



ELEVATION LIFE TRANSFORMATION

The University of Christ-Centered Coaching, Leadership, & Change™

APPROVED AND REGULATED BY THE TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION, DIVISION OF CAREER SCHOOLS & COLLEGES (AUSTIN, TEXAS)

7 Reasons Why the Church Should Learn to Coach

By Dr. Merle Ray

Whether a minister or not, if you are a child of God, you'll want to learn to coach. Jesus used powerful coaching questions when he stood before the Pharisees, Sadducees, His disciples, the crowds, and even Pilate. Through asking direct questions several times throughout the New Testament Gospels, Jesus was able to get the Pharisees and Sadducees to answer themselves, look in the face of truth, and expose their own critical tactics and hard hearts. For example, in Matthew 12:11, when Jesus said to them, *"If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out?"* Jesus demonstrated a perfect example of using a probing question to cause them to ponder their purpose and what was inside of their hearts. This is a coaching technique.

Through use of another coaching technique, Jesus was able to get the religious accusers to disqualify themselves from stoning a woman. In John 8, when the religious leaders brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus, he was teaching the crowds. In front of everyone, the religious accusers interrupted the lesson and pushed the woman in front of their midst making her a spectacle. Can you imagine that? While Jesus was there teaching the people, the religious haters bombarded the meeting and publicly began to humiliate this woman. But what did Jesus do? He stooped down becoming centered on the ground, writing in the dirt saying nothing but listening. And when they had pushed him further, Jesus looked up from the ground and said: *"Which of you is without sin; let him cast the first stone."* To that, the religious accusers couldn't say a thing, but one by one they left His presence.

What were the coaching techniques Jesus used against his religious haters in this example?

Becoming acutely self-aware, Jesus knew that they were trying to tempt him, that they might have reason to accuse him of wrong. So, he self-regulated and centered himself on writing in the dirt, and in response to their accusations, Jesus delivered unto them a profound biblical question.

This is absolutely brilliant! Why? Because Jesus was left there able to minister to the needs of the woman. He forgave her sins and in return, she was made free!

Another time occurred when Jesus was brought before Pilate to be crucified by the Jews. This a powerful profound passage that as a Christian you cannot appreciate fully until you know what is going on here in John 18. Jesus is about to be crucified so this is his last discussion to set the record straight before the ruling governor and those who are his accusers. But instead of tearing them down in their religiosity and stripping them of their fake claims, there is an amazing life-filled word that Jesus gives them and demonstrates for us in a melody of coaching! You see, when Jesus is asked about WHO he is, Jesus uses a coaching question to answer right before his death standing facing Pilate. Jesus had done no wrong, but for Scripture to be fulfilled, He knew he had to be crucified so that you and I could live eternally with Him in peace. **Even in this extreme moment in history, Jesus poses a question that gives Pilate, the governor, an opportunity to discover for himself who God is. This is coaching!**

Listen to what the Scripture records in John 18:33-34:

"Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?"

Jesus answered him, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?"

Their conversation recorded in John 18:28-38 leaves such an impression that Pilate didn't want to have anything to do with crucifying Jesus.

Wow! What an opportunity! How does Jesus do this coaching thing?

You see, coaching is a process of self-discovery and revealing questions that when properly explored can help us discover much about ourselves. **This is a big deal because these questions are huge opportunities to reveal not only who we really are inside, but also our huge potential. You see, coaching is just the beginning of getting to the truth!**

Read the story for yourself below and you will see clues in the passage that reveal to us that Jesus is offering Pilate, the Roman governor, **an opportunity to self-discover the truth – and that’s what coaching does!**

I wish we had more time. If we did, we’d do a deeper dive into these coaching opportunities one by one exploring the underlying thoughts highlighted below. We would soon discover the exploring opportunities for truth that Jesus was offering to the person in the room then, and still offers us today.

That is what a good coach does!

