



From the Pew... to the Harvest

An Introduction to
Faith Ministry Training Institute

FAITH MINISTRY TRAINING INSTITUTE STUDENT INFORMATION

A Word From the Director Welcome to the Process

Thank you for your interest in Faith Ministry Training Institute. This booklet was prepared to give you a basic understanding of the concepts that motivate and regulate FMTI. Our desire is to help you find your God-ordained place of service and become as effective as He created you to be. God has a purpose for your life, and it is GOOD!

We began developing these ideas in the mid-1980's and have continued to hone them in our own churches as well as in other nations.

Pastor Virgil L. Stokes

Director, FMTI

FMTI: THE HOW AND WHY

Turning Fannies into Laborers

Matthew 9:35-38

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” NKJV

Now, as then, the Lord cannot possibly reach all the broken and confused sheep without some human help. He sees the miserable condition of the human race and His great heart breaks within Him. The harvest remains plenteous, but the laborers are still insufficient.

In our world today there is no lack in church attendance or of professing Christians. We have an abundance of potential laborers sitting in seats on Sunday or watching TV from the couch. Our dilemma lies in moving the pew-sitters into the harvest field. I call this “Turning fannies in the pew into laborers in the harvest.”

Most of us have come to see ministry as something that requires sending potential ministers to a distant Bible school in order to learn the professional sophistication necessary to carry out their calling. While this is a system that has produced some fine ministers, it is our conviction that this misses the point of New Testament ministry.

By concentrating on a professionally prepared clergy we diminish the impact of the 95% of God’s people who are not called to vocational ministry, but are gifted by God for dynamic service in and through the local church. Every Christian has a

calling from God to serve at some level. Some want to become more proficient in what they are already doing in the local church. Others sense a leading to move into new areas of ministry within the Body but feel unqualified. Still others do have a call to full-time ministry, but because of their responsibilities here, cannot leave to attend Bible School. FMTI is for these people; people who want to grow in ministry while maintaining their relationship and service to their community of faith.

Our Present Methods are Flawed

As long as I can recall, the primary method of training ministers has been to send them away to Bible School. The first problem with this is that it rips apart the relationships that are formed in the local church and community. At a time when an individual is taking giant strides in his spiritual life, he is without the support systems God provided to help resist and overcome the inevitable assaults of Satan.

The second problem is that Bible schools are not real. The Kingdom is lived out in the local church. Local churches are not generally comprised of high percentages of full-time Bible students. Though many Bible schools have churches associated with them, these churches are typically driven and manned by personnel and students of the school. As most graduates soon discover, the real world is very different.

Because students come from many places and stay for only a short stint, relationships with instructors are usually distant. Instructors are high and holy and we know little of their lives. The reverse is also true. It is often possible for a student to finish school without having his life examined by leadership in any way other than class attendance and test scores. Because of the lack of close personal contact with leadership, students are often pushed into a mold of ministry that is theoretical rather than real and takes no genuine account of individual gifts and callings. If nobody knows you, they cannot be expected to guide you in the way you should go.

Finally, a student at a Bible school is destined to come away with an impartation of attitude and anointing that flows from the leadership of that particular institution. They will be immersed in the vision of the leadership and learn to flow in the Spirit of

that group. For the pastor of the local church, this often brings problems when the student returns. Every local church has a unique flavor, a vision and an anointing all its own. The laborers God plants there should be raised up as fruit that reflects the tree from which it came. When we send students off to Bible school we graft them into another tree where they take on the characteristics of that ministry and may never flow properly in ours again.

On the other extreme of ministry preparation, we have the group that says, "God called me, and I will not confer with flesh and blood. I'm like Paul." These dear folks are found everywhere floundering in unfruitful service or even doing harm to those they try to touch. They simply haven't the tools or the experienced guidance that could make them effective.

Between the two extremes lie the vast majority of Christians. Every Christian has a calling from God. All are called to service at some level. Some need to become more proficient in what they are doing in the local church. Others sense a leading to move into new areas of ministry within the Body, but feel unqualified. Still others have a call to full-time ministry, but because of their responsibilities to family and community, cannot leave to attend Bible School. FMTI is for these people, people who want to grow in ministry at any level.

