

# BUILDING A SENSE OF “ESPRIT DE CORPS”

## INTRODUCTION

You can change your CBLT Center from being a mere study program to a living entity for Jesus Christ. You do it by “Esprit de Corps.” Esprit de corps is a wonderful concept. It is just pure delight for me to share with you this special lecture on «esprit de corps». It is called «esprit de corps and that is what we will experience in heaven». So we are talking about creating a bit of \_\_\_\_\_ bliss for your CBLT Center here on earth.

## I. WHAT DOES ‘ESPRIT DE CORPS’ MEAN TO YOUR CBLT CENTER?

### A. To some it just means having no team conflicts.

No problems, everybody is happy. Everything is okay. Status quo is good. You’re blessed to serve the Lord.

### B. Some said, “To wives it means whether their husband is happy or not.” “The husband usually is if he likes his course coach!”

Is that is a good measurement of «esprit de corps»? If his wife sees that her husband is happy, or is there a little bit more to it. I think we may discover that there is a bit more to it.

### C. Several said that ‘Esprit de corps’ in the Team, Students, and Wives is a spirit of “MY CBLT Center—OUR CBLT Center—OUR COURSES—OUR...”

The idea is--we own it. We are part of it. We belong to it. This is important to us. We are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ for it. We believe in it. We are going to make it happen. This is valuable for the future of our people and our country deleted.

### D. The dictionary definition of Esprit De Corps is: a contagious group spirit; sense of pride, honor, etc. shared by those in the same group or undertaking.

This is the spirit we sense at a year-end celebration, a retreat or what people display during a parade. But we are saying that such a contagious general feeling or attitude should constantly pervade the CBLT Center and become its trademark.

## II. SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO BUILD ‘ESPRIT DE CORPS’

I will just be giving you a list following the letters of the alphabet.

### 1. Remember, spirit begins with the team.

The CBLT Center director has a vision of what he wants to see happen three years from now. What his plans are for two years from now. He should be enthusiastic about what he envisions and what things will look like in his province. How many new leaders prepared to serve Jesus Christ, how many churches started and how many people redeemed from hell. He needs to communicate this to the administrator. The administrator needs to see a vision of «this is wonderful and this year we can just do this and we will add that. We expect God’s blessing.” Then this spirit of anticipation is shared with the course coaches. The course coaches share this wonderful spirit of anticipation with students and so on. It is contagious.

## **2. Stress quality in everything you do--100%.**

This is absolutely crucial for your church-based training ministry as everyone is working separately in an isolated situation apart from each other. \_\_\_\_\_ is very important. You don't have a building and a budget and a team to carry you from one year to another and do a ministry. Ultimately it is quality right in the local church that makes pastors and elders successful. Quality makes a new generation think, "This is the way to prepare for Christian Service."

## **3. Involve wives in the program.**

Wives add an extra touch to a man's world. Extra in a sense of more beautiful and special than men do. Adam sensed there was something missing and God gave him a woman. A woman is always in favor of a flower or something special. Things automatically \_\_\_\_\_ if a woman is there. You want to involve women in your program. Every time you have a course seminar one of the wives comes with some tea and a tiny snack. She stays there in the sessions to listen. Next time another wife comes along. In a variety of ways you can get wives involved. They will be so excited and talk about it at home.

## **4. Involve students in the program.**

You can involve students with very little special things. Some of them can type. Some of them could come to the main office once a year for a day. Others have artist's skill and can make some artistic contributions. Some maybe can contribute singing on a special occasion. Involve your students so that they get a vision of participation in this special ministry. Have a special group evangelistic activity visiting a home for invalids or the elderly or a Christian center for drug addicts.

## **5. Sell the privilege of attending.**

Attending a discussion seminar is a special \_\_\_\_\_. Attending the courses from the CBLT Center right there in their own town and in their own church without having to go away is something very special. The sacrificial effort of the course coach coming to their place to minister to them is special.

