TRAINING MEMBERS OF ERINDALE BIBLE

CHAPEL IN MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO,

FOR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

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A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

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by

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APPROVAL SHEET

TRAINING MEMBERS OF ERINDALE BIBLE

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To Leanne: my wife, my love, and my partner in ministry.

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PREFACE

I am grateful to God for His astonishing goodness to me. Not only has He loved me, saved me, and been patient with me, but He has also afforded me the privilege of serving Him by serving His blood-bought sheep in the local church. My sincere hope is that by God's grace what I have learned and developed here will be of real practical use in equipping His people for the work of the ministry.

Several years ago, Dr. Bill McRae emphasized to me that my role as a pastor was not to do the ministry per se, but rather to equip God's people for that work. This insight into Ephesians 4 was as formative to me then as it is now. Thank-you, Bill! I pray that this project will be useful in this manner; namely, being a means by which the saints are equipped to serve the King.

I also trust that the work I have done here will yield meaningful results in my own life. I was challenged once by a pastor I admire greatly that in pastoral ministry I need to be more than just the "church chaplain." I need to be a *pastoral leader*. This project and the entire doctoral program afforded me the opportunity to continue my growth in this vein, learning more about what it is that God has called me to and taking intentional steps to apply that to my life and work.

Many people have helped me in this project, more than I have room to name. I would be remiss, however, if I did not thank Dr. Jamus Edwards for not only supervising my work, but also encouraging me along the way. I also wish to thank Betsy Fredrick for the tremendous assistance she gave me in editing every page of this of document. I am also grateful for my eldership team at Erindale Bible Chapel: Elias Murad, Bob Westrope, Dan Soucier, and our newest elder, Daniel Tee. This council encouraged and assisted me

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of Erindale Bible Chapel (EBC) in Mississauga, Ontario, is to make disciples and to teach them to grow. This mission is largely carried out through a variety of ministries that function in the church, some of which focus on making new disciples while others on making quality disciples.[1] Regardless of the emphasis, essential to each ministry are the members at EBC who lead them. These leaders are responsible to guide the work being done to ensure its quality and consistency with the mission of the church, including giving direction to volunteers who serve under them. EBC ministry leaders play a significant role not only in their particular area of service, but more importantly, in the overall effectiveness of the church in carrying out its purpose. If leaders do not receive adequate training, support, and guidance, then they are likely to become frustrated because they are tasked with responsibilities for which they have not been adequately equipped. In this situation, the church risks missing opportunities to be used of God to advance His kingdom in significant ways.

Context

This ministry project was carried out at Erindale Bible Chapel in Mississauga, Ontario. At least five contextual factors make this project pertinent. First, the possibilities for ministry in and through the church are innumerable given its location. The city is home to well over 700,000 people and is among the largest cities in the country, while in the Erindale community itself there are thousands of residents from ethnically and

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[1] Making "new disciples" has in view evangelistic ministries wherein the emphasis is on calling people to become disciples of Jesus. Reference to making "quality disciples" here has to do with ministries that emphasize growing up in the faith.

economically diverse backgrounds. This diversity is reflected in the membership of the church where almost every continent is represented and there is a broad range of income, age, and stage of life. From an outreach standpoint, there are countless opportunities to serve new Canadians in the community in ways that can lead to gospel conversations, while existing ministries to low-income individuals and families make for meaningful connections for Christ. From a discipleship perspective, there are numerous possibilities for building up believers in their faith through age and stage-specific endeavors, such as ministry for seniors, young parents, students, or people with differing abilities. Ministry opportunities at EBC abound at present. While it is impossible to estimate what could emerge in the months and years to come, what is certain is that every ministry will need leaders who are prepared for the task.

Second, no plan or process exists for the training and development of EBC leaders. Many members leading important ministries have been given no training for their role, nor is there any strategy for the development of character or leadership competencies to help them improve. Three paid, part-time staff members are subject to annual reviews during which there is direct feedback, suggestions for training from outside the church, and objectives are reviewed. However, most leaders are excluded from this process because these performance reviews are limited to paid staff. Currently, leaders are given tasks to perform for which they are not being equipped—a practice that is not only unlikely to be fruitful but is also unfair.

Third, there is a constant need for new leaders due to the turnover of those heading up ministries. To some extent, this is owing to the geographical setting of the church where a highly competitive housing market makes it difficult for first-time homebuyers to establish themselves in the community. This same reality compels some retirees to consider relocating in favor of a lower cost of living in communities less populated or closer to family. Additionally, new Canadians who make EBC their home find themselves in similar situations of looking for more affordable housing once they are

established in the country. EBC has had many strong leaders and leadership candidates move away from the church due to these circumstances. Congregational turnover is not unique to EBC, but this contextual factor makes it necessary for new leaders to be prepared to take over when key positions are vacated.

At the same time, some members have tirelessly led ministries and no longer want to do so or wish to invest themselves in a different area of the church, while others desire a sabbatical from service. Without adequate training at least two things are prone to happen: ministries will not have the leadership they need, and potential leaders may find the prospects of leading overwhelming when they know they are not likely to receive much by way of training.

Fourth, current ministry leaders have voiced concern over the absence of the kind of support this project aims to provide. Some key ministry leaders, when asked for feedback on their work, have indicated that they feel like they are on their own with little explicit connectivity to the overall mission of the church. They have spoken of unclear expectations, challenges in dealing with volunteers, and the desire to be given resources to help them grow as leaders and in ministry effectiveness. Essentially, leaders are indicating is that there is both the need and desire for better support.

Finally, the biblical convictions of the church call for the intentional development of men and women to serve the Lord and to grow up in the faith as they do so. In Ephesians 4, Paul commends a philosophy of ministry that emphasizes preparing church members for ministry. The reason Christ has given certain gifted people to the church, such as evangelists, pastors, and teachers, is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12).[2] In the context of EBC, this text has been spoken of often and is said to be a shared value. However, even a cursory survey of what is currently being done in the area of leadership development

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[2] All Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

suggests a disconnect between what the church believes to be important and what it actually does. This project is an attempt to close this gap by applying these biblical convictions to ministry practice.

Given the rich opportunities to make a strong kingdom impact, it is essential that the saints at EBC are found to be good stewards of what God has given them and to mobilize its members into ministry. Accomplishing this objective will require ministry leads who are ready for the task at hand, which will require the liabilities outlined previously to be addressed. Without a strategy for training existing leaders, a process for training new ones, nor an adequate response to the concerns being voiced and the clear biblical directive, EBC is at risk of failing to reach its potential and missing the opportunity to play a significant part in God's redemptive designs for the city of Mississauga. This project was designed to take necessary steps to train leaders to lead ministries at EBC toward fulfilling its mandate as a local church.

Rationale

Based on the contextual factors described, there are several reasons for training members for ministry leadership at EBC. First, leadership training will provide an intentional means of developing leaders of character, competency, and confidence. In terms of character, an emphasis on spiritual formation in leadership and Christian maturity will help them be the kind of people the church needs in influential roles, and the type of disciples EBC exists to replicate. With regard to competency, leadership training will equip men and women with skills to improve the work they are doing and to perform critical evaluations, set goals, and lead others. As a result, one can anticipate that the confidence of leaders will be cultivated as they develop and observe their own progress.

Second, the kind of training implemented in this project will lead to a greater alignment of individual ministries with the overall mission of the church. The very basis of training the church's leaders is to better fulfill its purpose for existing; namely, to

make disciples and teach them to grow. Leaders will see that what they are doing is not something independent and isolated from the broader ministry, but an important part of the whole.

Third, because of the ongoing need for prepared leaders, adequate training will enable the church to be more responsive to present and future opportunities and needs. Volunteers will work under leaders who are equipped to lead, assess, and strategize to make ministry efforts more fruitful. As a result of being trained, the church's approach to ministry will leave less to chance, as in the past, hoping that a leader's background, intuition, and outside training will enable them to make wise, godly decisions as they guide their team. Instead, there will be a tested and measurable intervention for ministry leadership. Such an environment will be more enjoyable for volunteers and will serve to motivate gifted members to want to be part of what God is doing.

Fourth, this project will fulfill the desire of staff and volunteers who want to grow as servants of Christ and will also be a means of practicing what the church purports to value by building up its members so they can build up the church. Both issues are important for the local church to effectively steward its people and to be true to its theology. Willing servant-leaders who want to do their work with excellence for the Lord should be aided in whatever ways possible to carry out this task. A church that neglects this task is failing their people and not giving due attention to one of their greatest assets, namely, the saints who want to serve. What is more, knowing that the Scriptures call for this kind of practice only heightens the urgency with which this issue ought to be addressed.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train members of Erindale Bible Chapel in Mississauga, Ontario, for ministry leadership.

Goals

The training of members at EBC for ministry is realized through the achievement of four goals. While the focal point of this project is the development of individual leaders, this will also enable their respective ministries to flourish for the mission of the church to be advanced.

1.   The first goal was to assess the current level of ministry preparedness among the ministry leaders at EBC.

2.   The second goal was to develop a curriculum to train ministry leaders at EBC for their work.

3.   The third goal was to implement the curriculum and equip ministry leaders to effectively lead their ministries and the people serving under their leadership in ways that are in keeping with EBC's mission and vision.

4.   The fourth goal was to create a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for ministry leadership.

The completion of each goal was dependent on a defined means of measurement and a benchmark of success. The research methodology and instruments used to measure the success of each goal are detailed in the following section.

Research Methodology

Four goals determined the success of this project. The first goal was to assess the current level of ministry preparedness among the ministry leaders at EBC. This goal was measured by administering the Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI) to every ministry leader.[3] This pre-course assessment gauged the confidence, competence, and the biblical-theological foundations possessed by those leading ministries at EBC. This goal was considered met when every ministry participating leader has submitted the LPI and the inventory has been analyzed yielding a clearer picture of the current leadership capacities of leaders at EBC.

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[3] See appendix 1. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research and Ethics Committee prior to use.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to train ministry leaders at EBC for their work. The design of the curriculum reflected issues arising from the LPI, as well as relevant biblical and leadership principles. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.[4] The goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, then the material would be revised until it meets the standard.

The third goal was to implement the curriculum and equip ministry leaders to effectively lead their ministries and the people serving under them in ways that are in keeping with EBC's mission and vision. Participants in this course were selected from those who completed the LPI. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-survey that assessed the knowledge, confidence, and competencies of participants in carrying out their responsibilities.[5] This goal was considered successfully met when a *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrates a positive, statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores.

The fourth goal was to create a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for ministry leadership. This plan was drafted to provide a guide for enhancing leadership effectiveness and fruitfulness at EBC. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the plan's biblical faithfulness, clarity of purpose and goals, scope, and functionality.[6] This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of all the rubric evaluation indicators met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If

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[4] See appendix 2.

[5] See appendix 3.

[6] See appendix 4.

the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, then the material would be revised until it met the standard.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms will be used in the ministry project:

Ministry leadership. The term *ministry leadership* refers to the task of taking responsibility, authority, and initiative in a particular area of ministry to achieve certain goals of the local church through the work and cooperation others.[7] Ministry leaders at EBC can be both paid staff and volunteers and will not be distinguished from one another in this project unless otherwise noted.

Members. Church *members* in the New Testament can be understood as those belonging to the universal church and also the local church. Membership at the local church level is variously understood and applied in Christian traditions, but for the purposes of this study it refers to those who are formally committed and affirmed as members at Erindale Bible Chapel. Thus, having submitted themselves under the authority of the leadership of the elders, they are currently living out their Christian life in fellowship with the saints at EBC.[8]

Ministry. The concept of *ministry* in the New Testament is the work that every member of a local fellowship does to advance the gospel and produce growth in the church. In this sense, the term is not limited to the work of clergy or priestly class, rather, all the saints are themselves priests who carry out the Lord's work.[9] In this project, the

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[7] Kenneth O. Gangel, *Leading and Feeding: A Practical Handbook on Administration in Churches and Christian Organizations* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 31.

[8] Jonathan Leeman, *Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 29.

[9] G. S. M. Walker and R. T. Beckwith, "Ministry," in *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1996), 769.

term *ministry* will be used primarily in reference to the wide array of organized activities carried out by volunteers in keeping with the mission of EBC.

There were three limitations to this project. First, this project will be limited to sixteen weeks, which will include the assessment of ministry preparedness, curriculum development and implementation, and construction of the ministry plan. Second, this project will be limited in terms of its target group, applied exclusively at EBC. Third, due to a global pandemic and its adverse effects on the region in which EBC is located, all interactions were conducted online. Government regulations combined with health and safety prudence necessitated the delivery of each component in a virtual format. Administration of the Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI), surveys, and expert panel assessments were carried out through email or digital platforms. Curriculum instruction was conducted via Zoom video conferencing. This format allowed for interaction with participants, but to a lesser degree than what would have been enjoyed had the seminar been conducted with participants physically present. There was less of a free flow of exchange that could have been enjoyed in an in-person classroom experience. However, the video conferencing platform allowed sufficient interaction among participants such that the objectives of teaching the curriculum were not significantly hindered.

The delimitations of this project are that the participants will be limited to those who are actively leading ministries at EBC, and who are 18 years of age or older.

Conclusion

The aim of this project was to train members from EBC to lead well for the glory of God and the joy of His people as they are equipped with the capacities needed for their ministries to flourish. Just as God, throughout redemptive history, has used godly and skillful leaders to carry out His work in the world, this work is an attempted means of applying this pattern at EBC with biblical faithfulness and intentionality.

CHAPTER 2

THE WORK OF GOD, THE PEOPLE OF GOD, AND
GODLY LEADERS: A BIBLICAL
MODEL FOR MINISTRY

Introduction

The decisive factor in all Christian ministry is the powerful working of God. Jesus put it plainly to his disciples saying, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5b). The apostle Paul, utilizing an agricultural motif, said that he "planted," his colleague Apollos "watered," but in the final analysis it was "God (who) gave the growth" (1 Cor 3:6). He summarized the point saying, "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth" (1 Cor 3:7). Good results from ministry efforts depend ultimately on God. The metanarrative of the Bible is marked by the mighty and gracious acts of God: creating, redeeming, judging, and in all things bringing His plans to fruition. Whatever transpires of any eternal significance is ultimately owing to Him. However, this fact does not negate the involvement of God's people. From Genesis to Revelation, God is the main actor, yet He regularly carries out His will by human agency. Jesus' instruction to His disciples was given to teach them of their dependency on Him, not their irrelevance. Similarly, the efforts of Paul and Apollos were not coincidental to the outcome—the growth granted by God came on the heels of their work. The story of God's great work of redemption in history is one wherein He accomplishes His will through His people.

What is more, God not only uses people to carry out his purposes, he also raises up leaders over them. This arrangement is an unmistakable pattern for the local church, perhaps most clearly described in Ephesians 4:7-16. There, Paul explicitly identifies members of the church as those who are to do the work of the ministry. They are equipped

for the task by spiritual leaders. Paul says that the Lord has given "the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11-12). Gifted people are gifted to the church by the Lord for ministry preparedness and fruitfulness. God's designs for His church will be realized through the labors of His people, carried out under godly, skilled leadership. In this paradigm, two components are essential: people to do the work and leaders to lead. A church that wants to be fruitful in ministry is wise to consider the significance of both.

What will be argued in this chapter, then, is that a biblical model for ministry is one in which the work of God is carried out by His people under godly leadership. This position will be sustained by two primary lines of argumentation. First, God has been pleased in redemptive history to accomplish His will through His people. God has plans and purposes that He sovereignly brings to pass by human agency. God is dependent on no one yet chooses to involve people. Second, God has not only carried out His purposes through His people but also uses godly leaders to lead them. Ultimate authority rests with God, but He often employs one or more people charged with providing leadership of those carrying out the mission. This arrangement forms a biblical pattern for ministry.

To demonstrate this pattern, the starting point is the creation account where God assigns dominion to Adam and Eve. Thus, the story of redemption begins with God entrusting to humanity a great, encompassing stewardship. The earth would be managed by people. This pattern is also observed, by way of example, in God's dealings with Israel, both in the construction of the tabernacle and later the temple. The work of building the tabernacle was carried out by God's people under the leadership of Moses. Likewise, the construction of the temple was accomplished under Solomon. In both cases, the people of God were integral to the fulfillment of God's will, as were godly leaders. Consideration will also be given to the fact that the advance of the gospel itself was entrusted to the disciples in the Great Commission. Additionally, Paul explicitly identifies the members of the local church as those who do the work of the ministry,

being equipped by spiritual leaders to do so. A discussion on Ephesians 4:11-16 will yield explicit warrant for a kind of leadership that is conducive to fruitful work, and the model for ministry commended here. Finally, space is given to the quality of leadership required in the church through a summative overview of the biblical qualifications for church leaders, particularly elders and deacons in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. In all, these texts underscore two critically important elements of an effective church ministry: skilled servants and godly leaders.

The Work of God Assigned to His Image Bearers

A biblical perspective on ministry finds its roots in the creation account in Genesis. God's design of humanity is linked to the mandate to carry out His will in the world. Because people are made in God's image, the call on their lives is to do God's work—their duty is a result of their design.[1] The biblical record is clear that, unlike the rest of creation, it is *people* who are made in his "likeness" and "image" (Gen 1:26-27). Human beings alone were given dominion over God's creation, and all created beings were assigned a place subordinate to the rule of God's image-bearers. Serving God is hardwired into humanity's purpose. If people are not carrying out God's will then they are missing a major part of God's intent for their life. Further, when men and women serve God, they actively reflect His image and likeness. To appreciate this reality, it is important to grasp the implications of being an image-bearer of God and the significance of God assigning dominion to humanity. Together, these realities form an important foundation for understanding the centrality of service in the church.

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[1] Peter J. Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant: Humanity as the Divine Image," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 25.

People: Distinct from the Rest of Creation

Genesis 1 is a poetic, symbol-laden account of God's work in making the world and all it contains.[2] The style employed by the author makes for some interpretive difficulty, yet serves to underscore the crowing jewel of God's creation: people.[3] The chapter describes God's creative activities over the course of a week—six days creating all that there is before resting on the seventh. The creation narrative consists of six "panels" that contain what becomes a predictable pattern: God speaks, what He commands comes to pass, there is a report of what was created, a naming of what was made, and then frequently an evaluation of its quality.[4] The verdict is either "good" or "very good" (Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 25, 31).[5] Of particular interest here is the repeated phrase, "Let there be." Each creative act was executed by God using this phrase. For instance, on day 1 He said, "Let there be light," and just as He commanded, "there was light" (1:3). On day 2 He said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters," and "it was so" (1:6, 7). On day 3 He said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear. And it was so" (1:9). This pattern continues day 4 and 5 with the creation of vegetation, plants, and trees (1:11-13), lights in the sky to separate day from night (1:14), and the formation of living beings that swim and fly (1:20). The sixth day's activities commence in like fashion when God made all other living creatures that populate the dry land (1:24-25).

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[2] D. A. Carson, *The God Who Is There: Finding Your Place in God's Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 15.

[3] Carson, *The God Who Is There*, 15.

[4] Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 56.

[5] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 56.

When the account turns to the making of mankind, however, there are subtle yet conspicuous changes in the pattern.[6] The text reads,

> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (1:26-27).

Sailhamer notes some significant changes to the textual pattern in these verses, three of which are highlighted here. First, God's speech shifts from the third person, "Let there be," to the first person "Let us make."[7] While the text does not elaborate on the significance of this, the writer signals to the reader that something special is afoot with the alteration of the pattern. God personally identifies himself with what He is making here unlike at any previous point in the narrative. Chapter 2 elaborates on how exactly God was more personally involved, namely by forming man out of the dust of the earth and breathing the breath of life into his body (2:7).

Second, unlike the other created beings who were said to be made according to their kind, humanity is said to be made in the "image of God."[8] Genesis 1:27 poetically declares, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him." More will be said about the implications of this matter in what follows, but the reader can hardly miss the uniqueness of what God is doing. Nothing else, not even any living, breathing creature is given this distinction. People are made in God's "image" and "likeness." No explanation is given in the text itself as to what this designation means, but it is clear that people are set apart from the rest of creation. One therefore might anticipate that they shall have a distinct purpose in the world.

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[6] John Sailhamer, *Genesis*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 37.

[7] Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 37.

[8] Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 37.

Third, people alone are given dominion over what God has made. This, again, is a distinction humanity shares with no other creature.[9] To have dominion is a kingly function, but Genesis is clear that there is only one true Sovereign, the one who is speaking all things into existence.[10] Yet, the passage indicates that the people God made in His image are assigned some manner of co-regency as a consequence of being made in the likeness of God.[11] In sum, the prominence of people in God's creative order is an important emphasis in the text.[12] People stand out from the rest of creation as special to God. These features together point to foundational realities that pertain to humanity's calling, and eventually to Christian ministry.

**People: Made in God's
Image and Likeness**

Of central importance is the fact that people are made in God's image. The text is patently clear that God determined to do this, and that He actually did. What does it mean that people are made in the "image" (Heb. *salem*) and "likeness" (Heb. *d^emut*) of God? The terms appear together only in the early chapters of Genesis, in 1:26-27 and 5:1-3.[13] In these passages, one discovers that these words are used interchangeably. God declares that He will make people in His "image" and "likeness" in 1:26. The narrator then reports in 1:27 that He made them, male and female, "in the image of God." So, one term, "image," is sufficient without "likeness."[14] Similarly, in 5:1 the reader is reminded

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[9] Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 37.

[10] Kenneth Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1a (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 170.

[11] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 33.

[12] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26*, 160.

[13] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 166.

[14] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 166.

that "when God created man, he made him in the likeness of God"—now "likeness" is used in place of "image."[15] In both cases, there is no space given to explaining what exactly this means, only that mankind is in some way to reflect or represent God.[16] Then again in 5:3 it says, "When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered as son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth." Here both terms appear together in the same sentence but now in relation to Adam's offspring. His children bear resemblance to him, albeit in ways that differ from mankind's resemblance to God. There is no elaboration as to whether this is physical, spiritual, or otherwise. Reading these verses gives one the impression that "likeness" and "image" are being employed interchangeably by the biblical author.

While many argue that there is no distinguishable difference between "likeness" and "image," not everyone concurs. Peter J. Gentry makes the case that while the terms are similar in meaning there is yet nuance in them that gives insight into God's purpose for people. He asserts that "likeness" refers especially to the relationship between God and man, while "image" emphasizes the humanity's special status under God.[17] In the ancient near eastern context, a king was often thought of as bearing the image and likeness of his god. Gentry points out that in certain instances "likeness focuses on the king as a suppliant and worshipper of his god and communicates sonship," while "image focuses on the majesty and power of the king in relation to his subjects."[18] Reflecting on the biblical usage of the terms, Gentry argues that this nuance is reflected in the biblical text. That mankind is made in the *likeness* of God denotes the vertical relationship between

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[15] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 166.

[16] Carson, *The God Who Is There*, 22.

[17] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 29.

[18] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 31.

people and their maker: the covenant relationship between God and humankind.[19] That mankind is made in the *image* of God denotes the horizontal relationship between people and creation: mankind are servant-kings, being granted dominion by God to rule over all He has made.[20]

Thinking in terms of the vertical and horizontal implications of being made in God's likeness (vertical) and image (horizontal) highlights the great privilege God has bestowed on people. On one hand, men and women have a special relationship with God being made in His likeness. On the other hand, they have an honored status as regents under the sovereign rule of God over His creation.[21] The emphasis of the text is on what people are to do in light of bearing this divine mark. Carson comments that people have been "charged with the responsibility of looking after (God's) creation" and that "in so doing (they) are reflecting something of God."[22] People were made to "work, to rule, to serve as God's stewards" and furthermore "to be surpassingly God-centered."[23] This assessment corresponds with what is known about the ancient context. Ancient near eastern kings were said not only to be sons of their pagan gods, but also to bear their image.[24] This historical evidence combined with the biblical data paints a striking picture. God's purpose for humanity is nothing less than to reflect his royal rule in their dealings with creation.[25]

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[19] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 32.

[20] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 32.

[21] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 29.

[22] Carson, *The God Who Is There,* 23.

[23] Carson, *The God Who Is There,* 23.

[24] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15,* 30.

[25] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15,* 30.