Seeking a Bible Standard for Ministry Training

1 Timothy 3:14-15

14 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;

15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. NKJV

The Scripture places the responsibility of the dissemination of the Gospel squarely at the door of the local church. In this passage Paul is addressing a local congregation concerning some issues of order. In that context he tells them that their church is the foundation from which truth must be proclaimed. The language seems to imply a role in both protection and propagation. **We begin by accepting our responsibility as a local assembly to prepare people for ministry.**

Having accepted our role as trainers, we must then say, “who do we train?” The only Bible answer is “everyone who believes.” Peter tells us that “*each one has received a gift*” and that each is to be a good steward thereof (1 Peter 4:10). The second step in becoming the trainers we should be **is recognizing the importance of the gifting in every member of the Body.**

There are any number of wonderful programs available for discipling believers and training workers in the local church. All have advantages and disadvantages. No matter what the method, it must include at least three ingredients to reflect biblical principles:

1. Instruction in sound doctrine.
2. Mentoring through personal contact.
3. Practical experience in ministry.

Instruction in sound doctrine is common to Bible schools of all types, but is primarily the function of a local church. Paul wrote to Titus that in the selection of bishops he should look in the local congregation for those who have been taught sound doctrine (Titus 1:9). In Acts 15 we find that the great issues of theology, in this case the admittance of Gentile believers, were discussed and decided in the context of a local assembly. The idea that ministry training should include sound doctrine is not debated. The issue is where this instruction should take place.

There is more to ministry training than instruction in facts. The Bible gives a picture of training through **mentoring relationships**. Elijah and Elisha, Moses and Joshua, Jesus and the 12, Barnabas and Saul, Paul and Timothy: It is a Bible constant. Webster says that a mentor is a wise, loyal advisor, a teacher, or a coach.

Mentoring includes the ideas of training and modeling. Jesus said that a pupil who is fully trained will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40). This means that he becomes an imitator in method and mentality. A mentor demonstrates techniques, discusses difficulties, and models values. This requires personal contact.

Ministry is more than information; it is impartation. Notice in Romans 1:11 Paul said he was longing to see the Roman Christians “that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established.” Though the very letter he was writing was inspired scripture, he said that reading it would not be

sufficient. There are some things that can only come by impartation. Some things of the Spirit are caught, not taught. Mentoring relations provide opportunity for impartation.

A third aspect of mentoring is accountability. The New Testament repeatedly exhorts us to submit to those who are over us in the Lord. This requires being related to them in a personal way. The requirements for ministry in the New Testament are primarily stated as character traits. We can never discern character by multiple-choice exams or by saying “hello” before service. There must be contact and interaction, requirements and execution, correction and amendment, in order to develop and assess character.

Practical experience in real ministry moves a student from theory to reality. The Bible student needs a place to get a first-hand picture of how church actually works. There are values, principles of human interaction, and practical skills that can only be learned on the job. Jesus sent out the twelve then critiqued them on their return. Barnabas gave Saul an opportunity at Antioch. There is a confidence that only comes with actual performance and feedback.

From conversion to harvest

The local church has an obligation to move believers through the process of growth in Christ. This process is three-fold. Most churches agree we should make converts. By instruction in the Word and a call for commitment, we make converts into disciples. We must not stop there. We must take disciples and move them into ministry, into the harvest.

Committed Christians want to fulfill their calling. They often fail to try because they do not feel competent. Competence breeds confidence. When combined with commitment to the work of God, competence and confidence produce people of real substance who will make an ongoing impact wherever they serve. This is the essence of Faith Ministry Training Institute.

Ministry Training at FMTI

Competence — Confidence — Commitment

Competence means I know what to do.

We develop competence by:

- ◆ Teaching the essentials of the Christian faith, the great truths that make us Christians.
- ◆ Exploring the distinctive practices and doctrines that mark us as a Spirit-filled, faith-driven people.
- ◆ Imparting essential skills in Bible interpretation, ministry ethics, and practical ministry expertise.

Confidence comes through experiences that tell me I can do it.

We develop confidence through:

- ◆ Mentoring in ministry experiences through personal contact with leaders and workers in the church environment.
- ◆ Giving guidance in applying principles and supplying feedback.
- ◆ Encouraging risk-taking in planning and implementing new ministry ideas with the guidance of a mentor.

Commitment is an attitude that says I will finish my course.

