



FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO OF
CHRISTIAN LIFE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY GLOBAL

WHY EVERY CHURCH NEEDS A BIBLE SCHOOL NOW

DR. RANDAL S. LANGLEY

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WHERE ARE THE LEADERS?

A CRISIS OF REALITY

In the last few years, we as church leaders have been awakened in the body of Christ to a whole new crisis of reality. Many churches are facing a critical lack of leaders, a rapidly changing culture, and a nationwide decline in church attendance.

If you're being honest, you've noticed it: In general, we haven't been as intentional or strategic as we've needed to be, and we've not prioritized the significance of raising leaders. Others have become innocent bystanders as cultural conflicts, technological disruptions and supply chain changes have vastly altered the systems, processes, expectations and tools of Kingdom ministry.

It's like we've awakened to realize we're taxi drivers in the age of Uber.

Yes, people still need transportation, but how they engage

and access transportation has changed significantly! Now, the question isn't whether something needs to change; we know it does. The question is what needs to change? And where do we begin the transformation?

MOVING PEOPLE ON TO MISSION

Without a doubt, there are growing churches. But it's no secret that statistics from Barna and Pew Research Center report that, **in many places, the American church today is in decline and losing its impact in the culture.**

I observe that there are fewer and fewer reasons today for people even to show up at church. People are tired, they work hard, and on Sundays, they don't want to "just go to church."

But this news isn't all bad. I see church being simplified down to two primary tracks:

- Seekers — Those looking for purpose or having a curiosity about Jesus, interested in knowing more or becoming a believer in some manner, and...
- Believers on mission — Those truly looking to discover how they can live out their Kingdom purpose and fulfill their destiny on the earth.

Simple attenders, those looking for "a good Word this week," who attend largely out of tradition, are waning. Because they attend to consume, most of today's church environments aren't engaging enough to be worthy of their effort to attend church. Without a heart change, they'll likely leave.

The churches that seem to be growing and thriving today are

those that have become laser-focused and intentional about **moving people onto mission.**

Some churches today have simply become gathering centers. Their aim is largely about how to get people involved and serving in their church. Their pastors genuinely love people and have good hearts, but their focus is less about equipping their members for their God-given purpose and more about getting them involved in church programs.

In this way, the church has become the mission instead of the world becoming the mission!

Other pastors see the church as a training center, and Sunday morning is the locker room. They know their members are created to be powerful for the Kingdom, and that their purpose is lived out as much or more Monday-Saturday as it is on Sunday. They want to prepare, heal and empower people to get where they need to be.

These pastors recognize that, while gathering time is essential, and while investing in the local body is necessary, we must be Kingdom-minded and not merely church-minded.

FOLLOWERS DON'T IMPACT AND CHANGE THE CULTURE; LEADERS DO!

All leaders have a vision and are driving toward its fulfillment. So from my perspective, we need a greater focus on the discovery and development of true leaders.

Note the following tweet by church consultant and leadership coach Aubrey Malphurs:



Aubrey Malphurs
@amalphurs

Follow

The need to develop as leaders has never been greater. Your theology should drive your leader development. #Eph4

1:49 PM - 21 Aug 2013

He also said, “Too many pastors ‘do the ministry’ rather than ‘equip others for ministry.’ One leads to a plateau, one to growth.”

Quite frankly, it amazes me how many churches have no strategy or plan in place to empower and develop these leaders. I guess they just expect to pray for God to drop them out of the sky? Many churches would agree with the need to grow leaders, but in reality they just don’t do it.

I say this with deep conviction: **If we fail to develop leaders, our churches will fail to reach their God-given purpose and potential.**

That is what we do at CLST Global.

Our very best partnerships are with those churches that want to transform members into Kingdom-minded leaders.

If we are going to make a dent in our God-given mission to change the world, **the church’s ability and commitment to educate, train, mobilize and release fully equipped people of God back into their spheres of life is essential!** Top-level, culture-shaping leaders must come to grips with this issue.

The future of the Church depends on it.

THE MISSING LINK

A CALL FOR SOUND BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

I am not suggesting that a sound Biblical and theological education is a substitute for:

- Spiritual mentoring
- Practical ministry skills development
- Hands-on experience

However, it's also very clear that Biblical education has become a missing link for many of our churches in today's landscape of Christian leadership and ministry.