## **6. Sell the opportunity to develop maximum potential.**

How easy it is to do that through the CBLT program emphasizing academics, ministry skills and character development. Students can sense almost immediate improvement and results as they practice something and members of the congregation and other people express their appreciation. Church leaders see that the ministry is valuable and lives are changing. Wives and children and close acquaintances see his character being developed as he begins to shine and \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ himself. Maximum potential is developed right in his or her own local church in a small group being trained by a specialist.

## **7. Enroll only those students who WANT to come.**

Often we are interested in numbers and all we want is a few more. Instead of being satisfied with four eager students, we get two more. Two that really don't want to do their homework, two that really did not make a commitment. Two that don't always come when there is a discussion seminar and it drags the whole thing down. What a joy it would be to just have those four students eager to participate and encourage one another and to be ready and wanting to please the course coach. Enroll only those who really want to grow for Jesus Christ.

## **8. Build spirit through bulletin boards or posters.**

I think this is a real need. Something that course coaches do not make enough use of. It is so easy for a course coach to take a large sheet of paper folded into four so that he can carry it with him very easily and put it on the wall when he has a seminar. Almost every single seminar he could have a poster there. One time he would have the lesson outline. Another time he would have a slogan for the lesson. Other times maybe a picture for a special seasonal event like Pentecost, or Christmas or Palm Sunday. An artist could make a special drawing that would appeal to the group and connect the course they are taking to the significance of that season and the course coach could put that up. What a positive, motivational thing that is. It says, «He cared for us».

## **9. Build spirit through punctuality.**

How absolutely important that is. A majority of groups meet every two weeks, if the course coach misses one time it means that the group does not get together for a whole month. It follows that home assignments will not be done properly because there was no motivation and no clear understanding or instruction. The students' ministry falls down right away. It is a MUST for a course coach to be there. Another element is to be there on time. A slave mentality says, «I do not get paid for that. I do not get anything extra. I am just going to be there the very last minute». Creating church leaders means students have to have \_\_\_\_\_, and to develop initiative you must show the example. You must model it to them. You must be there thirty minutes earlier to have time for prayer, time for «a last minute» review of the lesson, time to relax and enjoy being prepared, time to focus your lesson on this group situation in this room, and time to encourage and motivate students that arrive early. Punctuality is a vital aspect of the CBLT ministry and creates a reputation of faithfulness and quality.

## **10. Build spirit in the bi-weekly seminars.**

Make sure every student is welcomed. Have students to pray for each other. What a joy it is to come to this small family of 'like-minded men' with 'like-minded wives and families and needs' and have someone pray for you. What joy and privilege for a student to pour out his heart for a fellow student. Take time for personal prayer. Take time to encourage and \_\_\_\_\_, «Yes, this time you did not do very well on the exam but last time you did and normally you do well. We can make arrangements for you to take a few extra exam questions». It is possible to encourage students so they go home feeling, «Wow, that was good this week». A student who feels like that just wants to come back. A course coach who missed doing this missed the whole point of discipling people for Jesus Christ.

## **11. Build spirit through special conferences.**

People just want to get together in some larger groups. People want to get together in some other format than sitting around a table and discussing a big topic. Therefore we have encouraged you to have conferences for the pastors. Once every two months probably is enough, four times a year or so, in different regions of your province. Invite different students to come and simply share a testimony. Maybe someone had a remarkable change in his \_\_\_\_\_ or personal growth. Maybe God used another student and through his group the Lord started new church. Or a course coach has motivated fifteen students to have Bible studies with unbelievers. These things need to be shared. Not high-level academic material but practical stuff. «This is what our CBLT Center accomplishes». Have both course coaches and students participate. You should also have a few workshops, probably three times a year, for the course coaches and some key students. August/ September, December or January and March are good months for that. Only the director and administrator and their wives should conduct them with possibly some outside personnel.

## **12. Build spirit through field trips, picnics, etc.**

A number of CBLT Centers have done that and the results have been wonderful. I know one CBLT Center team that went with their wives and children to the forest for two weeks in the summer time. They bonded together in a new way as a Christian family. Some do other activities. Picnics are so easy. Just go to a little park. The wives come along with little snacks and some personal drinks that can easily be carried and share that food with one another. Bring some a new dish that is a little bit unusual. Have a time for testimonies that includes the wives. Share your vision or plan and do some good singing. Form two circles right there in the park, ladies holding hands and praying and the men standing in a circle and praying. After three or four hours the team goes home \_\_\_\_\_ and praising God.

