

Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims
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This book is dedicated to
the ultimate end of glorifying God
and promoting kingdom movement
throughout the realm of Christ.

It is dedicated to
faithful cartographers
and guides in the church
who assist pilgrims along the way.

This work is dedicated to
fellow travelers and students,
that we may all progress
and abundantly flourish
on the path set before us.

Often, the best context for developing multi-generational relationships is not on your church campus. For example, bringing the generations together for mission trips or other service opportunities may be far more effective church-as-family activities than any formal class in the educational wing.

Even church-as-family activities that *do* occur on your church campus may happen outside the context of a formal class. These activities could include a youth prayer time that places senior adults and teenagers together. It may be a “families-in-faith” program that matches believing families with spiritual orphans. No matter how your church chooses to bring the generations together, a clear curriculum will help leaders and learners alike to develop deeper connections as a family in Christ.

Step 4: Develop the Content

Once your objectives are clear and you know what is needed in your context, you are ready to begin writing the content for the curriculum. The format and the number of learning sessions will vary from one context to another. The content, however, must be rooted in the gospel in such a way that it turns the attention of every participant toward the vast and beautiful story of how God has worked with humanity through creation and fall, redemption and consummation. Connect your content with your objectives, and take the time to evaluate whether participants are actually achieving the objectives.

The development of family life curriculum is a radically counter-cultural process. Particularly in Western culture, people cluster together according to peer groups and personal interests, so church-as-family does not happen easily or naturally. Parents tend to turn over the shaping of their children’s souls to trained professionals, so family-as-church does not come easily either. But efficiency and ease are not the goal of gospel-motivated ministry. Conformity to the character of Jesus Christ—the one through whom the first family was formed in Eden and the one who is bringing together a new family even now on the basis of his own blood—is our purpose and ultimate goal.

CHAPTER 16

PURCHASING READY-TO-USE CURRICULUM

Bret Robbe

Your family wants a vacation! You consider going through the trouble of planning out an excursion all on your own. Visiting websites, calling for information, checking on flights and rentals, searching for housing . . . and eventually deciding it is not worth the trouble. On the other hand, you could decide to take a vacation and call your local travel agent. Travel agents have prepackaged travel plans with options designed to fit your family’s size, budget, and interests. You can pick up the pamphlets, talk to an agent, and select the right vacation package that suits you. You get to enjoy the vacation without the hassle of doing it all yourself. In the next few pages, we will examine the value of ready-to-use curriculum, your pre-packaged trip arrangements, and look at ways to overcome perceived weaknesses and identify factors to consider in selecting the ready-to-use curriculum that is right for a church.

Frees Leaders to Lead and Minister

Vacations take time to plan, but a travel agent makes the planning easier. A church that purchases ready-to-use curriculum rather than creating its own adds the equivalent of a staff member to its leadership team. Using a minister's time to produce curriculum takes precious hours away from time that could be spent with members of the church family. Nothing can minister better than flesh-and-blood presence. Nothing can replace staff members who are available to invest in the lives of people. The incarnation of Christ, who came and dwelled among us, sets the standard for what pastoral ministry should look like.

If a staff member takes on the task of developing quality Bible study resources, time that would have been dedicated to other more important work has to be cut. Developing relationships, equipping others (Eph 4:11–12), casting a vision, providing direction, and responding to needs become secondary. Choosing a ready-to-use curriculum frees church leaders' schedules from the massive amounts of time required to produce Bible studies. That time can be used more deliberately to lead the church and minister to people.

Makes Members A Priority

The main destination or goal of Bible study is discipleship. In spite of their efforts to reach this goal, leaders find themselves in a quandary because members choose to straddle the fence, live according to the flesh, or take a nonchalant view of God and his Word. Just as you value the comfort and safety of your family, church leaders see the members of Bible study classes as incredibly important to the church. These are "travelers" ministry leaders must lead step-by-step to spiritual maturity.

Ready-to-use curriculum includes an essential tool for class members. This tool is often called a learner guide. Addressing the educational and learning needs of members, the learner guide is a vital component for the spiritual development of members in Bible study. A personal learner guide benefits class members for several reasons.

