**Title: Under the Mango Tree: Pentecostal Leadership Training in Africa**

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**Article Abstract**:
Lessons under the mango tree have served Africa for generations. These lessons are still useful for this contemporary era, and in fact, are found to be in harmony with a Pentecostal model of training. The purpose of this paper is not to provide a prescriptive list of methodologies as to how leaders might be trained; rather, it is to identify and describe a set of values that should inform the ways we approach leadership training. These values are described in three dimensions that can serve as a leadership map for effective Pentecostal leadership training in Africa. First, Pentecostal leadership training must be contextual; second, it should utilize experiential learning methods patterned after traditional ways of instruction and biblical principles; third, it must understand its' missional *raison d'être*, and fourth, it should foster a culture of the Spirit leading to transformational outcomes. As the paper progresses, attention will be placed on positive aspects of relevant leadership and negative aspects to be avoided.

**Keywords:**
Pentecostal training; leadership training; theological training; experiential training; cultural transmission; transformation; participatory learning; African leadership patterns; African training models; African Pentecostalism; African indigenous education; missional leadership; holistic learning practice.

# UNDER THE MANGO TREE: PENTECOSTAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN AFRICA

**John L. Easter**[1]

## Introduction

On any given day on the campus of the Assemblies of God School of Theology in Lilongwe, Malawi, you will find students gathered together under a mango tree discussing theological matters and how they apply to their life and ministry in the world in which they live.

As a missionary educator it did not take long to discover the significance of the mango tree in the life of the African. The mango tree serves as a focal point for the community, a place of decision-making by village elders, under whose branches refuge from the heat and the rain is provided. Beneath its shade relationships are reinforced, dialogue transpires, and networking occurs—the place where nourishment can be found, and where history transmitted and remembered becomes part of oral tradition. There are many notable trees in Africa, but this one has become an important symbol to daily life.

The mango tree also serves as a formal and informal classroom of training. The relationship between the mango tree and the student has formed an iconic description of African learning patterns. Even the effects of urbanization and globalization felt in African society have not changed this dynamic. Classrooms made of concrete blocks can be found with blackboards, desks, and electrical outlets in the urban centers; nevertheless the continued presence of students under the mango tree requires a regular assessment of training models and expectations sensitive to local traditional culture within a rapidly changing world. Pentecostal leadership training is not exempt.

The need for Pentecostal leadership training in Africa quickly became apparent in the wake of the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism that transpired throughout the world in the 20th century, which shows no sign of dissipation.[2] It did not take long for national leaders and missionaries to realize that a growing continental constituency required many well-trained pastors, evangelists, and church planters to direct and strengthen a young, vibrant, and emerging church.[3] Naturally, Pentecostal missionaries from the West, including from within the

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[2] J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit: Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa," *African Christianity: An African Story*, ed. Ogbu U. Kalu (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press Inc., 2007), 339–355. See also Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1995); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, rev. and exp. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 8–9. For statistical information on the growth of the world Pentecostal movement, cf. *The World Christian Database,* Center for the Study of Global Christianity, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd.

[3] Interview with George Flattery (February, 2009). This growth includes the regions of Latin America and Asia. See Melvin L. Hodges, "Training the Worker" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mission

Assemblies of God, applied their Western approaches of leadership training to higher learning in order to fulfill the Great Commission. Educational methods, curriculum, and structures exported from the West became the models by which leadership training would be primarily defined.[4]

Like other Pentecostal movements, the Assemblies of God established institutions dedicated to theological, doctrinal, and practical commitments.[5] Paul Lewis describes the Pentecostal training approach as a holistic model emphasizing: *1) orthodoxy,* right belief; 2) *orthopraxis*, right action; and 3) *orthopathy*, right experience.[6] For Pentecostals this model serves as a paradigm for life and in theory carries over to Pentecostal leadership training.[7] However, while acknowledging the contribution of Pentecostals by emphasizing the role of *orthopathy* in the equation, the question remains: Does this go far enough to produce effective Pentecostal ministers within their local settings?

Reflecting on the importation of the Western model of leadership among non-Western peoples, Alan R. Johnson identifies two problematic assumptions: (1) the belief that methodologically we can communicate content and tell people how to lead and this will change their actual practice, and (2) that principles of leadership are primarily universal and therefore one does not have to pay too much attention to the impact of local culture and social organization.[8] Underlying the second assumption, according to Johnson, is a "one-size-fits-all strategy that takes whatever the current hot principles and techniques are from a particular spot

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Executives Retreat at Winona Lake, October, 1956, Heritage Center archives of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, MO, 1–7). Also see Carl Malz, "The Philosophy of Overseas Theological Education" (Heritage Center archives of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, MO; paper first published in *Central Bible College Bulletin* (August, 1970): 1–7). Recent projections provided by the 2007 Report by the *Annual World Statistics Research Office* of the Africa Department of the *Assemblies of God World Missions* U.S.A. indicates 232 Pentecostal Bible Schools and extension centers have been established since the origin of the Assemblies of God movement in Africa; also cited on the Africa department website: http://www.worldmissions.ag.org/regions/africa/.

[4]Alice E. Grant, *Theological Education in India: Leadership Development for the Indian or Western Church?* PhD dissertation, Biola University, 1999. Also see, David G. Scanlon, "Conflicting Traditions in African Education," in *Tradition of African Education*, ed. David G. Scanlon (New York: Teachers College Press, 1964), 4.