Psalm 8 helps to confirm mankind's royal status. The psalm is a poetic commentary on the creation account, particularly of humanity's honored distinction as image-bearers. The author, David, says to God, "You have made him (man) a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet" (8:5-6). In its context, Psalm 8 extols the wonder of God's creative power and marvels that He would bestow such honor on human beings: "What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (8:4). Compared to the Creator-God, people are so small and insignificant. What is more, mankind is rebellious by nature and unworthy of such status. Yet, God has impressed upon these beings His own likeness and, consequently, entrusted to them a sacred stewardship afforded no other creature.[26]

In Genesis 2:15 the reader observes this stewardship in action: "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." Wenham notes that the language used here is the same as what is also used in reference to the religious duties. The command "to work" in the garden is the same verb used, for example, in Numbers 3:7-8 and 4:23-26 with regard to the duties assigned to the priests in the tabernacle.[27] Likewise, God's charge to Adam to "keep" the garden is used in reference to God's instructions to the priests to faithfully carry out the commands and duties given them, including the imperative to protect the tabernacle from outsiders (Num 1:51-53).[28] The command for Adam in the garden, then, is no less sacred than that of a priest. There is no sacred-secular divide when it comes to serving God.

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[26] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15,* 31.

[27] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15,* 67.

[28] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15,* 67.

Seen in this light it becomes apparent that work itself is a gift from God. Work reflects mankind's royal status and religious duty.[29] As a consequence of humanity's fall into sin, God cursed the earth (Gen 3:17-19). As a result, work is often tremendously difficult and frustrating. However, work preceded sin and judgment and nowhere does Scripture indicate that this has changed.[30] Being made in God's image, the enduring call on humankind is to work for God and in so doing represent Him and His rule in the world.

Believers: The Image Is Being Restored

While people are made in God's image, sin has had a deleterious impact on the clarity with which that image is reflected. Mankind has not lost the image of God imprinted in creation.[31] The status of image-bearer is an enduring gift to humankind.[32] God affirmed this clearly after the flood: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image" (Gen 9:6). Sin is still present in humanity, yet so also is God's image. Additionally, just as Adam and Eve were commanded to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen 1:28), so the same edict was given to Noah and his family (Gen 9:1, 7).[33] Noah was, in a sense, recommissioned after the flood.[34] After the Fall, however, people were not what they once were. They previously knew no sin, but now are indelibly stained by it. The rest of the Old Testament bears witness to the fact that the image borne by humanity, while still present in the human race, is nonetheless marred.

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[29] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 87.

[30] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 95.

[31] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 164.

[32] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 164.

[33] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26,* 170.

[34] Matthews, *Genesis 1:1-11:26*, 170.

That which was created to represent God's gracious rule in the world became rebellious, selfish, idolatrous, and as a result was cursed by God and cut off from fellowship with Him. Adam and Eve's banishment from the garden is a true-to-life parable of the division that exists between fallen humanity and their Maker (Gen 3:23-24). Yet, the story of redemption sounds forth remarkable hope that this gulf can be bridged, and that what is broken can be repaired. In fact, the New Testament's teaching about the gracious work of God in His people recalls the fact that men and women were created to bear forth God's image, and in spite of their failure to do so God in Christ is making a way for that to happen more fully in His church.

It is remarkable how the New Testament sometimes describes the work of God in believers. For instance, in 2 Corinthians 3:18 Paul tells his readers of the work of the Holy Spirit in lifting the veil of hardened hearts to see and be changed by the glory of Christ: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." Whereas Moses wore a veil that covered the reflected glory of God at Sinai (2 Cor 3:12-15; c.f. Exod 34:29-35), now in Christ Paul says there is no such veil. The Spirit now transforms the believer to bear God's image like never before. People were to reflect the glory of God in their living, but the effects of the fall distorted that image. In Christ, however, God brings about a radical transformation in the believer to restore that image by the Spirit. David Garland comments, "The fall tarnished that image and glory, but not irreparably. Now it is being restored. This transformation is brought about through Christ as the image into whom the believers are to grow."[35] Believers in their inner being are being changed into the likeness in which they were

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[35] David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 198.

created and now saved to reflect.[36] The sanctifying work of the Spirit in the lives of Christians enables them to be the image bearers they were originally intended to be.

Paul told the Colossians that the new life they have in Christ is being crafted by God in His own image. At the beginning of Colossians 3 he reminds his readers of their new resurrection life in Christ: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God…For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (3:1, 3). In other words, there was an "old you" that is no more and now there is a "new you" that is alive in Christ. So radical is the change God has performed in the believer that it is described in terms of death and life. In light of this change, Paul challenges his readers to live out their new life, leaving behind the old one. In this vein he commands, "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (3:9-10). The allusion here is evidently that of Genesis 1:26-27, where humankind was made in the image of God, the Creator.[37] Indeed Paul earlier described Christ as the "image of the invisible God," so there is a clear Christological element present here that was absent in Genesis.[38] Nonetheless, God's objective in the life of a believer is that they would become more and more like Himself, being set apart in Christ.[39] Part of God's sanctifying work in His people is restoring to them the image they were created to show forth.

Not only is restoring this image God's objective in sanctification, but also in glorification. In Romans 8:29, in addressing the certainty of a believer's salvation, Paul

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[36] Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 198.

[37] David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series on the New Testament, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 227.

[38] Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 227.

[39] Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The New American Commentary, vol. 32 (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 296.

writes, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." The end for believers is to conform to the likeness of God's Son.[40] John testified to this in his first epistle, where he reminded his readers of the great hope that is theirs in Jesus: "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). The outcome of believers' faith is the realization of their hope that they will be with Jesus and, what is more, they shall be like Him—conformed to His image. God's present work in a believer's sanctification and his culminating work of glorification have the same goal: the transformation of the saints into the image of Himself. It is not to say that believers become God, but rather godly—holy, set apart, and complete.

Thus, not only is the image of God retained in fallen humanity, it is God's plan to restore it completely in His covenant people. The imperatives of the Christian life have linkage to God's design of human life, where His glory and likeness are put on display. Practically speaking, believers bear forth God's image best when in fellowship with God, seeking Him in worship and obedience to His will.[41] Gentry asserts that only when people's relationship with God "is nurtured through worship, fellowship, and obedient love will humankind appropriately and properly reflect and represent to the world the kind of kingship and rule intrinsic to God himself."[42] Believers will do well to note the significance of this insight with regard to its implications for Christian ministry. The work of God being carried out by the people of God has its roots in the very creation of mankind as recorded in Genesis. Because they are image-bearers, people are given a stewardship to carry out God's work in the world. As God restores that image in his

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[40] Robert H. Mounce, *Romans*, The New American Commentary, vol. 27 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 188.

[41] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 39.

[42] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 39.

redeemed people through sanctification, the ministry of believers is in keeping with that original assignment, only now in a greater and more meaningful way. It is part of God's redemptive purpose for His people that they be in their inner being, and subsequently in their outer conduct, reflections of God in the world.

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**The Work of God in the Construction of
the Tabernacle and the Temple**

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A biblical model for ministry is one in which the work of God is carried out by the people of God, under godly leadership. This paradigm is explicitly mandated for the New Testament church, as will be outlined in this chapter. It is, however, not only a biblical prescription but also a pattern. One need only to look at God's dealings with Israel in the Old Testament to see that in redemptive history He has brought about His will through His people. The construction of both the tabernacle and the temple are prime examples of this reality. Both were important to the covenant relationship between God and His people as the place where He manifested His presence among them. Also, the people were involved in construction in both instances. Those with special skillsets were given leadership that functioned under the oversight of God's appointed leader. Thus, the engagement of God's people who serve and leaders who lead is not without precedent. A survey of the construction of tabernacle and the temple will underscore this biblical pattern that is consistent with the New Testament prescription.

**Constructing the Tabernacle: Carried
Out by God's People Under Moses
(Exod 35:4-40:33)**

The tabernacle was an immensely important element in the covenant relationship between God and Israel. Among other things, the tabernacle testified to God's desire to dwell amongst His people.[43] Regarding the work the Israelites were to do, God said to

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[43] Walter C. Kaiser, *Exodus*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 452.

Moses, "And let them make a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst" (Exod 25:8). In reading these words, Christians are rightly reminded of the Incarnation when the apostle John said, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). One might also recall the promise of Scripture in the consummation of all things when God will dwell forever in the new earth with His people when it will come to pass that "the dwelling place of God is with man" (Rev 21:3).[44] It is an astounding act of grace that God is intent on being with His people. Rebels though they are by nature, God still dealt with them not according to what they deserved but according to His grace (c.f. Ps 103:10). For the nation of Israel, God was intent on being present with them in the tabernacle. His presence would become the focal point of their worship and communion.

The tabernacle's importance is quite evident by the sheer amount of space devoted to it in Exodus: thirteen chapters are given to its specifications, contents, and construction.[45] It would be difficult to overstate the significance of what God called Israel to make. Part of the wonder of the narrative is that God delegated the work to the people. Three elements of the tabernacle's construction are of note here, each critical to its completion and instructive for contemporary believers: (1) the construction of the tabernacle was indeed carried out by the people; (2) gifting and relevant skills were essential to the proper completion of the project; and (3) the role of Moses as leader was crucial—he was responsible for all that was done and accountable to God for it.

A work of the people. Exodus 35-40 tells of the tabernacle's construction. These chapters consist of a detailed account of not only what was made, but also *how* it was made, confirming that it met God's specifications in every way. Earlier, in Exodus 25-31, God gave elaborate instructions to Moses regarding how the tabernacle was to be made. Directions were given for its dimensions and material (26:1-37). It also conveyed

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[44] Kaiser, *Exodus*, 452.

[45] Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 449.

requirements for all that it would contain, such as the ark (25:10-22), the table (25:23-30), the lampstand (25:31-40), and the alter (27:1-8), as well as the vestments for the priests (28:6-43). Whereas a cursory reading of Exodus 25-30 and 35-39 might seem repetitious, there is an important distinction between them: in the earlier section God declares what it is He wants, then in the latter the people do exactly as he desired.[46] The people under Moses kept God's commands to the letter.

The intervening chapters of Exodus tell the sad story of Israel's idolatry when they foolishly rebelled against Him by worshipping Aaron's golden calf. There is a sense in which the people almost missed being part of what God was about to do.[47] However, the Lord's servant pleaded on behalf of the nation before God and, as Hamilton says, "The Lord's compassion and graciousness to Israel prevent(ed) the tabernacle from being nothing more than a blueprint on paper."[48] It is significant that that narrative did not end just with forgiveness and covenant renewal, as momentous as that was. Instead it gave a detailed description of the actual construction project and in Exodus 40 the climactic appearing of the glory of God. Afterall, this was the whole purpose of the Tabernacle: that God's manifest presence would be there with His people.[49] Thus, God's goal is fellowship with His people.[50] The outcome here was made possible ultimately by the grace of God, but not without the obedient work of the people.

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[46] R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1973), 188.

[47] Hamilton, *Exodus*, 593.

[48] Hamilton, *Exodus*, 593.

[49] Cole, *Exodus*, 189.

[50] Hamilton, *Exodus,* 612.

The construction of the Tabernacle was a nation-wide project.[51] From assembling the materials to the finishing touches, a wide array of people was involved. Some contributed directly and others indirectly, but everyone acted to bring to pass God's plan. Moses was responsible for the project, and under him specially skilled leaders were commissioned to their work according to their gifting and expertise. As will be noted here, leadership was an important part of this ministry. Yet, the leaders' effectiveness was dependent on the people's participation. Moses himself made nothing.[52] Nowhere does the text say that Moses had the requisite abilities to build the tabernacle or its contents.[53] The broad engagement of God's people in making the tabernacle a reality was essential. In fact, the biblical data is explicit about the involvement of many. Exodus 35:1 says, "Moses assembled all the congregation of the people of Israel," and again in 35:4 it says that Moses addressed "all the congregation of the people of Israel." Then in 35:20-21 they "departed from the presence of Moses" and "everyone whose heart stirred him" began to take action by making contributions and get the project underway.[54] As Moses relayed God's instructions he said, "Let every skillful craftsman among you come and make all that the LORD has commanded," then enumerated the many different things they were to make (Exod 35:10-19). Everyone was to participate in the project.[55] Six different times the text affirms the willingness of the people to engage in the ministry, "both men and women" (Exod 35:22).[56]

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[51] Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 750.

[52] Hamilton, *Exodus,* 601.

[53] Cole, *Exodus*, 235-36.

[54] Stuart, *Exodus*, 750.

[55] Cole, *Exodus*, 231.

[56] Kaiser, *Exodus*, 489.

The people were quite willing to comply with the call for contributions for the tabernacle. They were so willing, in fact, that donations exceeded the need. At a certain point people were told to stop giving. The craftsmen told Moses, "The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the LORD has commanded us to do" (Exod 36:5). More than enough had been given. So, Moses sent word and "the people were restrained" from giving (Exod 36:8).[57] The nation had been profoundly moved to action.

Not only did people contribute toward the tabernacle's construction, but they did the work as well. Moses was given instructions on how to build the temple, but from the start it was clear that he would not carry out the work alone. God said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution" (Exod 25:2). He then proceeded to list various materials needed for the sanctuary to collect from the people. Then he said, "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (Exod 25:8). The expectation was that the people would do the work. When instruction was given for making the Ark of the Covenant, God began by saying, "They shall make an ark of acacia wood" (Exod 25:10). God frequently gave instructions to Moses saying, "*you* shall make" instead of "*they* shall make"—and "you" is singular.[58] This pattern was surely in part a testament to Moses' responsibility as leader. However, the clear implication here is that others would be hands-on in this ministry. This arrangement was especially evident when God gave instructions regarding the priestly garments. God said, "You shall speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him for my priesthood" (Exod 28:3). Again, nowhere is Moses identified as having the wisdom or skill needed for building the tabernacle, its contents, nor any of the ceremonial attire.[59] If such skill was required for Moses, surely God would have given

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[57] Kaiser, *Exodus*, 490.

[58] For example, compare Exod 25:10; 28:3-4, 6, with 25:17, 23, 31; 26:1, 7, 11, 15, 26, 31, 36; 27:1, 9, 20; 28:15, 22-24, 26-27, 31, 36, 39, 42; 30:1, 4-6, 17.

[59] Hamilton, *Exodus,* 521, 600-601.

that to him. God's purposes for construction, though, was for the people to use the gifts He had given them and the skills they honed to do what God commanded. Just as then, so now: God carries out His purposes in the world through people.

Gifted and skilled. While the people played an important practical role, the biblical record is clear that God played a decisive role. The tabernacle was God's initiative. God spoke to Moses and entrusted him with the plans. The text explicitly credits God with the people's ability to perform their tasks. Take, for example, the ministries of Bezalel and Oholiab. Serving under Moses, these men were leaders and construction foremen. God said to Moses, "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft" (Exod 31:2-5). Surely, Bezalel had some natural ability in these areas, but God prepared him supernaturally for ministry.[60] Hamilton insightfully comments that here is a "Spirit-filled individual" who "is not some godly prediluvian or patriarch, or even the saintly Moses, but Bezalel, a layperson, a construction foreman. Such a calling is no less sacred and is not less in need of divine enablement than that of Moses the liberator and Aaron the supreme priest."[61] Likewise Oholiab, along with Bezalel, was said to have been gifted with "skill," or wisdom, for the task at hand (Exod 36:3). Together they were "inspired . . . to teach," to equip others for the work (Exod 35:34). It is likely that those they taught served as apprentices under them in preparing the tabernacle (Exod 35:34).[62]

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[60] Hamilton, *Exodus,* 522.

[61] Hamilton, *Exodus*, 521.

[62] Stuart, *Exodus*, 758.

This arrangement is strikingly reminiscent of a much later text in which believers are told that God has given gifted people to the church for equipping the saints for ministry (Eph 4:13-16). Elsewhere, Peter exhorted his readers, saying, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Pet 4:10). This could involve "speaking" or more generically "serving"—but whatever it is God has given it is to be used for His purposes (1 Pet 4:11-12). In Israel, Bezalel and Oholiab would play an important role in both equipping the people, as well as carrying out the work itself.

This dispensation of grace, then, was not only for Bezalel and Oholiab but those who apprenticed under them. An indeterminate number of skilled workers plied their trades for the glory of God with the abilities God gave them. The text makes this clear when Moses says, "Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whom the LORD has put skill and intelligence to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded" (Exod 36:1). In the next paragraph the reader is told that many craftsmen were thus gifted, and their hearts were "stirred . . . up to come to do the work" (Exod 36:2). In addition to a large number of people being involved in constructing the tabernacle, so also skilled work was important. The workmanship would not be shoddy.[63] Thus, the reader is disabused of any notion that God would bless just anything the people made. It would be done well and according to God's demands, then the Lord would be pleased. God gave the command to work, the ability to work, and blessed the work in the end because it was carried out faithfully in the strength He supplied (c.f. 1 Pet 4:11).

The leadership of Moses. A central feature in the tabernacle narrative is the leadership of Moses. Moses was responsible to relay God's commands to Israel, and then to see to it that the work was done accordingly. His was not to do the work per se, but to

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[63] Stuart, *Exodus*, 758.

ensure it was carried out according to God's design. Again, one should be mindful of the interplay noted between "they" and "you" in God's instructions (Exod 25-30). Most of those instructions were directed at Moses, even though he himself would not be the one hammering, sewing, or carving. He was responsible to see the work done correctly. When the project is complete the text declares, "So, Moses finished the work" (Exod 40:33). The author is not confused or mistaken—the blisters and sweat were borne by the craftsmen, not Moses. As leader, though, he was responsible to see it done, and so he did.

Moses also performed an inspection when the work was complete: "Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so they had done it. Then Moses blessed them" (Exod 39:43). This is the only instance in Exodus when Moses is said to bless anyone.[64] It is a marked change from earlier when he was so grieved and frustrated by the sin of the people (Exod 32). Here they have given generously, labored obediently, and have completed their work within a few short months.[65] Thus, Moses blesses the people for their faithful obedience. As God's messenger and appointed leader, he has the authority and divine endorsement to do so. It is also important to note that Moses has seen for himself that God's instructions have indeed been observed. As leader he has a first responsibility before God and is also accountable—not exclusively, but firstly. They can consider the work done when Moses confirms that it is. If on some point they have erred, miscalculated, or deviated from God's instructions then Moses is to insist on appropriate revisions. The leadership role of Moses here is of immense importance. That is his role, and in this ministry—like most other ministries—it is an essential function.

One would be remiss to overlook the outcome of all the work. Exodus concludes with the great climactic moment in which the glory of God descends on the tabernacle

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[64] Hamilton, *Exodus*, 614.

[65] C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 487.

and the dwelling place of God is manifested with His people, even in the wilderness. There is a sense in which the very construction of the tabernacle was marked by elements of biblical worship: sacrifice, devotion, and faithful obedience. In Exodus 40 the reader gets a glimpse of the great prize; namely, a glorious encounter with God Himself.[66] Twice it says, "the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exod 40:34, 35). In the final analysis, God in His grace not only came and dwelt in the midst of the people, but He utilized their gifts and efforts as a His appointed means of making it possible and blessing them with His presence.[67] In every ministry effort the objective is that people would indeed encounter God and enjoy communion with Him. At the heart of the gospel is the hope for sinners to come to God, to know Him, and to fellowship with Him. Peter says it was for this purpose that Christ died: "That He might bring us to God" (1 Pet 3:18). The prospects of such rich blessings make the labors of the ministry more than worth it.

Constructing the Temple: Carried Out by God's People under Solomon (1 Kgs 5:13-6:38; 2 Chron 2:1-5:1)

The construction of the Temple in the days of Solomon was a momentous event in redemptive history. To this point, God had graciously manifested his presence in the tabernacle, the portable structure that had been carried about in the wilderness in the days of the exodus. Now the nation was established, and a permanent structure would be built in the nation's capital. The new building would surpass the tabernacle in size and grandeur, but its true glory would be every bit the same because of the presence of God.

As with the tabernacle, the paradox of the temple was striking. Selman comments, "The highest heavens could not contain him" yet the temple would be "a

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[66] Stuart, *Exodus*, 562.

[67] Stuart, *Exodus*, 562.

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place of God's earthly residence . . . where He could be encountered."[68] In his temple dedication prayer Solomon declared, "heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you" (1 Kgs 8:27). He is transcendent above all and cannot be contained in a particular location, let alone in a tent.[69] However, God was pleased to show His glory in Israel, centralized in a particular place. The temple, just like the tabernacle before it, would be the focal point of God's presence with His people, and central to the religious life of Israel.

When trying to grasp the importance of the temple one should note that at the very outset of its construction, when it was merely an idea in the mind of David, it was immediately connected with the Christ's eternal kingdom. God's promise to David already established an enduring linkage between the eternal King and the building of the Temple: both were promised in the same covenant declaration (1 Sam 7; 1 Chron 22). In the immediate context of pre-exilic Israel, the temple would take on central importance. Of utmost significance would be the Most Holy Place, symbolic of the very presence of God—God Himself dwelling in the midst of His people.[70] The narrative of the temple construction, in 2 Chronicles especially, underscores its enormous worth. Of the nine chapters in that book given to Solomon's career, two thirds are devoted to building the temple. It would be home to the ark of the covenant; a tangible reminder of the Mosaic Covenant.[71] It would also be a place of worship, sacrifice, and prayer and the place where God chose for His name to dwell.[72] Thus, in both the immediate context of Israel's history, and the broader context of redemptive history, the significance of the temple would be

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[68] Martin J. Selman, *2 Chronicles*, Tyndale Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 11 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1994), 310.

[69] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 310.

[70] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 125.

[71] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 125.

[72] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 109.

hard to overstate. Once again, the construction of the temple is a stewardship given to His people. It was a project that was first on David's heart and then in Solomon's hands.

The vision of David and the vision of God. God blessed David, establishing his throne and giving him great success such that the king resided in a palace, while David realized that "God dwells in a tent" (2 Sam 7:3). Nathan the prophet encouraged the king, saying, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you" (2 Sam 7:4). So, David determined that he would build a permanent structure where God would dwell amongst his people in a more fitting dwelling place—the temple. Despite David's good intentions and the affirmation of Nathan, God had other plans. Yahweh forbade David to build the temple, but instead ordained that the work fall to the king's son and eventual successor, Solomon.

God's response to David's initiative, however, was as humbling as it was breathtaking. He first pointed out that if building a temple was a priority in David's mind, it was not because God demanded it. To the contrary, God said, "In all the places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges or Israel whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'" (2 Sam 7:7). Lest anyone be mistaken, the text makes it clear: God needs nothing. If anything is to be undertaken in His name it is not because He asked for it out of a place of need, nor is He a receiver of charity and worldly honor. Instead, if anybody is given anything it is His servant, David. To this end, God made this stunning declaration: "Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom" (2 Sam 7:11b-12). A house will indeed be built, but it is one greater than that which David envisions. God says, "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam 7:16). The Davidic covenant guaranteed that the house of David would be established forever. The Davidic dynasty

would culminate with the eternal king ascending to the throne, Jesus Christ.[73] God would sovereignly bring to pass this promise to David. That was the primary house that would be built, and God was the builder.

In the short term, however, God brought to pass the desire of David's heart in the building of the temple. In the mind of God, David was not a suitable candidate for undertaking this project since he was a man of war. David explained this to Solomon: "But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth. Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest . . . his name shall be Solomon . . . He shall build a house for my name'" (1 Chron 22:8-10; c.f. 28:3).

Instead, the next king in the Davidic line who reigned in a time of peace would be the one to see David's vision through. David announced to Israel what God had decided and declared to David: "It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father" (1 Chron 28:6). Solomon would do what David was not permitted to do, in building the temple. The next chapter of redemptive history features God's choice servant, Solomon, carrying out His divine will.

The new Bezalel and Oholiab. Humanly speaking, the temple was Solomon's most significant achievement.[74] He was endowed with wisdom that was legendary in Israel. One might recall one of the early judgments recorded during Solomon's rule when he decided a dispute between two prostitutes. Each claimed that a newborn child belonged to them and not the other. The king called for a sword to divide the child—one half for each.

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[73] Lissa M. Wray Beal, *1 and 2 Kings*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary, vol. 9 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 125.

[74] J. Barton Payne, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, in vol. 4 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 443.

The identity of the true mother was made clear when she pleaded for the life of the child, preferring to give it up than to see it die (1 Kgs 3:16-28). The text summarized the response of the nation as word of his wisdom spread: "And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice" (1 Kgs 3:28). He possessed "wisdom and understanding beyond measure" (1 Kgs 4:29), a great broad scope of understanding.[75] Yet, while he possessed wisdom for ruling and judging, he was also clearly wise for the work of building the temple. God gave Solomon wisdom that was vital for construction.[76]

Like Moses before him, Solomon had the central role of leadership. In this regard, he followed in Moses' footsteps by following the God-given blueprint for building, and he did so with diligence.[77] Unlike Moses, however, the text suggests more of a hands-on role for Israel's king. In fact, there is a sense in which the biblical text draws clearest comparisons not between Solomon and Moses, but between Solomon and Bezalel.[78] For instance, both Solomon and Bezalel were specifically chosen by God for building. In Exodus 31, God told Moses that Bezalel was his choice, and in 1 Chronicles 22:9-10, God gave the job to Solomon, telling David, "It is Solomon your son who shall build my house, for I have chosen him" (1 Chron 28:6). Likewise, Solomon and Bezalel were both given the wisdom and requisite skill for building (Exod 31:1-5; 2 Chron 1).[79] It is likely also no coincidence that both are from the tribe of Judah.[80] Moreover, the author

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[75] Donald J. Wiseman, *1 & 2 Kings*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 9 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1993), 95.