First, each lesson in the learner guide provides an essential step in moving members toward spiritual maturity and discipleship. A believer matures as the Holy Spirit helps him or her apply scriptural truth to life,

and the learner guide contains biblical truths God uses in this transformational process. Members will not get all they need at church or from a single handout. The learner guide becomes a companion to the Bible that members can use for personal study.

Second, the learner guide combats biblical illiteracy, an alarming trend in churches today. Believers of all ages are faltering because they lack knowledge of God's Word. The learner guide provides significant biblical content that can help to reverse the trend of biblical illiteracy in three significant ways:

1. *Preparation for group time.* Biblical literacy and life-changing discipleship do not happen through a one-hour information dump on Sunday mornings. The best discipleship happens when the learner prepares before the class session. When used as intended, the learner guide prepares believers' hearts and minds to receive the teaching that takes place during the class session. Without preparation, the learner may absorb only a small amount of the biblical content presented during the class session. With preparation, believers allow the Holy Spirit to cultivate their hearts so that God's Word can be readily planted deep. Designed by experts in education and group dynamics, the learner guide begins to connect learners to the lesson before the group meets.
2. *Biblical focus during group time.* During group time, the learner guide keeps the discussion from straying into topics unrelated to the lesson or from focusing on participants' feelings and opinions. Everyone in the group is literally on the same page. The learner guide helps keep the class centered on God's Word, diminishing the possibility of chasing topics that are not part of the Bible study. A good learner guide, used by a trained teacher, leads members to find true biblical solutions to questions and avoids everyone doing what is right in his own eyes (see Judg 21:25; Deut 12:8). This discipleship model differs substantively from the common practice of discussing eight to ten questions related to the pastor's sermon. A Bible-centered learner guide, used appropriately, takes learners much deeper into a study of

God's Word and helps them grow and mature in their relationship with God.

3. *Continued learning after group time.* After group time a quality learner guide reinforces what has been learned. Many learner guides include daily readings that help learners continue to apply what they learned during group time and discussion. Learners can continue to absorb biblical truth each day throughout the week.

Third, the learner guide provides content that challenges worldly perspective. Every day we receive cultural messages that shape our thinking. Many people, even believers, succumb to this powerful influence. Our ideals and worldviews are shaped by the culture in which we live. A learner guide helps church members develop a biblical worldview. A church that provides sound learner guides communicates to each member, "We believe the Bible is essential in shaping the way you think, act, and feel during the week." Learners need to grow in their understanding of the biblical text in order to interpret reality correctly and then apply Scripture to life needs within a culture that draws them away from God. Answering a few questions about a sermon or giving personal opinions in a small group does not lead to a change in worldview. If true biblical answers are not the outcome of the discussion, the group or the learner will never understand more than they already know. The only way a biblical worldview can develop is through members' interaction with biblical content. The learner guide is just that: a guide that helps learners stay in the Word day after day, week after week.

Utilizes the Experience and Knowledge of Experts

A quality, ready-to-use curriculum enables churches to benefit from the experience and expertise of countless educators and professionals. Most churches will never have access to the kinds of experts and scholars employed by a publisher of Christian curriculum. Companies like LifeWay are able to pull together a team of twenty or more experts from different fields and backgrounds to develop a single Bible study lesson. Age-group ministers, theologians, professors, and archaeologists are

involved in some aspect of the creation of biblically centered studies. Most churches cannot consistently draw from that pool of experts.

Car manufacturers would not think of creating a car without utilizing a team of experts. Why do churches believe a single minister can successfully create Bible studies week after week that include all of the resources teachers need to teach the lesson effectively? A person skilled in biblical exposition sometimes lacks knowledge in application or educational theory. A person strong in teaching methodology might be useful in instruction but may fall short in delivering biblical exposition. The diverse disciplines and skills required to create a complete, satisfying, and balanced lesson are most likely found in a team setting, not in one person.

A good curriculum for Christian education in the local church has at least seven characteristics:

1. Biblical and theological soundness, so that what is taught in the curriculum is biblically accurate
2. Relevance, so that the teaching is suited to the nature and needs of the learners in their current situation
3. Comprehensiveness, so that the scope of the curriculum includes the essential components that lead to the development of well-rounded Christians
4. Balance, so that the curriculum neither underemphasizes nor overemphasizes key Christian truths
5. Sequence, so that the presentation of topics is in the best order for learning
6. Flexibility, so that the curriculum is adaptable to the individual differences of the learners, to churches of different types, and to the varying abilities of leaders and teachers
7. Correlation, so that each part relates properly to the total curriculum plan¹

Another benefit of ready-to-use curriculum is age specificity. Most of us find it easier to teach one age group. The needs of preschoolers are vastly different from those of a sixth grader or a high-school senior.