I'm concerned that we inadvertently undermine the tremendous value of theological education when we throw around phrases like, "Things I didn't learn in Bible college..." or read articles titled "10 Things Seminary Can't Teach."

Obviously Bible school can't teach you everything you need to know. But would you trust a neurosurgeon who'd only had

on-the-job training and never gone to school? Of course not! Would you give your 16-year-old a car without any classroom driver's education time? Hopefully not. Yes, there are things you can't learn apart from the process of hands-on surgery or behind-the-wheel driving, but you can't say it's not necessary to learn in the classroom.

Because on-the-job training isn't a substitute for education, **that's exactly what makes church-based campuses so powerful.** Church-based campuses have that special environment of accountability, the wise experience of mentors, community relationships and the week-to-week ministerial issues that don't happen in a Bible college where students are just taking classes.

MYTH BUSTERS

In many instances, leadership development has come to mean the latest secular theories of modern thought. However, while Jim Collins and John Maxwell have fantastic insights regarding leadership culture as a whole, they don't necessarily convey the significance of a solid theological foundation for your leaders.

"Theology" is a powerful word! Though it may sound stuffy or high-and-mighty to some, *theos* (God) + *logia* (study and knowledge of) = the ability to know who God really is. Therefore, I have the capacity to frame my life and future on a solid Biblical foundation. For far too long, many people's perspective has been that Bible college is just for church workers, but that's a myth we're busting. In reality, **theological education is for everyone who wants to stand toe-to-toe and eye-to-eye with secular culture and be powerfully on-mission for the Kingdom.**

Here's an illustration: I had the privilege of pastoring Evangel Cathedral, one of America's great charismatic churches located in South Carolina. During my tenure, the resignation of our highly trusted business administrator sent us scurrying for a successor to serve in this vital role. I found a highly qualified young man with a Masters Degree in business from a major university. Additionally, he was raised in the church by wonderful Spirit-led parents and had even participated in one of the nation's best internship programs for youth ministry.

Though he possessed some good leadership skills, he quickly pointed out to me that he'd never truly had the opportunity to attend Bible college. He felt he was missing the training, equipping and theological education that would help him to maximize his potential on the job and in his life. Because we had a church-based Bible school, this young man was able to earn his Bachelor of Theology degree and become the major contributor in our organization that he knew he could be. (I'm proud to say he and his wife now pastor an extremely healthy and growing church body in Alabama!)

GIFTED BUT NOT MATURE

I've had the philosophy that my full-time staff members were, at minimum, going to have a B.Th. In doing so, they would be able to demonstrate a high level of commitment to biblical literacy; to studying and learning; to qualify themselves (show themselves approved); and move beyond the moniker of simply being "great people."

A lot of churches these days are hiring talented people, but without a Biblical education. It's easy to assume that gifted people are Biblically mature when they're not. Oftentimes,

many of their decisions and worldview have been shaped by secularism, not rooted in Kingdom thought and Biblical truth. Not only is this problematic, it has the potential to end in disaster when the Enemy comes to entice and deceive.

My point is this: As seasoned, trusted church leaders, we are in the best position to provide the essential theological education and training for leaders under our care and oversight. It should be our mission to ensure a sound investment into their development — so that no link is missing.

Let CLST Global be your partner in this mission! From the art and science of hermeneutics and biblical interpretation, to the basics of systematic Old and New Testament theology, to how to be an effective communicator... Yes, you can start your own school!

Clearly, without the needed Biblical education component, Christian leaders cannot be the best influencers and culture shapers that God has called them to be.

The next chapter explains why.

REASON 1 - YOU ADDRESS THE GROWING PROBLEM OF BIBLICAL ILLITERACY

In my observation, there is a huge void today of Christian leaders with the biblical and intellectual foundations necessary to engage and interact with the culture on a level playing field and explain the Kingdom.

In fact, based on data from George Gallup and Barna Research Group, Dr. Albert Mohler reports: “Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels. Many Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples. According to data from the Barna Research Group, 60 percent of Americans can’t name even five of the Ten Commandments.”