[5]Miguel Alvarez notes six aspects of this commitment drawing on elements listed in the Catalog 1998–2000 of the *Asian Seminary of Christian Ministries,* Manila, Philippines, in identifying foundational elements in Pentecostal education. Pentecostal education is: (1) passionate for God, (2) aims towards the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the life of students, (3) rooted in sound biblical doctrine, (4) aims towards efficacious service and academics, (5) is dynamic, critical, and creative, and (6) is missiologically involved. Alvarez recognizes these qualities as integral to Pentecostal theological education; cf. Miguel Alvarez, "Distinctives of Pentecostal Education," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, no. 2 (July 2000): 283.

[6]Paul W. Lewis, "Explorations in Pentecostal Theological Education," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 10, no. 2 (July 2007): 168. Lewis describes *orthodoxy* as setting the boundaries for experience and work; *orthopraxis* supplies action to belief and experience/passion; and *orthopathy* grants the heart and life to belief and work. Also see Stephen J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 32–47, and Jackie David Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit: The Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis," in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999), 75–79.

[7]Lewis, ibid.

[8]Alan R. Johnson, "An Anthropological Approach to the Study of Leadership: Lessons Learned on Improving Leadership Practice," *Transformation* 24, nos. 3 and 4 (July and October, 2007): 213–221.

in the world and markets them as the answer to the leadership woes of another completely different social setting."[9]

Toward the end of the twentieth century, studies in anthropology and missiology increasingly informed missionaries of the necessity to "contextualize the gospel into the indigenous culture and develop culturally-appropriate methods and ministry structures."[10] Among Assemblies of God educators in Africa, both national and Western, a growing concern hovers over how a contextual model of training can instill leadership qualities valued by one's national church and larger cultural community, resulting in effectual leaders in a rapidly changing world. Does the theological educative process prepare students to be leaders who can appropriately transfer knowledge to real-life situations? In what way can Pentecostal training assist students to know and love God in a way that addresses the whole individual? Moreover, does the spiritual environment foster a consciousness of the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the educative process, impacting student's values, beliefs, and behaviors as they are transformed in the light of biblical truth?

The purpose of this paper is not to provide a prescriptive list of methodologies as to how leaders might be trained; rather, it is to identify and describe a set of values that should inform the ways we approach leadership training. These values will be described in three dimensions that can serve as a leadership map for effective Pentecostal leadership training in Africa. First, Pentecostal leadership training must be contextual; second, it should utilize experiential learning methods patterned after traditional ways of instruction and biblical principles; third, it must understand its missional *raison d'être*; and last, it should foster a culture of the Spirit leading to transformational outcomes. As the paper progresses, attention will be placed on positive aspects of relevant leadership and negative aspects to be avoided.

## PART 1
## IF THE MANGO TREE COULD SPEAK:
### Pentecostal Leadership Training as Contextual

A fundamental lesson of the mango tree teaches that training does not take place in a contextual vacuum. As Judith Lingenfelter observes, "Every training or educational situation has a cultural context of teaching and learning."[11] Culture exists in a contextual framework, and serves as the inextricable component of both individual and social identity.[12] It is an integrated system of learned patterns of behavior, beliefs, and values characteristic of a given society.[13]

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[9]Ibid., 213.

[10]Beth Grant, "Theological Education in the Twenty-first Century: Re-evaluating some Basic Assumptions," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* (2003), handout, 1.

[11]Judith E. Lingenfelter and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Learning and Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 17.

[12]Timothy Reagan, *Non-Western Educational Traditions: Indigenous Approaches to Educational Thought and Practice*, 3rd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 32.

[13]Paul G. Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 33–37. There are disagreements among social and cultural anthropologist as to an agreed-upon definition of *culture*. The definition provided is a simplified one, yet underscores that culture is *transmitted* and *learned,* and significantly impacts the educational process.

Using the analogy of computer programming, Hofstede and Hofstede suggest that "layers of culture" correspond to categories in our mental programming—each layer representing a critical dimension in how individuals learn, perceive, and live life.[14] In reference to the educative and cultural process, the noted anthropologist George Spindler argues that culture is "a continuing dialogue that revolves around pivotal areas of concern in a given community."[15]

An inquiry into how culture is transmitted has enamored anthropologists and cross-cultural educators.[16] In every cultural setting, techniques are utilized to strengthen cultural norms and expectations, such as reward, modeling, imitation, play, dramatization, verbal instruction, and storytelling.[17] Education is a major cultural system employed in this regard.[18] As such, the vehicle of training serves to bring conformity into the existing cultural system, and to reinforce traditional values held dear by a community.[19]

Education has also become the means to bring about change within cultural systems. Since the era of modernity and globalization this has been especially true in third-world contexts like that of Africa, where societies are under increasing pressure to align with global market forces, expanding information technology and mass communication.[20] African educators Adeyemi and Adeyinka observe that as African "society becomes more highly urbanised and

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[14]Geert Hofstede and Gert Jan Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*: *Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 10–11. Hofstede describes the layers of culture as making up the following dimensions: (1) a national level, according to one's country (or countries for migrating peoples); (2) a regional level and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation; (3) a gender level; (4) a generational level; (5) a social class level; and (6) a level for the way employees have been socialized by their work organization.

[15]George Spindler and Louise Spindler, "Ethnography: An Anthropological View," in *Education and Cultural Process: Anthropological Approaches*, 3rd ed., ed. George Spindler (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 52.

[16]Solon T. Kimball, *Culture and the Educative Process: An Anthropological Perspective* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1975), 139.