## **13. Build spirit through privileges like coaching a group.**

To coach a group is an honour, to be entrusted with the lives of other men or in some case ladies. To minister to them individually is a high trust. Let it be a special privilege for an advanced student to participate in coaching a group. Make it a privilege. Disciple him personally and have him ready to coach a discussion seminar. Perhaps a course coach is sick or needs to be away so that he cannot lead his group. This is an opportunity for a key student to coach a group, and it is a special honor. Take time to prepare him. Take time afterwards to hold him accountable and to praise God for what happened.

## **14. Build spirit through awarding high grades.**

Grades can be a great ministry tool. Grades should be not *just* a number on a piece of paper that is sent off to the CBLT Center director. One CBLT Center gives each student with an overall grade of 90% or better a free set of course books for the next course. This is absolutely a perfect idea, a super idea. Here is future, here is perspective and here is a vision. The course coach's thankfulness is expressed and the student is given something into which he can pour his heart. He is motivated to study further and to continue growing in the Lord Jesus Christ. There are other small things like a spiritual book of some sort that can be shared with men. But this is one of the best.

#### **15. Build spirit by inviting wives at course end.**

Yes, bring the wives in. The end of a course marks the completion of a \_\_\_\_\_ step. The men have been sweating for three months, maybe five months. They have been sacrificing time. There have been difficulties they had to overcome. Perhaps occasionally there have been some family arguments, or other problems relating to his studies. This is victory time so bring the wives in and let them share in the victory of their husbands. Give a hand written congratulation slip or 'thank you note' to the wives for participating which shows the grade the husband has received. Then make it a party time.

#### **16. Build spirit by attending LTS workshops.**

The LTS or leadership training workshops provide special material for people that really want to become high-level leaders in the church. LTS is for men that want to explore this area of leadership. There are many good materials in those workshops and usually they are a highlight for everyone. We want to encourage you to bring your team and some key students to these workshops.

#### **17. Build a family spirit. (Encourage older students to care for and mentor newer students.)**

In many areas in your province there are new students that want to be enrolled. Possibly he was saved later or he has moved to that area or he was hindered for some particular reason. Now he wants to become a student. Yes, he has done the Basic Christian Life courses, which should be a beginning step. But he has missed Galatians/Romans and E/D and now he is doing the New Testament Survey course but without some help he is basically lost. Especially the first month an advanced student should go over once a week to give this student the help that he needs. Just help him to go through the lesson and cover it completely. The wife only had a minimal interview and she does not know any of the other wives. She does not know what it is all about. The wife of another student who has been longer in this program could make this new lady her prayer \_\_\_\_\_. They should visit at least monthly all during that first course. These two students need to meet together and develop a special bond. It will make this new student successful.

#### **18. Build spirit through your logo insignia on notebooks, clothes, etc.**

It is now possible to get logos printed on clothing. It would be very helpful to have your CBLT Center logo printed on t-shirts or other clothing that students can wear. Or maybe a smaller shirt (that is cheaper) for their children to wear. These can be worn on special occasions. Maybe the logo of your CBLT Center is "know, be and do." As director or administrator or course coach you should have it printed on your briefcase. Then wherever you go people see: 'know, be and do'. It signifies, this is us, this is our CBLT Center. Have it printed on all the CBLT Center papers that you pass out. The logo should be on the exams, congratulation slips and on many things like that. When it regularly comes before the students it is \_\_\_\_\_ to them.

#### **19. Build spirit through homework to reach unbelievers.**

I think there is nothing more delightful for the child of God than to find a sinner bound for hell and introduce them to the precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and have that person become a family member of God. Course \_\_\_\_\_ always should prepare assignment opportunities for students to go out and have contacts with unbelievers and lead them to salvation.