[76] Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 15 (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 2, Kindle.

[77] Selman, *2 Chronicles,* 301.

[78] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4.

[79] Dillard, *2 Chronicles,* 4.

[80] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4.

of Chronicles takes care to relay that prior to commencing temple construction, Solomon sought out the bronze alter that Bezalel made for the tabernacle and on it offered a thousand burnt offerings (2 Chron 1:5-6). Additionally, both men had secondary helpers: Bezalel had Oholiab, and Solomon had Huram-abi (Exod 31:6; 2 Chron 2:13-14).[81] Of significance for this study is the fact that just as with the tabernacle so also with the temple; God was pleased to accomplish both through His people.

Huram-abi is an interesting case because while he arrives on the scene from Tyre (2 Chron 2:13), it is quickly noted he had Hebrew heritage. Although his father was Phoenician, his mother was a Danite (2 Chron 2:14). This is the man who became Solomon's right hand, much like Oholiab was to Bezalel.[82] A traditional rabbinic interpretation of Chronicles concludes that Huram-abi was actually a descendent of Oholiab.[83] Like Oholiab, Huram-abi was literally "a wise man who knows understanding."[84] There is yet another identifiable parallel here with the tabernacle construction, as Huram-abi appears to be "the new Oholiab."[85] In him, God provided an adequately skilled craftsman who could, under Solomon, see to it that the temple was built to the standard it deserved.[86]

Tyre not only supplied Huram-abi, but also massive amounts of materials for construction, especially lumber. In return, Solomon paid Hiram "20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, and 20,000 cors of beaten oil" (1 Kgs 5:11). These payments were made year after year while the work was being done. Hiram agreed enthusiastically

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[81] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4.

[82] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4-5.

[83] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 20.

[84] Selman, *2 Chronicles,* 317.

[85] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4.

[86] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 317.

to partner with Solomon's request, while acknowledging the greatness of God. He said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, who has discretion and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD and a royal palace for himself" (2 Chron 2:11-12). Before his death, David made massive contributions to the project: gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, stones and more were given from his personal collection (2 Chron 29:1-5). The people themselves made large contributions as well, including gold, silver, iron and bronze. "And whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD. . . . Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD" (1 Chron 29:9). God had providentially provided through both David and the people.

The workforce and provisions. When it came time to build, Solomon conscripted 30,000 Israelites to assist Hiram's men with sending supplies down to Jerusalem.[87] Unlike the building of the tabernacle, these workers are not presented as willing volunteers. Forced labor, or the "covee" system of unpaid work, was common in the ancient near east.[88] This differs from what happened in the building of the tabernacle where the sense of volunteerism was more pronounced. Three factors must be remembered. First, the building of the tabernacle was not optional even if the people seem to "volunteer" their services. Second, the times were much different. Israel was no longer a theocracy, but a monarchy. With a king on the throne, Yahweh predicted that things would be different, and the people would be compelled to contribute in ways they had not previously (c.f. 1 Sam 8:10-18). Third, the construction of the temple was exponentially larger in its undertaking. The scope of construction was ambitious and its design was grand. Solomon, as a wise king, acted here in such a way as to see the project through, or "doing whatever

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[87] Beal, *1 and 2 Kings*, 108.

[88] Beal, *1 and 2 Kings*, 108.

it takes" as one might say. The king divided the people into three shifts of 10,000, each working one month on then off for two.[89] Both voluntarily and by command, the people of God indeed did the work of God and the nations contributed to blessing Israel too.[90]

Solomon also staffed the immense project with 153,600 "resident aliens who were in the land of Israel" (2 Chron 2:17). These people were enumerated under David when Solomon's father was preparing for the temple prior to his death. They were divided into two large groups: 70,000 were to "bear burdens" and "80,000 (were) to quarry in the hill country" (2 Chron 2:17-18). An additional 3,600 were made taskmasters over the workers. The usage of this kind of labor force might land on the contemporary reader as distasteful. Contextually, however, it is a reminder of the great victory that God had afforded Israel over her enemies. Of course, this aspect of the story is a long way removed from a New Testament model for assembling a ministry team. The point here, however, is that through Solomon in particular, and the nation Israel in general, God's purposes were carried out by God's enablement. The successes afforded the nation put them in a place where they were able to acquire what was needed and get the job done.

Godly leadership? One of the central contentions in this chapter is the important role of godly leadership in God's purposes. When considering the overall career of Solomon as king, one might ask, was Solomon godly? After all, while he was endowed with unmatched wisdom in his day, he did not always apply that wisdom. Anyone who attempts to view him as a role model is forced to ignore serious lapses in judgment, and moral failures. The king who prayed beautifully in 1 Kings 8 and saw the glory of the LORD in 1 Kings 9 displayed questionable behavior in 1 Kings 10, and outright rebellion in 1 Kings 11. His behavior incited God to anger. One chapter later, the kingdom was divided (1 Kgs 12).

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[89] Beal, *1 and 2 Kings*, 108.

[90] Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 311.

Perhaps one is best to glide past Solomon's role as a leader and simply highlight his hands-on workmanship and practical guidance in the construction of the temple. However, such a conclusion would be a mistake for at least two reasons. First, every leader in the Bible, outside the person of Christ, had faults and failures of one kind or another, many of which are documented in the biblical text. Nothing was said in the previous section regarding Moses being forbidden to enter the Promised Land. One might justifiably argue that Solomon's failings were more varied and serious—and that could be debated— but even the exemplary leadership of Moses was not without shortcomings. To be sure, Solomon's failures are disappointing. At times he leaves students of Scripture with an example to *not* follow. This, however, does not negate the positive leadership exhibited in the construction of the temple.

Second, Solomon *was* godly in so much as he was faithful to do what he was charged with doing. He was also godly in so much as He used what God had given him— wisdom, wealth, and opportunity to name a few—to do great things for Him. Solomon was obedient to carry out God's plan for the temple as handed down to him from his father. The construction of the Temple was, by God's grace, a shining moment for Solomon because he did as he was directed and did it well. What is more, he understood that while he had worked to bring to pass God's purposes, God deserved the credit. Upon completion of the temple he worshipped God saying, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to David my father" (2 Chron 6:4). Solomon knew by whose hand the temple had really been built. The king's humility is noteworthy especially to the reader, who is aware of his worldly power, wealth, and status.[91] Notwithstanding the sin that reared its head in Solomon's life, the construction of the temple was carried out under godly leadership. That is not a statement about the

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[91] Payne, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 445.

whole life of the king, but is a fitting descriptor of the kind of leadership he exercised in that particular season.

The Gospel Entrusted to Disciples

In his book *First Things First*, author Stephen Covey uses a memorable line to remind leaders and managers about the importance of prioritizing life's most important matters in their planning: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing."[92] Covey wants his readers to overcome the common frustration of living life under the tyranny of the urgent wherein the constant barrage of life's daily demands keep people from doing that which is most important. No doubt many individuals could benefit by reflecting on and applying Covey's principle, but so also would churches. There is no end to the number of needs and demands that confront pastors and church leaders. Many existing and potential ministries vie for time and attention. There are also innumerable difficulties with finances and people. It is easy for church leaders to lose sight of what it is that they are primarily to do. Churches must keep the main thing, the main thing. So, what is the main thing? On the day of His ascension Jesus made it clear: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20).

Three things are of note here: first, the assignment is enormously significant. The Lord Jesus speaks with "all authority" and issues a royal decree that people of all nations be made disciples of Him. Second, this commission is quite clearly "the main thing" in terms of what disciples of Jesus are to do. They are given a divinely authoritative command to go and do something in the name of Jesus that cannot be taken in any way

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[92] Stephen R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill, and Rebecca R. Merrill, *First Things First: To Live, to Love, to Learn, to Leave a Legacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 75-76.

other than mandatory. Third, this enormous, most important mission has been assigned to *people*—the Lord's people, particularly the disciples of Jesus. Thus, the main thing in the mind of Christ is for the disciples of Christ to carry out His work in the world. The advance of the gospel is a stewardship of the saints. After a brief review of God's sovereign role in the church's mission, consideration is given to the vital part that God's people have to play in His mission.

The Decisive Factor: God

The church's missional mandate will not proceed in any way without the powerful working of God. Even in the Great Commission Jesus stated explicitly the difference-making factor in disciple-making: "I am with you always" (Matt 28:20). This statement communicates a measure of comfort to the disciples.[93] In the face of persecution and even death this assurance would be for them, and countless Christians since, a tremendous source of encouragement. It is also an assurance of the power He would provide.[94] The disciples would be able to serve effectively and fruitfully with strength beyond their own because the Lord would be with them.

Christ is present with believers in a very real and personal way by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In addressing the church at Rome, Paul said that "the Spirit of God dwells in you" and then in the next sentence explained, "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom 8:9). The Holy Spirit who indwells the believer is here called the "Spirit of Christ." He mediates the presence of Christ in the life

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[93] D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 599.

[94] Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 431.

of the believer.[95] The promise of Christ's presence is inseparably linked with the ministry of the Holy Spirit.[96]

Matthew's Gospel provides no explanation on this subject. In John's Gospel, however, the Lord taught that the Spirit would, among other things, empower God's people for the ministry. Jesus said of the Spirit, "I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you" (John 16:7). He then explained what the Spirit would do: "And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). No mere messenger can cause such an impact on anyone. The disciples would be successful only in so much as God enabled them by the Spirit.

Jesus promised, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16-17a). The One coming then would be like Christ—He is "*another* Helper"—and would provide needed help. In Acts 1:8, Christ spoke explicitly of the kind of help the Spirit would supply: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8a). The Holy Spirit's ministry is vital in evangelism. Only the Spirit can change hearts and minds in a saving way. Jesus explained this graphically to Nicodemus when he told him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Then he elaborated, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). In other words, a kind of conversion must take place in a person that cannot be affected by human will or intervention. It is something performed by the Spirit of God. The tool the Spirit uses is the gospel. Peter writes, "You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God" (1 Pet 1:23). The "word of God" to which Peter refers is, he says, "The good news that

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[95] J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit: Finding Fulness in Our Walk with God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 49.

[96] Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

was preached to you" (1 Pet 2:25). The salvation of souls comes as a result of the work of the Spirit using the Word of God in the hearer, bringing the spiritually dead to life.[97]

The New Testament is clear that when people are saved it is to the glory of God. Paul told his readers, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:8-9). Salvation is by grace alone and because of Jesus alone, and His atoning death (c.f. 1 Cor 15:3-4). The command of Christ, then, to make disciples can and will only be carried out by His power. Yet, God has determined that His appointed means of spreading the gospel message and making disciples of Christ would be through His people.

The Dependent Worker: The Disciple

The Great Commission is clear: the disciples of Jesus are to "make disciples." Obeying this command involves announcing the good news of salvation from sin, and teaching people to come under the Lordship of Christ. The objective is for people to live by faith in Christ and themselves to be on mission for him.[98] Carson writes, "Disciples then are those who hear, understand, and obey Jesus' teaching."[99] Thus, the Great Commission is not just a call to evangelize, although surely it is in part, but also to faithful church ministry. That, after all, is how people will be brought into this kind of discipleship. It may indeed start with one's decision for Christ but requires teaching.[100] The eleven, to whom the commission was directly given, received Christ's instruction as disciples themselves. They in turn become the model for other believers, especially after Jesus said

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[97] John Piper, *Finally Alive: What Happens When We Are Born Again* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2009), 169.

[98] R. T. France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1985), 415.

[99] Carson, *Matthew*, 596.

[100] Blomberg, *Matthew*, 429.

that they were to teach others to keep Christ's commands also (Matt 28:19).[101] Jesus

further desires that this message be carried out in all the world, among all peoples—

"make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19). By "nations," Jesus has in view "all peoples

without distinction," including both Jews and Gentiles, or as Carson summarizes, "Make

disciples of all men everywhere."[102] This work knows no geographic or political

boundary. It is a mission that Jesus said was to begin in Jerusalem and extend to the ends

of the world (Acts 1:8).

   With such clear, authoritative marching orders, the church cannot be passive.

The global scope of the mission, the gravity of what is at stake, and the Lordship of Christ

make Christian ministry a matter of priority for every believer. Indeed, the main thing is

to be on mission. Jesus told his disciples, "You will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). They

had seen some things that they were now wonderfully obligated to declare to others.

Earliest believers could verify the fact of the resurrection and therefore the veracity of the

gospel message. However, by application, it is an imperative that is not limited to them

alone. A "witness" was an individual who in a legal setting bore testimony to something

they had seen. The evangelistic sense is the testimony of what one has seen regarding

Jesus.[103] There were certainly things about Jesus beheld by the eyes of the apostles. There

are yet also things about Jesus beheld by those with spiritual sight. Peter intimated this to

his readers: "Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see

him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,

obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (1 Pet 1:8-9). They had

not laid eyes on the Savior, yet they knew Him. More than that, they loved him, were

joyful in him, and saved by Him. Believers of every generation, including the present

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[101] Carson, *Matthew*, 596.

[102] Carson, *Matthew*, 596.

[103] John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 84.

one, have seen something of Jesus about which they are to testify. God's divine design for spreading salvation to the world, making disciples of Christ, and bringing glory to His name is through the witness of His people. The followers of Jesus are to dependently labor at the master's work.

Members of the Local Church Doing the Work of the Ministry

Ephesians 4:7-16 is a key text for establishing a biblical model for ministry in a local church. Paul outlines both the goal of church ministry and the way in which it is to be achieved. The goal of church ministry is church growth, or more specifically, church *maturity*. He writes, "We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body . . . makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love" (Eph 4:15, 16). God's heart for the church is that it would grow. Surely this includes more believers added to the church, in keeping with the outreaching aspect of the Great Commission. He also desires, however, for the saints to mature—He wants them to grow in Christlikeness "to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13). The Lord wants His church to no longer be like "children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning and craftiness in deceitful schemes" (Eph 4:14). He wants the church to be wise, discerning, and anchored in the teachings of the faith.[104] An immature church is easily duped by false teachers and moved off the truth by waves of shifting cultural attitudes and thinking that mislead people in matters of eternal significance.[105]

This kind of growth that Paul speaks of here does not come firstly from the members but originates with Christ: "From whom the whole body . . . makes the body

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[104] Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 282.

[105] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 283.

grow" (Eph 4:16).[106] In other words, the true source of church growth is the Lord. This fact, however, does not negate the role of God's people in the process. To the contrary, Paul explicitly identifies them as the means by which Christ causes his church to grow. Paul says, "The whole body . . . makes the body grow" (Eph 4:16). Once again, the Lord is presented as the decisive actor. Yet, church members play a key role in the growth of the body. In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul fleshes out how God accomplishes this outcome through His people.

In this particular text Paul identifies the members of the local church as those who are to do the work of the ministry, being equipped by spiritual leaders to do so. Ministry is not for a particular class of people in the congregation but is the task of the congregation itself. Stott summarizes this notion well: "The New Testament envisages ministry not as the prerogative of a clerical elite but as the privileged calling of all the people of God," and Ephesians 4 is a strong case in point.[107] At least three elements of what Paul says will be underlined here: (1) the Lord gives gifted people to His church; (2) those people-gifts to the church are responsible to equip the saints; (3) church ministry is to be carried out by those equipped church members.

The Lord Gifts His Church with People

In Ephesians 4:7. Paul tells his readers that "grace was given to each one of us, according to the measure of Christ's gift," indicating that gifts are given to every believer. Elsewhere, readers are taught more about spiritual gifts given to every believer that enable them to serve the Lord fruitfully.[108] Spiritual gifts are often spoken of in terms of divinely bestowed enablement for specific tasks, such as showing mercy, teaching, or leading to

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[106] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 286.

[107] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 167.

[108] See for example 1 Cor 12, 14; Rom 12:3-8; 1 Pet 4:10-11.

name a few. In this instance, however, Paul has in view *people* the Lord has given as gifts to His church. In Ephesians 4:8-9, he presents Christ as the victorious warrior who returns from battle with spoils for his people. Drawing from Psalm 68, the reader sees Christ as victor—conquering sin and Satan through the cross and resurrection—and now distributing the booty to His own.[109] In 4:11, the apostle elaborates on what gifts he has in mind and, it turns out, the gifts are people: "And he [Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry" (4:11-12). Each of these kinds of people are given by the Lord for the equipping of the church. Thielman notes, "The most plausible understanding of the text places the emphasis less on the positions that certain people hold in the church and more on the activities that Christ has equipped certain people to perform."[110] Each of them bring different kinds of help to God's people, but they are all key in preparing God's people to do His work.

The first two groups of people named by Paul are "the apostles" and "the prophets." Earlier in Ephesians Paul taught that they had a foundational role in the church. He said that Jewish and Gentile believers were "members of the same household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:19b-20).[111] Hoehner emphasizes the distinction between the offices of apostle and prophet versus the spiritual gift of apostleship and prophecy to the church.[112] He suggests that while there were indeed offices of "apostle" and "prophet," in view here are people gifted like apostles and prophets. They are enabled by God to do the kinds of things apostles and prophets did—

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[109] Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 538.

[110] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 273.

[111] See also Acts 1:21-26; 9:15; 1 Cor 15:5-9. It is beyond the scope of this project to study the full nature of the offices and foundational ministries of apostles and prophets, but texts such as these give a sense of their important and particular place in the early church.

[112] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 541.

they plant churches in new unreached regions and declare the revelation of God to His people.[113]

There is little doubt that God has gifted believers in these ways not only in the days of the New Testament but also throughout church history. It seems, however, in the context of Ephesians that Paul likely has in view the office as much as the gift. At the outset of the letter, Paul identified himself as an apostle (1:1), and as noted, he stated the foundational ministry of apostles and prophets within this very epistle (Eph 2:20). Thus, the antecedent references in the letter are to those who hold the office. Additionally, the point Paul is making is that certain kinds of *people* are given to the church. The main emphasis is not the gifts the people possess, but the people themselves, such as apostles and prophets.[114] People like Paul himself have been given to the church for great edifying purposes.

The apostles where divinely commissioned messengers for Christ with an authoritative office and ministry. Likewise, prophets spoke forth the truth of God in the days preceding the completion of the New Testament canon, declaring to them what was needed for the church's growth and maturity.[115] Their ministries in the beginning were crucial for the spread of the gospel and the establishment of the church. It is because of them that New Testament doctrine was established, and it is on their work that the church has continued to build. They continue as gifts to the church especially through the Scriptures.[116]

The evangelists are those gifted by God to fruitfully call people to faith in Christ through the declaration of the gospel. In antiquity, the sense of the term *evangelist*

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[113] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 542.

[114] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 345.

[115] Hoehner, *Ephesians,* 542.

[116] Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 161.

was one who travelled from one place to another to tell the good news.[117] It is likely that Paul had primarily in view those who, like him, took the gospel to new mission frontiers.[118] The first evangelist mentioned in Ephesians was Jesus Christ, who "came and preached peace" to both Gentiles and Jews (Eph 2:17). He was not called an *evangelist* but performed the ministry of one.[119] Evangelists were not limited to those who travelled. Paul told Timothy, who at the time pastored in one city, Ephesus, to "do the work of an evangelist." (2 Tim 4:5). In Ephesians 4, then, an evangelist is a person given to the church to equip the church by using their evangelistic giftedness. Evangelists took the gospel to those who needed to hear it, whether far or near geographically. Evangelists were, and are, passionate about the gospel and are burdened for the lost. They are a gift to the church, especially in that it is by their ministry people are added to the body and they bolster the church's fruitfulness by answering the call of the Great Commission.

Shepherds and *teachers* are commonly thought of as one person rather than two. Foulkes, for instance, asserts that the fact they are linked by the same article means the expositor should understand Paul to be speaking of a pastor-teacher.[120] Also, the work of a *shepherd* in the church is inextricably linked with teaching.[121] When Paul bid farewell to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, he admonished them to take note of how he had diligently taught them, and that they should therefore do the same. He told his young protégé Timothy to "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching" (2 Tim 4:2). Further, one of the distinguishing qualifications of a church elder is that he be "able to teach" (1 Tim 3:2).

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[117] Hoehner, *Ephesians,* 542-43.

[118] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 274.

[119] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 274.

[120] Francis Foulkes, *Ephesians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 10 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1989), 126.

[121] Stott, *The Message of Ephesians,* 163.

However, just because teaching is a requisite qualification for pastors or elders, does not mean that every teacher must be one.[122]

It is every bit as plausible that shepherds and teachers are two distinct people, even if in some circumstances they are the same. "Shepherds" are those responsible to care for the flock, especially affording protection from threats without and within.[123] One of the most important ways in which this is done is through teaching. To this end, the shepherd will indeed teach God's Word, but others will be employed in this ministry too. Thielman writes, "Insofar as we can distinguish 'teachers' from 'shepherds,' we should probably think of people who are not necessarily skilled in administration, but whom Christ has equipped to instruct others in what 1 Timothy 6:1 calls 'the teaching.'"[124] For this purpose, Christ has given gifted teachers for the church's edification.

Given to Equip the Saints

Christ has given the church gifted people who are "to equip the saints for the work of the ministry" (Eph 4:12). The word Paul uses here, translated "equip," makes its only appearance in the New Testament in this verse. The word was used most frequently in a medical context of straightening a fractured bone.[125] It is used in other settings to describe preparations one might make to ready a guest room in the home, or the set-up involved for tools used in weaving.[126] It is this final sense of the word that Paul speaks here, preparing saints for the work set before them.[127] The implication is that without the ministry of gifted people given to the church, the people will not be prepared for their

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[122] Hoehner, *Ephesians,* 545.

[123] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 276.

[124] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 276.

[125] Thielman, *Ephesians*., 279.

[126] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

[127] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

work. Believers, no matter how motivated, cannot serve effectively on zeal alone. They need to be ministered to in order to be ready to serve. In other words, training is not optional for local churches. The church that grows is the church that equips their people.

**The Ministry Is Carried Out by the
Members of the Church**

In his best-selling book on church ministry, pastor and author Rick Warren famously said that in the local "every member is a minister."[128] This language is quite intentional because many tend to think of "ministry" as something done by clergy, or individuals with specific offices or titles in the church. This perspective on ministry, however, falls short of Ephesians 4. Rather, what is presented in this text is a vision for ministry wherein everyone in the church is active, understanding that the responsibility for the spiritual health of the church does not rest with pastors and elders alone, but with the members. Gifted people are given to the church "to equip the saints for the work of the ministry" (Eph 4:12). He concludes the paragraph by reiterating this principle, telling his readers that "when each part [of the body] is working properly" the church will "build itself up in love" (Eph 4:16). Thielman comments, "Paul pictures 'every connection' in the body performing its work" in accordance with what gifts the Lord has given them.[129]

An important theme in Ephesians is the unity that exists in the body of Christ, the church. In chapter 2 of the epistle, Paul gives extensive teaching on the unity that exists between Jews and Gentiles in Christ because of the cross (2:11-22). In chapter 3, he tells them that "the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise of Christ" (3:6). Then, at the start of chapter 4, Paul exhorts his readers to make every effort to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:3). The unity purchased for them in Christ was to be applied in how they lived. It is this unity that

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[128] Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 368.

[129] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 287.

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is featured in God's design for maturing the church. There is "one body" (4:4) that is "joined and held together" (4:16b) in Christ and will grow "when each part is working properly" (4:16c). As the Lord fits the body together, the members are to function in unity for building up of the whole.[130] As in the human body, no part of it is a member all to itself but is part of the whole and mutually dependent on the other members.[131]

The significance of this reality for church ministry cannot be overstated. When Jesus declared to Peter, "I will build my church" (Matt 16:18), He surely had in view His forthcoming death, resurrection, and giving of the Holy Spirit. What is evident in Ephesians 4 is that He also envisioned this design for how this would happen. As has been noted, the Lord's people are not incidental to His work. He has ordained their contribution to the fulfillment of His plans.