John 18: 28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

In the examples I’ve shared so far today, you can see that Jesus uses some direct questions, probing questions, and pondering questions as impactful tools of self-discovery. That’s what coaching is. But coaching is not just good to use in situations of conflict and strife with our enemies, Jesus also shows us that coaching is an impactful technique to use with friends, family, and fellow church members when all is going well. Coaching is a great way to engage in a relationship with yourself and with other people. It is a useful practice when you just need to be in touch with your identity: with who you are in Christ, where you stand with God, and how to walk in and maintain your dominion. Here’s one example of probing coaching questions that Jesus used to invite His disciples into

identity truths – his and theirs. We gain powerful evidence on the identity of Christ and our identity in Him when we study the ways that Jesus coached.

In John chapter 16, the Pharisees and Sadducees have come to Jesus again to test him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. Instead of them recognizing the many works that Jesus has already done among them, these religious haters began to demand more signs from heaven to prove again who Jesus is. But Jesus doesn't dwell on that. He is not moved by their religious condemnation. Instead, Jesus uses this precious time to focus on the needs of his disciples teaching them about the importance of their identity. He poses what coaches call, "soft asks." These are questions that shut down outside distractions and turn our attention to within so that we can hear with our spirit man and not from our flesh. By doing this, Jesus allows the Spirit of God himself to reveal the identity of Jesus to the disciples so that the disciples can receive the blessing of God's Son. But get this, when that happens, God not only releases the power of the Son of God into the disciples' lives, but God also reveals to his disciple, Peter, his own identity, and because of this revelation, a blessing of powerful proportion is delivered. Look at what happens as Jesus uses coaching techniques in conversations with his disciples in Matthew 16:13-19,

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

May I share with you how partnering with God in coaching can make blessings of powerful proportions accessible by you? Here is what I have found from being drawn into a coaching relationship with God:

1. Coaching helps YOU to become a better steward of your life.
2. Coaching helps YOU to help others.
3. Coaching is the beginning of finding answers and the direction you seek towards purpose.
4. Coaching helps YOU discover WHO you are being.
5. Coaching helps strengthen and build character and integrity.
6. Coaching equips the church with the tools we need to become more effective.
7. Coaching increases our awareness, ability to love, make decisions, and take action toward change.

These days when we are faced with such world-changing phenomena as global pandemics, worldwide natural disasters, economic ruin in every world market, and political threats of unrest everywhere, there has never been a more important time during my generation when the church needs to learn how to coach.

Why? **Because the way we "be the church and do the church" needs to change.**

Instead of waiting for a "new normal" that depends on businesses and buildings fully operating to the capacity we knew before, we need to **become the new normal.**

Instead of seeing Sundays and Bible Study nights as our time to come together for worship, **our lives need to be the worship.**

Instead of looking for a miracle, **it's time to be one** in a coaching relationship with our Lord.

We need to find a way to fully be WHO we are in Christ right now.

There are reliable, measurable, and provable ways to demonstrate our intimacy with God. We can find these through coaching. I know because I coach myself and others, and it has made an immense difference in the promises of God that I am seeing come to pass in my life, not because I sat down and waited for a miracle, but because I got up and the Holy Spirit drew me in, and I became the miracle.

This is how I utilize coaching at **ELEVATION LIFE TRANSFORMATION: The University of Christ-Centered Coaching, Leadership, and Change**. It is just one tool – that I use with students and clients to strengthen and increase your intimacy with God and position you on the path towards delivering your destiny. Notice I said: “towards delivering your destiny” – not just talking about it and studying it, but discovering your purpose, your calling and career, and then walking in it, advancing in it, and leveling up to your next state of being WHO you are on this earth – shining like a diamond becoming more and more brilliant in the things of God, manifesting your Maker to make a difference in the world.

That’s the power of God through coaching – and that’s just the beginning of exploring God’s knowledge and expertise. God can use your experience in coaching to go beyond the spiritual, and manifest greatness in the natural.