[17]See George Spindler, "The Transmission of Culture," in *Education and Cultural Process: Anthropological Approaches*, 3rd ed., ed. George Spindler (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1997), 275–309.

[18]Ibid., 276.

[19]Ibid., 302–303. Spindler observes that this is true in the case of cultural transmission among both societies that have experienced no input from the outside, and those societies that have had massive input from the outside. Naturally, however, the ability for traditional educative methods to transmit cultural values, behaviors, beliefs, and expectations resulting in the guarding and maintenance of traditional ways is altered to the degree of exposure to the outside in this era of globalization. As Spindler remarks, "There are, however, virtually no culturally systems left in the world that have not experienced massive input from the outside, particularly from the West. This is the age of transformation. Nearly all tribal societies and peasant villages are being affected profoundly by modernization" (302).

[20]Yeboah Kwame, "The Impact of Globalization on African Culture," University of Southern Denmark, Odense: website http://www.csus.edu/org/capcr/documents/archives/2006/conferenceproceedings/kwame.pdf. Also see Heidi Hadsell, "Theological Education for a Globalized World," *The Ecumenical Review* 56, no. 1 (January 2004): 128–135; and Sarojini Nadar, "Contextual Theological Education in Africa and the Challenge of Globalization," *The Ecumenical Review* 59, no. 2–3 (April-July, 2007): 235–241.

detribalised, particularly in an age of science and technology, the process of education becomes more complex."[21] The training systems increasingly become negotiators of modernization and "intentional agents of cultural discontinuity" which do not value cultural norms, nor reinforce traditional values historically adhered to.[22] Consequently, consternation has been fueled on two sides of the educational debate—one side holding solely to indigenous models resulting in hyper-nationalization, and the other decidedly for Western forms of education, a drift from cultural sensitivity.

In addressing theological education in general for the twenty-first century, Beth Grant challenges commonly held assumptions that she identifies as implicit in missiological literature from the 1970s through the 1990s: (1) Western and indigenous are mutually exclusive categories which can be identified, (2) indigenous methods are inherently more effective in a non-Western missions context than Western ones, and (3) Western methods are inherently less effective in a non-Western missions context than indigenous ones.[23]

Grant refers to three developments that support her thesis. First, nations in the two-thirds world increasingly reflect a complex blend of cultural and historical influences, and "as a result, the lines of whether certain aspects of education are actually imported Western or indigenous can become blurred over time."[24] Secondly, many nations have adopted and utilized aspects of Western education in an effective manner. Grant comments, "Many of those systems, including educational ones, were adopted long ago by non-Western nations and are now associated with a globally competitive education."[25] Last, it cannot be assumed where a visible Western system has been adopted in a non-Western culture that transmission of *non-visible* values and the dynamic of leadership development have not transpired.[26]

If this is accurate, then Pentecostal leadership training must develop creative and integrated approaches that are responsible to contextualize the content, methods, and structures of a local contextual framework, while simultaneously allowing values and principles of biblical leadership to influence local leadership development. While taking into account the observations of Grant noted above, Johnson stresses the need for contextual leadership training by pointing out two possible dangers:

> The result of non-contextualized training when combined with the natural tendency to default to our local cultural values is to have leaders that are both *too contextual* (in that they embrace leadership values and patterns from the non-Christian, secular culture) and at the same time *not contextualized enough* (in that they embrace values and patterns learned in

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[21]Michael B. Adeyemi and Augustus A. Adeyinka, "The Principles and Content of African Traditional Education," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 35, no. 4 (2003): 428.

[22]Spindler, 302.

[23]Beth Grant, 2.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., 2–3. Grant underscores the deep sorrow in historical travesties in how Western systems were forcefully imposed upon non-Western cultures, but submits that if theological education is to be viable in the twenty-first century, there must be recognition that history cannot be altered and present realities cannot be ignored.

[26]Ibid., 3.

their W[estern] education that cause them to miss/ignore/reject local cultural solutions) (emphasis mine).[27]

## African Socio-Cultural Considerations

While African societies are quite diverse, and patterns of traditional African education can vary, there are many shared characteristics. Citing J. P. Ocitti, Adeyemi and Adeyinka list five foundations or principles of African traditional education.[28] The first foundation of *preparationism* implies that the role of learning is to equip students for their distinctive roles in society, typically gender-based. Second is the related foundation of *functionalism*, which is participatory education, taught through imitation, initiation ceremonies, work, play, and oral tradition. The third foundation of indigenous African education, *communalism,* emphasizes an individual student's relationship to the community. This foundation is non-negotiable, and underscores one's loyalty to the group over self. The community has a stake in the upbringing of the student, and therefore plays a key role in the training process. *Perennialism* constitutes the fourth foundation. Traditional communities in Africa perceived of education as a means to preserve the cultural heritage, and as a result progression was discouraged. Last, African indigenous education systems are *holistic* or multiple learning. The holistic nature of African learning models enable students to acquire a variety of skills necessary to take care of the whole life. For the most part, African learning patterns were not specialized nor fragmented, but concerned for the whole person: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

### *African Learning Styles*

A responsibility of Pentecostal trainers is to seek to understand how best their students learn. Citing research by Bowen and Bowen, Murriel McCulley provides eight characteristics of African learning styles: (1) they are sensitive to what others think, (2) they value interpersonal relationships, (3) they are socially oriented collectivists rather than individualists, (4) they seek social reinforcement, (5) they have a high regard for authority, (6) gender and age roles are often rigid and culturally determined, (7) they are not analytical in approach to problem solving, and (8) they value social acceptance over autonomy. [29] The learning styles listed above highlight both community and holism in the educational process.