We inspire commitment through:

- ◆ Keeping the student committed to the local church and church family.
- ◆ Demonstrating ministerial excellence and follow-through.
- ◆ Giving opportunity to plan and implement ministry projects.

THE PLAN OF STUDY AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

FMTI: Preparation on 3 Levels

Faith Ministry Training Institute is divided into three levels of preparation. We use the term “level” instead of “year” because the courses are designed to be completed as the student is able rather than on a strict time schedule. The first, our Believers Level, consists of eight courses that are all required for graduation. Levels 2 and 3 include elective and required courses as well as guided practical experience.

Level ONE: Believers Level

The first level of training is designed to impart fundamental Christian doctrine, believer’s ministry skills, and key study skills. This is the essential foundation upon which all else is built. Every Christian who wants to be effective for God can benefit from these courses.

Requirements for completion of the Believers Level:

128 class hours with reading and assigned homework. The Believer’s Level consists of 8 courses of 16 class-hours courses each. In addition to class attendance, homework and reading assignments are required. The following 8 courses are required for completion of the Believer’s Level.

Foundations of Faith 16 hours + reading and homework. An overview of essential Christian doctrine. The inspiration of the Scriptures. How to study and interpret the Bible. The nature of God. Creation. Basics of Christology. The Fall and Redemption. Things to Come.

Christian Character for Ministry 16 hours + reading and homework. Character traits for successful ministry. The Believer’s Ministry. The meaning of faithfulness. Godly servanthood. Courage for the battle. Flow of authority. Increasing the anointing through submission. Practical helps for dealing with people.

Biblical Faith 16 hours + reading and homework.
A careful look at the Bible message concerning faith evidenced by obedience to God's Word and Spirit. The principle of confession. Faith that springs from relationship with God. Using your faith to please God and inherit Bible promises while avoiding the pitfalls of the so-called "Faith message."

Redemptive Truth 16 hours + reading and homework.
A study of what Christ has done for us. Practical methods for living in the benefits. Understanding the concept of covenant. Renewing the mind concerning the blessings inherent in the New Covenant. The believer's authority and power in the Name of Jesus. Finding a place of service in the church. Receiving the ministry gifts.

Healing Truth 16 hours + reading and homework.
Biblical basis for healing and ministry to the sick. The will of God concerning healing. Methods of administering healing. Major hindrances to healing. Understanding the healing ministry today.

Money, Ordinances, and Music 16 hours + reading and homework. Ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus, and 2 areas of confusions in Charismatic ministries. Serving the Lord's Table. Administering Water Baptism. Principles of financial stewardship and biblical Prosperity. Spirit-filled praise and worship.

Holy Spirit 16 hours + reading and homework.
The person and functions of the Holy Spirit. The new Birth compared with the Baptism of the Spirit. Supernatural manifestations of the Spirit. Operating in these manifestations as the Spirit wills. Judging prophecy and ordering the operation of the spiritual gifts. Practical helps for supernatural ministry.

Practical Ministry Skills 16 hours + reading and homework. Practical ministry to the most common needs. Preparing to minister. Ministry of the New Birth and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. Ministering to the Sick. Helping those with mental & emotional difficulties, marital difficulties, financial problems, and life-controlling habits.

Level TWO: Servant Level

The second level of training is designed to prepare the student for ministry. Emphasis is on functioning in a useful way in the local church, understanding the roles and anointing of different ministries, and following the Holy spirit in personal and ministerial life. The Servant Level student should begin to think from a ministry perspective.

Requirements for completion of the Servant level:

1. Completion of the Believer's Level.
2. Two Mentored Ministry Experiences.
3. 64 Upper Level class hours including:

Life in the Spirit 16 hours + reading and homework. Developing the believer's relationship to the Holy spirit. Sensitivity to the work of the Holy Spirit as well as the development of the human spirit. We will look at the immediate effects of the new birth, growth of the spirit person, and Christian maturity. Specific attention will be devoted to recognizing the leading of the S(s)pirit and responding to the correction of the Lord.

Panning for Gold 8 hours + reading and assignments. Verse-by-verse studies of Bible books will be regularly offered. The book will vary from term to term, but the methods will not. Each Leadership level graduate must have the experience of seeing accurate interpretation and teaching methods in practice. These courses will be acceptable as elective credit as well.