Godly Leaders Are a Must

God accomplishes His purposes through people. He has a plan that He works providentially through servants who are, in carrying out His will, obedient to Him. God also uses leaders. Perusing the Old Testament this fact is quite evident: from the narratives of the patriarchs, to the events of the exodus, through the period of the judges and the days of the kings, God used godly leaders for His purposes. These leaders included prophets, priests, kings, and other individuals who were by no means always model citizens but had hearts for God. Many leaders in Israel were not always godly—recall, for example, Solomon's foibles—and some were notedly ungodly; the likes of Samson and Saul come to mind. In such cases, though, their sinfulness was exposed, and they often became foils for men and women who were faithful to God and answered His call on their life. In the New Testament, then, it is no surprise that not only are godly people found in leadership, but it is an explicit requirement in the church that leaders be

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[130] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 571.

[131] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 574.

people of Christlike character. The clearest example is found in the qualifications given for eldership and the diaconate.

In 1 Timothy 3, the apostle Paul relayed to Timothy qualifications for elders and deacons. Paul also outlined requisite qualities for elders in Titus 1. The intent here is not to provide a detailed exposition of these requirements, but instead to take note of their general implications for leadership in the local church. Not just anybody can be a pastor. Not just anyone qualifies to be a recognized servant leader in the church. Everyone is called to serve, as is clear from Ephesians 4, but not just anyone is to be given the mantle of leadership. The Lord will grow his church through His people under *godly* leadership.

In summary, Paul told Timothy that a church elder must be "the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money" (1 Tim 3:2-3). Further, he must be able to "manage his own household well" and "must not be a recent convert" so he will not become proud (1 Tim 3:4, 6). He must also have a good reputation outside the church "so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil" (1 Tim 3:7). That is to say, he must be respectable. How a man is viewed in the community will have an impact on how the church is perceived and will impact its gospel witness.[132] In all, an overseer must demonstrate certain abilities: being able to manage his household, for instance, is a testing ground for whether he is capable of leading in the household of God.[133] He must also have certain spiritual qualities: he must possess a maturity in the faith that manifests itself in holy conduct.

At the top of Paul's list, however, is that a pastor must be "above reproach" (1 Tim 3:2a). A pastor must be a person against whom no one can bring a "charge of

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[132] Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1995), 201.

[133] Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 77.

unfitness" for the office.[134] He starts with the same qualification in his letter to Titus.

This is a general description of suitable character for a church leader.[135] It is a standard

under which all the other qualifications are placed—a kind of blamelessness not marked

with perfection, but of consistent Christian character.[136] When one is above reproach he

is someone with a consistent testimony, morally upright, and can therefore set an

example for the flock (1 Pet 5:3).[137]

This standard is quite similar to what Paul firstly required of deacons. He said

deacons were to be those who are "dignified" or "worthy of respect." (1 Tim 3:8a)[138] He

further stated that deacons must "not be double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not

greedy for dishonest gain" (1 Tim 3:8b). They are to be people of integrity, honest, and

marked by self-control. As they ministered among the people, they must not be prone to

behavior that would bring them or the church into disrepute, especially in the ancient

context where much ministry was in homes.[139] Paul says that "they must hold the

mystery of the faith with a clear conscience" (1 Tim 3:9) being obedient to the Lord,

living in submission to the truth.[140]

There are differing views on how to understand 1 Timothy 3:11-13, whether

these verses are meant for the wives of deacons, or female deacons. The language is

ambiguous as "their wives" could also be rendered "wives, likewise, must" or "women,

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[134] Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 108.

[135] George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992), 155-56.

[136] Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 14 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), 80.

[137] Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 189.

[138] Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 113.

[139] Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 84.

[140] Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 115.

likewise, must."[141] What is clear, however, is that godliness in the diaconate is important in the mind of the apostle. Verses 11 and 12 call for holiness in speech, faithfulness, marital fidelity, and again the ability to manage one's household well. Being qualified to lead here is not a matter of possessing personal charisma, cultural influence, nor affluence. Godly character is necessary for leading in the local church.

Paul's instruction to Titus is much the same. The lists are not identical, but the standard is equal to what was given to Timothy. Titus was told, "If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination" then such a man is a good elder candidate (Titus 1:6). Paul continues, "For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach" (Titus 1:7). It is worth noting the phrase "God's steward." This phrase recalls the earlier discussion on dominion being given to humanity in creation—a stewardship of managing God's creation. Leading in the local church is likewise caring for something that one does not own. It is the Lord's church and leaders are managers of it, entrusted to them by the true Overseer.

Paul further says that a pastor ought "not be arrogant or quick tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined" (Titus 1:7-8). MacArthur summarizes Paul's teaching: "The implication is that the pastor is a cut above the rest in attitude and conduct and worthy of being imitated . . . As a result he will have power, not only the power of God because of holiness of his life, but credibility, honor, respect, admiration, and love that will endow him with respect as a leader."[142] A good church leaders does not love the

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[141] The interpretation of these verses is consequential for church governance but has little bearing on the point being made here regarding the necessity of godliness in the diaconate in particular, and leadership in general.

[142] John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 74.

world but loves the Lord, and it shows in how they conduct themselves. Qualified leaders embody the kind of people believers want to become, as they themselves imitate Christ.

Finally, Paul tells Titus that pastors must "hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9). Qualified pastors hold fast to the Word that has been faithfully preached. They are in whole-hearted agreement with the truths of the gospel.[143] At the time, the Word was disseminated orally mainly, so Paul emphasizes that the elder embraces that which has been "taught."[144] In the contemporary context, the same might be said with regard to faithful preaching and teaching of Scripture, as well as adherence to the Scriptures. Affirming the truths of God's Word is a non-negotiable when one thinks of a leader in the church. That is not to say that leaders understand everything, but the higher the level of responsibility they hold, the greater the impetus is for them to know the Bible. They must be able not only to articulate what the Bible says, but also to correct those in error and defend what it says.

The focus of these texts is on the qualifications for elders and deacons. Not every leadership position in a local church fits into either of these categories. Some lead ministries that do not require one to be a qualified pastor or identified deacon. There is room for varying degrees of leadership in a church that do not rise to the level envisioned in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. What must be recognized, however, is that godly character matters for anyone who would lead in a ministry of the local church. One instructive example comes from Philippians 2, where Paul comments on a servant in a local church whose character was exemplary, whether he held a formal leadership position it is unknown. His name was Epaphroditus, a member of the church at Philippi dispatched by the saints there to deliver provisions to Paul on their behalf. Paul was in prison and

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143 Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 293.

144 Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 293.

unable to provide for himself. The saints at Philippi, as they were known to do, gave generously and sent Epaphroditus on the errand to deliver their gifts.

Paul said of him, "I have found it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need" (Phil 2:25). Paul obviously had a great fondness for this man and let it be known that he considered him a true co-worker in the gospel. He then explained to the church why he was returning the young man to them: he had fallen deathly ill. The church had got word that he was sick. "Indeed he was ill, near to death," Paul said, "but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow" (Phil 2:25). Paul saw fit to send Epaphroditus home to put everybody at ease, seeing for themselves that he had made a full recovery. Then Paul said this about Epaphroditus, "Receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me" (Phil 2:29). To be clear, Epaphroditus got sick running an errand for his church. Yet, Paul discovered that he was a man worthy of being honored by his congregation.[145] He saw in him a love for the Lord and an unusual commitment to the ministry. He was a godly man, and it showed.

Whether Epaphroditus was the leader of a particular ministry in Philippi one can never know. What is clear, though, is that he was appointed by his church to a practical ministry by his congregation and Paul sheds light on the kind of person they laid hands on for such a purpose. He was a man of godly character. If running an errand for the church calls for godly character, so also then does leading a worship team, teaching Sunday school, running the welcome center, and heading up the usher team. Godliness in leadership is a priority in Scripture and should be equally valued in the local church.

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[145] Richard R. Melick, Jr., *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The New American Commentary, vol. 32 (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 121.

Conclusion

God has been pleased throughout redemptive history to accomplish His purposes through people. Beginning with imprinting on humanity His own image and assigning them dominion over all other creatures, God began to demonstrate His desire to work in and through people. He created man and woman distinct from every other living creature, making them in His likeness. As a result of this difference, human beings were assigned regency in the world under God. Of special significance for Christians is the fact that the distortion of God's image in humanity because of sin is being repaired in Christ. No one in the world is better suited to serve as stewards of God than those who are new creations.

God's choice to work through His people is an observable pattern in Scripture. Two examples have been posited in the construction of both the tabernacle and temple. Both were significant in the course of the biblical narrative and each were graced with the presence of the glory of God. In each case, God raised up those gifted with requisite skill and wisdom for the work. Also, both were completed under the guidance of godly leaders.

In the New Testament the pattern continues, most notably in the Great Commission. God ordained that the gospel of Jesus Christ would advance in the world through the labors of His people. As in all things, God is the difference-maker. No one is saved without Him; the success of the mission depends ultimately on His power and grace. Yet, the workers are not merely incidental to the task being complete. Rather, Christ explicitly commands His followers to go and make disciples. The work of God through His people is the pattern in Scripture; it is also the prescription.

This arrangement is perhaps best explained in Ephesians 4:11-16 where Paul explicitly states that the members of the church make the church grow. That growth comes firstly from Christ but is a product of the ministry of the saints. Christ has gifted his church leaders whose ministries are to equip the saints. This equipping ministry is for preparing believers to work toward the growth and health of the local church. Any model for ministry in a church must have in view the fact that the people are doing the Lord's

work, and not a select group of specialists within the body. Godly leaders are given to equip the saints; God works through His people for the edification of the church.

Those who lead in the local church are qualified to do so because of their godly character. Essential to leadership in ministry are people who are living for the Lord. Both 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 outline qualifications for leaders in the church, specifically elders and deacons. Leaders must have the ability to do their job and have character worthy of replicating. Not just anyone can serve in church leadership.

Ministry in the local church matters. Equipping the saints is consequential. God's people doing God's work is how He intends to carry out His redemptive plans in the world. It would be prudent, then, for a local church wanting to develop its ministry to take intentional steps toward training their people for ministry. Since people are part of God's plan for accomplishing His will, churches ought to invest in them through training. If godliness is a must for leaders, then churches would be wise to develop their leaders in this way. In the following chapter, attention is given to preparing ministry workers and leaders alike for ministry in the local church.

CHAPTER 3

CHARACTER, COMPETENCY, AND EMPOWERMENT:
HOW EFFECTIVE LEADERS FOSTER FLOURISHING
MINISTERS AND MINISTRIES

Introduction

There is no institution in the world like the church. The church consists of

redeemed people, purchased by God for His own possession by the shed blood of Jesus

Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 2:9-10). These redeemed people are spiritually born again,

indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and united to Christ (Eph 2:1-10; Titus 3:5). Further, because

of their union with the Lord, they have a real bond together in Him, so much so that they

are said to be brothers and sisters, a "household" of faith (1 Tim 3:15). Christians

fellowshipping together in local churches and led by under-shepherds live in submission

to the authority of God's Word (2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 13:17). They are on a mission in

service of the Eternal King, whose purposes extend into eternity. Their ability to do His

bidding is dependent not on their own resources, but entirely on the power God supplies.

There are many different groups, organizations, companies, and religions in the world

who have varying expressions of unity and purpose. However, there is no organization

anywhere, past, present, or future quite like the church of God. Consequently, it is

understandable that some church leaders might be reluctant or even opposed to looking to

the secular world for input on ministry leadership. Leading an organization in the world

of business, philanthropy, or pubic service is quite different from leading a local church.

This is not to say, however, that the two do not in any way intersect.

The reality is that scriptural principles for leading in church are commonly

reflected in secular leadership theory and practice. The language is often different but

nonetheless readily recognizable to students of the Bible. What is more, secular application

of those principles has garnered empirical data that testifies to their validity for leading ministries and developing people. Consequently, churches are wise to be intentional about understanding and applying biblical leadership values with the encouragement the corresponding research supplies. The church does not take its cues from the world but does well when it recognizes the goodness and wisdom of God where it is observed in other settings.

What the Bible says, for instance, about godliness and spiritual maturity in leaders is reflected by researchers in the marketplace who observe the importance of character. Similarly, whereas the Bible puts an emphasis on God's provision for His servants to skillfully carry out their work, there is also an impressive amount of evidence that underscores the importance of leadership competency. Likewise, while the Bible teaches that the saints ought to be equipped for ministry for the health and growth of the church, secular research finds a quantifiable link between the empowerment of workers and organizational flourishing. Christians do not need the world's affirmation of the wisdom of God's designs for church ministry. Again, there is nothing in all the world like the church. However, when theorists and practitioners affirm the wisdom of Scripture, how much more then should churches be encouraged to adopt a model of ministry that aligns with God's Word.

What will be explored in this chapter are three elements of good leadership: godliness, competence, and a commitment to empowering other leaders. While each of these elements has biblical precedent, they are also empirically affirmed. Non-theological leadership literature does not speak in terms of "godliness," but it does emphasize character as vital to good leadership. Thus, the case will be made that character is crucial. Similarly, many writers do not speak in terms of God-given abilities, but it is widely agreed that competency is critical for anyone who would lead. Finally, as the Bible directs church leaders to equip the saints for ministry for the church to flourish, there is evidence that empowering people in any organization yields statistically significantly

positive outcomes. Godly, competent leaders will develop leaders in the church, and in so doing will have a positive impact the ministries they lead.

Character Is Crucial

As noted in the previous chapter, godliness is necessary when it comes to church leadership. The New Testament calls for leaders who are, among other things, people of good repute, faithful, and holy in conduct. Those who are of ill-repute, unfaithful, worldly, untrustworthy, unloving, do not manage their households well, or are lacking in self-control are not suitable candidates to be leaders in the church. Outside the church, experts concur that character is crucial for successful leaders. What counts as good character in general is not entirely the same as godliness in Scripture, but they do bear resemblance when it comes to the kind of person a leader ought to be. While a wide array of characteristics are desirable, attention here will be given to credibility, humility, and other traits found in leaders whom people are willing to follow.

The Foundation of Character:
Credibility and Honesty

In 1982, James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner set out to answer the question as to what it is that leaders do when they are at their best.[1] They sought answers from people in a variety of organizations and at different levels and functions in multiple countries around the world.[2] Their findings are published in their book entitled, *The Leadership Challenge.* Now, well over three decades later, their research has yielded a sixth edition of that book which utilizes data collected from more than three million people who have completed their "Leadership Practices Inventory."[3] Their main argument is that

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[1] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 6th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), xii.

[2] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, xii.

[3] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 19.

there are five primary practices of exemplary leaders: they model the way (leading by example), inspire shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the hearts of those they lead.[4] While these behaviors are the marks of effective leaders, Kouzes and Posner assert that foundational to all of these practices is a leader's credibility. They argue that a credible leader is inspiring, competent, and honest. In their research, these qualities were scored as three of the top four most desirable traits in a leader people are willing to follow.[5] A leader must be able to encourage others to be part of the organization—a leader must have people excited about following. Leaders must also demonstrate themselves to be capable for the task, having a track record that shows they have what is needed to take the team where they want to go.[6] Additionally, a credible leader is, according to their respondents, known to "walk the walk," "practice what they preach," and "follow through on their promises."[7] Good leaders have a consistency about them such that they can be counted on and taken at their word. Thus, a key aspect of credibility is being *honest*.

Surveying over 100,000 people internationally, they have asked respondents to indicate what qualities they look for most in a leader whom they are willing to follow. In all, the preferred characteristic is *honesty*.[8] Kouzes and Posner write, "Overall, (honesty) emerges as the single most important factor in the leader-constituent relationship. The percentages vary, but the final ranking does not. First and foremost, people want a leader who is honest."[9] Surveys conducted in 1987, 1995, 2002, 2007, 2012, and 2017 all yielded

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[4] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 13-19.

[5] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 39.

[6] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 33.

[7] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 42.

[8] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 32.

[9] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 32.

the same result—honesty is the most frequently identified desirable trait in a leader, indicated by 83 percent of respondents or more.[10] Honesty is esteemed across genders, levels of education, age groups, types of organizations, and different countries. In some countries, such as China, Singapore, and Turkey, honesty did not rank number one, but it still appeared in the top four in every nation surveyed.[11]

Where leaders are seen as credible, the positive outcomes for their organization are noteworthy. Team members are more likely to tell others that they are part of the institution. They also enjoy a strong sense of team spirit and express increased personal commitment to the company.[12] Conversely, where leaders lack credibility, worker productivity declines, team members feel unsupported and unappreciated, they lack a sense of personal affinity with the organization, and they often end up searching for better opportunities elsewhere.[13] Thus, the character a leader possesses has a consequential impact upon the experience of their team members and the group's failure or success.

A direct outworking of one's credibility is the example he sets for others. John Maxwell, commenting on leaders who "model the way," notes that people learn a lot by what they see: "This is one of the greatest motivational factors in the world. All our life, we truly play 'follow the leader,' and Stanford University research indicates that 89 percent of how we learn is visual."[14] He goes on to note how the apostle Paul in his epistles repeatedly called on his readers to follow his example, because this is how good leaders lead—by being what they want their people to be.[15] Maxwell comments, "When you as a

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[10] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 29.

[11] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 30-31.

[12] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 40.

[13] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 41.

[14] John C. Maxwell, "Reflections on Model the Way," in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 48-49.

[15] Maxwell, "Reflections on Model the Way," 49.

leader look at your people, it's like looking in the mirror because they become just like you."[16] A leader who knows the way and shows the way will have a pivotal impact for the better on their team.

Humility in Good-to-Great Leaders

While credibility and honesty are vital to leadership, so also is *humility*. In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins and his research team sought to understand the differentiating factors of companies that went from "good results to great results" compared to a control group of companies that did not experience the same degree of success, or who made significant strides that were not sustained.[17] His method was to find companies whose stock returns were at or below the market average for at least fifteen years, and then, after a transition point, rose to three times in market value for a fifteen-year period.[18] In all, eleven such companies were identified. Collins' research team reviewed articles on both good-to-great and control companies that were written over a fifty-year period, analyzing and coding their content for relevant data. Executives were also interviewed who led good-to-great companies during their pivotal transition period. Analysis of company functions and strategies were also completed, all in an effort to discern what it was that made the eleven good-to-great organizations so markedly better than others.

One discovery Collins made was about the kind of person who led each company during their transition from good to great. Every good-to-great organization was led by a "Level 5" leader. These leaders, Collins says, possess two vitally important capacities that make them what they are: on one hand, they have a persistent will to do

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[16] Maxwell, "Reflections on Model the Way," 49.

[17] Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . And Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 3.

[18] Collins, *Good to Great*, 5.

whatever is necessary to make the company great, and the other hand, they are *humble*.[19]
Collins reports,

> During interviews with good-to-great leaders, they'd talk about the company and the contributions of other executives as long as we'd like but would deflect discussion about their own contributions. When pressed to talk about themselves, they'd say things like, "I hope I'm not sounding like a big shot." Or, "If the board hadn't picked such great successors, you probably wouldn't be talking with me today."[20]

Those who worked under these leaders affirmed this kind of modesty, describing them to researchers as "quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild-mannered, self-effacing, understated" and other such descriptors.[21] He notes also that the articles written about these companies were rarely ever about the chief executive officers. Good-to-great leaders "never aspired to be put on a pedestal or become unreachable icons," writes Collins.[22] When it comes to success, good-to-great leaders give credit to others or consider it to be "good luck."[23] Conversely, where there were shortcomings, good-to-great leaders are quick to accept responsibility.

These findings are in marked contrast to comparison companies who had experienced significant growth that they were unable to sustain. In those organizations, larger-than-life leaders seem to have had a short-term catalytic impact, but in due course they experienced decline.[24] Collins found that comparison leaders were more apt to respond to success by accepting credit, while failure was often blamed on factors external to themselves.[25] This is not to say that modesty is the only determinative differentiator.

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[19] Collins, *Good to Great*, 22.

[20] Collins, *Good to Great*, 27.

[21] Collins, *Good to Great*, 27.

[22] Collins, *Good to Great*, 28.

[23] Collins, *Good to Great*, 35.

[24] Collins, *Good to Great*, 29.

[25] Collins, *Good to Great*, 35.

Modesty alone does not make one a great leader. Collins found that good-to-great leaders were every bit as driven as they were humble. However, where humility is lacking in leadership so also are long-term organizational results.[26] The character of a leader is undeniably linked to organizational outcomes.

**The Character of One Worthy
to Be Followed**

One way that a leader's character positively affects his organization is in its impact on the attitudes and behaviors of those who follow him. Patrick Liborius, a research assistant at the Technical University of Darmstadt, examined three aspects of a leader's character and how those traits affect certain positive outcomes. Those aspects Liborius considered were integrity, humility and forgiveness, and interest and gratitude. Leaders with integrity are described in terms of exercising fairness, respect, promise keeping, and truth telling.[27] Humility and forgiveness were combined since both are expressions of a person who is nonegocentric, "offense-resistant," and positive in personality.[28] Interest and gratitude is showing care for others and being grateful to team members for more than just achieving organizational goals.[29]

The objective of the study was, in part, to confirm that a leader's character has a positive effect on the follower in three ways: the follower's perception that the leader as worthy to be followed, the followers' voice behavior (willingness to give constructive input), and the follower's organizational citizenship behavior (going beyond his or her specified role requirements to contribute in ways that are not formally rewarded).[30] A

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[26] Collins, *Good to Great*, 29-30.

[27] Patrick Liborius, "Who Is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality," *The Journal of Psychology* 148, no. 3 (2014): 352.

[28] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 353.

[29] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 354.

[30] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 349-52.

secondary objective was to understand the degree to which follower personality traits effect the impact of a leader's character.

To measure these factors in the leader-follower process, Liborius used three scenario studies, each of which provided participants with both a good and bad aspect of each character trait under consideration.[31] So for instance, participants who responded to a scenario that focused on integrity read a narrative in which the leader exhibited good integrity, and then a similar one in which the leader lacked integrity.[32] Participants were asked to respond to questions about these scenarios by imagining themselves as the follower in that situation. The questions were designed to measure their perception of the leader, as well as how their own personal character attributes affected their response. The follower traits considered were agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism.

The results of the study confirmed that character is indeed crucial for leaders. A leader's integrity, humility and forgiveness, and interest and gratitude all had a positive impact on the follower's belief that he or she is worthy to be followed. Integrity also positively impacts the followers' voice behavior, and their organizational citizenship behavior.[33] He also found that the personality of followers does moderate the impact of a leader's character. For instance, team members who score high in agreeableness (compliant, pleasant, trusting) are affected more by the quality of a leader's character than those who are low in agreeableness.[34]

Liborius summarizes his findings: "All in all, one can say that the manipulation of character in the scenario experiments affected followers' intended willingness to follow their leader, and, though a bit less, their willingness to contribute to the organization in a

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[31] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 358.

[32] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 381-83.

[33] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 369-70.

[34] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 370.

positive way."[35] He further concludes, "Consciously, this study was developed to examine the impact of character, independent of a certain leadership concept, with the objective not to mix up with other aspects and just ask, does character in leadership matter? And the answer is yes."[36] In practical terms he advises leaders to follow this guideline: "Be honest, do not say one thing and behave another way, be reliable, be truthful, be humble and forgiving, be interested in those who follow you and give your gratitude to them, not only when they achieve something special, but just for their faithful work."[37] This synopsis might sound like one is stating the obvious, but as Liborius notes, even if the conclusion at first appears pedestrian, the empirical data ought to reinforce the importance of quality character as it pertains to leadership attitudes and practice.[38]

For Christians, the findings of Kouzes and Posner, Collins, and Liborius will come as no surprise since the New Testament is replete with the call for a God-honoring disposition amongst Christians, especially church leaders. What secular leadership literature describes as *character*, including traits such as "credibility," "humility" "integrity," and "interest and gratefulness," Christians will recognize in a church context as godliness. Much of what researchers confirm as crucial for effective leadership, the New Testament has required for over two thousand years. For instance, as Kouzes and Posner identify "credibility" as a foundational attribute of good leaders, Paul told Timothy and Titus that an elder must firstly be "above reproach" (1 Tim 3:2a; Titus 2:7a). Just as Collins notes the importance of humility, so also Paul identified arrogance as a disqualifying attitude for leadership (Titus 2:7b). Paul's insistence that overseers be faithful in marriage and responsible at home, "respectable, hospitable . . . gentle, not

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[35] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 370.

[36] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 372.

[37] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 372.

[38] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 372-73.

quarreling" (1 Tim 3:2-4) and "well thought of by outsiders" (1 Tim 3:7) bears striking resemblance to the attributes of integrity, humility and forgiveness, and interest and gratefulness, studied by Liborius. From a Christian worldview, the research only vindicates the wisdom of the biblical qualifications for those who would lead God's people.