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[27]Alan R. Johnson, "Why We Need Contextualized Leadership," in *MCS 932 Contextualized Leadership Training: Course Study Guide*, 1st ed. (Assemblies of God Theological Seminary). Regarding the first danger, Elliston comments, "Leadership is nearly always closely tied to local cultural models. With this close association the Christian distinctive are often compromised." See Edgar J. Elliston, *Home Grown Leaders* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992), 11. This issue leads to another major tributary: the process that governs how we select our leaders. Elliston addresses this consequential issue stating, "Our leadership selection processes closely follow the dominant patterns in our culture as do the selection processes in other cultures. That may be why some of our "Christian" leaders look and act like leaders in other social organizations in our societies but ail in the issues of ministry and spirituality" (20).

[28]Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 431–436. Also see J. P. Ocitti, *African Indigenous Education: As Practiced by the Acholi of Uganda* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973). These foundational principles they believe generally apply to all African societies.

[29]Murriell G. McCulley, *Beyond the Classroom: Teach for Life* (Springfield, MO: Life Publishers International, 2008), 53. McCulley cites D. N. Bowen and E. A. Bowen, "What Does It Mean to Think, Learn,

In a reflective statement related to the characteristics of traditional African education, McCulley offers a challenge to theological educators in Africa:

> It now becomes the responsibility of teaching institutions across Africa to create a safe learning environment that will incorporate the holistic, interconnectedness of the African learning styles. Classes must allow space for the learner to see his or herself embedded in the learning process and not separate from it. Classes need to move away from teaching that promotes acquisition of knowledge without living out what is being learned.[30]

Pentecostal leadership training does not take place in a contextual vacuum. The impetus behind effective instruction requires sensitivity to a larger cultural setting.

### The Hidden Curriculum—The Unseen Factor

Leadership training in Africa is composed of more than the explicit curriculum and classroom activities.[31] The African student brings to class a framework of values and beliefs formed by life experiences.[32] "If we think about education as the entire process of cultural transmission, schooling with its formal curriculum is a very small part," states Judith Lingenfelter.[33]

Cross-cultural educators, like Lingenfelter, emphasize that the training process always occurs in a larger cultural context.[34] This larger context is referred to as the "hidden curriculum." [35] Lingenfelter defines hidden curriculum as "the cultural learning that surround the much smaller 'stated curriculum' of schooling. This hidden curriculum is 'caught' rather than 'taught.'"[36] How educators apply the principles of the explicit curriculum to practical issues that emerge from a student's larger context becomes the challenge. All the more problematic can be recognizing two dimensions of the hidden curriculum in a cross-cultural setting, namely, both the teacher and students are blinded to their cultural values and habits. The unseen factor in the educative process is the cultural agenda at work in a learning environment.

When applying this knowledge to leadership training, Johnson asserts:

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Teach?" (Paper presented at the Manila Consultation on Two-Thirds World Missionary Training, Manila, Philippines, July 8–11, 1989).

[30]Ibid., 54.

[31]Beth Grant, 3; Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter, 28–34.

[32]McCulley, 54.

[33]Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter, 28.

[34]Ibid.

[35]See Philip Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968). Jackson originally used the term. Also see John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: MacMillan, 1938), 18. Dewey references the concept of hidden curriculum without using the terminology.

[36]Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter, 28.

> From a training perspective, what the role of implicit knowledge in leadership means is that when we teach paradigmatic knowledge from another sociocultural setting or even from within the very context we are working in, we are only touching the tip of the iceberg.[37]

Effectual leadership training must work at mining the implicit knowledge from the deep layers of a student's cultural setting. In Johnson's estimation, "we cannot teach someone to be a good leader if we have no clue as to what good leadership looks and functions like in that particular sociocultural setting."[38] In so doing, this allows for trainers to ask the right questions and dig in the right places before beginning the leadership training process.[39]

Yet, as stated earlier, the challenge for educators is how to apply the principles of the explicit curriculum related to leadership values to practical issues that emerge from a student's sociocultural setting. The task of training effective local leaders requires that educators must find ways to sensitize and provide skills in mining the implicit values in their context and bring them into conscious thought.[40] Johnson's assertion that "it is precisely those people who are able to step outside of themselves and reflect on leadership behavior in the light of idealized cultural preferences . . . who are able to devise strategies of action that are fruitful for task accomplishment."[41] The way forward may be for Pentecostal educators to implement an informal and formal reflective process that encourages personal and group reflection activities related to leadership issues.[42] According to Kirk Franklin, we must "intentionally develop reflective thinkers—a pool of general reflective practitioners . . . we want to encourage all our leaders to make time to read and think reflectively."[43]

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[37]Johnson, 217.

[38]Ibid., 219.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid., 220.

[41]Ibid. Johnson argues that such people become valuable sources for learning the implicit values in that individual's cultural setting; this includes not just their behavior, but the conditions and circumstances behind the behavioral pattern.

[42]Reflective processes should include personal and group reflection activities, including the sharing of personal and organizational narrative, which allows individual and corporate experiences to be shared. This impacts the depth and breadth of the reflective activity allowing for a more effective "mining" in leadership practice that is more non-discursive.

[43]Kirk Franklin, "Leading in Mission at a Higher Level: How to Become a Reflective Practitioner in Mission Leadership," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (October 2009): 417.