At Least one course from the following Ministry Emphasis Curriculum:

The Ministry of Helps 8 hours + reading and assignments. The necessity and importance of non-pulpit ministries. Attitudes and training. Biblical basis for the ministry of helps. Qualifications of the helps minister.

Ministry Gifts 8 hours + reading and assignments. Purpose and nature of the five-fold ministry. Keys to receiving God's blessing through the ministry gifts. Attributes and job descriptions of the Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher.

Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage 8 hours + reading and assignments. Our world is filled with people who are suffering the effects of divorce. The church reflects the society. This has caused much confusion and pain for honest believers. This course offers practical assistance to those facing divorce, contemplating remarriage or desiring to serve God but are unsure if they are qualified. Some issues addressed are: Bible grounds for divorce, ministry to problem marriages, living with an unbeliever, the pitfalls and joys of remarriage, and marriage and the Ministry.

Victory over Addiction: Ministering to alcoholics, addicts and their families 8 hours + reading and assignments. This class will help the addict stay free and find their place in the local body, help empower the family in how they can help, and help the Church become more effective in working with addicts. Some topics covered will be: What is an alcoholic? Is addiction a disease or a sin? How does addiction affect the family? How can I help my loved one? What about AA and other support groups? Requirements for recovery. What can the church do?

Preparing to Preach 8 hours + reading and assignments. The essence of ministry is the public proclamation of the Word of God. Christians are asked to do this on many levels from the home all the way to the pulpit. This class will help the student in preparation of a well-organized message. We will address the issue of stage fright and give some practical help in public speaking. The course will emphasize dependence on the Holy Spirit and give practical help in learning to flow in the anointing of the spirit.

Ministering to the Tormented 8 hours + reading and assignments. Much of ministry has to do with helping people who are in great distress. This course will explore the basis for mental and emotional torment, be it spiritual, mental, or physical. The student will learn how to discern if a person is being tormented because of a physical problem, a mental problem or a demonic entity. He will acquire skills that will assist him in helping the individual regardless of the source of the problem.

Biblical Money Dynamics 8 hours + reading and assignments. There has been great debate in the Church world over the will of God concerning financial blessing. Many books and seminars focus on sowing and giving, but fail to emphasize the reaping aspect of the spiritual law. **Rev. David Mallonee's *Biblical Money Dynamics*** seminar will help the believer to find the disconnect between their sowing and their reaping. Some of the topics covered will be: Why money flows to some and away from others? How Bible characters multiplied money. Connecting your reaping to your sowing. Your relationships and your money. And much more...

****Other Ministry Emphasis courses will be added regularly which will satisfy this requirement.**

Mentored Ministry Experiences—(Two of these are required.)
The student must make an appointment with a faculty member in order to begin this requirement. With the help of a faculty advisor, the student chooses an area of ministry in the local church. He/She then works in that area for one month, spending as much time as possible with the leader of the ministry. They become as familiar as possible with the planning necessary to carry out that leader's functions, as well as actually serving in that department as needed. At the end of the experience the student will complete and submit the MME Report (Mentored Ministry Experience Report) form to his/her faculty advisor.

Level THREE: Leadership Level

The third level of training is aimed at the person making preparation to step into full-time ministry or serve in leadership in the local assembly. The student will focus on effective leadership and ministry skills.

Requirements for the completion of the Leadership Level:

1. Completion of Levels ONE and TWO.
2. One Ministry Leadership Project.
3. 32 Upper Level class hours including:

Planning for Success 8 hours + reading and assignments. Good ideas are plentiful. Turning them into reality is rare. We need to know if the idea is from God and how to take effective action to bring it to pass. Students will learn to discern the leading of God, set godly priorities, make good decisions and use time wisely. In addition you will learn a simple method for organizing, planning, and implementing a project that will work for you at home, at church, and on the job. This is a primer course in ministry project management.

Ethical Ministry Management 8 hours + reading and assignments. God wants your ministry to be clean. A primer on handling money in ministry. Avoiding the appearance of evil. Leading without manipulating. Safety with the opposite sex. Basic principles of church government.

Ministry Leadership Project

Each Leadership Level student will be required to plan and implement an individual ministry project. This will entail praying and receiving an idea for ministry from God, writing the vision and the plan, recruiting and training personnel, raising financial support, coordinating with the local church, and carrying out the project. Each step will be carried out in collaboration with a Faculty Advisor.