Here are just a few of the ways I utilize coaching at ELTU to show how you can advance in your calling and career:

1. Use core competencies, best practices, and ethical standards in everyday life and business.

Much of your personal and work life uses important coaching traits and skills that you possess naturally, such as compassion, empathy, and a kind spirit towards others. But you also need to learn some key “core competencies” which are knowledge, skills, and abilities that we rely on when coaching with our friends, family, and clients to help guide them and ourselves through our coaching relationships. Since the coaching industry is not like the healthcare industry or counseling industry or legal industry that is regulated and governed by state, federal, or local law, coaching relies on education, training, and guidance from people who voluntarily commit themselves to ensuring that they have access to and always implement coaching industry best practices. These best practices vary from one coaching organization to another, since there are over 600 (at last count) professional for-profit coaching organizations that I could find in the market via a search on Google, and over 60 different coach credentialing systems being used. This means that literally anyone can call themselves a coach legally. But the more serious candidates believe in a core set of behaviors and skills known as core competencies that help define for themselves and the world their common set of ethical codes of conduct, business, and personal practices such as integrity, respect, honor, and confidentiality working with others.

2. Enhance and improve leadership in your personal and professional life.

Child of God, you can use coaching to complement your university degree and your professional experience you already have working in Corporate America in a blue-or-white collar profession; it doesn’t matter. Coaching is still valuable. Coaching helped me to add a layer of expertise and objective validation to my abilities to do my job well. You can use this as leverage to advance yourself and demonstrate to leadership in organizations the level of competence, professionalism, and value you bring as a leader. In my roles both in the corporate sector and as a freelance entrepreneur, coaching has been essential to helping me find clients on my own and showing me how I can help my clients as a strong leader. You can gain big payoffs utilizing coaching to improve and strengthen your leadership.

3. Build relationships, networking opportunities, and helpful alliances.

Coaching as way of life means using it anytime anywhere whether in conversations with loved ones, family, or business networking with others in organizations. Primarily a way to communicate and engage others in your associated relationships, you will find that coaching helps you to build true solid business and personal relationships – and to identify when that solid structure is not there. You receive the discernment to identify and discover the difference between your personal relationships that may remain in your life and those who may be just passing through. Individuals are of value regardless of whether they are temporary or more long-term, for business or pleasure.

4. Create opportunities for deeper learning, growth-centered relationships, and authentic connections.

Coaching is a great way to infuse your business or career with the additional knowledge, training, and skills you need to be open to new professional possibilities. While coaching, you can gain additional information that you may have never seen before as a new business or career pathway, something to explore further, or discover how you might make yourself more appealing to prospective clients, partners, employers, or associates – regardless of whether you are looking for a job or not. And guess what, it doesn't just work for attracting new business opportunities, but also for attracting new friends and relationships. When you are more self-aware and freer in the truth of WHO you are in connection with Christ, there is an inner peace, beauty, and powerful ability to have a healthy connection with others. This helps when you want to attract more friends and clients in your business and personal life.

5. Maximize your earning potential.

Coaching is an industry that grossed more than \$2.84 billion in year 2019 in the United States according to a study released in 2020 by the International Coach Federation (ICF), the world's largest professional coaching association. This was a 21% increase over the 2015 estimate. As you develop coaching presence and the skills of an experienced coach, many people find coaching to be an attractive part-time freelance role or even full-time. The more comfortable you are with coaching the more earning potential has been my experience. It becomes more natural to be objective and "in the moment" with the people around you rather than being judgmental or critical is what I've found in coaching professionally. This type of ability to connect with people and be fully centered and focused on the other person and what they wish to explore for themselves provides proof of your comfort level as a coach and makes those who are partnering with you more comfortable and willing to pay for your coaching expertise. In the United States, the average reported income from coaching clients in 2019 was \$61k according to the ICF 2020 study above. As a credentialed professional coach, I know of coaches whose hourly rates are more than \$200/hour, but that is not why I coach. Like me, most coaches I know are not just coaches, but also consultants, trainers, authors, public speakers, and human resource managers. The coaching part of my work accounts for about 40% of my total income, but what keeps me coaching is the impact of my work and the growing demand for effective coaching.

