

It has been recognized that a major limitation of traditional residential training is that it usually alienates people from the context in which they originally intended to serve. In a rural village setting, potential lay leaders from targeted rural areas could be distanced from rural ways and life if they are brought to the city for training. Spending a period of time experiencing the excitement and conveniences of urban life can cause this unwanted distraction. Therefore it is recommended that rural training centers should be located in close proximity to the rural churches being served. In the case of training urban lay pastors/leaders urban-based training is obviously encouraged.

### ***Contextual Methodology***

In general, Portable Bible School classrooms should be devoted to discussion and other creative means of teaching and learning. A heavy dependence on lecture by the teacher is unproductive in contextualizing Portable Bible School lessons. The recommendations listed below will aid the teacher in more effective contextualization. The teacher will need to be innovative in order to create a culturally relevant methodology.

The classroom phase of training performed in a rural classroom or poverty-stricken urban setting should be low-tech. There can be little reliance on the use of video equipment or other aids which are technically complicated, costly and dependent on unreliable sources of electricity. This does not mean that creativity will be sacrificed because of the scarcity of high-tech audiovisual aids. Other low-tech aids are recommended in addition to the conventional blackboard. Some are:

#### ***Visual***

- flip charts
- graphs, charts
- maps, globes
- flannel board
- flash cards
- drawings, paintings
- sketch boards
- photocopies
- posters

### *Audio*

- Cassette tapes may be used with a simple battery-operated player.

### ***Creative Methods Which Help Achieve Contextualization***

Creative teaching methods can be used to energize the classroom experience. The key to motivational teaching methods is increased participation by students. Some examples follow:

- demonstrations
- topical discussions
- role playing
- singing
- skits
- question/answer panels
- games
- charts, maps
- panel discussions
- case studies
- memorization
- story telling

Preparing students for field assignments and then processing students' field experiences are important considerations in experience-centered learning. In addition to some of the above, more methods are suggested below to help students prepare for field experiences. These methods aid in developing observation and evaluation skills.

- modeling behavior
- team tasks
- interactive demonstrations
- performance try-outs
- agenda setting
- structured discussions
- observation
- simulations
- data gathering
- problem solving

*Some questions to ask about teaching and learning methods:*

1. Which of the above methods can be used in Portable Bible Schools among marginal literates? Among village agriculturalists? Among poverty-stricken urban dwellers?
2. How can teachers determine which learning methods are appropriate for each of the Portable Bible School courses?
3. What traditional methods of learning (both formal and non-formal) are found in your culture? Which of these might you use or adapt for Portable Bible School training?

### ***Teacher Selection***

The use of at least three teachers for the eight-week phase of training is encouraged. Students will experience boredom if they are exposed to just one or two teachers in the classroom phase. The sponsoring agency may supply its own staff on a rotation basis, or it can recruit a variety of outside experts to teach the courses. In either case teachers should be knowledgeable in the specific topics they teach. The use of experienced, qualified teachers is of vital importance! They should have the ability to teach according to the methods discussed above, namely the ability to teach adults using creative contextual techniques. Inexperienced teachers will never do justice to an extensively-planned, sacrificially-financed training program.

### ***Primary Texts for Training***

Each student must have a Bible as the primary classroom text. Teachers should adapt lessons from the Portable Bible School book, *Called to Shepherd God's People*, which offers course outlines for the training. The Foreword of the book has practical suggestions for planning and implementation of PBS instruction, and it is strongly suggested that teachers take these suggestions to heart.

PBS graduates will find *Called to Shepherd God's People* a useful resource tool in preparing teaching and preaching lessons after returning to their ministry routine. Students should be allowed to keep their copies of the book upon graduation.

# Chapter Four

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## Post-Training Evaluation

## ***Post-Training Evaluation***

Christian educators have generally considered evaluation to be a process which judged how well students learned what they were taught. Examination and grading at the end of each course was the standard means, administered to an often-nervous group of students. More recently, educators have begun to see that any lack of learning may be primarily caused by inadequate teaching or lesson materials. So, it is important to develop instruments to evaluate the courses and facilitators as well as the students. In any case, whether teachers and field supervisors are evaluating students or vice versa, the primary concern is to improve the learning process and the end result.

### ***Who is involved in the evaluation process?***

Evaluation should go hand-in-hand with planning; it should be a basic component of the training process. Graduates of Portable Bible Schools should consider their own effectiveness in ministry with the help of field supervisors after the classroom phase is complete. Observations of pastoral skills by the field supervisor, the congregation and other lay leaders of the ministry team will make the evaluation complete on the local church level. A sample evaluation sheet is included at the end of this manual in Appendix A.

