

# **THE TRACK**

Proposal for Equipping Youth  
To Teach and Lead  
From the Word of God

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## Introduction

When my husband, Art, was in college, one of the elders of his church gathered him along with a few others and taught them how to prepare a sermon and deliver it. There were several small church bodies in his denomination that needed preachers, and since they believed in an elder-driven polity, they welcomed these unpolished young men. Don Crook mentored them for a couple of years, providing constant oversight and critique.

Many years later, in the mountains of Albania, an opportunity arose as my husband was leading a group through several ancient villages. The mountain people wanted to hear about the Lord. Art, being current in the Word and trained by this elder long ago, stepped into this opportunity and gave a message that tied in their pagan practices to the Gospel.

He was ready, on the spot, to preach—even though that wasn't in the plan for the trip.

Some might point out the fact that Art is naturally a quick thinker, and is naturally comfortable speaking in front of people. But the truth is that someone in the leadership of his church long before identified a gifting and fanned its flame, working alongside what the Holy Spirit was already doing.

That's what this idea is all about.

It is also about dealing with a continuing sense that some of our graduates are not equipped to take what we have been pouring into them over the years here at Chapel Hill, and use it to make a difference for the Kingdom in their respective landing places. In fact, some have found the onslaught of the world's pull to be too much. One said to me the other day, "Someone should have told us what this was really going to be like." I'm not sure we didn't or if he would have listened if we had been more in his face, but the begging question is what are we going to do about this growing trend among our graduating seniors?

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## Vision Synopsis

The vision surrounds the idea of incorporating a team of four adults who would mentor up to 10 high school students in learning how to lead a Bible study, and how to give a short devotional. Both of these tasks would develop skills that would not only help them to stay connected personally with the Lord as they launch, but to also be a catalyst for growing others towards the Lord in their college or work futures.

Briefly, the plan is to meet once a week on Wednesdays, for an hour and a half, to cover three different areas: bible study, short training, and training on giving a devotional and then after January, feedback for those who led the devotional the previous week. The bible study

emphasis will focus on inductive study materials and how to use them in different settings. The short training time will cover different issues that help build successful leaders and speakers. The feedback time will be a review of the devotional given, what was great and what needs polishing. The students are being trained during this weekly time, but also will be taking turns leading the bible study at the weekly meeting and giving a devotional at the high school meeting, the Hill, and possibly at the Wednesday night middle school program, Extreme. By taking turns at both venues, each student would have a chance to lead a bible study at least once every two months, and giving up to 2 devotionals by the end of our time together.

Who will participate? Ideally, we would invite five boys and five girls, decided on through a application process. Their turned in application will be reviewed by the four adults and the high school staff. After they are chosen, they will make a contract for the seven months with parents' signatures. This is to make sure everyone understands expectations.

The adult team would be made up of two men and two women not already committed to the Hill leadership team. We would be answerable to Brad and Katie and would commit to 7 months of weekly meetings and attending the places where their students will be presenting. For example, if the guys are presenting one week, the gals don't have to be at the meetings, unless they agree to be there to offer advice and feedback later. Because our schedules are so busy, all of this would be flexible as we share the tasks with each other.

### **Overview of Expectations of Students**

Students will join with the understanding of what the focus is: to grow in the area of leading a bible study and in giving a three to five minute devotional at the Hill and possibly Extreme at least 2 to 3 times total during the year we are together. There will also be a weekly meeting time which will be separated into three areas of study, which the students will eventually lead two of. The months of involvement would be one weekend in the beginning of September for basic inductive bible study training (cost up to participant and will be minimal), and then officially starting our program Wednesday, September 16th through November and January through April.

### **Overview of Expectations of Mentors**

Our basic commitment will be to the 10 students over the seven month time-frame, meeting once a week for an hour and a half, and taking turns with the different sections of the program. Mentors on this team will divvy up topics that are most needed to be trained, giving that short training talk during the weekly time. We will need to commit to being at the devotionals (starting in January), either on Sunday night at the Hill or on Wednesday night at Extreme. This will only be about a 15 min. commitment, unless you take time right then to discuss with a student your impressions. One to two adult leaders per devotional time (other wise we may overwhelm them.) Our role is to teach and to give feedback, to befriend and encourage, to be at their talks and to give ideas when they are stuck. We will be busier at the start but the idea is to turn over the leadership of the weekly bible study and the feedback time to them by the end of the year. We will then move in to more of a cheerleading role, hopefully, guiding and providing accountability to the weekly meetings and to be problem solvers. By the end, we will

have seeds that the Lord will scatter toward the different high school and college campuses from Chapel Hill, for the glory of the Lord and for His Kingdom.

### **Overview of Subjects Covered During Weekly Time (not necessarily in this order)**

Bible Study -30 min.-Our focus will be in using the inductive study method. Taking one weekend in the beginning of September, we'll bring in a trainer (Sandy Cassio, who has taught high schoolers in the past) to lead us through the general scope of this pattern, using the inductive method. Through out the 7 months, we'll cover:

- Personal bible study
- Leading a study that has no homework (Precepts 40 min. studies)
- Small inductive studies with a bit of homework
- Larger, full 10 week Precept study, like Daniel.
- Leading a group of just those in one gender
- Leading a co-ed group

Growing in the Gift-training for 15 min-Each adult leader will take turns leading one of these short training times, with a focus on improving our skills in leading or giving a devotion. Topics may include:

- How to do a word study
- Making an outline for a talk
- How to write out a devotional
- How to weave in personal stories
- How to decide on a topic to speak on
- How to hear the Holy Spirit
- Leading a bible study with just one gender vs. mixed
- Keeping your heart clean before the Lord
- Keeping up a personal Bible Study
- How to find feedback (and why everyone needs it and what to do with it)
- Common problems when leading a Bible study:
  - Argumentative people
  - Rabbit trail-ers
  - So much good info!
  - Not enough good info
  - No one is talking
  - No one did their homework
  - Dominant voices
- Common problems in giving devotionals:
  - Keeping it simple and short
  - Where do I get the punch?
  - Fidgety audience
- Finding your voice and style

*Devotional Development and Feedback*-45min.- The first half of our time will be devoted to learning the nuts and bolts of developing a short devotional, using the method presented in Andy Stanley's book *Communicating for a Change*. We'll slowly develop this with limited homework. Then, the second part of the year, we'll do it; and this time will become the feedback time. Feedback is necessary for our growth as leaders in every area. By using this method in the mix, I believe we will not only improve their leadership, but teach them how to use feedback to grow in other areas of their life. The people that gave the devotional the week before will share what they think was good and what needs work and then there will be a designated leader that will lead us all in discussing the issues that were raised. Eventually, the goal is that the kids begin to lead this part of this section, learning how to give and receive needed feedback.