## PART 2
## SHAKING THE MANGO TREE:
## Pentecostal Leadership Training as Experiential

Learning under the mango tree is experiential. Instruction must go beyond mere verbal instruction, and employ pedagogical methods that teach more than "mangos are good to eat." At the right time, a teacher must climb the mango tree in front of their students and shake its branches so that mangos fall to the earthy ground where they stand. Afterwards, the students must climb the mango tree for themselves.

Adeyemi and Adeyinka stress that while some indigenous African education was formal, the greater portion of training was informal.[44] Storytelling, modeling, imitation, play, and dramatization characterized an informal mode of education. Moreover, whether formal or informal, indigenous training was holistic, involving the physical, social, and spiritual aspects of a student's environment.[45]

One of the challenges of effective leadership training is helping students understand the relationship between the content of what they are learning and their everyday lives.[46] In order to do this successfully, a commitment to incarnational and participatory learning must take place.

### Incarnational Learning

The learning process in a cross-cultural setting should begin with the teacher and not the students. A significant lesson of the hidden curriculum teaches that the explicit curriculum forms only a small part of what students must learn to be effective ministers of the gospel.[47] For this to happen, the teacher must become a pupil of the hidden curriculum so that new values, beliefs, and patterns are learned and utilized to empower the teaching process by taking on an Incarnational approach to teaching.

#### *God's Pedagogical Approach*

The starting point of incarnational teaching begins with the example of Jesus Christ. While social and anthropological studies assist our engagement of culture, our primary instruction comes from learning how Christ engaged humanity's frame of reference. In His incarnate state, Christ as Teacher demonstrated qualities of a true learner, motivated by a deep-rooted love to genuinely know others (Phil. 2:4–8).

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[44]Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 435.

[45]Ibid., 433–434.

[46]Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, "Effective Theological Education for World Evangelization," in *Lausanne Occasional Paper* no. 57 (2004): 3.2.c.

[47]Lingenfelter and Lingenfelter, 33.

The incarnational model is a key for Pentecostal leadership training.[48] Incarnation speaks to the activity of laying down one's own prerogatives. It is an act of self-denial that demonstrates a servant's heart and "most of all a test of the veracity of one's love."[49] God in Christ was able to fully identify with humanity. In becoming man, Jesus provided a pattern for Pentecostal educators to rely upon the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as one engages the larger cultural framework of others (Phil. 2:6–8).[50]

Throughout His life, Christ exhibited a growing knowledge of His surroundings in a cross-cultural environ.[51] Consequently, He was able to employ an extensive teaching repertoire intended to instruct His students in meaningful ways that applied to real-life issues of ordinary people to whom His disciples were called to serve. Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers see two significant implications about Jesus' incarnational ministry. First, Jesus came as a helpless infant. Christ did not engage humanity as a fully developed adult, nor as an expert in cultural anthropology. Second, Jesus was a learner. He had to learn a language, culture, and lifestyles.[52] Whether in cross-cultural settings or within one's own cultural framework, Pentecostal educators should assume a humble disposition in the pedagogical task as part of the developmental process. Like Christ, the teacher commits to an Incarnational model of education through an intentional lifestyle of learning.

Charles Kraft supports this model of ministry. Kraft lists three characteristics in the communicative process of Christ's teaching ministry: (1) to love communicationally is to put oneself to whatever inconvenience necessary to assure that the receptors understand, (2) to identify and interact in a personal way, and (3) to ensure that one's messages are presented with a high degree of impact.[53] Kraft argues that these distinctive elements provide the basis by how Christ, as God incarnate, engaged humanity's all-embracing life context.[54] These rudiments highlight that verbal communication, although important, is only part of the pedagogical process.

*Illustration: Incarnational Learning in Malawi*

As a Pentecostal educator in Malawi, the importance of being an Incarnational learner quickly became apparent. Teaching in Malawi comes with certain cultural expectations—

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[48]Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 91–110; Charles H. Kraft, *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, revised edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 1–10.

[49]Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 25. It is the model the Apostle Paul adopted as he traversed Roman Empire preaching the gospel and planting the Church, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:22–23).

[50]Kraft, 5.

[51]Dan Lambert, *Teaching That Makes A Difference: How to Teach for Holistic Impact* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 15.

[52]Lingenfelter and Mayers, 16–17.

[53]Kraft, 15–19.

[54]Ibid., 15.

whether one is a national or an expatriate. In many ways, the effectiveness of meeting educational objectives greatly hinges upon how students perceive these expectations are met. Malawian students distinguish their teachers as fathers or mothers—as rooted in the traditional way Malawian children are raised by their biological parents, extended family, and the community.

An American cultural upbringing of individualism was in conflict with this expectation. This kind of relationship comes with responsibility and obligations to be fulfilled, which can be misunderstood if not interpreted within the larger context of their traditional rearing. Malawians have many mothers and fathers, so why should their teachers not also relate to them in this manner? By engaging the larger context more deeply to understand this hidden dynamic, and by being a learner of new cultural values and expectations, my feelings changed. At the heart of this cultural layer was the students' desire to be acknowledged, and to acquire knowledge and advice. In turn they provided loyalty, admiration, and respect.

Teachers who want to communicate effectively with Malawian students must not be tied to time or proximity. The teacher who learns to relax and enjoy relationships with students will find that time spent this way enables and fortifies relationships key in the educational process. A model for teaching leadership principles drawn from biblical patterns of Incarnational ministry emerges. Pentecostal leadership training should embrace Incarnational-oriented commitments on every level.