¹ See Howard P. Colson and Raymond M. Rigdon, *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum* (Nashville: Baptist Sunday School Board, 1981), 50.

People spend their entire lives trying to understand better how to teach one age group. Expecting church leaders to develop quality resources for multiple age groups is setting them up for failure.

One way to illustrate the importance of the experts is seen in the creation of the Experiencing God resources. Dr. Henry Blackaby had led conferences and presented the content before the first workbook was ever published. He was teamed with a group of editors and educators who complemented his skill set. Because of that partnership, what was once a compelling presentation became a life-changing movement that has made a dramatic impact on churches and individuals from all walks of life.

By having as many as twenty individuals working to create an individual lesson or set of lessons, each individual can contribute from his strengths in the collaborative process. A team is assembled from different fields and is composed of people with different skill sets. You want people from different backgrounds working together to build your car. Each inspector looks at the project from a different angle, resulting in a better-finished vehicle. You want the engineer with the most extensive knowledge of brakes to design the ones for your car. You want a tire expert to select your tires. You want the paint job to last for the lifetime of the vehicle. We could talk about every part of the car—fabrics for the seats, dashboards that look good and do not rattle, metal that withstands road salt and does not corrode.

We all teach or preach from a unique point of view based on our specific experiences, study, and personality. If we are the only one who engineers a curriculum, then over time the people using that curriculum run the risk of developing a limited perspective. There is a reason God used more than forty different individuals to write the Bible. They each brought a different perspective, and each perspective is one that God knew we would need.

Ensures More Hands and Eyes

Ready-to-use curriculum providers usually follow steps in a production process focused on quality control. Proofreaders, doctrinal readers, editors, production specialists, and printers are parts of these multiple eyes and hands. Doctrine and biblical integrity matter!

Typically, when a church creates its own curriculum, fewer people look over the resource. Time constraints may limit the process to only one read-through. Choosing a ready-to-use curriculum significantly decreases the chance that biblical error will slip into a lesson. You would not want a car that had been inspected by only one quality-control technician who faced a thirty-minute deadline. Even with all of the extra eyes and hands examining a ready-to-use curriculum, some things will slip by—but not nearly as many as if fewer eyes had looked over the content. Henry Ford stated that nothing is “particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.”² Ford understood the value of many hands and eyes. Each week church leaders trust a team of teachers to help disciple their church members, and this discipleship takes place most effectively when they put resources into their hands that help them teach the Bible in a way that is scripturally sound and doctrinally correct.

Provides for Balanced Results

A by-product of having many experts who design and create curriculum is the issue of balance. The next time you sit behind your steering wheel, take a careful look at the dash. You see gauges that tell you important information like speed, water temperature, and amount of fuel in the vehicle. Just as important are the controls for the air-conditioning system! These things all have a practical function in the operation of your car, and they are also designed for your comfort. You will likely see circles, ovals, squares, rectangles, triangles and a host of other shapes that make the dash more appealing, interesting, or functional. When designing that dash, the designer was aware of the need for a balance between style and function.

Quality, ready-to-use Bible study curriculum is created with balance in mind. Balancing the amount of exposition against the amount of application, balance among different teaching methods, and balance among different teaching outcomes are all considered. Many publishers have adopted approaches that also help their customers

² Henry Ford, as quoted in Fred R. Shapiro, ed., *Yale Book of Quotations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 282.

move toward balanced spiritual growth. For example, LifeWay uses the LifeSpan strategy as a filter for this type of balance.³ A balance of multiple spiritual disciplines enhances healthy spiritual growth and transformation.