The High Calling of Love

One important aspect of a leader's character that might be overlooked is perhaps the single most important trait a godly leader can possess: love. In *Leading with Love*, author Alexander Strauch laments the lack of appreciation for the importance of love in the Christian leadership conversations:

> Although Christianity is unmatched among the religions of the world in its teaching about God's love and the requirements of love for Christian believers, Christian leaders don't normally focus on love when they address leadership. Much good material has been written describing the leadership qualities of courage, resourcefulness, charisma, conviction, perseverance, visionary thinking, self-discipline, decisiveness. Yet few books on church leadership include anything about love. This is a tragic oversight since the New Testament makes it clear that love is indispensable to the gifts of leading and teaching.[39]

Further research might well serve to verify Strauch's claim about the paucity of material on love in Christian leadership literature. Mary Miller underscores the regrettable lack of inquiry into the relationship between love and leadership: "What is missing is leadership research with a focus on love. Especially if leaders are to be transforming the lives of others love is surely an essential ingredient."[40] She argues that there is no reason more could not be done in leadership theory or the field of psychology to better understand the importance of love to organizational success.[41] Regardless, Strauch's point is well made that love cannot be overlooked when it comes to leading, especially in Christian

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[39] Alexander Strauch, *A Christian Leader's Guide to Leading with Love* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 2006), 1.

[40] Mary Miller, "Transforming Leadership: What Does Love Have to Do with It?" *Transformation* 23, no. 2 (2006): 94.

[41] Miller, "Transforming Leadership," 103.

ministries. Depending on one's personality, a leader may be more inclined to introversion and distance from their people. While it is wise to maintain healthy boundaries in relationships with others, this cannot happen at the expense of genuine care and connectivity with the people they lead.[42]

Paul taught the Corinthians that love is essential. He told them that without love they are "a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor 13:1). He said that without love they were "nothing" and despite even the greatest of sacrificial efforts they would "gain nothing" (1 Cor 13:2-3). Paul further explained that even if he could "speak in the tongues of men," "have prophetic powers," "understand all mysteries," "have all faith," and "give away all that I have, and if I deliver my body up to be burned," but did not love people, then none of his virtues would amount to anything in God's sight. D. A. Carson called this "divine mathematics": five acts of piety minus one essential character trait—love— equals zero in God's economy![43] If one is searching for a single biblical category that captures the kind of character essential to good leadership, one would be hard pressed to find a better choice than *love*. As Strauch underlines, having skilled leaders with some admirable qualities and capacities who lack love "spells total failure for a Christian leader."[44] The point here is that love is the paramount expression of godliness in the New Testament and is therefore necessary for ministry leaders. Love is the most critical attribute of any Christian, no less those who aspire to lead in the church at any level or in any capacity. None of the research cited above refers explicitly to "love" but leaders who are credible, humble, forgiving, grateful, and interested in the people they lead are leading with love. This loving character is crucial for leaders and the people who follow them.

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[42] Herbert Anderson, "Connective Leadership: Loving Those We Lead," *Reflective Practice* 38 (2018): 85

[43] D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 77.

[44] Strauch, *A Christian Leader's Guide to Leading with Love*, 1.

Competency Is Critical

While character is critical to good leadership, so also is competency. Leaders must be able to do whatever is required of them to effectively lead. What then does this entail? Isolating a specific number of leadership capabilities is difficult. Aubrey Malphurs provides a compilation of 68 leadership capacities identified by various theorists, illustrating how illusive it is to identify a single set of skills that all leaders need.[45] Specific competencies that are necessary may vary depending on one's context. For instance, certain skills needed to be an effective pastoral leader might differ from what is necessary to lead the tech team or the food distribution ministry. Yet some assert that every leader in every situation must possess, cultivate, or acquire certain abilities to lead well.

In *The Leadership Code*, Dave Ulrich, Norm Smallwood, and Kate Sweetman argue that effective leaders follow five "rules" for leadership. They maintain that these "rules" contain 60-70 percent of what is required to successfully lead in *any* setting.[46] In other words, if one can lead by these "rules," then they are well on their way to successfully leading a school, office, sports organization, church, or any other enterprise. In essence, *The Leadership Code* is intended to form a foundation upon which to build the other necessary capacities, or "differentiators," for their particular setting.[47] Their method was a combination of interviews with experts and extensive reading in search of an identifiable "code."[48] In the end, they discovered a pattern and organized it into a set of "rules."[49] What is especially noteworthy is that each rule is rendered in terms of what

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[45] Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 87-88.

[46] Dave Ulrich, Norm Smallwood, and Kate Sweetman, *The Leadership Code: Five Rules to Lead By* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008), 11.

[47] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 11.

[48] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 8.

[49] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 9.

an effective leader is to be able to *do*. Each rule is a kind of competency that, in the end, leaders either acquire or develop.[50]

Rule 1 is "shape the future"—leaders must be strategists who "not only envision future but also create it."[51] Rule 2 is "make things happen." This rule requires that the leader be an executor who can "translate strategy into action," enacting accountability, decision-making, and the delegation.[52] Rule 3 is "engage today's talent," whereby a leader is a talent manager who has the capacity to build his or her team toward achieving desired results.[53] Rule 4 is "build the next generation," which is the leader's ability to ensure long-term sustainability and development of people.[54] The authors suggest that most leaders are likely strong in any one of these first four rules, but as one takes on greater responsibility he must grow in the others.[55]

The fifth rule is foundational: "invest in yourself." Adhering to this final rule involves "personal proficiency," which is being and becoming a person of character.[56] This rule is foundational because what one does flows out of who one is. Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman write,

> Personal proficiency is the ultimate rule of leadership. . . . If you are not grounded through your values and beliefs, credible through your judgment, emotionally mature through your ability to analyze yourself and connect with others, and willing to learn and grow as a leader, you will not be prepared to be a strategist, executor, talent manager, or human capital developer.[57]

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[50] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 22.

[51] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 13.

[52] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 14-15.

[53] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 15-16.

[54] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 16.

[55] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 17.

[56] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 17.

[57] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 129.

This assessment parallels the argument made above; namely, that character is crucial for leaders. Yet they are also clear that leaders must be skillful to be successful. They further emphasize that the requisite skills can be developed through a variety of interventions, such as education, coaching, mentoring, practical experience, and more. It important for leaders to identify where they need to grow and to take steps to do so.[58]

**God-Given and God-Directed
Capabilities**

From a Christian worldview, believers acknowledge the goodness of God in providing requisite skills for ministry. Malphurs posits that Christian leaders have two kinds of capabilities—those that are God-given and God-directed.[59] God-given capabilities are what God gives to someone at birth, conversion, or sometime later. Malphurs argues that these include a person's natural talents, spiritual gifts, passion, and temperament.[60] In the providence of God, unbelievers are given natural abilities to accomplish all manner of feats, including leadership greatness. By God's grace, believers are given spiritual gifts, which are special kinds of enablement not afforded to the unsaved. Leaders in diverse settings may have a number of different gifts, but each are given for the good of the body of Christ and the advance of God's kingdom purposes (1 Cor 12).[61]

In terms of "passion," Malphurs says it is the "capacity to commit oneself fervently over an extended period of time to meeting an objective."[62] He has in mind that which a leader cares about deeply—what motivates him or her to take action and do it with endurance. Malphurs reminds leaders about the passion Paul exhibited in ministry,

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[58] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 22.

[59] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 73.

[60] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 76.

[61] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 77.

[62] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 78.

especially to take the gospel where it had not yet gone. Paul said, "I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation" (Rom 15:20). This "ambition" or passion was evident in Paul's unrelenting commitment to the advance of the gospel, especially where Christ had yet been named, even unto death. This passion, Malphurs says, comes from God.[63]

A person's "temperament" refers to their "unique, God-given (inborn) behavioral style, affecting his or her actions and lifestyle."[64] It might loosely be referred to as someone's "wiring." How leaders lead and how they interact with those who follow are affected by their temperament. This is one reason why many organizations use personality profiles, such as Myers-Briggs or DISC, to better understand one's personal makeup.[65]

While God-given abilities are those providentially given by God, *God-directed* capabilities are those that a leader "can cultivate over time with God's help."[66] Malphurs asserts that these capacities include the leader's character, knowledge, skills, and emotions. Good character is not innate, but rather necessitates "soul work" whereby one must be committed to improving himself in his inner person. Knowledge, Malphurs says, involves "head work" wherein one acquires "the relevant information that the leader applies to his or her leadership situation."[67] In this regard, leaders commit themselves to learning whatever it is they need to lead their specific program.[68] "Skills" consist of the application of one's knowledge in the ministry setting. Malphurs says that there are relational and

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[63] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 78.

[64] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 79.

[65] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 79.

[66] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 80.

[67] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 82.

[68] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 82.

task skills: the former has to do with all that is needed to effectively minister to people, while the latter has to do with the skills needed to get the job done. This can include preaching and teaching, vision-casting, strategizing, writing, planning, and more, depending on the nature of the work.[69] Finally, emotions have to do with leaders' feelings—they need to "be aware of their emotions and moods," says Malphurs, and "also need to recognize others' emotions and ensuing moods."[70] Leaders must be empathetic in their dealings with people.[71]

What Malphurs addresses with regards to managing emotions is akin to what leadership theorists describe as "emotional intelligence." According to Peter Northouse, emotional intelligence is one's "ability to understand emotions and apply this understanding to life's tasks."[72] He defines it as a person's capacity "to perceive and express emotions, to use emotions to facilitate thinking, to understand and reason with emotions, and to effectively manage emotions within oneself and in relationships with others."[73] In leadership situations, Northouse insists that the research shows that those who are aware of their emotions and how they affect others will be more effective leaders.[74] This assertion is in keeping with the case made by Malphurs who acknowledges that there are times when emotionally unhealthy people can hinder a church's ability to carry out its work. In such cases it is imperative, says Malphurs, that leaders address that for the good of the ministry.[75] At times, even a leader's reaction to something might be

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[69] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 84.

[70] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 86.

[71] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 86.

[72] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2019), 28.

[73] Northouse, *Leadership*, 28.

[74] Northouse, *Leadership*, 29.

[75] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 87.

overly emotional but it is imperative that he acts with high emotional intelligence and not allow himself to be controlled by what he feels. Failure to do so can harm the team and undermine efforts to achieve objectives.[76] The other dimension of managing emotions is the repeated biblical warnings about sinful expressions of one's negative feelings. Malphurs reminds leaders of the Bible's warnings about uncontrolled anger (Eph 4:26), speech (Jas 3:1-12), jealousy (Jas 4:2), worry (Phil 4:6-7), fear (1 John 4:18) and more.[77]

Malphurs' exhortation for leaders is to be diligent to develop both God-given and God-directed capabilities.[78] Natural abilities and spiritual gifts, for instance, cannot be received via education, training, or any by any other human means—they come from God. That does not mean, however, that one cannot develop what he or she has received. A person can be trained in the use of their gifts. For example, one might have the gift of teaching, but can cultivate greater effectiveness in utilizing that gift via training, coaching, and formal and informal evaluation. The same can be said for other God-given provisions for leaders. Malphurs writes, "Above average leaders tend to have natural and spiritual leadership gifts that they work hard at developing. Even so, if they're to have impact for the Savior, they must submit their abilities to God."[79] This kind of attitude is especially important for God-directed abilities because they are by nature capabilities that must be developed.

The necessity of cultivating one's capabilities certainly helps to justify every effort to train leaders. Leighton Ford commends the "Character/Competency Model" as a tool for doing this kind of training. The model consists of four main categories: spirituality

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[76] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 85.

[77] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 86.

[78] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 89.

[79] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 89.

(or character), leadership, evangelism, and kingdom seeking.[80] Under spirituality, the training model addresses the vertical and horizontal relationships of the leader—the relationship between the leader and God, and between the leader and others. Ford's curriculum gives attention to matters such as the heart of the individual before God, their heart for people, and places an emphasis on growing in Christian maturity. In the leadership category, three items are important: leading like Jesus, the ability to manage well (prioritizing, strategizing, building a team, performing administrative tasks, and attending to matters such as budgeting), and the ability to lead people. The third category, evangelism, is specific to the work of Ford's ministry. The final category of the model gives attention to "kingdom building," which includes having a heart for the local church and the growth of the universal church.[81] It is important to note that in this model, just as in Malphurs, character and competency are both to be nurtured. The heart of the leader matters first, but in the final analysis their capacity to lead is not at all a distant second. Without godly character no one qualifies to lead God's people. Likewise, without the requisite capacities no one will effectively lead.

Communication Is Key

Among the many skills that are vital for leaders, the ability to communicate is of great importance. Albert Mohler asserts that communication is the most essential skill a leader possesses because "leadership doesn't happen until communication happens. . . . The leader may have the most brilliant strategy in his mind, the most breathtaking vision in his sights, and an irrepressible passion in his heart, but if these are not communicated

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[80] Leighton Ford, "Helping Others Grow," in *Leaders on Leadership: Wisdom, Advice and Encouragement on the Art of Leading God's People*, ed. George Barna (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 134-35.

[81] Ford, "Helping Others Grow," 146-48.

to others, real leadership just doesn't occur."[82] There are many ministries in the local church where communicating is central to the task: a Sunday school superintendent, a worship leader, and certainly a pastor or teaching elder have ministries where a leader's communication is featured prominently and publicly. However, leaders of any stripe must be able to communicate well with others even if they are not as visible.

Communication, says Mohler, further requires clarity so as to not confuse followers.[83] He maintains that leaders must communicate with consistency so as to convey sincere conviction of beliefs and to avoid mixed messages. He also says that one's communication necessitates courage because "if your convictions mean anything at all, someone will oppose you."[84] Put in these terms, communication is indispensable for every leader, and is a skill to hone. For some, the ability to communicate well is God-given, while for others it is God-directed. For all leaders, though, to be an adept communicator is imperative. This assertion is not only evident theoretically but also finds support empirically.

Frank M. J. LaFasto and Carl Larson conducted extensive research on the functionality of teams in organizations. They identify six desirable competencies for team leaders. Surveying 6,000 team members who work under the leadership of 600 leaders, responses were given to two questions: "What are the strengths of the team's leadership?" and "What does the team leader do that keeps the team functioning more effectively?"[85]

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[82] R. Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 91.

[83] Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 95.

[84] Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 95.

[85] Frank M. J. LaFasto and Carl Larson, *When Teams Work Best: 6000 Team Members and Leaders Tell What It Takes to Succeed* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 99.

An analysis and subsequent compilation of answers resulted in six "consistent and useful competencies" for leaders.[86] Team leaders ought to do the following:

1. Focus on the goal

2. Ensure a collaborative climate

3. Build confidence

4. Demonstrate sufficient technical know-how

5. Set priorities

6. Manage performance[87]

What is remarkable here is that at least five of these competencies depend on the ability to communicate well. It is possible that the fourth item, demonstrating technical know-how, does not require strong communication skills. This capacity has to do with the leader having a good, working knowledge of what it is their team is doing. Leaders need not be experts in their field per se, but they must have knowledge and skills relevant to the task at hand and be able to make meaningful contributions toward desirable outcomes.[88] This ability might be operable without strength in transmitting information. The rest of the list, however, does require good communication skills on the part of the leader.

Consider the first item on LaFasto and Larson's list, "focus on the goal"— accomplishing this requires leaders to articulate a clearly defined purpose to their team, either in a short-term project or realizing a long-term vision. The authors note that a fundamental way that leaders keep their team focused on the goal is by "being willing to openly and frequently communicate the goal," in a way that is inspiring.[89] Leaders

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[86] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 99.

[87] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 99.

[88] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 131.

[89] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 106.

regularly remind everyone what it is the organization exists to do.

To perform the second item, "ensure a collaborative climate," it is imperative that a leader facilitate member interaction in such a way that keeps communication in the organization feeling "safe," by fostering open and candid discussions while holding accountable those whose behaviors threaten this objective.[90] Similarly, when leaders seek to "build confidence," they do so by reassuring communication with their team.[91] The fifth item necessitates communication also—setting priorities for the team cannot be done without addressing them. Being clear about what is most important or most urgent and amending this based on changing circumstances is accomplished by the leader who addresses the members of the team either directly or indirectly—there is no other way to do it.[92] Finally, managing member performance leans heavily on the leader's communicative capacities. LaFasto and Larson comment, "Performance management begins with making expectations clear."[93] Managing team members involves giving helpful feedback on performance, confronting and attempting to resolve performance issues, and positively reinforcing good work by rewarding success.[94] Team members need and want their leaders to communicate well.

Not only must leaders communicate, but they also need to be skilled in doing so when the stakes and emotions are high. In *Crucial Conversations*, Kerry Patterson et al. insist that the single most important skill of an effective leader is their capacity to have "crucial conversations."[95] A "crucial conversation" is one where an individual has the

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[90] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 109-10.

[91] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 122.

[92] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 138.

[93] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 140.

[94] LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 142-45.

[95] Kerry Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes Are High*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012), 9.

ability to "talk openly about high-stakes, emotional, and controversial topics."[96] While the temptation may be to delay these conversations or avoid them altogether, the case is made that having this kind of conversation with people is critical to organizational health and success. They write, "Twenty years of research involving more than 100,000 people reveals that the key skill of effective leaders, teammates, parents and loved ones is the capacity to skillfully address emotionally and politically risky issues. Period."[97] They site compelling research that supports this assertion. For instance, in positive terms they found that where people are good at crucial conversations, organizations "respond five times faster to financial downturns," are "two-thirds more likely to avoid injury and death due to unsafe conditions," and are able to "save over $1,500 and an eight-hour workday for every crucial conversation employees hold rather than avoid." Also, when crucial conversations happen there is "increased trust" experienced in team members, and employees are able to "influence change in colleagues who are bullying, conniving, dishonest, or incompetent."[98] On the negative side, when close to 1,000 respondents were asked about bullies, manipulative, dishonest, and incompetent people in their workplace, 93 percent said that people like this were "untouchables" in their organization.[99] Organizations such as these cannot be happy places of work. The problem in such circumstances is not a flaw in strategy but a failure to have difficult yet necessary conversations.[100]

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[96] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 9.

[97] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 9-10.

[98] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 12-13.

[99] Patterson et al., Crucial Conversations, 13.

[100] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 13.

Fortunately, leaders and team members alike can learn to converse about high-stakes issues.[101] Patterson et al., provide readers with insight and instruction on how to have these kinds of discussions and how to do so proficiently. Seven of the eleven chapters in their book are devoted to teaching dialogue skills given to equip readers to have crucial conversations. In all there are seven principles with corresponding skills. The first principle is to "start with heart," which involves focusing on what one really wants as an outcome from the conversation, as well as being able to articulate what one does *not* want to have happen.[102] The second principle, "learn to look," consists of being aware of defaulting to ways of handling stressful encounters that are directly contrary to what will be effective.[103] The third principles is to "make it safe" whereby one takes steps to ensure mutuality in purpose and respect where they are at risk.[104]

The fourth principle, "master my stories," calls on readers to take charge of their emotions by taking intentional steps to analyze the interpretation they have in their mind as to why people are doing what they are doing, or saying what they are saying.[105] When something negative happens or is said, people often have a "story" in their mind that is their perception of what has taken place and why. This perception fuels feelings, and these feelings inform actions. In the end, a person's feelings (and subsequent action) may or may not be based on fact. Skilled communicators—and capable leaders—will "separate fact from story by focusing on behavior."[106] In so doing they are able to better

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[101] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 28.

[102] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 41-47.

[103] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 54-61, 71.

[104] Patterson et al. *Crucial Conversations*, 76-82.

[105] Patterson et al. *Crucial Conversations*, 108.

[106] Patterson et al. *Crucial Conversations*, 115.

control their response to negative stimuli and keep the greater good of the organization on track.

The fifth principle, "state my path," is about how to state one's opinion or take a position of advocacy in situations where what is said may put others on the defensive. When people respond in this way it can cause them to go silent as opposed to being conversant.[107] To prevent people from reacting in this manner, the authors teach a five-part strategy: share your facts (starting with the least controversial information), tell your story (giving your understanding of what is taking place), ask for others' paths (getting perspective from others as to how they see it), talk tentatively (not assuming you have it right), and encourage testing (inviting differing or opposing views).[108]

The sixth principle, building off the previous one, is to "explore others' paths." In this regard, one aims to make others "feel safe" so that they will be able to share freely their own perspective—what they understand to be true and how they feel about it.[109] The seventh and final principle is "move to action." This principle has to do with taking ideas and turning them into good decisions and following through on them.[110] This section may be especially refreshing for leaders who are frustrated by seemingly endless discussions that yield few if any results. They provide four different ways decisions can be made and how to choose which one is most appropriate. The result is that discussions are had, decisions are made, and action is taken. Finally, practical guidance is given on how to follow through on decisions that are made and to uphold accountability to ensure what has been agreed to is actually done.[111]

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[107] Patterson et al. *Crucial Conversations*, 132.

[108] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 136-47, 154.

[109] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 156-57.

[110] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 177.

[111] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 180-87.

Of course, communication is not a one-way activity. As much as leaders need to be able to convey information and ideas to others, they too must be ready to receive it. At times, a leader's inability or unwillingness to hear from those who report to them can cause serious flaws in an entity's effectiveness. Dennis Tourish and Paul Robson studied upward feedback within organizations and point out that where leaders do not get honest critical input from their team members they are vulnerable to making poor decisions that negatively impact everyone.[112] In their study of a particular health care organization, they surveyed 146 staff, conducted in-depth interviews of 15 employees, and convened 6 focus groups.[113] In the end, they found that subordinates were mostly unwilling to give honest and necessary criticism to their superiors. Team members were fearful of reprisals should they voice dissenting views. Workers felt this way due to a punitive approach to leadership from management.[114] Where negative input was given it was met with over-analysis, while positive feedback tended to be accepted without critique.[115] This means that people making decisions are not likely to be working with the information they need to make good choices. The input management did receive from their employees tended to be "inaccurately positive" and managers were generally oblivious.[116] Where team members might have had the opportunity to contribute to greater organizational outcomes by providing vital information, they instead were inclined to overstate their agreement with senior managers in attempts to bolster their own influence.[117]

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[112] Dennis Tourish and Paul Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations: Process, Problems and Implications for Communication Management," *Journal of Communication Management* 8, no. 2 (2003): 151.

[113] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 150.

[114] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 163.

[115] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 163.

[116] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 150-51.

[117] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 153.

The authors assert that at the heart of the problem is a reluctance in senior leaders to relinquish power and to create an environment where constructive criticism is welcome and valued.[118] From a biblical worldview, one will recognize pride as a detrimental factor. This relates to the earlier discussion regarding the importance of humility and character. Yet at the same time, leaders must recognize that communication is not a unidirectional discipline. As much as one must cultivate their ability to relate truth to others, so they also must be open to receiving it.

Altogether, leaders must be competent communicators if they are to lead well. This ability is required for much of what a leader does, and it is expected by those who follow. From a biblical standpoint, being able to communicate with others is germane to church ministry. Whether communicating truth, encouragement, correction, direction, or even sharing the gospel, these leadership tasks take place by way of one being able to relay information with clarity and compassion. Not only must leaders be able to speak to others, they must also have requisite skill to talk about difficult issues. Where there is tension, confusion, or a problem to confront, addressing it and having hard conversations is part of what it is to lead.

Develop Ministries and Ministers

Where there are godly and skilled leaders, ministries and ministers are strengthened. The main business of church ministry is to make disciples, that is, people who love and follow Jesus and lead others to do the same. This replication is evident in the ministry of Jesus, who raised up disciples who went out and made more disciples. One should be mindful again of Paul's instruction in Ephesians where the goal for pastors and church leaders is to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry" so that "when each part is working properly" the members of the church will "make the body grow so that it builds itself up in love" (Eph 4:16). Thus, the pattern is both prescriptive and descriptive.

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[118] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 162.

Churches would do well to note this design and to consider the wisdom of being intentional about developing ministers for ministry. Where there are godly leaders, seeking to serve God by ministering to others, the overarching purpose is to develop people. As people are equipped, they themselves will be trained and become more effective ministers. The presence of godly and skilled leaders ought to result in more and better equipped ministers who lead flourishing ministries.

In *Designed to Lead*, Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck make the case that developing leaders is something the church is specially designed to do. They maintain that the church is "the locus of leadership development," meaning that it is the ideal center for developing leaders who will do God-glorifying good in the world.[119] They insist that "leaders who will ultimately transform communities and change the world will come from the Church."[120] Clearly, the scope of leadership they have in view is broader in application than merely what is done within the walls of the local church. They envision churches training men and women to lead who will then have an eternally significant impact on the culture as leaders in the marketplace.[121] Readers are reminded that the mandate for this kind of leadership in the world emerges from the early pages of the Bible. It is said there that image-bearers are assigned the responsibility to care for the Creation.[122] Who better than the church to raise up people for God-glorifying work in the world? Believers best understand humanity's mandate.