## Participatory Learning

An important paradigm shift in training leaders allows for students to be partners in cooperative learning. This takes place through experiential methods resulting in reflective engagement of the subject matter and its relationship to everyday life. Chet Meyers and Thomas Jones promote participatory learning as "active learning."[55] According to Meyers and Jones, active learning derives from two basic assumptions: (1) that learning by nature is an active endeavor, and (2) that different people learn in different ways.[56] They provide two supporting corollaries: "First, that students learn best when applying subject matter—in other words, learning by doing—and second, that teachers who rely exclusively on any one teaching approach often fail to get through to significant numbers of students."[57]

Jesus employed the active learning model as He trained the disciples. His teaching repertoire went beyond didactic instruction and included storytelling, the use of proverbs, Socratic dialogue, group discussion, modeling, and group exercises. Likewise, Pentecostal

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[55]Chet Meyers and Thomas B. Jones, *Promoting Active Learning: Strategies for the College Classroom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), 3–11.

[56]Ibid., xi. Also see Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple* Intelligences (New York: Basic Books, 1983), and Thomas Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*, 2nd ed. (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2000). Gardner, an educational psychologist, challenged the educational establishment, and charged that Western culture had too narrowly defined intelligence. His research has proposed nine possible forms of intelligence. Thomas Armstrong strongly supports this theory and calls for experiential learning methodologies to be incorporated in classrooms of learning recognizing that people respond differently to various stimuli in the learning process.

[57]Ibid.

educators should seek to augment their teaching tactics by finding creative ways that create a more dynamic experience for their students in engaging and practical ways.

*Experiential Learning*

To enhance the learning process, Pentecostal leadership training must incorporate opportunities for students to put knowledge, attitudes, and skills to work in practical everyday settings. Experiential learning promotes a praxis-oriented learning process where serious reflection occurs in the life of the student who struggles with the tension between theory and practice in the context of community and society.

Pentecostal leadership training in Africa must also be conscious to allow for this learning to be communal—inclusive of the teacher to ensure supervision, encouragement, and evaluation. This cultural dimension strengthens the praxis-oriented approach of instruction in the African cultural context, and naturally reflects a Pentecostal ethos in the teaching process.

*Holistic approaches.* The African worldview consists of an integrated thinking pattern, which incorporates all aspects of life—the volitional, emotional, intellectual, social, physical, and spiritual. Africans perceive all of these dimensions as a natural whole. Unlike the Western worldview that compartmentalizes life and thinks in strictly linear patters, the African approach to life appreciates how these aspects interrelate and impact the value of daily existence.

This reality should inform Pentecostal leadership training. To employ a holistic approach for training leaders the process must consider the entire person. Dan Lambert advocates, "The idea is to teach individuals in the way God has created us, as whole beings made in his image, rather than fragmented parts."[58] This type of educational approach addresses the felt needs of students in a deep and meaningful way. According to Einike Pilli, "Educating the whole person means that learning is much more than individual cognitive activity and that becoming a good professional in the area of theology and Christian ministry means much more than simply knowing facts."[59]

According to Johnson, for educators who really want to assist local leaders to reflect and improve their leadership practice "it will require grappling holistically with leadership as perceived and practised in real-life settings to produce conceptual insights grounded in local understandings."[60]

*Active learning environment.* Creating an active learning environment promotes an engaging context for students to process the subject matter in different ways. An active learning environment must provide a safe context, and encourages student and cultural learning styles. Meyers and Jones suggests four elements to create a workable active learning environment: (1) clarifying course objectives and content, (2) creating a positive classroom tone, (3) coping with

[58]Lambert, 17.

[59]Einike Pilli, "Toward a Holistic View of Theological Education," *Common Ground Journal* 3, no. 1 (Fall, 2005): 92. http://www.commongroundjournal.org (accessed February 10, 2009). Also see Linda Cannell, *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church* (Newburgh, IN: Edcot Press, 2006 )270–305.

[60]Johnson, 216.

teaching space, and (4) knowing more about our students.[61] This kind of workable learning environment, however, requires diligent planning and flexibility.
Pentecostal educators should seek to create a dynamic and creative environment that provides safety for students to learn according to their individual and cultural learning styles. According to Jane Vella, “safety is a principle linked to respect for learners as decision makers of their own learning.”[62] Vella suggests five components to create an environment of safety for learners: (1) trust in the competence of the design and the teacher, (2) trust in the feasibility and relevance of the objectives, (3) allow small groups to find their voices, (4) trust in the sequence of activities, and (5) realize that the environment is nonjudgmental. This environment must not be static, but rather adapt and fit the needs of students based on contextual factors.

For Pentecostal leadership training, however, the primary factor of creating an active learning environment is reliance upon the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit enables the educative process supernaturally on a level deeper than any human activity can provide on its own. This requires Pentecostal administration and faculty to create a culture of the Spirit in the educative process. To borrow terminology from Paulo Freire, there must be a *conscientization*,[63] or an awakening of Pentecostal consciousness in the leadership training activity, of the Holy Spirit’s divine presence in the classroom. If the act of conscientization matures in developing a classroom of the Spirit in our leadership training, as a result it will be the most significant pedagogical tool in the Pentecostal educator’s tool-belt.

*A classroom of the Spirit.* To create a classroom of the Spirit, a Pentecostal teacher must be conscious of a third Presence in the classroom, and ask for the Holy Spirit to preside over the educational process. To be mindful of the Holy Spirit’s role in the task of leadership training is to acknowledge the Spirit’s omnipresent and omniscient activity in pedagogical task. The Holy Spirit fully understands the teacher, students, and the hidden curriculum.