The word curriculum refers to the course, track, or path on which a person runs. Curriculum is similar to running a race toward a finish line, much as the author of Hebrews encourages his readers to “run with endurance the race that lies before us” (Heb 12:1 HCSB). Choosing a Bible study curriculum means pursuing the course the Bible sets for life—Christlikeness, transformation into the image of Christ (see Rom 8:28–29; 2 Cor 3:18). Sunday school curriculum is the continuous course, process, or system Bible study groups can use to guide unbelievers toward faith in Christ and believers toward Christlikeness through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes curriculum can resemble a sprint, a course that is finished quickly like a six- or eight-week study. Ultimately, however, curriculum should be viewed as a marathon, something that takes place over a long period of time. There are two aspects of curriculum: the curriculum plan and the curriculum resources. The curriculum plan sets the agenda for what is studied. The curriculum resources contain the curriculum plan and set forth how to study it.

Gives You a Comprehensive Plan

A curriculum plan or curriculum map, as some call it, is an orderly arrangement of Bible study content organized so that Sunday School leaders can engage learners in the study of God’s Word in a balanced, systematic way.⁴ Months of planning were required before the frame of your car was manufactured. Comprehensive concept drawings, testing, spec sheets, machine orders, timing of delivery, and a host of other elements were planned so that your car would roll off the assembly

³ For more information about the LifeSpan strategy, see “LifeSpan transforming people from birth to heaven,” n.p. [cited 31 January 2012]. Online: <http://lifeway.com/Article/Why-Lifespan-can-make-a-difference-for-your-church>.

⁴ Adapted from Bill L. Taylor and Louis B. Hanks, *Sunday School for a New Century* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1999), 162. Used by permission.

line complete and ready to drive. When the manufacturer began the process, the production team knew exactly what it was attempting to do and what it would need to do to get the job done. Ready-to-use curriculum is usually based on a comprehensive plan. That plan may call for a curriculum to take three to ten years to complete. This kind of detailed planning is invaluable to churches and teachers. One of the biggest struggles in developing any curriculum is determining what will be studied and when it will be studied (scope and sequence). Creating the scope and sequence is nitty-gritty work that takes hours of consideration and thinking. The developers of ready-to-use curriculum have already completed this most difficult task for churches by planning the scope and sequence of Bible studies. This frees church staff from days of planning meetings to determine the scope and sequence of materials they might produce, which in turn frees them to do what God called them to do—lead the church.

When considering a curriculum plan, choose one that covers all of the Bible’s content, not just selected or favorite parts. “All Scripture,” Paul writes, “is . . . profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16 HCSB). Make sure the curriculum plan is comprehensive enough to cover the entire Bible and all life concerns that people face over a specified length of time. Second, choose a plan that has a balance of biblical content, Bible study approaches, and life issues. For example, the plan should contain a balance of Old Testament studies, the life of Christ, and New Testament epistles. The plan should contain a balance of approaches to studying the Bible, such as studying through a book of the Bible, a character in the Bible, or a topic or life issue in the Bible.

Why not just allow groups to study whatever they want or whatever the hot topic or felt need is? By following a systematic, comprehensive plan, ongoing Bible study repeatedly points to the fact that the Bible, not developmental life needs and human issues, must guide and shape believers’ lives. If a Sunday school leader selects studies that address only age group needs and issues, the leader risks supplanting the Bible’s goal for believers with contemporary perceptions of age group needs and issues. Occasional topical, issue-oriented studies are necessary and included in ongoing curriculum plans, but the ultimate goal of the Bible and Sunday school curriculum is to lead people toward faith in

Christ and transformation toward Christlikeness through an encounter with the truth of God's Word.

Although Jesus was responsive to immediate physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, He did not always teach on subjects the people wanted—their felt needs. Jesus was aware of the deeper issues of the human heart that went beyond the current issues of the day, such as ceremonial washing of the hands, observing Sabbath laws, and getting caught in adultery. Jesus' curriculum plan focused on redemption; the cross; and the transformation of human lives, beginning with the heart. A balanced curriculum plan not only addresses hot topics and felt needs but also places people on the track toward mature biblical faith by considering doctrines such as union with Christ, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, evangelism, compassion for a lost world, and a biblical worldview.⁵

If a group is left to determine its own course of study, there will be significant consequences. Sunday school classes will not receive the whole counsel of God without a balanced approach to studying Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. If classes are not going to study the entire Bible over a period of time, adult learners will learn only a small percentage of the Bible. No one would be satisfied to read half a book, but that is what some Sunday school classes are getting—half the Book. They are not receiving instruction in the entire Bible because a poor curriculum strategy was adopted.

