



COVER22

Leadership Development & Spiritual Formation Curriculum

A Model for Emerging Leaders

Josiah Covington-Lane
Edited by: Darren Schalk

Cover22 Vision and Mission

Vision

Cover22 envisions a generation of new leaders who live holy lives, are empowered by the Holy Spirit, and faithfully serve the church and the world through Christlike leadership. Rooted in the Wesleyan–Pentecostal tradition, Cover22's vision is for emerging leaders to discover their identity in Christ, embrace the call to holiness, and develop the gifts God has given them to edify the church and advance the Kingdom of God.

Mission

The mission of Cover22 is to cultivate emerging leaders through intentional spiritual formation, mentoring relationships, and ministry experiences. The program equips believers to grow in identity, discipline, character, and calling so they may serve faithfully within the local church and broader mission of the Church of God of Prophecy.

The “Three-Phase” Model

PHASE ONE: Emerging Leaders

Phase One focuses on exposure before expectation. Emerging leaders are not given responsibility immediately; instead, they are immersed in healthy ministry environments where they observe faithful leadership in action. This model reflects biblical formation patterns seen in Elisha serving Elijah (2 Kings 3:11), Timothy learning from Paul (2 Timothy 3:10–11), and the disciples being with Jesus before being sent (Mark 3:14). Formation begins with proximity, participation, and reflection within a Spirit-filled community (Acts 2:42–47).

Exposure Environments

- Worship team rehearsals and services
- Youth and children’s ministry settings
- Community outreach events
- Corporate prayer meetings
- Technical and media environments
- Church leadership gatherings (such as church board and volunteer meetings)
- Preaching and teaching settings
- Altar and prayer ministry
- Annual budget planning and management

Emerging leaders engage in guided reflection through journaling, mentoring conversations, and structured debriefs. The goal is not performance, but internal formation—shaping vision, cultivating humility, and developing a theology of service.

PHASE TWO: Foundations

The Foundations phase emphasizes identity before activity. In Wesleyan theology, salvation restores the image of God through prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace. In Pentecostal theology, the Spirit empowers both holiness and mission (Acts 1:8). Before emerging leaders discover what they will do, they must understand who they are in Christ.

Foundation 1: Identity

Participants explore biblical identity as image-bearers (Genesis 1:27), adopted children of God (Romans 8:15–17), new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and Spirit-empowered witnesses (Acts 1:8). Identity formation includes testimony development, listening prayer, and discernment practices that help participants distinguish God’s voice from cultural pressures.

Foundation 2: Discipline

Spiritual disciplines train leaders for godliness (1 Timothy 4:7). Drawing from the Wesleyan means of grace, students learn structured rhythms of prayer, Scripture, fasting, Communion, and Christian conferencing.

Pentecostal spirituality adds Spirit-led prayer (Romans 8:26) and expectation of divine encounter. These habits anchor emotional experiences in consistent devotion.

Foundation 3: Character

Character sustains what gifting attracts. Participants examine the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) and the primacy of love over gifting (1 Corinthians 13). Core virtues include integrity, humility, sexual holiness, emotional maturity, and servanthood modeled by Christ (Mark 10:45).

Foundation 4: Calling

Students explore the call to salvation, holiness, service, and specific vocational assignment. Scripture teaches that gifts differ according to grace (Romans 12:6–8) and are given for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). Calling flows from identity, not insecurity, and is tested within an accountable community.

PHASE THREE: Early Calling Development

In this phase, participants begin practicing leadership in structured environments. They identify spiritual gifts, natural talents, personality strengths, and ministry burdens. Safe practice laboratories allow experimentation in teaching, worship leadership, outreach coordination, and prayer ministry with guided evaluation and feedback.

As participants progress through the program, the curriculum deepens to include theology of suffering (Philippians 3:10), conflict resolution (Matthew 18:15–17), ongoing filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), and ordered spiritual expression (1 Corinthians 14:40). The objective is durable, humble, Spirit-led leadership that can sustain long-term service.

Core Theological Anchors

- Holiness is relational and rooted in love.
- The Spirit forms both fruit and gifts.
- Calling flows from identity.
- Formation happens in an accountable community.
- Leaders are servants first.