Pentecostal educators anticipate that the Holy Spirit will communicate in the classroom. The Spirit is not silent, but speaks to both teacher and student, working in hearts and minds to bring illumination, conviction, and assurance. The communication process includes both vertical and horizontal dimensions. The Pentecostal teacher should be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit when covering subject matter, and encourage students to do likewise as they reflect and interact with the content of the course. Built within the explicit curriculum must be an allowance for God to interject and bridge the gap between theory and life.

A classroom of the Spirit is truly an active learning environment. The purpose goes beyond education itself, and points to a more important goal for the classroom experience—transformation.[64] As such, an acute urgency within this environment drives home the practical application questions as the Spirit works effectually in student’s lives.

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[61]Meyers and Jones, 33–56.

[62]Jane Vella, *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Press, 2002), 8–10.

[63]Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1993).

[64]Roy B. Zuck, *Spirit-Filled Teaching: The Power of the Holy Spirit in Your Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 159.

## PART 3
## FROM THE MANGO TREE TO THE NATIONS:
### Pentecostal Leadership Training as Missional Transformation

Perhaps the most remarkable factor of African indigenous education relates to functionalism. It is not enough for students to sit under the shade of the mango tree discussing the content of the day's lessons. Moreover, when education is defined as a functional process designed to equip people with useful skills, a critical element must be introduced.

The *raison d'être* of leadership training is not for information transfer, to confer degrees, nor as providing useful tools for personal achievement—instead, it's to prepare students to be effective ministers of the gospel. This aspect of training implies both missional and transformational outcomes. Pentecostal institutions seek to prepare students mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and practically.

### Leadership Training and *Missio Dei*

In every context, the role of mission in theology must be addressed.[65] Martin Kahler once stated that mission is "the mother of theology."[66] Theology, he added, developed as "an accompanying manifestation of the Christian message."[67] Kahler's thought reflected a biblical understanding in the relationship between mission and theology. By reading the Old and New Testaments we observe that theology was formed as God's people advanced in faith and obedience. This resulted in meaningful reflection within specific cultural contexts—as clearly observed in the experience of the New Testament church.

As the early church went forth everywhere preaching the gospel, planting churches, and making disciples, their theological frameworks were stretched as they encountered contemporary issues that emerged from within the communities of faith.[68] According to David Bosch, "The New Testament writers were not scholars who had the leisure to research the evidence before they put pen to paper. Rather, they wrote in a context of an 'emergency situation,' of a church which, because of its missionary encounter with the world, was forced to theologize."[69] Theology was done in contexts of mission as the church advanced by planting new churches, and nurturing existing churches to maturity in Christ. This was intended to be paradigmatic for generations to follow.

In the fourth century, a fundamental change occurred between mission and theology. Previously, in the first three centuries, theological education was rooted in a missiological

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[65]"Effective Theological Education for World Evangelization," 3, 1, d.

[66]As quoted in David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 16. This quotation was from a translation of Bosch's reading of Kahler's book. See Martin Kahler, *Schriften zur Christologie und Mission* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971), 190.

[67]Bosch, ibid.

[68]Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 25–88.

[69]Bosch, 16.

identity tempered by passion and urgency. From the time of Constantine, however, a radical shift transpired and the decline of missionary zeal followed. While examples of missionary advancement can be traced, theology began to be constructed differently. From this period, theology moved away from the streets and marketplaces into the monasteries—only to continue its journey in the Late Middle Ages to the academic halls of the University, and placed in the hands of Scholasticism.[70] Theology divorced from mission became no more than abstract study, intellectual reflection, and knowledge transmission.

Theology experienced a new birth in the Reformation. Nevertheless, mission in theological construction was relegated as a subordinate field of study. This pattern continued from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. While Protestant and Catholic missions expanded, theological education maintained an attitude that treated mission as a peripheral category.

In the mid-twentieth century a fundamental shift in how mission and theology related to each other transpired. Evangelical Bible Schools and seminaries began to understand that the mission of God and theology should not be treated as separate disciplines, but rather two parts of an interpenetrating whole. Mission and theology actively shape each other. There is interdependency. Theology needs mission to keep it grounded in God's redemptive work, and mission needs theology to provide theological foundations. Both need to be rooted in biblical truth and human realities.[71]

## Pentecostal Theology and Missional Leadership

Grant McClung has characterized Pentecostal theology as "theology on the move."[72] The very nature of Pentecostal training promotes an unapologetic missionary spirit. Alvarez argues that while Pentecostals have been criticized for being overtly practical-oriented and less cognitive oriented, Pentecostals, he asserts, "sought to correct the historical imbalance that the Church has suffered throughout the modern and contemporaneous age, even to this point in time."[73]

### *Empowerment for Mission*

Pentecostal education considers the baptism of the Holy Spirit as indispensable to Christian mission (Acts 1:8; Lk. 24:49).[74] The Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirit Who empowers the Church to be God's missionary people in the communities of the world.

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[70]John L. Elias, *A History of Christian Education: Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Perspectives* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Co., 2002), 25–65.

[71]Cf. Paul G. Hiebert "Missiological Education for a Global Era," in *Missiological Education for the Twenty-First Century: The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals*, eds. J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997), 37–41.

[72]Grant McClung, Jr., "Salvation Shock Troops," in *Pentecostal From the Inside Out*, ed. Harold B. Smith (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990), 86.

[73]Alvarez, 285.

[74]L. Grant McClung, Jr., "Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspectives on Missiological Education," in *Missiological Education for the Twenty-First Century: The Book, the Circle, and the Sandals*, 58.