Teachers and program coordinators should also share in the evaluation results. Finally, administrative staff and governing bodies and committees at the top of the sponsoring organization should be included in the evaluation process. The inclusion of selected participants from all three levels will not only assure essential input from these varied perspectives, but also increase support and commitment for the program in general. In addition, outside persons can be invited to add special expertise and independent perspectives to the evaluation process.

### ***What should be evaluated?***

1. The overall classroom experience, including lesson materials and teaching methodology, should be evaluated at the completion of the program.
2. The effective performance of graduates should be measured after graduation for at least six months.
3. The impact of the program on participating churches and the surrounding community should also be evaluated.

### ***How should evaluation be done?***

Without question, Portable Bible School training cannot be perfected without a comprehensive and systematic evaluation process. But careful evaluation procedures can become costly in time, energy and money if the process goes beyond realistic expectations of the program. Therefore it is recommended that the process be kept simple and inexpensive without compromising effectiveness. “The Portable Bible School Performance Statement” (found on page 11 in this manual), especially the end result objectives, should be the guide for measuring training effectiveness.

## ***Recommended Methods of Evaluation***

### Process Evaluation During Classroom Training

Students' knowledge retention can be measured in the classroom. Oral or written quizzes and tests can be used. Evaluators should keep in mind the literacy level of students when subjecting them to written tests. Performance of afternoon and weekend field assignments should be periodically evaluated. Pastors and/or field leaders who have charge over lay people in the training program should be given tools to help evaluate students' performance during field assignments at the start of the program.

Graduates will be surveyed by their teachers for evaluation of learning experiences during the initial eight-week training. It should be stressed that the most effective evaluation takes place *after* the graduate returns to his or her ministry activities. Measuring ministry performance in the field is more important than measuring the retention of facts in the classroom.

### Student Evaluation of the Program

Classroom facilitators should use a simple questionnaire for student responses immediately upon completion of the instruction. An example is offered at the end of this manual, in Appendix B entitled "Student Evaluation Sheet." These evaluations should be kept on file, with copies distributed for evaluation meetings between teachers, coordinators, pastors, administrators and all others involved in improving the training.

# APPENDIX A

## OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION OF TRAINED LAY PASTORS BY PORTABLE BIBLE SCHOOL FIELD SUPERVISORS

Please observe the lay pastors in the churches to which you have been assigned for evaluation in the areas listed below. Be sure to observe each of the skills three times and rank each observation separately.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates:  
1<sup>st</sup> observation \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> observation \_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> observation \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Please place a mark in the box that corresponds to ranking</i>				
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Below Average</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Above Average</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
<b><i>Leading Worship</i></b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> observation					
2 <sup>nd</sup> observation					
3 <sup>rd</sup> observation					
<b><i>Leading a Prayer Meeting</i></b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> observation					
2 <sup>nd</sup> observation					
3 <sup>rd</sup> observation					
<b><i>Teaching from the Bible</i></b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> observation					
2 <sup>nd</sup> observation					
3 <sup>rd</sup> observation					
<b><i>Preaching Good Sermons</i></b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> observation					
2 <sup>nd</sup> observation					
3 <sup>rd</sup> observation					
<b><i>Explaining the Gospel</i></b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> observation					
2 <sup>nd</sup> observation					
3 <sup>rd</sup> observation					



## **APPENDIX B**

### **SAMPLE STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET**

*Note: This sample sheet should be translated into the vernacular language and duplicated for use.*

Instructions: Please circle the answer that best indicates your response.

- 1. *How was the fellowship among the students in your group?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 2. *Did you feel the training motivated the group to pastoral ministry?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 3. *Did you personally feel motivated and inspired by the training?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 4. *Were the teachers able to provide answers to students' questions and help with solving ministry problems?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 5. *Did your field supervisor give proper guidance in applying course lessons to ministry activities?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 6. *How would you describe the discussion times you had in course sessions?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 7. *Do you feel that the lessons and assignments were applied to the ministry and life of the students?***  
Excellent      Very Good      Good      Fair      Poor
- 8. *What learning methods (in addition to lecture and discussion) were used in your group? Please list.***

**9. *In what ways could the training be improved? (Please write response.)***

**10. *What did you like best about the training (Please write response.)***

**11. *Please write any other comments about your training.***

# APPENDIX C

## PORTABLE BIBLE SCHOOL APPLICATION

Please return to the address listed in the manual on page two.

*Please type or print legibly.*

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Organization Telephone Number (if any) : \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Fax Number (if any) : \_\_\_\_\_

Your Position/Title with Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Location of Proposed School*

State: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Village: \_\_\_\_\_ Pin/zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Starting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Language of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person in Charge of Proposed School: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Teachers for Proposed School*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Occupation/Title</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Age</i>

**APPENDIX D**  
**STUDENT ROSTER**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Location of Pastoral Assignment</i>	<i>Name of Church Student Now Leads</i>
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## ***NOTES***