Pet topics can dominate the discussion. Prophecy, the book of Revelation, or a particular doctrine—each one is a potential focal point for a Sunday school class over an extended period of time if it is a topic either the teacher or the learners feel passionate about. I heard one minister of education ask, "Who am I to tell him he can't teach the topic he wants to?" This was said in regard to a Sunday school teacher who held that God told him to lead the class in a particular pet study. Pet topics increase the likelihood of imbalance in the study of God's Word. If you turn children loose in a buffet line, they will eat all the macaroni and cheese, pizza, and cookies you let them eat. If you turn teachers loose to study whatever topic is near and dear to their hearts, class members will have a similar buffet experience: they will study the

⁵ Taylor and Hanks, *Sunday School for a New Century*, 162–63.

same topics over and over again. The result will be spiritually imbalanced, unhealthy believers.

A lack of strategy is perhaps the most glaring weakness of all when curriculum is chosen that does not provide a balanced approach to studying God's Word. Sunday schools need curriculum that strategically develops learners who are spiritually balanced and are being transformed by the power of God's Word. The LifeSpan strategy addresses this need head-on. LifeSpan is a promise backed by a plan. LifeSpan, a strategy developed by LifeWay Christian Resources, provides a strategic, coordinated approach to study God's Word from birth to heaven. LifeSpan promises a balanced study of God's Word over the lifetime of the individual. Preschoolers are taught eight foundational biblical concepts, and additional biblical concepts are added during the childhood and student years. Finally, adults of all ages study fifteen biblical concepts. Special care is given to the development of the scope and sequence of each curriculum line so that learners experience a balanced diet of Old and New Testament studies.⁶

The curriculum plan must be properly sequenced so that learners can build on what they already know. A systematic approach to Bible study facilitates the integration of biblical truth into the learner's life as a lifelong process. Jesus built on what his hearers already knew and took them to a new level when he said, "You have heard that it was said . . . But I tell you . . ." (Matt 5:43–44 HCSB). Remember that spiritual transformation into Christlikeness is a lifelong process.

Because curriculum is best viewed from the perspective of a marathon, the appropriate repetition of biblical content and life concerns in different ways and at different times strengthens learners, much as a cup of fresh water reinvigorates a marathon runner. The Heb 12:1 principle of the perseverance of believers applies here. At the same time, open Bible study groups (groups that expect new people to attend each week) will always have new people joining the curriculum race—new learners who need the basics the veteran learners could help teach. Do a quick survey of Jesus' teaching in the Gospels, and you will discover

⁶ For more information about the LifeSpan strategy, go to lifeway.com/lifespanspan; lifeway.com/adultstrategy; lifeway.com/studentstrategy; lifeway.com/kidspromise

how frequently he repeated themes—and how slowly his disciples caught on. A properly sequenced Bible study plan is an expression of the principle of renewing the mind found in Rom 12:2. One ministry of the Holy Spirit is to help believers recall what Jesus taught, to help believers become experts in living and bearing witness for Christ. Curriculum can support your goals for transformational Bible study.

A planned, ongoing Bible study strategy creates a ministry environment that fosters strong relationships and challenges members to regularly invite the lost to become Christ followers. Ongoing groups have a fixed organizational structure that provides stable leadership over a long period of time. With regard to curriculum planning or curriculum mapping, God knows the timeliness of any study for an individual's life, as well as for a congregation's time and circumstances. The Holy Spirit can work in the hearts of curriculum planners months and years in advance to design studies that will be used by God at a particular time.⁷

A ready-to-use curriculum can be an essential tool for setting a recognized standard for the Bible study organization in churches. Church leaders can use the scope and sequence behind the chosen curriculum to communicate what they want to happen in the lives of people. Providing well-developed resources for both leaders and group members also creates a standard for accountability. Leaders are expected to use the resource, and group members are expected to prepare. In fact, by providing every group member with a study guide, leaders communicate that they expect members to do some type of personal Bible study outside their group experiences.