12-Month Implementation Map

(PHASE ONE)

Month 1: Introduction and Identity in Christ

Lesson Focus:

Establish a theological foundation for Christian identity grounded in salvation, new birth, and the witness of the Spirit. Within the Wesleyan-Pentecostal tradition, identity in Christ involves both justification and transformation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching: Salvation, regeneration, and identity in Christ
- Testimony workshop where students share their faith stories
- Group Bible study on Romans 8 and 2 Corinthians 5:17

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be a “new creation” in Christ?
2. How does the Holy Spirit confirm our identity as children of God?
3. How should identity in Christ shape leadership and ministry?

Assignments:

- Write a two-page personal testimony describing your spiritual journey.
- Reflect on Romans 8:14–17 and journal how the Spirit affirms your identity.

Suggested Readings:

- John Wesley – Sermons on “The New Birth” and “The Witness of the Spirit.”
- Steven J. Land – Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom
- Daniel Castelo – Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition

Month 2: Spiritual Disciplines and Prayer

Lesson Focus:

Spiritual disciplines shape leaders who are attentive to the Holy Spirit. Prayer, fasting, Scripture meditation, and worship are practices that cultivate intimacy with God.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on the means of grace in Wesleyan theology
- Guided prayer and intercession session
- Introduction to fasting and devotional rhythms

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are spiritual disciplines essential for Christian leaders?
2. How do Pentecostal traditions emphasize prayer differently from other traditions?
3. How can spiritual disciplines sustain leaders during seasons of pressure?

Assignments:

- Keep a 14-day prayer journal.
- Participate in one day of fasting and write a reflection.

Suggested Readings:

- Richard Foster – Celebration of Discipline
- Simon Chan – Spiritual Theology
- Cheryl Bridges Johns – Pentecostal Formation

Month 3: Biblical Foundations for Leadership

Lesson Focus:

Leadership in Scripture is defined by service, humility, and faithfulness. Jesus' model of servant leadership forms the basis of Christian leadership.

Lesson Plan:

- Study of biblical leaders: Moses, David, Nehemiah, and Paul
- Teaching on servant leadership from Mark 10:42–45
- Group leadership case studies

Discussion Questions:

1. What qualities distinguish biblical leadership from worldly leadership?
2. Why does Jesus emphasize service as the foundation of leadership?
3. What leadership qualities do you admire in biblical leaders?

Assignments:

- Write a short reflection comparing Moses' leadership and Jesus' leadership.
- Identify three leadership qualities you want to develop.

Suggested Readings:

- Robert Greenleaf – Servant Leadership
- Craig Keener – Gift and Giver
- Eddie Hyatt – 2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity

Month 4: Character Formation and Holiness

Lesson Focus:

Holiness theology emphasizes the transformation of character through sanctification. Leaders must cultivate integrity, humility, and holiness.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on sanctification and holiness
- Study of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5
- Accountability and character formation exercises

Discussion Questions:

1. What does holiness mean in the Wesleyan tradition?
2. Why is character more important than charisma in leadership?
3. How does the Spirit produce Christlike character?

Assignments:

- Write a reflection on one fruit of the Spirit you need to grow in.
- Meet with a mentor to discuss character formation.

Suggested Readings:

- John Wesley – A Plain Account of Christian Perfection
- Kenneth J. Collins – The Theology of John Wesley
- Randy Maddox – Responsible Grace

Month 5: Understanding Spiritual Gifts

Lesson Focus:

The Holy Spirit empowers believers with gifts for ministry. Understanding spiritual gifts helps leaders serve effectively within the body of Christ.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on spiritual gifts from 1 Corinthians 12–14
- Spiritual gifts assessment
- Ministry gift workshop

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts in the church?
2. How should gifts operate within community and accountability?
3. What gifts do you believe God has given you?

|| Assignments:

- Complete a spiritual gifts inventory.
- Write a reflection on how your gifts can serve the church.

|| Suggested Readings:

- Gordon Fee – God’s Empowering Presence
- Amos Yong – The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh
- Frank Macchia – Baptized in the Spirit
- SpiritMatters: The Spiritual Gifts, volumes 1 and 2 (studies available through White Wing Publishing House)

Month 6: Ministry Exposure Experiences

|| Lesson Focus:

Ministry is best learned through participation and reflection. Students observe and assist in church ministries.