#### **20. Build spirit through visitors, partners, sponsors.**

Yes, you have visitors. Encourage students to bring a visiting relative to sit in on a discussion seminar one time. At home they can talk about CBLT, the course, what they are doing, the value and so forth. There are other visitors like a pastor or another elder or some other leader. Maybe even a curious unbeliever. There

are partners sharing in prayer, with medicines, clothing or financially, or building a church building. Make them part of your CBLT Center. Let them see different groups. Let them see your office. Spend time with them, they just want to participate, be there, visit, see and taste. What a wonderful opportunity for your team and students to share CBLT results by the grace of God.

## **21. Build spirit through news bulletins.**

I recommend CBLT Centers to prepare a simple single sheet news bulletin. I have seen others do that and I think it is beautiful. It does not cost much because it is only one sheet. You can easily distribute them once a quarter, three or four times a year would be very appropriate. It should have the CBLT Center logo, some pictures, the latest news and some prayer requests. It tells people “we are not \_\_\_\_\_” and “this is a large ministry.” It brings before the people what the CBLT Center is doing, like showing a baptism of people who were reached through the CBLT Center ministry. Cover the 3 points “academics, character development and ministry skills.”

## **22. Build spirit through sports.**

Yes, sports can help you. Our ministry is with men, mostly young \_\_\_\_\_ men that are in their twenties or thirties. Imagine a very early spring day, this is the first warm day and you know that winter is now gone. Men come early to your course seminar but it is too nice to go inside. They want to stand outside lingering. The course coach brought a beanbag or ball for the men to throw around, to have a little fun activity. These men have aching muscles and they want to use those muscles. They just want to jump a little bit but need something to jump for. Tossing the beanbag around gives them a reason. They start puffing “this is just wonderful” then they come in, sit down, smile and are relaxed. A bond is being established; they pray and now are ready for a good discussion. The memory of this will stimulate the student later on in the week when he has to open his books at home and study again. There are other times like that during the summer or fall when a sports activity can greatly help and it is very appealing to men.

## **23. Build spirit through State and National Conventions.**

Probably there are some other groups holding conferences in your province. On a national level there may be a CBLT or denominational conference and there are other conferences. Take some students with you. It gives you an opportunity to be together on the train or in a car for many hours and you can disciple that person. Have something outlined, something prepared to share and encourage and spend time together. You have an opportunity to pray and he has the privilege of a paid trip that helps him grow closer to Jesus.

## **24. Love the individual**

The CBLT Center director should have a great love for his administrator. They should love one another as families and do some things together (go to the zoo or whatever). Together they should love course coaches, especially those who live far away. Focus especially on those that are isolated or those who coach only one group, or those who don't come to all the course coach meetings. Take special \_\_\_\_\_ to love them. Then together, as a team, love the students. Make sure that your course coaches regularly report how they showed love to their students. Love is action. Love is giving. Love is physical. Without a physical element love is no love. Make sure it happens! Make sure you are an example.

# **CONCLUSION**

If God gives you grace to put all these principles into practice, you will have a contagious sense of «esprit de corps». It will pervade your whole CBLT Center team and student body. Ultimately from there it will spread out to the churches. From the churches it will reach your whole province. It is God's secret to a victorious Christian life. It is God's secret for all of eternity. That's why you and I like to read the Book of Revelation so often. This book is full with tribulations but we love reading it because there is an overwhelming feeling of worship and awe and praise. Serving God and Jesus Christ forever and ever. Let's begin right now, amen.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege upon completion of your practical assignment to use this lecture with others.

## *Practical assignment*

Completed

- Choose two of the principles of building “Esprit de Corps” to put into practice each week. At the beginning of the week write down which principles you have chosen and how you plan to put them into practice during the next week. At the end of the week evaluate how you did and note what you could do better. Bring your notes to the next conference for accountability.



## *Answer Key*

### **INTRODUCTION**

heavenly

- I. C. sacrifice
- II. 2. Quality
- 3. beautify
- 5. privilege
- 6. emulate
- 9. initiative
- 10. motivate
- 11. character
- 12. refreshed
- 15. significant
- 17. partner
- 18. encouraging
- 19. coaches
- 21. alone
- 22. energetic
- 24. opportunities