Other courses and opportunities may be offered at any time as the Lord directs. Outside speakers with special expertise will be used as they are available. God has given us a framework and a direction. We reserve the right to be flexible within that framework.

Course Prerequisites

All courses are designed to “stand alone.” That means you may enroll in any course without having taken any previous course. It is best to begin in the beginning, but not required. All Servant and Leadership Level courses may be taken at any time by any matriculated FMTI student. An FMTI student is considered to be matriculated when he/she has paid his/her enrollment fee and enrolled in at least one first level course.

Electives

There are many other Servant and Leadership Level courses not included as specific requirements for completion of either level. These courses are regarded as electives and may be applied to the total hour requirements for the Servant and Leadership Levels.

Enrollment Information

Costs

Enrollment fee — Every student who wishes to be enrolled as an FMTI student pays a one-time only enrollment fee. The student is considered to be an FMTI student from that time forward.

Tuition and Books — Tuition includes complete course syllabus and study notes. Books are in addition to tuition and will be available at the beginning of classes. Books are discounted for FMTI students.

Financial Aid — Students needing to make special financial arrangements should speak to the personnel at enrollment or to the director.

Course Enrollment

Enrollment begins approximately two weeks prior to the start of each course. Applications and fees may be turned in at the enrollment table or to the designated FMTI coordinator. Enrollment closes at end of business the day prior to the beginning of the class.

Auditing of Classes

All courses may be taken on a not-for-credit basis. The students will be granted admission to class and receive all course material, as well as being able to buy texts at student prices. The auditing student will not be required to turn in homework or take tests. Attendance will not be monitored. Auditing requirements are different for each level.

Believers Level Auditors — All auditing students must complete an application and pay the one-time enrollment fee. Then they can audit any course at the regular tuition. If they decide to convert to regular student status they may do so within the first two weeks of the course.

Servant and Leadership Level Auditors — Auditors who have paid the one-time enrollment fee for the Believers Level may audit any course at regular tuition rates. Auditors who do not wish to pay the enrollment fee may incur a surcharge in addition to regular tuition for each course. No student file will be kept and the auditor may not convert to regular student status.

Class Schedule

Schedules are flexible and will be announced via church bulletins and FMTI mailing lists. Schedule information is available from the FMTI coordinator and Church calendar.

Contact:

Pastor Virgil Stokes
PO Box 90314
Tucson, AZ 85752
pastorvirgil@abundantheart.org
520-792-3238

Or find us on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.abundantheart.org>

Faith Ministry Training Institute

Student Requirement Check List

Believers Level

- Completed Enrollment Form
- Complete homework and reading for all 8 Level One courses
 - ⇒ Foundations of Faith
 - ⇒ Christian Character for Ministry
 - ⇒ Holy Spirit
 - ⇒ Biblical Faith
 - ⇒ Redemptive Truth
 - ⇒ Practical Ministry Skills
 - ⇒ Money, Ordinances, and Music
 - ⇒ Healing Truth

Servant Level

- Completed Believers Level
- Contact Faculty regarding Mentored Ministry Experience
 - ⇒ Choose 2 areas of ministry
 - ⇒ Clear with Faculty Advisor
 - ⇒ Contact leaders of chosen ministries for training and scheduling
 - ⇒ Complete 2 MME Report forms and turn them in to Faculty
- Complete all class work for 64 hours of Upper Level courses
 - ⇒ Life in the Spirit (16 hours)
 - ⇒ Panning for Gold (8 hours)
 - ⇒ One class from the Ministry Emphasis Curriculum
 - ⇒ 32 additional hours (4 courses) of Upper Level coursework

Leadership Level

- Complete Believers Level
- Complete Servant Level
- Contact Faculty regarding Ministry Leadership Project
 - ⇒ Turn in proposal
 - ⇒ Amend proposal after consultation with Advisor
 - ⇒ Complete and write up project as assigned by Advisor
- Complete all class work for 32 hours of Upper Level courses
 - ⇒ Planning for Success (8 hours)
 - ⇒ Ethical Ministry Management (8 hours)
 - ⇒ 16 additional hours (2 courses) of Upper Level coursework