|| Lesson Plan:

- Ministry shadowing experience
- Debrief sessions after ministry exposure
- Reflection on practical ministry challenges

|| Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about ministry through observation?
2. What surprised you about leadership responsibilities?
3. How does theology inform practical ministry?

|| Assignments:

- Serve in one ministry role in the church.
- Write a two-page reflection on the experience.

|| Suggested Readings:

- Andy Crouch – Culture Making
- Alan Hirsch – The Forgotten Ways

Month 7: Mentoring and Leadership Development

|| Lesson Focus:

Leadership formation occurs through relationships. Biblical mentoring models shape the next generation of leaders.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on mentoring relationships in Scripture
- Peer mentoring groups
- Leadership growth planning

Discussion Questions:

1. What makes mentoring effective?
2. Who has influenced your spiritual development the most?
3. How can you mentor others in the future?

Assignments:

- Interview a church leader about their leadership journey.
- Create a personal leadership development plan.

Suggested Readings:

- Robert Clinton – The Making of a Leader
- Daniel Castelo – Pentecostal Spirituality and the Christian Life

Month 8: Service and Outreach Opportunities

Lesson Focus:

The church participates in God's mission through service, compassion, and evangelism.

Lesson Plan:

- Evangelism training
- Community outreach project
- Reflection on mission and justice

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is outreach central to the mission of the church?
2. How can Pentecostal spirituality energize mission?
3. What needs exist in your local community?

Assignments:

- Participate in a community outreach project.
- Write a reflection on how the experience shaped your understanding of mission.

Suggested Readings:

- David Bosch – Transforming Mission
- Amos Yong – Hospitality and the Other

Month 9: Conflict Resolution and Teamwork

Lesson Focus:

Healthy leadership requires wisdom in resolving conflict and working collaboratively.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on biblical reconciliation (Matthew 18)
- Conflict resolution case studies
- Team leadership exercises

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does conflict occur in ministry settings?
2. What biblical principles guide reconciliation?
3. How can leaders promote unity?

Assignments:

- Reflect on a conflict you have experienced and what you learned.
- Develop a biblical plan for resolving conflict.

Suggested Readings:

- Ken Sande – The Peacemaker
- Miroslav Volf – Exclusion and Embrace

Month 10: Spirit-Empowered Ministry

Lesson Focus:

Pentecostal ministry emphasizes the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for mission, healing, and proclamation.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on Acts and the early church
- Prayer ministry training
- Reflection on Spirit-led leadership

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to minister in the power of the Spirit?
2. How did the early church depend on the Spirit?
3. What dangers exist if leaders rely only on charisma?

|| Assignments:

- Lead a short prayer or devotional in a ministry setting.
- Write a reflection on the role of the Spirit in leadership.

|| Suggested Readings:

- Roger Stronstad – The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke
- Craig Keener – Spirit Hermeneutics
- Frank Macchia – Justified in the Spirit

Month 11: Calling and Discernment

|| Lesson Focus:

Discernment involves recognizing God’s direction for one’s life and ministry.

|| Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on vocational calling
- Personal discernment retreat
- Spiritual direction conversation

|| Discussion Questions:

1. What does calling mean in the Christian life?
2. How does the church community help discern calling?
3. What gifts and passions might indicate God’s direction?

|| Assignments:

- Write a three-page reflection on your sense of calling.
- Meet with a mentor to discuss discernment.

|| Suggested Readings:

- Frederick Buechner – Wishful Thinking (Calling)
- Ruth Haley Barton – Sacred Rhythms

Month 12: Commissioning and Leadership Reflection

|| Lesson Focus:

The final month celebrates formation and prepares participants for ongoing leadership and service.

Lesson Plan:

- Leadership presentations
- Reflection on spiritual growth
- Commissioning service

Discussion Questions:

1. How has your understanding of leadership changed?
2. What practices will sustain your spiritual life moving forward?
3. How will you continue serving in the church and community?

Assignments:

- Write a final leadership reflection essay.
- Present your ministry vision to the group.

Suggested Readings:

- Lesslie Newbigin – The Gospel in a Pluralist Society
- Steven J. Land – Pentecostal Spirituality

Alternative Lessons (These can be inserted as the mentor sees fit based on the participant's experience and needs.)