*Equality in Pentecostal Leadership*

Pentecostal education promotes equality in mission participation. The fulfillment of Joel's prophecy of the Spirit's outpouring upon "all flesh" ushered in a new universalistic realism for the mission of the Church.[75] It establishes the inclusivity factor that openly invites "whosoever will," no matter one's ethnicity, gender, or economic condition. The Spirit poured out at Pentecost emphasizes level ground at the foot of the cross. Pentecostal education fosters a culture of equality in training with a missional purpose.

## Spiritual Transformation and Missional Leadership

Lois Douglas notes, "Spiritual formation grows out of *missio Dei*, what God is doing in the world and in the lives of individuals through his church."[76] Douglas identifies three common threads that need to be woven into theological education that cultivates spiritual formation. First, Scripture must define spiritual formation. A biblically-based program sheds the light of Scripture upon the hearts and minds of students, exposing their sinfulness. Second, spiritual formation must be transformation by Jesus Christ. Genuine transformation must touch the inner dimension of the heart, engaging the mind and will, and is made efficacious through encounter with Christ. Third, the Holy Spirit must lead the educational process leading to spiritual transformation.[77] The role of the Spirit is paramount for Christlike transformation.

The Pentecostal educative process must stress both the inner and outward dimensions of Christian life. First, inner formation of the mind and heart results in godly character, integrity, love, and charity. Second, outward formation is rooted in participation in the mission of God. Cheryl Bridges Johns observes, "While Pentecostals have historically emphasized that they are the objects of God's transforming grace, they often neglect to acknowledge that via transformation humans become partners with God in the redemptive process."[78] Furthermore, Johns counsels that in the cultural educative process, praxis-oriented results are the goal, and must be sought, but the human condition serves as a barrier unless transformation is the work of the Spirit, and rooted not in self-knowledge but in knowledge of God.[79]

There must be an intentional design that encourages spiritual formation. As Clark Gilpin insisted:

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[75]Compare Joel 2:26–32 to Acts 2:16–21.

[76]Lois McKinney Douglas, "Globalizing Theology and Theological Education," in *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity*, eds. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 276.

[77]Ibid., 277–279.

[78]Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 39.

[79]Ibid., 38–41. Also see Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Pentecostals and the Praxis of Liberation: A Proposal for Subversive Theological Education," *Transformation* 11, no. 1 (January/March 1994): 10–15; and Jackie David Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit: The Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis," in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made To Travel*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999), 70–84.

> Spiritual formation cannot be left to chance, any more than the pastoral or strictly academic components of ministerial formation. . . . The role of faculty, staff and students in spiritual formation is inevitable and reciprocal (whether intentional or not). It cannot be merely a task assigned as a separate program to special staff.[80]

The academic pursuits of Pentecostal leadership training must keep the spiritual in mind.

### Spirituality and Pentecostal Leadership Training

Pentecostal leadership training is done in the context of the *charismata*. The cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit within students is essential for effective life and ministry—assisted by the manifestation spiritual gifts.

It cannot be assumed, however, that the Holy Spirit controls the Pentecostal leadership training process. If administration and teachers do not have a deep conviction over the nature of the Spirit's work in teaching and learning, then the process of cultivating a culture of spirituality that leads to transformation will be divorced from the educative process. Academic excellence and spirituality are not mutually exclusive. Yet, a temptation among Pentecostal educators in every context is to become preoccupied with finding favor in the eyes of the secular academy—indicative of theological educators who have forgotten their *raison d'être.*

How can this be prevented? First, Christian educator Larry McKinney calls for a "theology of the Holy Spirit's role on all of the relevant biblical passages and themes, and not just a few of special interest."[81] Second, spirituality within Pentecostal leadership training must be modeled as well. Del Tarr once asked, "Do we model only the intellectual side of our profession?"[82] Administration and teachers must model personal holiness, prayer, evangelism, charismatic gifts, and a commitment to Scripture. Third, a strong expectation and perspective integrated into the whole educative process. Spiritual formation is not a separate course or department. The Apostle Paul's admonition is appropriate, "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Gal. 3:3).

## CONCLUSION

This paper identified three dimensions that need careful evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of Pentecostal leadership training in Africa. First, Pentecostal leadership training must be contextual. Pentecostal educators must be conscious of the context in which the training process transpires. The hidden curriculum plays a critical role, and educators must ask what steps

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[80]A quote of Daniel Buechlein by Richard W. Stuebing, "Spiritual Formation in Theological Education: A Survey of the Literature," *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* 18, no. 1, (1999): 52.

[81]Larry J. McKinney, "A Theology of Theological Education: Pedagogical Implications," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 3 (2005): 223.

[82]Dell Tarr, "Transcendence, Immanence, and the Emerging Pentecostal Academy," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 211.

can be taken to lessen the residual imprints of Western-based education upon students in an African context without abandoning helpful Western approaches that have been embraced and utilized effectively in a non-Western setting. The danger here is contextual training that can be too contextual, or not contextual enough. Second, Pentecostal education is experiential. Whether formal or informal, Pentecostal leadership training must be holistic, involving the physical, social, and spiritual aspects of a student's environment in Africa. Finally, Pentecostal leadership training should be designed with missional and transformational outcomes in mind. Pentecostal leaders should evaluate the *raison d'être* of leadership training, and be intentional to foster a culture of the Spirit leading to authentic leadership transformation.

Lessons under the mango tree have served Africa for generations. These lessons are still useful for this contemporary era, and in fact, are found to be in harmony with a Pentecostal model of training.

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