Maturity does not happen in a six-week study or even over a two-year period. Curriculum is designed to lead people toward spiritual maturity and transformation. Frequently changing curriculum means members would miss the balance that comes from a well-planned design. Allowing every class to study whatever they want introduces the risk of missing essential Bible stories and core doctrines. Good leadership involves knowing where you are leading your people. When you choose a ready-to-use curriculum that gives attention to the whole counsel of God, you are leading your people toward a solid biblical foundation.

⁷ See Taylor and Hanks, *Sunday School for a New Century*, 163–64.

Addressing Perceived Weaknesses

Curriculum will never replace trained teachers. Trained teachers can make bad or mediocre curriculum good, and they can make good or great curriculum superior. But an untrained teacher can find a multitude of ways to misdirect even the best curriculum. Curriculum alone will not solve our need for more teachers or for more quality teachers.

There are no shortcuts when it comes to training teachers. Willing teachers are handed a ready-to-use curriculum resource and told to use it. But how do they use it? How do the parts relate to one another? What is required of them to use the resource the way it was designed? Every teacher requires and deserves training, regardless of the type of curriculum being used.

No matter what curriculum church leaders use, they still need to maintain the organization. As with any organization, Bible study groups and the supporting organization will die if leaders fail to nurture and cultivate it. More leaders, new groups, upgrades to equipment, and attention to ministry involvement are just a few of the tasks required to maintain a quality Bible study organization. Ready-to-use curriculum was never intended to replace regular evaluation and refinement of the Bible study groups using the resources. However, ready-to-use curriculum can free leaders to do the things required to keep their Bible study groups healthy and vibrant.

Ready-to-use curriculum is developed for the masses. Leaders need to help their teachers customize the content to the needs of their groups. Most ready-to-use curriculum provides tools beyond the basics that will help make the teachers' jobs easier and will help them customize the material. Teachers who receive extra resources for their preparation will naturally be more confident when facing the group. Extra resources provided to teachers can enhance the group experience and can make it easier for them to have a satisfying Bible study week after week. No matter how good a curriculum resource may be, teachers will need to make changes to make it their own, and they should.

When incorporating ready-to-use curriculum, church leaders must be comfortable using someone else's scope and sequence—someone else's directions to the desired destination. Leaders must be willing to trust a prescribed path even when they may wonder about a particular

leg of the journey. A ready-to-use curriculum allows leaders time to lead and shepherd the congregation, but the cost of that freedom is releasing control over the scope and sequence of the Bible study. The good news is that leaders can select from different curriculum options at the onset, finding the scope and sequence that best fit their needs.

Choosing the right curriculum is an important decision that will impact the church family for years. Church leaders should not expect to flip through the pages of catalogs and make their decision in a few minutes. This decision should not be based on the hottest fad or the latest trend. This is a decision about multiplying disciples of Jesus Christ. In order to evaluate curriculum, churches need to spend time getting familiar with the format, the feel, and the theology directing that curriculum. The time leaders invest in the decision will most likely save them time in the future. Making a hasty decision now will usually cost them in the long run. Doctrinal direction and educational philosophy should be at the top of the list as these decisions are made.

A stark reality to keep in mind when working with a travel agent is that the vacation will cost more if each piece is customized individually than if purchased as a package deal. The cost to create curriculum is similar to buying the individual parts of a major vacation separately. Most of us forget to calculate some of the fixed costs when thinking about what it costs to take the full trip. These are the costs that will be spent no matter what it costs to reach the destination. Fixed costs are usually seen in salaries, benefits, equipment, software, and reference materials (commentaries and other resources the creator/writer may need to complete the task). In contrast, variable costs are those that can fluctuate, such as paper, ink, color, and amount of graphic design. Be aware that we are not talking about creating five discussion questions and calling that a curriculum. We are talking about providing a resource set that offers sound Bible exposition, key insights, teaching plans, and resources that help teachers approach their task confidently and help class members prepare for transformational Bible study. Such a curriculum is more likely to result in quality Bible study experiences in small groups that will help people move toward Christlikeness.

Conclusion

"I'm going to plan my own vacation! It'll save bundles of cash!" That's the paradox of ready-to-use curriculum versus "write-your-own" curriculum. People think they are saving money, but they are not; they are paying more and often getting less. Fortunately, savvy church leaders have learned this lesson. They are swapping curriculum-writing time for hands-on ministry time with their people with confidence they are making the right choice.