There is a huge assumption that we make as church leaders: Our people — and even staff — are rooted in the faith and grounded in sound fundamental doctrine. The truth is, many are not! As a result, they are subject to theological error and heresy more than we often realize.

In today’s cultural climate, it’s more important now than

ever that we exemplify Paul's example at the Areopagus (aka Mars' Hill), found in Acts 17. Paul communicates with such a profound relevance to a Biblically illiterate culture that — while some mocked — others joined him or at least wanted to hear more.

This Christian education gap can only be bridged with intentional, systematic Bible training.

For those in your church who don't feel called to the vocational ministry, your Bible school will help establish them to apply Biblical truths in their professions and circles of influence.

It will strengthen their faith foundations and prepare them for a lifetime of effective Kingdom service.

They'll be both successful and powerful for God!

REASON 2 - YOU FULFILL YOUR BIBLICAL MANDATE

Church members who are hungry for empowerment and training are looking to you for spiritual wisdom and mentoring. [Ephesians 4 is essentially a treatise whereby Paul challenges church leaders to empower and effectually prepare people to engage the culture and do the work of ministry.]

With this in mind, I find it no coincidence that many of the fastest growing and most influential churches understand this reality and have already made the commitment to provide theological education as part of their leadership strategy.

This is what CLST Global does for pastors, church leaders and cutting-edge organizations worldwide. The CLST Global church-based Bible school partnership is “plug and play.” We provide **all the tools and support necessary for you to be a trusted mentor and leader** to the men and women under your leadership.

Right now, you have people who know you and trust you. You have people who want you to provide quality theological education and oversee their journey of living out the call of God for their lives!

With CLST Global as your partner, your church can have their own unique school of leadership and ministry development.

REASON 3 - YOU MAXIMIZE YOUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST LEADERS AT HOME

I have a son; his name is Jonathan. (And he did considerable work editing this e-book!) God saw fit that Jonathan be raised by my wife Laurie and me. While he was growing up, it was our responsibility to train him, pour into him, discipline him, coach him, lead him, love him. It wouldn't have been right to farm that out to somebody else.

Did he get education from other people? From life experiences? Friends? Failures? Hard knocks? Absolutely. But at the end of the day, it's our responsibility to "train up a child in the way he should go..."

In the same way, **the leaders God has sent into your life and ministry shouldn't have to go away** and separate from the vision of the "house" where they are already planted in order to receive training.

In a spiritual house, God brings people and leaders to you. They connect with the vision of who you are and the DNA of your organization. In turn, He's brought you to them. You're

in their lives to help, love, encourage, serve, train and equip them.

Many times, because there's not an ordered, systematic equipping tool, those with leadership potential pack up, move away to somewhere they can find training, and ultimately plug into another place of ministry (and another vision). The churches that sent them there, who desired for them to come back and be involved with the work of the local church, are often left missing out on the potential those leaders possess.

As a spiritual family, your church has a unique God-given calling and ministry. Of course, you will have spiritual sons and daughters whom you'll purposefully send out and away so that they can fulfill God's call and purpose for their lives. However, that's different from giving your ambitious best no choice other than to disconnect and leave, possibly to embrace a different vision for life, another ideology or a new mentor.

To this end, a handful of states in the U.S. offer their best and brightest students merit-based scholarships for in-state schools and universities. With success, they've seen students reinvest this educational advantage and their economic futures back into their home states — during and after college.

In the same way, we see that among the ministries that have one of our church-based Bible schools, **the students are more likely to engage in every aspect of the vision and success of the church** they are planted in.

They become the prime leaders and volunteer support

members of that organization. They become the missionaries and the support team of the local ministry. They become the church planters and the go-to leaders on whom the lead pastor can depend for strengthening and growing the local church.

REASON 4 - YOU GENERATE RESOURCES TO FUND YOUR VISION

With our CLST Global church-based partnership, you generate funds and revenue that **supports your mission instead of sending those tuition dollars away** to someone else's organization or institution.

Our unique tuition sharing program allows you to accomplish more.

For many of our church-based campuses, this is a breath of fresh air and a low-risk manner in which to better resource the unique calling and vision of their ministry. Your Bible college can actually fund staff members, special projects, missions, etc.!