A major problem Geiger and Peck have unearthed is that too few churches are intentional about equipping the saints to lead. In one study, they discovered that less than

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[119] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 4.

[120] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 4.

[121] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 91.

[122] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 57.

25 percent of pastors surveyed had a plan in their church for developing leaders.[123] It is not that leadership training was nonexistent or thought of as unimportant, but that there was no intentional strategy for training people. A major concern for many pastors and denominational leaders is readying lay people for effective ministry—it is widely felt to be a real challenge to be overcome.[124] Many senior ministers are acutely aware of the lack of training their people have received and are understandably leery of their ability to lead others.[125]

What is required, Geiger and Peck argue, is a clear plan for people to mature and develop as leaders who serve in the church and are sent out from it.[126] To this end, the authors recommend that churches institute a "pathway" and a "pipeline" as a model for leader development. A "pathway" is simply a personal plan for the individual's development. A "pipeline" is an organizational philosophy and strategy for cultivating leaders from within.

The "pipeline" they propose is adapted from *The Leadership Pipeline*, by Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel. Charan, Drotter, and Noel note that many companies look outside of themselves to supply their demand for leaders. Instead, a leadership pipeline is a paradigm wherein organizations create their own.[127] The model they commend is intended to develop an organization's personnel in such a way that accounts for differing degrees of competency commensurate with their level of

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[123] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 181.

[124] Arch Chee Keen Wong et al., "Are You Listening? The Relevance of What Pastoral/ Denominational Leaders and Theological Educators Are Saying about Preparing Leaders for Ministry," *Practical Theology* 12, no. 4 (2019): 419

[125] Wong et al., "Are You Listening?," 420.

[126] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 181.

[127] Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline: How to Build the Leadership Powered Company*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 32.

responsibility.[128] They suggest that there are up to six levels, or "passages" in an organization's leadership pipeline. Each level has a set of skills that one ought to have to be successful in that role. As the necessary capacities are acquired, the leader is ready to pass from one level to the next. In the first passage they move from managing self to managing others. In passage 2, they move from managing others to managing managers. Passage 3 shifts from managing managers to being a functional manager (people who once were peers now report to them as a functional manager).[129] The fourth passage is the move from being a functional manager to business manager. The fifth passage is business manager to group manager, and the sixth is moving from group manager to enterprise manager.[130]

Conceptually, the "pipeline" motif provides organizations with a framework for developing leaders from within. The pipeline provides clarity for leaders because it makes companies think about how their people will grow as leaders since they will want to successfully prepare for each successive passage. When people are moved from one level to the next prematurely, the pipeline becomes "clogged."[131] To truly implement a pipeline, an organization cannot allow people to skip levels without showing that they are ready. One should not pass from level 1 to level 3 until demonstrating the requisite ability for level 2. A process to follow brings leaders along so they are more likely to be successful in their role.

The pipeline concept further establishes greater objectivity in assessing one's fitness for leadership. At times, churches assign people to leadership roles because of a subjective sense of readiness or simply because they are known by the right people. An

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[128] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 2.

[129] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 77.

[130] For a summary overview of each passage, see Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 16-27.

[131] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 26.

honest assessment of their ability to do the job is often missing. It is assumed that they are ready for the role, but not because they met any objective criteria.[132] The pipeline model is a means by which organizations, companies, and churches can overcome this problem and set unbiased measures for each passage.[133]

While Charan, Drotter, and Noel present up to six passages in an organization's pipeline, Geiger and Peck suggest that in a local church there will not likely be more than four. They propose the following passages or levels for church leadership: lead yourself, lead others, lead leaders, and lead ministries.[134] This concept can be adapted depending on context, but the main thing is to establish "clarity of how an organization builds its own leaders" and to have "a visible picture of how leaders can be developed and what their next step in the pipeline is."[135] Geiger and Peck remind readers that "ministry is greatly multiplied when leaders are developed and deployed."[136] One of the best ways to grow the local church is to grow its people.

Empowerment Leads to
Positive Outcomes

Another benefit to this approach to leadership development is that it is an intentional means of empowering people in their work. Leadership is decentralized as people are moved up the pipeline. When organizations pour into their people in this manner, they experience measurable positive outcomes. One study, conducted by Sergio Fernandez and Tima Moldogaziev, showed that there is a direct positive connection between the empowerment of the people in an organization and their performance. Job

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[132] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 4-5.

[133] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 295.

[134] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 187.

[135] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 188.

[136] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 188.

performance includes factors such as the quality of a worker's interactions with people receiving their services, more production, better use of time, level of technical knowledge, and worker capabilities.[137] The researchers collected data from responses to three different surveys conducted by the United States Office of Personnel Management. The first survey was the 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS), which had 212,223 respondents, and the second and third were the 2010 and 2011 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), which had 263,474 and 266,376 respondents respectively.[138] Based on their analysis of this data, they found a statistically significant positive relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction, innovation, and performance.[139] They found that when empowerment goes up by one standard deviation, so also a worker's level of job satisfaction increases by 0.89 standard deviation. The same increase in empowerment resulted in a 0.76 rise in innovation, and a 0.55 measure in worker performance.[140] They also found that higher job satisfaction leads to better performance. Thus, empowerment directly increases performance and indirectly bolsters job satisfaction.[141]

For church ministries, this suggests that when a church invests in its people there is likely to be a positive impact on the experience of the ministry leaders. This in turn ought to translate into stronger ministries because of improved performance. Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens remind readers that empowerment is not just a matter of assigning responsibility but giving over ownership of the ministry.[142] In Fernandez and

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[137] Sergio Fernandez and Tima Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment, Employee Attitudes, and Performance: Testing a Causal Model," *Public Administration Review* 73, no. 3 (2013): 492.

[138] Fernandez and Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment," 494.

[139] Fernandez and Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment," 496.

[140] Fernandez and Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment," 496.

[141] Fernandez and Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment," 500.

[142] Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Colorado Springs: Group Publishing, 2005), 220.

Moldogaziev's study, empowerment meant that information about the organization was communicated to workers, rewards were given based on organizational accomplishments, knowledge was imparted that enables workers to contribute to the overall performance, and power was given for making decisions that affect outcomes.[143] Employees are empowered when the mission of the organization belongs to the people carrying it out. This idea is nowhere better realized than in the church. The workers are themselves actually members of the whole—really and truly, by virtue of their union with Christ. When ministry leaders in the church are equipped to lead, then given freedom to develop methodology and strategy, the reach of a church increases.[144] Giving ownership of the mission by empowering the people to carry it out is in keeping with the vision of the church's Designer and how He intends for it to function. What is observed in the research reflects something far greater than what meets the eye.

Conclusion

Christians do not need secular research to know that biblical instruction in ministry leadership should be followed. Believers live under the authority of an omniscient God who has all wisdom and insight. This great God has given His Word to direct His people in the way they should lead and carry out ministry. However, research and leadership theory verify that good things happen when biblical principles for church leadership are applied. The wisdom of God is evident in the marketplace just as it is in the church. It has been shown here that just as the Bible requires that elders and deacons be godly, so also character is crucial for leaders and the organizations that they head to flourish. When leaders are credible, honest, humble, and are in attitude and conduct the kind of people others want to follow, they are in good stead in their task and so are the ministries they lead. The likelihood of missional success in such situations is increased.

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[143] Fernandez and Moldogaziev, "Employee Empowerment," 491.

[144] Morgan and Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers*, 220.

Likewise, leaders must be competent in their role. While some competencies are necessary in particular settings, others are universally required. These general capacities include the ability to communicate well and, where necessary, to confront issues when much is at stake.

Additionally, while the Bible is clear that God's intent is that the members of the body of Christ will be equipped for the ministry by those who lead them, so also the literature affirms the importance of empowering people in their service roles. The New Testament casts the vision for the members being developed as ministers, who in turn develop others also. As this happens, the church makes the church grow. This kind of replication enjoys empirical support as empowerment yields statistically significant results in worker experience and organizational outcomes. Thus, godly and skilled leaders have the potential to not only build up ministers but also the ministries of the church. The outcomes for which Christians labor do not depend ultimately on their efforts alone, but on God. However, the wisdom of God who instructs believers about character, being equipped for ministry, and equipping others, is reflected in organizations outside of the household of faith. These observations ought to encourage and embolden Christians to follow the biblical pattern as they lean on the Lord for the results.

CHAPTER 4

TRAINING MEMBERS OF ERINDALE BIBLE CHAPEL
FOR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP:
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The purpose of this project was to train members of Erindale Bible Chapel

(EBC) for ministry leadership. To that end, four goals guided this project. The first goal

was to assess the current level of ministry preparedness among the leaders at EBC. This

goal was realized by administering the Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI) to

participating ministry leaders.[1] The second goal was to develop a curriculum to train

leaders at EBC for their work. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a

rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, clarity, and thoroughness

of the lessons.[2] The third goal was to implement the curriculum and equip ministry

leaders to effectively lead their ministries and the people serving under their leadership in

ways that are in keeping with EBC's mission and vision. This goal was measured by

administering a pre- and post-survey and considered successful when a t-test for

dependent variables demonstrated a positive, statistically significant difference.[3] The

fourth goal was to create a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for leadership.[4]

This plan was evaluated by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to assess its biblical

faithfulness, clarity of purpose and goals, scope, and functionality. When a minimum of

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[1] See appendix 1.

[2] See appendix 2.

[3] See appendix 3.

[4] See appendix 4.

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90 percent of all the rubric evaluation indicators met or exceeded the sufficiency level, this goal was considered successfully achieved.

The interventions created in this project were shaped by theological and theoretical data, as outlined in chapters 2 and 3. The central contention of chapter 2 was that God has been pleased in redemption history to accomplish His will in the world through His people, under godly leaders. The work of any church ministry hinges on God, but the labors of the saints are not incidental to the completion of the task. It is His divine design to work through those He has created and consecrated to Himself in Christ. This conviction highlights the importance of investing in members of the local church because it is by them that God works.

Additionally, in chapter 3 it was argued that quality leaders are people of character and competency who have a commitment to empowering others to do the work at hand. These virtues accord with the biblical requirements of godliness and skillful leadership, along with a heart of discipling others. Leaders who possess these qualities are instrumental in enabling their organizations to flourish and have a similar impact on the very people who follow them. These ideas have informed each step of this project, providing a biblical and theoretical framework for equipping men and women to lead their respective ministries at EBC.

What follows is a detailed description of this project throughout the fifteen weeks in which it was implemented. This description is divided into three chronological sections: (1) the preparation period (weeks 1-7); (2) the implementation period (weeks 8-12); and (3) the follow-up period (weeks 13-16).[5] The intent here is that the reader could duplicate this project in their own setting if so desired.

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[5] For the sake of precision and clarity, the ministry plan was distributed to the expert panel sixteen weeks plus four days from commencement of the project. Panelist evaluations were received in the days that followed.

The Preparation Period: Weeks 1-7

The main objectives of the preparation period were to administer the LPI, write a leadership training curriculum, and then have those lessons evaluated by an expert panel. Prior to the start of week 1, I compiled a list of leaders at EBC who I would ask to participate. As noted in chapter 1, the term *ministry leadership* refers to the task of taking responsibility, authority, and initiative in a particular area of ministry to achieve certain goals of the local church through the work and cooperation of others.[6] Thus, for the purposes of this project, the criteria for someone to be considered a ministry leader was that the person is responsible for a ministry in the church that involves serving people. This proviso includes those who minister directly to others or who have at least one other person serving under them. Thus, both paid staff and volunteer leaders qualified to participate. After I completed the list, contact information was verified. Each leader was contacted via email and asked to confirm their willingness to participate.[7]

In week 1, the LPI was administered to all confirmed leaders. This inventory was given using an online survey platform and a link was distributed via email.[8] Recipients were asked to complete the survey within one week. The results of these inventories factored into the writing of the ministry leader's curriculum and the ministry plan.

The LPI consisted of two parts. Part 1 utilized a multiple-choice answer format that mostly sought to gauge the leaders' sense of preparedness on a practical level. Part 2 was made up of open-ended questions especially designed to analyze leaders' theological acumen. Most respondents answered all of the questions, but 4 of the 18 participants did not complete part 2 of the LPI.

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[6] Kenneth O. Gangel, *Leading and Feeding: A Practical Handbook on Administration in Churches and Christian Organizations* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 31.

[7] See appendix 5.

[8] The online survey platform used in this project for both the LPI, as well as the pre- and post-survey was Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com).

In weeks 2-5, I wrote the curriculum. This included a detailed transcript and outline notes for each of the five lessons.[9] In general, these lessons covered pertinent theological and theoretical matters discussed in chapters 2 and 3, as well as issues arising from the LPI's completed in week 1.

In weeks 6 and 7, I asked an expert panel for feedback on the draft curriculum documents by assessing it using the rubric provided.[10] The expert panel consisted of five people, each of whom have extensive experience in training people to serve and lead in local churches. The first panelist was Linda Reed from Heritage College and Seminary, Cambridge, Canada (EdD The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary). She is the Director of the Graduate Certificate for Women in Ministry at the Seminary, which focuses on training women for ministry in the local church. The second panelist was John Brown, Director of Ministry to Africans in Canada (DMin Denver Seminary). Part of his ministry involves training international church leaders for ministry in the local church context. The third panelist was Gord Martin, Associate Director and Founder of Vision Ministries Canada. Martin founded and led a church planting network organization that, among other things, trains pastors and lay leaders for ministry in Canada. The fourth panelist was Hugh Rodger, Pastor at Hilltop Bible Chapel, Toronto, Canada (DMin Trinity Evangelical Divinity School). In addition to his extensive experience as a pastor, he is also a teacher by profession with experience instructing in Christian higher education. The fifth panelist was Daniel Degeer (DMin Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary), who is an instructor with Walk Thru the Bible Canada, past President of Kawartha Lakes Bible College, and has many years of experience in local church leadership.

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[9] See appendix 6.

[10] See appendix 2.

Panel member commitments were secured prior to the start of the project via email. Each person's education, background, perspective, and experience proved helpful in the feedback they provided.[11] I gave them all five seminar lessons to review at the start of week 6 and asked them to give feedback within two weeks. I made revisions based on their evaluations and the goal for this step was achieved by the end of week 7.

The Implementation Period: Weeks 8-12

The first of two interventions in this project was the leader training seminar. This course consisted of five sessions which were written to provide ministry leaders at EBC with biblical and theoretical principles for doing their work and for their development. In these sessions I presented participants with scriptural and empirical data toward increased leadership competency. In these classes leaders were afforded the opportunity to reflect on their own character, skillset, and practice as ministers in the local church. Since the main purpose of this project was to *train* the members for ministry leadership, this course was central to the success of the project.

Five successive sessions were taught on Zoom video conferencing.[12] Due to scheduling restraints, the course was compressed into four weeks instead of five.[13] Each session was two hours in length and included direct instruction, discussion, as well as time for questions and answers. The classes were recorded so that absentees could catch up prior to the next meeting. At the outset of the first session, I administered the pre-

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[11] See appendix 7.

[12] Other such platforms could have been equally useful. However, during the time in which this project was conducted, the majority of meetings at EBC were being held using this platform. Thus, all ministry leaders were familiar with it and most were comfortable using it.

[13] Ideally, this course would have been taught in five weeks instead of four. Two Canadian holidays, one at the start of September and the other in early October, would have made it difficult to for many leaders to be present. By limiting the course to four weeks, the holidays were avoided, and maximal attendance was attained. This meant that more information had to be absorbed in a shorter period of time and practical assignments had to be doubled up on one occasion. In the end, this did not appear to negatively impact the success of the course given the positive statistical results outlined in chap. 5.

seminar survey.[14] At the conclusion of session 5 the post seminar survey was completed.[15] I supplied the ministry leaders in the seminar with a course syllabus and a copy of the class notes via email. While many participants chose to print these off ahead of time, they were also displayed on screen using a screen sharing feature in the video conferencing application.[16]

Session 1

   The first session was entitled, "God's Plan and Pattern for Working in the World: A Biblical Foundation for Ministry." The content of this session was a distillation of the theological model for ministry given in chapter 2 of this project. The desired outcomes of this class were to equip leaders to be able to (1) articulate a biblical-theological foundation for Christian ministry, (2) describe the connection between being image bearers and the call to serve God, and (3) describe the pattern by which God carries out His will in the world.

   At the outset, ministry leaders were asked if they have ever wondeered to themselves "Why am I doing this?" Some may have asked this question as a way of personal motivation, reminding themselves that there is a reason they signed up to lead a ministry and thus they ought to remember that and press on even through difficulty. Some may have asked that question of themselves in a season of discouragement where they are not so much encouraging themselves to keep going but wondering whether they might as well give up and let someone who appears more qualified to step in and take over. Others may have raised this question when they wonder if it is worth it to keep going in ministry at all. There is a good chance that many ministry leaders have asked themselves this question, but participants were reminded that whatever the reason for the

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[14] See appendix 3.

[15] See appendix 3.

[16] See appendix 6.

query, it is worthy of a biblical response. Having a biblical answer might provide the clarity and encouragement one needs in a season of confusion and frustration. What is more, having a biblical-theological foundation for ministry will enable a leader to do so with conviction that filters down to each member of their team. Session 1 intended to provide a biblical explanation for why believers serve in Christian ministry and why leaders do what they do.

This class was organized in three main sections. The first section focused on the biblical prescription of how God intends His work to be carried out in the world, namely through people under godly leadership. In the second section, it was demonstrated that the prescription is an observable pattern in Scripture established in Creation, evidenced in God's dealings with Israel, essential to the Great Commission, and is stated explicitly in Ephesians 4 in the context of church ministry.

At the conclusion of the study, students were asked to reflect on and discuss together what was the most significant part of the session for them personally, what was one effect the truths considered ought to have on their ministry leadership, and what is one action they are committed to taking as a result of what they learned.

Session 2

Session 2, "Character Is Crucial: The Key to Leading Well," focused on the biblical requisite for godly character in leaders. The main objectives of this class were to enable participants to (1) identify key Scripture texts that pertain to the character qualifications of Christian leaders, (2) demonstrate familiarity with research that affirms the biblical character qualifications for leaders, and (3) create and implement a plan for personal spiritual growth. To accomplish these aims, this class consisted of three sections.

In the first section, several biblical texts were studied that emphasize the centrality of godliness and the Bible in Christian leadership. Special attention was given to 1 Corinthians 13 which attests to the primacy of love. Participants were asked to reflect on and discuss how love is manifested in their leadership. Students were asked, "What is

your reaction when a leader is arrogant, rude, self-willed, irritable, or resentful?" Further, they discussed what it looks like when a leader is patient and kind.

The second section was a review of empirical data that affirms the importance of being above reproach when in positions of authority and responsibility. In the final section, participants were asked to create a plan for their own personal spiritual growth. To accomplish this task, they were directed to identify specific steps they intended to take in the next quarter to develop as a man or woman of God, and to come ready to share their plan at the next meeting with other participants.

Session 3

Sessions 3-5 focused mainly on leader competencies. The third class, entitled "Competency Is Critical," outlined several essential leadership skills with a special emphasis on communication. The main objectives were to enable participants to (1) identify important skills for ministry leaders to acquire and develop, (2) describe key competencies for fruitful leadership, (3) explain the ways God has personally gifted them, and (4) articulate a plan for personal growth as a leader.

At the outset, the class participated in a scenario in which they imagined they were tasked with hiring ministry personnel for two divergent positions: a supervisor for a moms' and tots' program, and then an executive pastor. The purpose of the exercise was to explore leadership skills that are particular to the leader's role versus those common regardless of the kind of ministry one is tasked with overseeing. In this case, participants identified several qualities they would want in both an executive pastor and moms' and tots' coordinator. At the same time, there are particular qualities desired in positions that would not be needed or suitable in the other. In both cases, though, competency was deemed critical.

I led participants through a study of Scripture passages that underscore the importance of competent leadership. Attention was then given to the importance of communication and the appropriate methods by which leaders communicate with team

members and constituents. Time was also devoted to Malphurs' concept of God-given and God-directed capabilities.[17] At the conclusion of the session, participants were given a "Personal Capabilities Profile" assignment. To carry out this task, participants were to apply their learning from this class to themselves as leaders, identifying and reflecting upon their own capabilities. Students were to come to the next session ready to share their own profile, including a description of their own God-given and God-directed capacities, along with a one-year plan for growth in character, knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence.

Session 4

Session 4 was entitled, "The Three 'R's' of Ministry Leadership." This class was about how to manage one's team and was structured around three "r's": recruit, ready, and review. In the "recruit" section, participants were introduced to strategies for enjoining others to be part of their ministry, including consideration of common barriers to people getting involved. Four keys to recruitment were posited: (1) create a good job description, (2) use a "taste and see" approach to recruitment, (3) remember that asking is better than announcing, and (4) tell potential volunteers why they should want to be involved. Leaders were asked to write job descriptions for every position in their ministry and to be ready to share them for mutual learning in the next meeting.

The "ready" section was about training workers for the ministry. Participants were asked to review current training practices and consider what it will take for them to prepare their team members both at the start of their involvement and on the go. The "review" portion of the class provided leaders with a method of evaluating their team. Participants were given a step-by-step plan for conducting reviews in a non-threatening way. Prior to a performance review, volunteers should be asked to evaluate themselves,

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[17] See Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 73-89.

identifying specific accomplishments, ambitions, and areas for growth. The review itself is best conducted in-person where the supervisor asks good questions and provides meaningful constructive feedback. After the review, the leader follows up with the volunteer thanking them for their work and summarizing agreed-upon actions steps. Throughout the class, leaders were given opportunities to share other ideas and perspectives on the topic.

Session 5

The final session was devoted to two divergent topics. The first topic was on how to have hard conversations with others in ministry, especially a team member or direct report. By the end of this class, it was intended that participants be able to (1) articulate a biblical view of confrontation, (2) describe key elements of having difficult conversations, (3) be able to engage in a conversations with team members where the stakes and emotions are high, and (4) set actionable goals for their area of ministry.

The class was asked to share together about what makes for a hard conversation, how they feel about having them, and what fears are commonly associated with them. There was a good free flow of discussion with class members describing their collective trepidation about having difficult conversations: fears of hurt feelings, adverse reactions, and not knowing what to actually say to people. Participants were then given a practical and detailed plan for having hard conversations that included preparing for it, having it, and following up afterwards. Time was also devoted to developing a biblical view of confrontation.

The second topic covered in this session was setting goals. Participants were taught to create "s.m.a.r.t." goals: specific, measurable, ambitious, reachable, and timely. Examples were provided of goals that were good models as well as those that should be improved. Participants identified strengths of these examples and named needed

improvements. The ministry leaders were also challenged to write goals of their own for their ministries.

The Follow-Up Period: Weeks 13-16

During the final four weeks of the project, three main tasks were completed. First, the pre- and post-seminar surveys were analyzed utilizing a *t*-test for dependent variables. The objective in this step was to evaluate the effectiveness of the seminars in training members for ministry leadership. An analysis of those results is provided in chapter 5. In sum, the surveys demonstrated that the curriculum taught in this project yielded a statistically significant result.

Second, I drafted a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for ministry leadership.[18] The purpose of the plan was to provide EBC with a strategy for perpetuating what this project was intended to instigate; namely, an intentional means of equipping people for ministry leadership and making necessary structural and strategic changes within the church to enable leaders and their ministries to flourish. To accomplish this goal, data from the LPI was reviewed and served to inform the ministry plan.

Similarly, the principles of leadership presented in chapters 2 and 3 of this project were formative to the plan's design. The focus in this exercise was not on how to communicate biblical and theoretical concepts to leaders but rather how to see them absorbed into the very systems and processes of the overall church ministry. In practical terms, this ministry plan outlines key changes to be proposed at EBC in the areas of communication, training, and structure. Attention was also given to taking concrete steps toward ongoing recruitment and growth of men and women into active service at EBC.

Third, I asked the expert panel to evaluate the ministry plan using the ministry plan evaluation rubric.[19] This panel consisted of five people in total, three of whom

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[18] See appendix 8.

[19] See appendix 4.

served on the first one. Returning to this panel was Dr. John Brown, Gord Martin, and Dr. Daniel Degeer. Two alternate panelists evaluated the ministry plan: Rick Reed, President of Heritage College and Seminary, Cambridge, Canada (DMin Trinity Evangelical Divinity School); and Rick Buck, Regional Director at the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists, (DMin Trinity Evangelical Divinity School). Drs. Reed and Buck both have extensive pastoral ministry experience in larger church settings.