The United States Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics refers to **Executive Coaches** and **Philosophy and Religion Teachers** (Postsecondary level) as **Bright Outlook Occupations**.¹ As you can see below, these categories not only include Executive Coaching and Faith-based Instruction, but also: Human Resources Managers, Training and Development Managers, and Counselors (not elsewhere classified). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics defines "Bright Outlook" occupations as those that match at least one of the following criteria:

- *Projected to grow faster than average (employment increase of 5% or more) over the period 2019-2029 for the US nationwide; or*
- *Projected to have 100,000 or more job openings over the period 2019-2029 for the US nationwide.*

The screenshot shows the O*NET OnLine interface. At the top left is the O*NET logo. To its right is the text 'O*NET OnLine'. On the far right is a search bar labeled 'Occupation Quick Search:'. Below the logo and title is a navigation bar with links: 'Help', 'Find Occupations', 'Advanced Search', 'Crosswalks', 'Share', and 'O*NET Sites'. The main content area features a heading 'Bright Outlook Occupation:' followed by the code '25-1126.00 - Philosophy and Religion Teachers, Postsecondary'. Below this is a sun icon and a paragraph stating: 'Bright Outlook occupations are expected to grow rapidly in the next several years, or will have large numbers of job openings. More details...'. Underneath is a link 'View all Bright Outlook occupations'. At the bottom, a sentence reads: 'This occupation, Philosophy and Religion Teachers, Postsecondary, is expected to grow rapidly.' Red arrows in the original image point to the occupation name and the phrase 'grow rapidly'.

¹ O-Net Online Source for Occupational Category 25-1126.00 - Philosophy and Religion Teachers, Postsecondary as of 2/28/2021 found at: <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/25-1126.00>

Education Crosswalk Search for:
52-1006

Search again:

1 code matching "52.1006" in 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)

- 52.1006 Executive/Career Coaching
 - 11-3121.00 [Human Resources Managers](#)
 - 11-3131.00 [Training and Development Managers](#)
 - 13-1071.00 [Human Resources Specialists](#)
 - 13-1151.00 [Training and Development Specialists](#)
 - 21-1012.00 [Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors](#)
 - 21-1019.00 [Counselors, All Other](#)

All Bright Outlook Occupations [Save Table \(XLS/CSV\)](#)

Every Bright Outlook occupation matches at least one of the following criteria:

- Projected¹ to **grow faster than average** (employment increase of 5% or more) over the period 2019-2029 for the US nationwide
- Projected to **have 100,000 or more job openings** over the period 2019-2029 for the US nationwide

The source for this information is the 2019-2029 employment projections from the Bureau. Projected growth represents the estimated change in total employment over the projections period (2019-2029). Projected job openings represent job openings due to growth and replacement during the same period

Elevation Life Transformation is committed to providing education and training in these areas for communities of faith. However, Elevation Life Transformation cannot guarantee employment.

I love the fact that I can provide coaching as both a ministry calling and an industry career anywhere across the globe. I gain fulfillment in working with clients who are happy to co-partner in elevating their personal, professional, and spiritual lives. These individuals know the value of a coaching relationship with me, and investing in themselves; they are seeking to grow, level up, elevate, expand or explore more in the form of solutions or growth for themselves or their businesses.

Coaching remains an untapped market for the church as most pastors, church leaders, and members I see know very little about how to use coaching to build congregations of resourcefulness, strength, purpose, prosperity, and character. Instead, many men and women leaders of the church are stressed to the max doing ministry the way that they have done it for years, and it seems like they are pulling tractors with tightropes instead of using coaching to let God do the heavy lifting. While coaching is not the only tool the church should use to impact the world for good, it is certainly the most impactful and fundamentally underutilized in my opinion. This is where ELTU comes in.