How to Effectively Study God's Word

Lesson Focus:

A basic introduction to inductive Bible study.

Lesson Plan:

- Introduction to inductive Bible study.
- Practice the principles of observation, interpretation, and application.
- Workshop on using context, keyword studies, and historical understandings.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is careful study of Scripture important for Christian growth and leadership?
2. How does the Holy Spirit guide believers in understanding Scripture?
3. What is the difference between reading the Bible devotionally and studying it inductively?

Assignments:

- Complete an inductive Bible study on a short New Testament passage.
- Journal reflections on how Scripture speaks to personal growth and ministry calling.

Suggested Readings:

- Howard G. Hendricks – Living by the Book
- Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart – How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth
- Craig Keener – Spirit Hermeneutics
- Robert Traina and David Bauer – Inductive Bible Study

How to Effectively Present God's Word

Participants will take what they've learned from their inductive Bible study and put it into an effective public presentation.

Lesson Plan

- Teaching on the biblical foundations of preaching.
- Introduction to sermon preparation and structure.
- Practices sessions that allow evaluation and refinement of sermon preparation and presentation.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is preaching central to Christian ministry and discipleship?
2. How does the Holy Spirit empower the preaching of God's Word?
3. What qualities make preaching both biblically faithful and spiritually effective?

Assignments:

- Prepare a short sermon or devotional from a selected Scripture passage.
- Write a reflection on your strengths and challenges in communicating biblical truth.

Suggested Readings:

- Haddon Robinson – Biblical Preaching
- John Stott – Between Two Worlds
- Craig Keener – Spirit Hermeneutics
- Steven J. Land – Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom

Handling Church Finances and Budgeting

Lesson Focus:

Within the Wesleyan-Pentecostal tradition, church finances are understood as resources entrusted by God to support ministry, mission, discipleship, and care for the community. Students will learn principles of budgeting, financial accountability, and ethical stewardship in ministry contexts.

Lesson Plan:

- Teaching on biblical stewardship and financial integrity
- Introduction to church budgeting and financial planning
- Workshop on creating a simple ministry budget and expense report

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is financial integrity important in church leadership?
2. How can churches practice transparency and accountability in finances?
3. What principles should guide budgeting and financial decision-making in ministry?

Assignments:

- Create a sample monthly church or ministry budget.
- Write a one-page reflection on biblical stewardship and accountability.

Suggested Readings:

- Randy Alcorn – Money, Possessions, and Eternity
- Richard J. Vargo and Vonna Laue – Church Administration
- Aubrey Malphurs and Steve Stroope – Money Matters in Church
- Dan Busby – Church Finance Basics

Leader Mentoring Structure (PHASE TWO)

Each emerging leader participates in a mentoring relationship with a mature spiritual leader. Mentors meet monthly with participants for prayer, reflection, and guidance. Mentoring conversations focus on spiritual growth, leadership development, and accountability in personal discipleship.

- 1 Monthly mentor meetings
- 2 Quarterly leadership evaluations
- 3 Prayer partnership between mentor and participant
- 4 Opportunities for ministry feedback and reflection

Spiritual Formation Assessment Tools (PHASE THREE)

Progress in spiritual formation is evaluated through reflective practices rather than performance metrics. Assessments encourage students to evaluate their spiritual growth in areas such as prayer life, engagement with Scripture, character development, and participation in ministry.

- 1 Spiritual reflection journals
- 2 Mentor feedback conversations
- 3 Personal rule of life evaluation
- 4 Ministry participation review
- 5 Annual spiritual growth self-assessment

Rule of Life for Emerging Leaders

A rule of life provides intentional rhythms that guide spiritual growth. Emerging leaders are encouraged to cultivate daily, weekly, and communal practices that nurture holiness and spiritual attentiveness.

- 1 Daily prayer and Scripture reading
- 2 Weekly worship participation
- 3 Regular fasting or spiritual discipline
- 4 Accountability within the Christian community
- 5 Active service within the church

Core Theological Commitments

- 1 Holiness as the mark of Christian leadership
- 2 Spirit-empowered witness and ministry
- 3 Servant leadership modeled after Christ
- 4 Faithfulness to Scripture and its proclamation
- 5 Commitment to the unity and mission of the Church
- 6 Prioritizing Biblical stewardship both individually and corporately