This expert panel was asked to assess the ministry plan based on the following criterion: (1) the degree to which the plan is biblically faithful, (2) the degree to which the plan is clear in purpose, (3) the degree to which the plan contains clearly articulated goals, (4) the degree to which the plan is thorough in scope and application, and (5) the degree to which the plan contains clear action steps for implementation. The feedback given in these assessments will be considered in greater depth in the next chapter, but it is noted here that 95 percent of the evaluation indicators were scored sufficient or higher. Thus, the goal for the ministry plan was successfully met.

Conclusion

This chapter consisted of an overview of the three phases of this project. The project was implemented over a sixteen-week period. During that time, I attempted to achieve each of the four goals of this project with commensurate evaluations. During the preparation period of weeks 1-7, the LPI was administered and the five training sessions were written and evaluated by the expert panel. In the implementation periods of weeks 8-12, the seminar was presented to participants from EBC and the pre- and post-seminar survey was administered. Due to circumstances beyond my control, accommodations had to be made to teach the seminar using an online format. In the follow-up period of weeks 13-16, the pre- and post-seminar surveys were compared using a *t*-test for dependent variables, and a ministry plan was written and evaluated by the expert panel.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

To what extent was this project successful? There is a sense in which the true answer to this question will be borne out over time. The impact of the leadership training course, for example, will be observed in the months to come as leaders continue their work with the knowledge and skills gained from that intervention. Further, the plans crafted in this project will be tested over the course of the fifty-two weeks in which they are to be rolled out. Yet again, the true worth of this plan will be seen in how it benefits the church in the long run. Will the plans crafted in this project make ministry leadership and recruitment more fruitful? Will a review process prove helpful to leaders and benefit the ministries they lead? Will the pipeline model actually make a difference in raising up more people to lead? I trust that the answer to each of these questions will be, "Yes!" However, surely whatever evaluations are made at this juncture ought to be tempered by the test of time.

That being said, meaningful measures were set forth at the start of this project for the purpose of gauging an initial level of achievement. While the full extent to which this project will benefit Erindale Bible Chapel (EBC) remains to be seen, it did have a clear purpose and specific goals with measurable criterion for success. These measures have been applied and demonstrable conclusions will be outlined below. What is more, having completed this project, I am able to reflect upon some of its strengths and weaknesses and make immediate note of how its implementation could have improved. Additionally, an important and perhaps unspoken priority in this project was for me to learn. As much as the central intent was to benefit the church—and I believe this project

has—I also desired to grow as a pastoral leader. This growth included the acquisition of theological understanding and personal development. Thus, as a student it is prudent for me to take inventory of theological truths that have crystalized in my thinking, as well as how this entire process impacted me personally.

In this chapter, then, I will attempt to evaluate this project in at least seven ways. First, I will assess the purpose of this project. Second, I will evaluate the project's goals—were they met? Third, I will identify some of the strengths of what was performed during implementation, followed fourthly by some of its weaknesses. Fifth, I will outline several things I would do differently if given the opportunity. Sixth, I will explore theological reflections that have impressed me through what I have learned and practiced in this exercise. Finally, I will consider how this process has impacted me personally both as a pastoral leader and follower of Christ.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project, as stated in chapter 1, was to "train members at Erindale Bible Chapel in Mississauga, Ontario, for ministry leadership." For clarity, it should be remembered that one delimitation of this project was that the training given during the implementation stage was only to those who are currently leading ministries at EBC. Indeed, all participants were members of the church, but the training was targeted at existing leaders in the church. It is anticipated that the curriculum written for this project will be taught in due course to new and potential volunteer leaders, and that the ministry plan will prove fruitful in time. However, evaluating the purpose of this work here is a matter of assessing its relevance and effectiveness for those currently tasked with leading ministries, as well as the project's potential to do the same for others in the future.

The purpose of the project guided every part of this work, including the goals, research, and implementation. Therefore, it is wise to reflect on the virtue of this objective now that it has been pursued. To evaluate this purpose, the following question will be considered: was the project's purpose worth pursuing?

From a biblical standpoint, there is no question as to the value of this project's purpose. As underscored in chapter 2, training the Lord's people for ministry leadership is an explicit New Testament directive. Paul taught that the saints are to be equipped for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12). He taught his protégé Timothy to take what he learned from the apostle and teach those things to faithful believers who could teach others also (2 Tim 2:1-2). Christ Himself took this same approach in His own ministry to His disciples, teaching them and setting for them an example that would shape their foundational, apostolic work. He directly told them immediately prior to His ascension that in making disciples they were to be "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19). Central to "one another" ministry in the church is the edification and raising up of other believers. Thus, setting out to training members in one's local church for ministry leadership stands on solid Scriptural ground.

Not only did the purpose of this project enjoy biblical warrant, but it is also something ministry leaders at EBC want. In the Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI) participants were asked, "What three things could be done at EBC that would help ministry leaders lead more effectively?" Of the 14 leaders who answered this question, 8 specifically identified a need for more training. Prior to the implementation of this project, there was no specific program or course for leadership training in the church. There have been occasional seminars in different departments specific to the given ministry, but they were limited in number and sometimes ad hoc in approach. It is evident from the ministry leaders' feedback that what has been previously done in this regard has been far from sufficient, and they are ready for that to change. Training members at EBC for ministry leadership is something people want.

The LPI also demonstrated that ministry leadership training is something the people need. Responding to the statement, "I have been adequately trained to be a ministry leader," 11 percent said "disagree" while 39 percent said, "disagree somewhat," and another 39 percent said, "agree somewhat." Only 11 percent of respondents answered,

"strongly agree," while none indicated "agree" (see table 1). This is a clear indication that leadership training is needed at EBC. When asked if they know what they are supposed to do as a ministry leader, only 28 percent said "agree," while 50 percent said "agree somewhat." Another said, "disagree somewhat," while one other respondent checked "strongly disagree" (see table 1). One can only conclude that leaders at EBC feel less than confident in what it is they are tasked with doing.

Table 1. LPI responses in percentages

LPI Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have been adequately trained to be a ministry leader.	0	11	39	39	0	11
I know what I am supposed to do as a ministry leader.	6	0	6	50	28	11

The LPI further demonstrated the need for developing the skills of EBC's leaders. Few leaders could say that they were able to clearly communicate expectations and goals to volunteers. When asked if they are able to carry out this task, the most frequent response was "agree somewhat" (44 percent), while 12 percent indicated that they were not (table 2). Similar uncertainty was expressed when asked if they understood how to recruit new volunteers, as 56 percent said "agree somewhat," while 12 percent answered "disagree" (table 2). When asked if they knew how to give constructive criticism to volunteers, 33 percent said "disagree somewhat," while a combined 39 percent expressed an inability to set clear goals for their ministry (table 2). One must remember that the people answering these questions have demonstrated a high degree of commitment to the church. These are not people who lack motivation or interest. To the contrary, they unanimously affirm that their primary calling in life is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ

(question 1 of LPI).[1] They are also people who put in many hours of work leading and serving others. In addition to being serious followers of Christ, they are also key people in the life of the church. The point is that if these members of the church are saying that they need help leading their ministries, then it is a plea that ought to be heeded. The collective responses of ministry leaders in the LPI validate the purpose of this project.

Table 2. Additional LPI responses in percentages

LPI Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am able to clearly communicate expectations and goals to volunteers	6	0	6	44	22	22
I understand how to recruit volunteers for my area of ministry.	0	6	6	56	17	17
I can give constructive criticism to volunteers serving in my ministry.	0	0	33	33	17	17

If anything, the stated purpose of this project may have been too limited. Training was warranted by Scripture and wanted and needed by ministry leaders. A training course was written and taught as a direct intervention to address this situation. Yet, providing ministry leaders with what they need to succeed required more than a training course. As reflected in the ministry plan, other adjustments need to be addressed in the church to both facilitate further training and to increase the fruitfulness of leaders. Thus, organizational adjustments, improved communication, and attention to fostering collaboration among leaders were called for in the ministry plan.[2] These interventions are

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[1] The first statement on the LPI asked respondents to indicate their answer to the following sentence: "My primary calling in life is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ." In response to this statement, 89 percent said "strongly agree" and 11 percent said "agree."

[2] See appendix 8.

more than mere training, but part of what it will take for EBC to train and keep on preparing leaders. The steps outlined in the plan are going to be taken to create an environment in which others are raised up to lead. For this reason, I would suggest that saying the purpose of this project was to "train" members for ministry leadership may have been be too narrow. It is sufficiently stated so long as one understands that training members requires a more than just direct instruction, which is reflected in the project's goals.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Evaluation of the Project's Goals</h3>

There were four goals set for this project. The first goal was to assess the current level of ministry preparedness among the ministry leaders by administering the LPI.[3] This goal was met when all participating leaders submitted the LPI, and the results were analyzed. The results of the LPI were useful in writing the leaders' seminar curriculum. For instance, teaching on communication and how to have hard conversations was motivated in large part by the results of the LPI. As previously noted, responding to the statement, "I am able to clearly communicate expectations and goals to volunteers," 44 percent said "agree somewhat" while one leader said, "strongly disagree" (see table 2). In response to the statement, "I can give constructive criticism to volunteers serving in my ministry," 33 percent said "disagree somewhat" and another 33 percent said "agree somewhat" (table 3). When it comes to resolving conflict, 50 percent of the leaders said they were somewhat skilled at doing that while two said they were not (table 3). In an open-ended question asking leaders to name areas in leadership in which they felt they needed to grow, communication, giving constructive feedback, and handling conflict among volunteers was a common theme.

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[3] See appendix 1.

Table 3. LPI results on conflict resolution and hard conversations in percentages

LPI Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can resolve conflict between that occurs between ministry personnel serving on my team.	0	11	0	50	22	17
I can set clear goals for my area of ministry.	0	6	33	28	28	6
I understand how to train new volunteers.	0	0	17	28	39	17

The LPI also served to verify the importance of including other leadership tasks in the curriculum, such as goal setting. One prompt in the inventory read, "I can set clear goals for my area of ministry." In response, 39 percent of leaders disagreed, and another 29 percent could only say "agree somewhat" (table 3). Another item in the survey read, "I understand how to train new volunteers." In response, 28 percent said "agree somewhat," while another 17 percent said, "disagree somewhat" (table 3). Data like this enabled me to make difficult decisions regarding what to include or exclude from the curriculum. Knowing that I had only limited time, I had to be selective in what I chose to focus on in the course. Hearing from the leaders proved fruitful in this task.

The LPI was likewise useful in creating the ministry plan. The most important question turned out to be one that asked, "What three things could be done at EBC that would help ministry leaders lead more effectively?" Responses to this question yielded three areas needing attention that I addressed in the ministry plan: structure, training, and communication.[4] This feedback inspired the corresponding interventions outlined in the plan, including the creation of an executive pastoral team, ministry staff teams, offering ongoing leader training including a refresher course, and a formal review process.

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[4] See appendix 8.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to train ministry leaders at EBC for their work. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.[5] This goal would be considered successfully achieved when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. Based on helpful feedback from the panelists, several revisions were made to the initial draft of the material. In the end, 100 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level: 32 out of 40 (80 percent) indicators were scored as "exemplary," and 8 out of 40 (20 percent) were marked as "sufficient."[6]

The third goal was to implement the curriculum and equip ministry leaders to effectively lead their ministries and the people serving under them. Fourteen leaders participated in the course, taking all five classes. This goal was measured by using a pre- and post-survey. The survey consisted of 25 questions that reflected the outcomes of each lesson, especially assessing the knowledge, confidence, and competencies of participants. Participants were queried on their own sense of competence and confidence in fulfilling their role, as well as the degree to which they felt they had been trained. The goal was met when a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive, statistically significant difference between the scores: $t_{(13)} = -6.476$, $p<.0001$.

The fourth goal was to create a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for ministry leadership. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the plan's biblical faithfulness, clarity of purpose and goals, scope, and functionality.[7] This goal was met when 96 percent of all the rubric evaluation indicators met or exceeded the "sufficient" level, surpassing the benchmark of 90 percent. Out of a

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[5] See appendix 2.

[6] See appendix 7 for the completed expert panel evaluations.

[7] See appendix 4.

possible 25 points, 20 categories were graded as "exemplary," four were marked as "sufficient," and one indicator was rated as "requires attention."[8] The comments associated with the latter score are duly noted and will be applied as the ministry plan is enacted.

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Strengths of the Project

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I have identified four strengths of this project that will be considered here. For clarity, I understand the term *strengths* in this context to refer to parts of this project that have especially contributed to its quality, both in terms of biblical faithfulness and practical usefulness. In this regard, four aspects of this project are especially strong: the expert panels, the theological foundation, the people involved, and the fact that the project addressed real and common needs.

The Expert Panels

I am incredibly grateful for to the people who served on the two expert panels who reviewed my work in this project, both the ministry leaders' training curriculum and the ministry plan for EBC. The men and women who agreed to serve as panelists are eminently qualified and experienced in Christian ministry. Not only were these people kind enough to take time to read and evaluate my work, but in many instances, they provided helpful feedback that improved the finished product. In some instances, the feedback given pushed me to make significant revisions, especially to the ministry leaders' seminar. The evaluations from the panel members gave me the confidence that what I had prepared was doctrinally sound, cogent, and on the mark in terms of the needs in our local church. At the risk of gushing, I am hard pressed to imagine a better assembly of people to assess the interventions I created in this project.

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[8] See appendix 9 for completed expert panel evaluations.

The Theological Foundation

A second strength of this project was the theological foundation for ministry delineated in chapter 2. Having a clear understanding of why we serve the Lord is crucial not only for ministry leaders, but for all church members and pastors. It is important to see in the Bible that God accomplishes His will in the world through His people under godly leadership. However, digging deeper and seeing that being made in the image of God is inextricably linked to doing what Christians do in service of God is a biblical truth that has profound implications for every Christian. Since bearing God's image has to do with having dominion over Creation, the work believers do is a primary way by which they reflect God's image. Christians bear God's image by doing His work in the world. In serving God, His people not only do His will but also reflect His royal rule over all things.[9] Thus, the duty of God's people is derived from their design. One cannot come to understand this and believe it without being profoundly impacted by it.

Ultimately, the theology expounded in chapter 2 gives this project real value. Apart from the Lord a servant of God can do nothing (John 15:15). The disciple's work has to do with eternal matters and the transformation of souls. Worldly stratagems and the wisdom of people are ultimately unable to affect real results in these arenas. I choose to focus on training members at EBC for ministry leadership because I recognized it as a need in our church. It is not enough, however, just to pragmatically tinker with training and church structures. Real, meaningful help for the local church emerges from sound theology and is established on the bedrock of biblical truth. What good would this project be if it did not accord with Scripture? What kind of pastoral leadership would I be providing if the interventions I propose are not theologically informed? Not only is the theological foundation of this project a strength, if it were to be removed the finished product would be definitively weak.

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[9] Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 87.

The People Involved

It must be acknowledged that without the cooperation and participation of ministry leaders at EBC, this project would not have worked. The willingness of people to complete surveys and attend classes was critical to success. Of particular importance was each ministry leader who participated in the leaders' training seminar taking every class. Those who had work commitments on meeting dates were faithful to make up classes and did so in a timely fashion, either by doing a make-up session with me or by viewing a recording of the session. In the end, their efforts ensured that they had taken in all the content and were in a position where their responses to the post-survey provided a true picture of what the course provided them. Altogether, this represents hours of time from people who are already active in church ministry. Not only am I grateful to them, but they played an integral role in the project and I would be remiss if I did not underscore their contribution to the strength of the project.

**The Project Addresses Real,
Common Needs**

A fourth strength of this project was that it addressed real and common needs. By "real," I mean that the needs this project addressed are significant and pressing. Every local church needs leaders, including EBC. God has blessed our congregation with good, committed people to fill such roles, yet little has been done to formally prepare them for their work. This fact is established by the leaders themselves in their LPI responses. It is patently unfair to expect people to perform tasks for which they have not be adequately equipped. It is also a deterrent when looking for more leaders since the prospects of succeeding are not what they could be or should be if good training were provided. Prior to embarking on this project, it was the elders at EBC who noted the relevancy of this pursuit. They wisely pointed out that investing my attention in training leaders would have broad application in the church since this is what our church needed—leaders who are well equipped to head ministries, and *more* of them for the future.

Not only does this project address a real need, but it is a common one as well. It has been my observation that, in many churches, good people are called upon to lead ministries without any meaningful training. The churches and ministries may differ, but the narrative is generally the same: a leader is needed, a good and godly man or woman is willing, the pastor or elders are relieved that someone will do it, they are given a roster of volunteers (if there is one), are promised prayers (which are valuable!), and off they go to do what their predecessor likely burned out or gave up doing. Perhaps that is painting the picture in too dark of a hue, but to many church members the scenario will sound familiar. This problem is common among many churches and is exactly the issue this project aimed to address. Thus, a strength of this project was that it addressed a common need in churches.

Weaknesses of the Project

There are undoubtedly many ways that this project could have been improved, but in this section I will acknowledge four specific weaknesses: having to teach the leaders' course online, compressing the leaders' course to four weeks instead of five or more, too small of a sample size to verify the effectiveness curriculum, and a potentially over-ambitious ministry plan.

Having to Teach the Leadership Course Online

One weakness to this project was caused by circumstances beyond my control; namely, having to teach the leaders' seminar online only. The year 2020 brought with it a global pandemic that has been acutely felt in the region in which our church is located. Local authorities issued orders that restricted our ability to gather. In compliance with these regulations, I taught the curriculum via a video conferencing platform. There were some advantages in the online format: (1) it was easier for participants to join the class since they could really be anywhere; (2) commuting was a non-issue since participants could join from the comforts of home; and (3) recording the sessions for the purpose of make-up

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classes could not have been simpler. Yet, despite the benefits, teaching these classes online was overall a drawback. A free flow in an open classroom setting is difficult to replicate online. We also encountered technical challenges along the way, the worst of which was during a session when my screen froze, and I had to log back into the session while participants waited. Of course, everyone is understanding but having to use this medium felt very limiting.

Teaching the Course in Four Weeks
Instead of Five (or More)

A second weakness of this project was that I taught five sessions of material in four weeks. The reason I did this was because of calendar restrictions I encountered during implementation whereby two Canadian holidays bookended the weeks in which I taught the course. After weighing various options, I chose to compress the classes into four weeks, and I regret doing that. This was a problem for two reasons. One drawback was that it meant that there was more information for participants to take in each night. I felt constant pressure to keep going and not linger long over some things that might otherwise have been more fruitful discussions.

Another reason that compressing the classes was problematic was that it truncated time that should have been spent taking up participant homework. An important component of each class is the corresponding homework assignments wherein students are asked to do relevant exercises. These assignments were designed to either help them personally or practically as leaders. My intent had been to take more time for participants to share their work with one another both for the purpose of mutual edification and also to help them sharpen what they produced. We were somewhat able to do these activities, but I did not create enough time to do it to the extent I wished. Part of this was surely owing to me needing to manage the time better, but the problem was exacerbated by the fact that too much was attempted in too little time. Instead of four weeks, five or more would have allowed for more attention to be given where it perhaps should have been.

Too Small of a Sample Size

A third weakness of this project was that there is too small of a sample size to say with confidence that the leaders' curriculum is an intervention that will prove useful in many settings. Fourteen people took the pre- and post-seminar surveys. For the purposes of this project, I can affirm that the curriculum yielded a statistically significant result. However, a larger sample size of participants will better determine the value of the course material. This fact does not in any way reflect poorly on my own church as the vast majority of ministry leaders did indeed take part. We simply do not have enough leaders in our church to further verify the effectiveness of the seminar.

**A Potentially Over-Ambitious
Ministry Plan**

A fourth weakness of my project was that I have prepared a ministry plan that may be overly ambitious given the timeline I set for it. In wording it this way I am being purposely tentative in my assessment since only time will tell whether I am reaching too high, too fast. It is potentially *not* overly ambitious if the plan ends up yielding the kind of results that I envision. However, I acknowledge that I could be expecting a lot. In all, it is a nine-point plan that spans one year (52 weeks).[10] Of course, there is a sense in which the plan *ought* to be ambitious. After all, if meaningful steps can be taken to help our church in the training and development of leaders, then we should act. It is quite possible, however, that we will not be able to fulfill the plan according to the schedule I have set. As one panelist commented, "My sense is that leaders and ministry workers may be fatigued with the change process in the later part of the year. Specifically, I wonder if there will be energy to implement the Leadership Pipeline at the stage when it is scheduled."[11] While I have explicitly stated the need for some flexibility with the plan's schedule, the one danger I will need to beware of is that change fatigue does not result in

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[10] See appendix 8.

[11] See appendix 9.

the plan becoming derailed. In sum, I am trying to balance my sense that we need to act now with a realistic outlook on what can be accomplished in a short period of time. Whether or not I have erred wisely or unwisely remains to be seen. I am hopeful that the flexibility I have written into the plan will prove suitable.

What I Would Do Differently

There are several things I would do differently were I to do this project over again. Some of what I would change was previously addressed where I discussed some weaknesses. If I could, I would teach the leaders' curriculum in person rather than online. Also, I would teach the course in five or more weeks instead of four. Additionally, I would do at least three other things differently: simplify the LPI, get open-ended feedback from course participants, and formally survey other churches in my region to better understand what steps they do or do not take to prepare their leaders.

Simplify the LPI

The Leader Preparedness Inventory (LPI) that I created for this project was a useful tool in gauging the extent to which the leaders feel prepared for their ministries. However, a simpler version of this tool could have been just as useful and taken less time for participants to complete. Most critically, the second part of this inventory consisted of ten open-ended questions. Some of those questions proved quite useful, but those that queried the doctrinal understanding of the participants could likely have been just as effective if I had used multiple-choice questions instead of long answer. Consequently, it took participants an average of almost ninety minutes to complete the questionnaire, which is too long. I could have gained the same degree of insight with a different approach that would have taken less time from participants. Thankfully, those who answered the questions were gracious and did indeed provide helpful information that informed both the leadership course material and the ministry plan.

Get Open-Ended Feedback from
Leadership Course Participants

A second item I would do differently would be to ask for open-ended feedback from leaders who took the training course. Each participant completed the pre- and post-seminar survey that measured the effectiveness of the material taught. Those surveys consisted of Likert scaling questions. However, I missed an opportunity for leaders to evaluate the course from their own perspective outside of the outcomes I had sought to assess. A simple questionnaire asking for their overall impressions—what parts of the course they found most useful, what they would change, and what subjects we did not cover that they feel should also be addressed—would have been a useful step I should have taken. Just as some of the open-ended questions in the LPI proved tremendously useful, the same likely would have been the case if I had done so at the conclusion of the course.

Survey Other Churches

A third action I should have taken would be to have formally surveyed other churches in my region to see what they do, or do not do, to train their leaders. I do not know why I did not think of this at the time, but it would have been a useful step for me to take for at least two reason. First, it would have been a good test of the veracity of my observation noted above that many churches do not systematically or adequately train their people to lead ministries. Second, this kind of inquiry is such a good means of learning and would have nicely complemented the research I conducted throughout this process. It is possible that there are good ideas being implemented around me of which I am not aware. I talk with pastors and church leaders all the time and interact with many churches. The needs addressed in this project are indeed problems I have commonly observed—without question. Yet, my research would have been strengthened with formalized testing that could have demonstrated that the situation at EBC is not unique.

Theological Reflections

In this section I will briefly comment on two theological realities that have surfaced for me in the course of my work. These issues are not necessarily matters that were central to my argument and findings but are nonetheless noteworthy to me. First, the study I conducted in this project reminded me of the impressive unity of Scripture. That God has been pleased to carry out His will in this world through His people under godly leaders is a theme that is evident from Genesis through Revelation. In my own study, I traced this reality back to the Creation account where mankind was made in the image of God which, as noted, has everything to do with why we, as His own people, serve Him. This pattern of God's work in the world is established in creation, evidenced in God's dealing with Israel, essential to the Great Commission, and is explicit in the New Testament epistles. Of course, in making this argument I was quite selective. From the Old Testament I limited my focus to the construction of the tabernacle and the temple. However, I could also have given space to this same pattern being seen in the reconstruction under Nehemiah, the ministry prophets, and arguably some of the kings as well.

In the New Testament I paid particular attention to Paul's instruction in Ephesians 4. However, are there any general or pastoral epistles in the canon of Scripture that do not bear witness to the fact that God works in this world through His people and that godly leaders have a crucial role? The answer to this question must be a resounding, "No!" Thus, the pattern is present throughout the Bible. Redemptive history bears witness to a pattern that is reflected in a unified book, the Bible. While this study was not focused on the unity of Scripture per se, what I have studied and written about in this project testifies to this thread that weaves through the Word of God.