Want a degree that is meaningful to you and not just a piece of paper? What about participating in a program that lets you become a trained coach, leader of change, and published author while finishing your Bachelor's, Master's, Graduate or Doctorate degree? What if you could do it at your own pace and finish faster than traditional college at a cost you can afford? Now you can! – It's not too late to coach!

Take the steps to fulfill God's destiny for you personally, professionally, and spiritually.

Be the Game-changing Degreed Coach, Author, and Leader you are destined to be!

See which ELTU Degree or Coach Certificate is right for you.

There are (10) different programs and certificates offered at ELTU that you might pursue:

- Bachelor of Science in Christ-Centered Coaching, Leadership, and Change (BCL)
- Master of Science in Christ-Centered Coaching, Leadership, and Change (MCL)
- Graduate Degree in Executive Leadership, Pastoral Care, and Change (GCL)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Christ-Centered Coaching, Leadership, and Change (PHD-CCC)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Human Capital Leadership (PHD-HCL)
- Graduate Certificate in Professional Coaching (G-CPC)
- Master Certificate in Professional Coaching (M-CPC)
- Christ-Centered MBA – Inner Healing for the Soul (MBA)
- Personal Ministry Coach (PMC)
- Spiritual Intimacy & Birthing Coach (SIB)

Regardless of your chosen ELTU degree or certificate, take the essential step as a child of God to use coaching to strengthen and further your success in your personal, professional, and spiritual life.

When you earn an ELTU Degree or Coach Certificate, it's easy, affordable, and life-changing:

- **Your program is self-paced self-study!**
- **Complete journal reflections from textbook or do 1 course paper! Your choice.**
- **No tests! Just coaching labs with a person who wants to be coached by you.**
- **Check-in once a week by posting to your Instructor's Discussion Forum question.**
- **Graduate in just 12, 16, 24, or 36 months! Your choice.**
- **Decide on a customized Student Roadmap!**

ELTU was built specifically to help self-motivated individuals with a desire and passion to coach others. We help you to live, learn, and love your life in Christ! Use coaching as the strategic lever and laboratory for your advancement you learn how to take your calling and career to the next level. The self-learning and discovery that is revealed as you coach yourself and others is unlike any other learning environment! Visit our ELTU website at www.ElevationU.com to learn more about how an ELTU Degree or Coach Certificate can add value to your personal, professional, and spiritual life experiences.

ELEVATION Life Transformation University is:

- Licensed and approved by the Texas Workforce Commission.
- Exempt from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- Not recognized by the United States Department of Education.
- Not designed for state certification or designation outside of ministry or faith-based education.

About the Author



Dr. Merle Ray,

Founder and Chief Executive Officer of ELTU has over 20 years of experience in Corporate America senior leadership roles functioning as an internal coach and HR executive. She is certified as a professional coach (PCC) by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) – the world’s largest professional coaching organization considered the gold standard for coaching. Dr. Ray also carries both industry and ministry credentials as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) by the Human Resources Credentialing Institute since 2001; Change Management Professional (CMP) and PROSCI credentialed practitioner since 2017; Senior Professional in the International Public Management Association (IPMA-SCP) since 2016; Bachelor of Science degree specializing in Christian Leadership from College of Biblical Studies in Houston, Texas (2003); Master of Science degree specializing in Leadership from Grand Canyon University (2012); Doctor of Philosophy specializing in Coaching & Christian Counseling (2019) from Newburgh Seminary and College of the Bible. She is also an ordained Christian Minister since 2007 specializing in faith-based instruction, coaching, training, discipleship, personal and spiritual formation primarily of women and men in business professional groups.



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Perfect for individuals whose spiritual life is also important to their career.

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