With CLST Global as your partner, as much as 40% or more (varies with local school's fee) of the tuition revenues collected by the local school remains in the local ministry!

REASON 5 - YOU RECEIVE AN EXTRAORDINARY VALUE AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Our three core values at CLST Global are: Quality, Flexibility, and Affordability!

When you partner with us, you fulfill the Ephesians 4 scriptural mandate of helping people to align with their God-given purpose and to equip them for the work of ministry. Many of those people have families, jobs and financial responsibilities that may not afford them the opportunity to obtain a world-class Biblical education under normal circumstances.

With CLST Global, students in all concentrations learn critical Biblical thinking, textual interpretation, problem solving, ethics and effective cultural engagement.

Therefore, in addition to preparation for the work of the ministry, many of the skills and knowledge gained from a Bible college or theological education translate well into a variety of jobs in the marketplace. Many theology students go on to be teachers and professors, journalistic writers and

reporters, politicians, business professionals, lawyers, designers, non-profit leaders and more. Effectively, they become great Kingdom influencers across the cultural and vocational spectrum.

In the end, CLST Global is an extraordinary value! We offer **one of the most affordable, flexible and quality theological education opportunities anywhere!**

WHY CLST GLOBAL?

YOUR PARTNER IN PASSIONATE PURPOSE

I do believe that the Church is the hope of the world. However, the Church is not a building; it's the people!

Local churches that are led by Kingdom-minded leaders **must have a passion to empower and mobilize people** to extend the purposes of God to the whole earth. It's through these trusted churches that leaders are best prepared.

For over 35 years, the mission of CLST Global has been to partner with the Church to develop leaders who will influence, impact and transform their world.

A LIVING PROCESS

Leadership is a living and growing process, not an event or title on a business card. And for the most part, **our capacity to grow determines our leadership effectiveness and impact**. The best leaders today are committed to finding

ways to equip and empower aspiring leaders so they can remain on-mission and effective throughout their lives.

It's really that simple.

Our promise: CLST Global is committed to God's vision for your ministry and the success of your local church!

WHY CLST GLOBAL?

- **World-class faculty** – There's nothing like it anywhere in the world. Our courses are taught by men and women who are noted experts in their field. A vast majority have earned doctorates, doing their graduate work at a variety of the best universities and seminaries.
- **Academic excellence** – We're proud of our worldwide credibility. CLST Global maintains the highest standards of academic integrity throughout our programs and resources. We hold accreditation with IABCS and relationships with ACISI, ACCESS, ACEA and other professional education associations.
- **Affordability** – We believe no other organization in the world delivers the quality of our church-based, theological, Biblical education at a greater value. Our goal is to make Bible college affordable for everyone!
- **Maximum flexibility** – Our program allows you to set the schedule and select the courses to offer students based on your church's unique needs. Courses are available via live instruction, on-demand streaming, flash drive, locally authorized

teachers and other delivery methods. CLST Global customizes our educational programs to fit you. Even if students relocate away from your church, they can still take courses and complete a degree online as part of your school!

- **Dependability** – For over 35 years, CLST Global has served thousands of churches and students all over the world with an unwavering commitment and sustained reliability. We will continue to be on the cutting edge of delivering the very best in Christian higher education and resources to meet the needs of our student and global education partners.

A FINAL WORD

CLST Global offers a world-class theological education within the practical and life-giving environment of the local church. This dynamic combination creates an incredible opportunity and environment to prepare students to lead and serve in the local church, the marketplace and around the world!

Yes, every church needs a Bible school!

Contact CLST Global today to get started.

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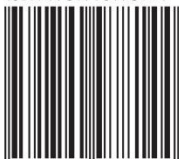
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In "Why Every Church Needs A Bible School Now", Dr. Randal S. Langley challenges today's Kingdom-minded leaders that they must have a passion to empower and mobilize people to extend the purposes of God to the whole Earth. Leadership is a living and growing process, not an event or title on a business card. And for the most part, our capacity to grow leaders determines our effectiveness and impact. The best leaders today are committed to finding ways to equip and empower aspiring leaders so they can remain on-mission and effective throughout their lives.

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ISBN 9781790978144



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