Second, part of the joy of salvation is surely experienced in serving God. It is a wonder that God chooses to use people. Equally wondrous is the fact that He has designed us to bear His image, and that we do that at least in part through working for Him. Add to this the fact that He supplies enabling grace to His servants and uses their efforts to change

lives and build His kingdom—one cannot linger long over these realities without being touched by joy and moved to worship.

This experience is evident in Scripture. When the Tent of Meeting was completed and Moses had ensured all was in order (Exod 39:32-43), the people saw firsthand that "the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exod 40:34). Likewise, when temple construction was finished, fire from heaven fell and consumed the offering and the people rejoiced in God saying, "For He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever" (2 Chron 7:3). Service of God is related to experiencing God, and it is in such encounters that God's people taste the sweetest of joys.

It is important to recognize that this does not mean that all service is pleasant. To the contrary, it is many times grueling, exhausting, painful, and even humiliating. One might recall the many frustrations Moses encountered as a leader over Israel, both before and after the construction of the tabernacle. The apostles likewise endured great difficulty, and not surprisingly the church as well, just as Scripture repeatedly warns. Yet the road is not only a difficult one, but also joyful. The apostle Paul told the Corinthian church he was many times "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Cor 6:10). His joy was in the Lord that overcame the negative effects of his many troubles and kept his spirit cheerful.[12] The apostle John said, "I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (3 John 3-4). There is delight in seeing people's lives impacted by the gospel and being, at least in some way, part of it. This is a special joy for any servant of the Lord, perhaps especially leaders who bear responsibility for the spiritual well-being of people in their care. There are many troubles along the way but not without abiding joy that comes from the Lord.

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[12] David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 313.

Living life in service of the Lord is also marked with profound hope that fuels present joy. Hebrews 12:2 says of Christ that "for the joy that was set before Him [He] endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of God" (Heb 12:2b). There was horrendous suffering in the work Christ. "Shame" was directed toward Him in service of His Father. Yet, the text says He "despised" those troubles, or was unafraid to go through what was set before him because he knew of the glory that was His on the other side.[13] The writer says it was "joy" that moved the Lord forward—the joy of what was to come when delivered from death and enthroned at the Father's right hand.[14] While there are hardships one must endure in ministry and Christian leadership, it is not without tremendous joy that comes from experiencing God and resting in the hope that He supplies to His people in Christ.

Personal Reflections

On a personal note, three reflections are worth sharing at the conclusion of this project. First, this project helped me to grow as a pastoral leader. The discipline of research and academic writing, along with the requisite application, has helped me minister to the members of my church with a degree of certainty and clarity that I have not previously done. There is a sense in which the rigors of this project taught me a process of methodically identifying needs in the local church and attempting to meet them. As a pastor, too often I encounter problems and try to address them without taking the kind of time needed to be sure the issue is understood, that the response is biblical, and even that the problems actually are what I think they are. My experience has been that too much has been done in an ad hoc fashion. As a pastor I have responsibility to see that this kind of approach is not taken, but rather that I act as a pastoral *leader*. Knowing the way and

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[13] William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 47b (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 414.

[14] Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 413.

showing the way forward together with the other under-shepherds in the church is something my church needs me to do. If I do not know something, then I need to at least initiate discovery. This project has been an important experience for me personally to help me exercise some leadership muscles that have not previously been used to the degree they should, and to learn some lessons that will help me be a more useful servant of the Lord.

A second personal reflection I would note is that through this process I have redoubled my commitment to depending on Scripture to be the guide for everything I do in ministry. The Bible must be my first consideration, always. When encountering a problem, I must ask, "What does the Bible say about this?" When wrestling with a decision I ought to query, "What wisdom do the Scriptures provide for this issue?" When looking to how to grow our church or implement change of any sort, I am a fool if I do not first look to the Lord and ask, "What do you have to say about this matter?" Nineteenth century minister Charles Bridges wrote these compelling words:

> Let the theologian delight in these sacred oracles: let him excuse himself in them day and night; let him meditate on them; let him live in them; let him derive all his wisdom from them; let him compare all his thoughts with them; let him embrace nothing in religion which he does not find here. Let him not bind his faith to a man— not to a Prophet—not to an Apostle—not even to an Angel himself, as if the dictum of either man or angel were to be the rule of faith. Let his whole ground of faith be in God alone. For it is a Divine, not a human faith, which we learn and teach; so pure that it can rest upon no ground but the authority of God, who is never false, and never can deceive.[15]

I am not saying that prior to this process I did not look to the Word of God first, but through this process I have been wrestling with the role of Christian (and non-Christian) leadership literature in relation to the Scriptures in the practical insights and wisdom that can be found therein. Pastors can draw from a lot of useful material in the marketplace to help the local church from an organizational and managerial standpoint. However, one must ponder how much of it is needed. To what extent should church

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[15] Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry with an Inquiry into the Causes of Its Inefficiency* (1830, repr., Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2000), 64-65.

leaders look to literature for insights on how to do ministry better? Additionally, if one rushes too quickly to the latest book or most recent article on leading the local church, what gems might be neglected in the inspired Word of God while one is investing time and attention elsewhere? This project forced me to confront this tension because the discipline itself necessitated extensive and wide reading. I found that many of the non-biblical sources I read were quite helpful in various ways, but I had to intentionally come back to Scripture. Contemporary leaders are blessed with many resources, but since God has spoken, the ear of a good pastoral leader must firstly and foremostly be tuned to Him.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not say how much this study blessed me with the reminder of the goodness of God. The Psalmist exclaimed, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (Ps 8:3-4). The greatness of God that is evident in the majesty of Creation causes the psalmist to wonder that God paid any attention to him at all, let alone knew and cared about him. Such an exalted position before a great God baffles the mind.[16] Then, two verses later, he gives voice to the wonder of God's grace to humanity that was considered earlier, in chapter 2: "You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet" (Ps 8:6). God grants to those who bear His image the great and high calling of being ministers to His Creation. It reminds me that to do ministry is nothing short of a privilege afforded by a God who is not only great—and He truly is—but He is also good: he has been abundantly kind to me, calling me to His service.

Conclusion

In evaluating this project from start to finish, it was overall a success. The purpose of this project was to train the members at EBC for ministry leadership. This

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[16] Tremper Longman, *Psalms*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vols. 15-16 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2014), 80.

purpose was warranted both biblically and in terms of the needs identified by the current ministry leaders themselves in the LPI—the people confirmed it was needed and wanted. Also, the goals of this project were all successfully met. The first goal was met when all participating leaders completed the LPI. The second goal was met when the evaluations of an expert panel exceeded the rubric benchmark of 90 percent "sufficient" or higher. The third goal was met when a pre- and post-seminar survey yielded a positive, statistically significant result. The fourth and final goal was met when evaluations of the ministry plan by a panel of experts attained a rating of 96 percent "sufficient" or higher.

Several strengths were identified that leant to the success of this work: high quality expert panels, important theological foundations, the commitment of the people in my local church who participated in the seminars and surveys, and the fact that the project sought to address real needs. There were four weaknesses noted here, including having to teach the leadership training course online instead of in person, compressing the material into four weeks instead of five or more, too small of a sample size for me to be too confident of effectiveness of my curriculum, and also that the ministry plan I have written may be overly ambitious. Were I to do this project over again I would simplify the LPI, seek open-ended feedback from course participants, and would formally survey other churches to confirm how common the issues addressed in this project really are.

Reflecting on this experience from a theological standpoint I have been impressed with both the unity of Scripture and the God-given joy that is very much part of serving the Lord. From a personal standpoint, I am grateful for the growth I have experienced as a pastoral leader. I am also reminded of the primacy of Scripture not only in its authoritative role but also its guidance over all matters pertaining to church ministry. Finally, I am moved by the goodness of God who saves us and sets us apart unto Him to carry out His will in the world. This is indeed how God has been pleased to work in redemptive history and how He continues today: He accomplishes His will through His people, under godly leaders.

APPENDIX 1

LEADERSHIP PREPAREDNESS INVENTORY

The following instrument is the Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI).
Some general questions are followed by a twenty-four-question survey with a six-point
Likert scale. The purpose of this instrument was to assess the degree to which each
participant was prepared to carry out the leadership associated with their current ministry.

LEADERSHIP PREPAREDNESS INVENTORY

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to help us better train and equip our ministry leaders to effectively and joyfully carry out their responsibilities here at EBC for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. This research is being conducted by Michael Ross Kearney for purposes of collecting data for a research project. In this research, you will answer candidly a series of questions relating to how well you feel trained and prepared to lead in your area of ministry. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential,* and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this inventory you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Part 1
Directions: Please read each of the following statements and indicate which of the of the adjacent options best describes your level of agreement as it pertains to your spiritual life or ministry leadership:
SD = strongly disagree;   D = disagree;   DS = disagree somewhat;
AS = agree somewhat;   A = agree;   SA = strongly agree.

1. My primary calling in life is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

2. The Bible is my final authority in every area of my life.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

3. The greatest character virtue of any Christian leader is love.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

4. I consciously rely on the work of the Holy Spirit to lead my ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

5. Reading the Bible on a regular basis is a priority in my daily life.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

6. There are many worthy examples of godly leadership in my local church.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

7. I have been adequately trained to be a ministry leader.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

8. I understand the purpose of my ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

9. I understand how my ministry fits into the overall mission of the church.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

10. I can name the person at Erindale Bible Chapel who I am to report to about my ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

11. Those who report to me understand what I expect of them in their role.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

12. I enjoy leading the ministry for which I am responsible.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

13. I know what I am supposed to do as a ministry leader.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

14. I am able to clearly communicate expectations and goals to volunteers.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

15. I understand how to recruit new volunteers for my area of ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

16. I understand how to train new volunteers.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

17. I understand how to assess the effectiveness of my ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

18. I can give constructive criticism to volunteers serving in my ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

19. I can resolve conflict that occurs between ministry personnel working on my team.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

20. I can set clear goals for my area of ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

21. I make it a priority to celebrate with my team members the successes we experience in our area of ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Part 2
Directions: Please answer the following questions and statements by writing your response in the space provided.

1. Name three areas of leadership in which you need to grow, and why.

2. If you need guidance on practical matters pertaining to the leadership of your ministry, where or to who are you most likely to go for help?

3. Why are you a ministry leader? Or, what motivates you to do what you do in this church?

4. What three things could be done at EBC that would help ministry leaders lead more effectively?

5. When it says in the *Erindale Bible Chapel Statement of Faith and Practices* that "there is one God eternally existent in three persons," what do you understand that to mean?

6.   In your own words, what do you believe about the Person of Jesus Christ, including the nature of His birth, life, death and resurrection? (Feel free to use point form)

7.   In your own words, what do you believe about the Bible itself?

8.   What is your understanding of sin, and why is it a problem for people?

9.   Please provide a brief explanation of the gospel. In doing so, write what a person must know and do in order to be saved.

10. What is your definition of the "church"?

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

The following evaluation was sent to an expert panel who used it to assess the fitness of the curriculum for training ministry leaders at EBC.

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.					
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.					
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.					
The content of each lesson is consisted with the stated outcomes and goals.					
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.					
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.					
The lessons include clear points of practical application.					
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.					

APPENDIX 3

PRE AND POST-SURVEY

The following survey was given to those who participated in the curriculum training program and was administered both prior to and immediately following implementation. The survey was designed to measure the success of this project as an intervention, especially whether or not it improved their knowledge, confidence, and competence as ministry leaders.

PRE AND POST-SURVEY

Agreement to Participate: The research in which you are about to participate is designed to help us better train and equip our ministry leaders to effectively and joyfully carry out their responsibilities here at EBC for the glory of our Lord Jesus. This research is being conducted by Michael Ross Kearney for purposes of collecting data for a research project. In this research, you will answer candidly a series of questions relating to your ministry leadership at Erindale Bible Chapel. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this inventory you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Instructions: Please read the following carefully and indicate which of the options best describes your level of agreement with each statement.

SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; DS = disagree somewhat;
AS = agree somewhat; A = agree; SA = strongly agree.

1. I can demonstrate from scripture that the decisive factor in all Christian ministry is the powerful working of God.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

2. I can explain from Scripture the pattern by which God accomplishes His purposes in redemptive history.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

3. I have a clear biblical-theological model for Christian ministry.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

4. I can explain the relationship between being an image-bearer and the call on my life to serve God.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

5. I can demonstrate from Scripture that God carries out His will in this world through people.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

6. I can explain from Scripture how godly leaders are essential for flourishing churches.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

7. I can identify key Scripture texts that pertain to the requisite character traits of a Christian leader.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

8. I am familiar with research that supports biblical character requirements for leaders.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

9. I have a plan for personal spiritual growth.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

10. I have a good understanding of the gifts and abilities God has given me.   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

11. I can identify key competencies for ministry leadership.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

12. I know what I am supposed to do as a ministry leader.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

13. I have a plan for training new volunteers.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

14. I am familiar with good principles for recruiting volunteers.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

15. I know how to conduct meaningful, non-threatening performance reviews of the members of my team.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

16. I am equipped to have hard conversations when necessary with members of my team.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

17. I know how to set clear goals for my area of ministry.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

18. I can name 5 key principles for setting good goals.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

19. I understand how I need to grow as a leader.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

20. There are job descriptions for each position in the ministry I oversee.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

21. I know how to seek feedback from my team members.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

22. I am confident in my ability to lead my ministry.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

23. I feel encouraged right now in my ministry leadership.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

24. I have a plan for developing the abilities that God has given me.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

25. I have been equipped to lead my area of ministry.　　SD　D　DS　AS　A　SA

APPENDIX 4

MINISTRY PLAN EVALUATION RUBRIC

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The plan is biblically faithful.					
The plan is clear in purpose.					
The plan has clearly articulated goals.					
The plan is thorough in scope and application.					
The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.					

APPENDIX 5

LETTER REQUESTING LEADER PARTICIPATION

The following letter was given to each ministry leader at EBC who met the criteria for participation. The purpose of the letter was to request their participation and to enable them to understand what was being asked of them in terms of time and overall commitment.

Dear _____,

Greetings! As you may recall, I am currently working on a Doctor of Ministry degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, studying leadership.

A major part of my culminating project is to write and teach a ministry leader training seminar in our local church. For me to succeed in this, I will need the participation of our ministry leaders – and that's why I am writing to you!

Will you help me with this?

What I will need from you is to do the following:

1. Complete a 2-page questionnaire (I will send this to you). This survey is designed to assess how we are doing as a church in equipping our leaders;

2. Participate in a seminar (online). This will involve:

    a. Approximately 5 training sessions which I will teach (online);

    b. Completing a pre and post seminar questionnaire (given during the seminar);

    c. Some relevant exercises that are designed to help you as a leader (this will be part of the seminar).

The exact dates are still to be determined, but I hope to run this starting as early as the end of August, and finish before the end of September. The current pandemic is causing me to recalibrate my original plans, such that I am going to implement this exclusively online. The good news is that this means you won't have to leave the comfort of your own home!

Can I count on your involvement?

Once I hear back from you, I will send you that first questionnaire to complete; it will have detailed instructions.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to let me know.

I can't tell you how grateful I am for your help. I trust that this experience will be a real blessing to you and that your involvement will help me to grow and develop as a pastor.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm Regards,

Ross Kearney

APPENDIX 6

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR: CURRICULUM NOTES

The following pages consist detailed class notes for each of the seminar sessions taught during weeks 8 through 12 of this project.

Stewards of God's Work in the World:
A Course in Ministry Leadership

E R I N D A L E
B I B L E   C H A P E L

Instructor:
Ross Kearney
Email: ross@eridale.org
Phone: 905-277-4618 ext. 10
        647-391-8698

Course Introduction and Description:

The purpose of this seminar is to train members at Erindale Bible Chapel for ministry leadership.

Churches need ministry leaders! But what do they do to equip them for success? Too often willing church members step forward and take responsibility for important work who are not trained in how to do it. Eager servants who want to serve fruitfully are many times are not given the tools they need to be effective. Instead they are given a roster of people involved and list of volunteers with a promise to pray for them – and that is indeed important – but that's often the extent of their training. Sound familiar? Have you seen this happen? Has it happened to you?

There are important tasks the ministry leader will have to do that they haven't been equipped for:

- o How do you recruit people to your ministry team?
- o How do you set goals for your ministry?
- o How do you deal with volunteers who are having challenges or maybe aren't working out?
- o How do you grow as a leader while you lead?
- o And, what is the biblical purpose for this ministry anyway?

Being able to answer questions like these will go a long way to enabling a leader to do what they do with excellence – but too often people are left to themselves to figure it all out.

The results are often frustrating, disappointing and even painful. Nobody wants this kind of grief: volunteers don't, nor do churches! Churches and their leaders ought to be set up for success.

That's what this course is all about: equipping leaders of ministries at EBC for fruitful ministry.

This purpose will be accomplished by…

a) Providing a biblical-theological foundation for Christian ministry,

b) Considering the priority of character in a Christian leader and creating a plan for personal growth.

c) Identifying, exploring, and applying practical elements of fruitful ministry leadership,

d) Discovering areas of strength and gifting in the leader and encouraging personal growth.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of this course the participant will be able to …

- Explain from scripture the pattern by which God accomplishes His purposes in redemptive history,
- Articulate a biblical-theological model for ministry,
- Explain the relationship between being an image-bearer and a servant of God,
- Identify next steps for spiritual growth, and development as a leader,
- Recruit and train new volunteers,
- Conduct meaningful, non-threatening performance reviews of team members,
- Have hard conversations when necessary with team members,
- Set clear goals for their ministry.

Course Schedule:

Date and Time	Content
Sunday, September 13: 7-9 p.m.	Pre-Course Survey (Pre-Test) Course Overview Session #1 – God's Plan and Pattern for Working in the World: Biblical Foundation for Ministry
Sunday, September 20: 7-9 p.m.	Session #2 – Character is Crucial: The Key to Leading Well Session #3 – Competency is Critical: The Skills of Effective Ministry Leaders
Sunday, September 27: 7-9 p.m.	Session #4 – The Three "R's" of Ministry Leadership: Managing Your Team
Sunday, October 4: 7-9 p.m.	Session #5 – Having Hard Conversations and Setting Goals

*All Classes will be held online on Zoom Video Conferencing. Participants will be emailed log in information prior to each class

Session #1
God's Plan and Pattern for Working in
the World: A Biblical Foundation for
Ministry

Outcomes: By the end of this session
the participant will be able to …

- Articulate a biblical-theological foundation for Christian ministry,

- Explain how God carries out His purposes in the world,

- Describe the connection between being an image-bearer and the call to serve God,

- Describe the pattern by which God accomplishes His will in redemption history.

Introduction:

"Why am I doing this?" As a ministry leader, have you ever asked yourself that question? Or have you heard someone else ask it about their ministry?

The question could be understood in a few different ways:

"*Why* am I doing this?" – could be asked as a means of motivation, reminding yourself that there was a good reason you signed up to serve! So, you do a little self-talk, reminding yourself that just as there was good reason you started, there still is good reason to continue.

"Why am *I* doing this?" – could be asked in a season of real discouragement, when you feel like you're failing or not cut out for the task at hand: "Shouldn't someone else be doing this instead of me?" you wonder.

"Why am I doing *this*?" – when you have felt frustrated and overwhelmed; or you've just lost sight of the point of it all – busy, busy, busy – what's this really all about, and is it worth it?

If you've been involved in church ministry in any capacity for any length of time, there's a good chance you've asked yourself this question in one form or another.

What's the answer to the question? You might not feel that your immediate need is not a theological explanation of God's purposes for Christian ministry. It's true that you may surmise that what's needed is some help, encouragement, guidance, perspective, or rest. But when you think about it objectively, it is a question that deserves and answer. What's more, getting a biblical answer will quite likely give you some of the encouragement, guidance, or perspective you need!

After all, think about what is at stake in Christian ministry:
- Think of who we are ministering for: Christ Jesus Himself,
- Think of the cost of ministry: time invested in the ministry is time away from other people/things,
- Think of who we are ministering to… Christ's blood-bought sheep,
- Think of who it is we minister with… our forever family, brothers and sisters in Christ,
- Think of what it takes to do it well: emotional, mental and physical investment.

When you think of all that's involved in Christian ministry it is worthwhile to be really clear about what we are doing as ministers of Christ and why!

That's what this session is all about: discovering a biblical explanation of why we serve as ministers and ministry leaders. To do that we are going to discover *a biblical-theological foundation for ministry*. Or, to put it another way: we are going to see in the Bible *why it is we serve God* with our time, talent and treasure.

Session Overview:

I. God's Work Carried Out by God's People Under Godly Leadership is a Biblical **Prescription**.
II. The Prescription is a **Pattern** that is …
   a. Established in Creation
   b. Evidenced in Israel
   c. Essential to the Great Commission
   d. Explicit in Church Ministry
III. Conclusion

I. God's Work Carried out by God's People Under Godly Leadership is a Biblical Prescription

Ephesians 4:11–16 (ESV) [1] [11]And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

This is a key text for establishing a biblical model for ministry:
- The goal is church growth – maturity, health, and number (v.13, 15, 16)
- The growth of the church comes ultimately from Christ (v.16)
- The means by which Christ grows the church is by its members (v.15-16)
   o The Lord gives gifted people: godly leaders (v.7-11)
   o The gifts are given to equip the saints (v.12)
   o The ministry is carried out by the members (v.12-16)

When Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18) He surely had in view His coming death, resurrection, and giving of the Holy Spirit. But He also envisioned this design for how He would bring it to pass. Christ does indeed build His church – and He uses His people to do it! That's the work of the ministry and that's our calling too!

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the English Standard Version.

In Sum, three factors are essential: members who minister, godly leaders who equip, and Christ from whom it all comes.

II. The Prescription (God's Work is Carried Out by God's People Under Godly Leadership) is a Pattern

Not only is this design prescriptive in the New Testament, it is a pattern that can be traced through redemption history. We will see that it is …

- Established in Creation
- Evidenced in Israel – particularly in the construction of the tabernacle and the temple
- Essential to the Great Commission
- Explicit in Church Ministry

a. The Pattern is Established in Creation

A biblical perspective on ministry finds its roots in the creation account in Genesis. Our call to serve God is connected to the fact that God made people in His image.

> Genesis 1:26–27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." [27] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Three things to note about how God created people:[2]

1. Of all that God made, **only people are personally identified with God** in the creation formula. Previous to this, God said, "***Let there be***" and there was whatever He had in mind to make. With human beings, however, God said "***Let us make*** man in our image." God identified Himself in the creation of people, in a way unlike anything else.

2. Of all that God made, **only people are said to be made in the "image" and "likeness" of God**. Other creatures are made according to their "kind" but people are made in God's image and likeness. This text does not elaborate on what exactly it means to be made in God's image, but it is evident that people are set apart from the rest of creation. The reader should anticipate that they will also have a distinct role in the world.

   > Illustration: What do you see when you look in a mirror? What you see is yourself – but it isn't exactly you, but an *image* of you. When we look at each other we don't see God. However, God has made us people who – sort of like a mirror – are reflections of Him and His glory.

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[2] John Sailhamer, *Genesis*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 37.

3. Of all that God made, **only people are said to have "dominion" over creation**. To have "dominion" in the ancient context is a royal function. In Genesis, it is clear that the One with true dominion is God. Yet, this passage indicates that people are assigned something that, previous to this, could only be ascribed to God.

What Does It Mean to be Made in God's Image?

The terms "image" and "likeness" are closely related, sometimes used interchangeably (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1, 3). But these terms are also *nuanced*:

Peter Gentry points out that …
- In the ancient context a king was often thought of as bearing the image and likeness of his god (pagan deity)[3]
- In certain instances, "likeness" described the king as a worshipper of his god, while "image" pertained to the king's rulership over his people (as a king under his god).[4]
- Therefore…
  - "likeness" emphasizes the *vertical* relationship between people and their maker,
  - "image" emphasizes the mankind's *horizontal* relationship with the rest of creation.[5]
  - "dominion" therefore is a *function* of bearing the image of God: in exercising dominion we reflect God's ultimate rule over all that He has made.[6]

To be made in God's image has to do, in part, with attributes of God that are reflected in us (our ability to reason, communicate, create, etc.). But the emphasis in Genesis is *not* on the attributes we possess but rather **works we perform**, namely exercising dominion over God's Creation.

> **Genesis 2:15** "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15).

> Question: *Whose* garden is it? It's God's garden.

> Question: *Who* is given responsibility for it? Adam (people).

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[3] Peter C. Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant: Humanity as the Divine Image," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 31.

[4] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 25.

[5] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 32.

[6] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 32.

Question: Why was Adam given this role? Because having dominion over God's creation is what image bearers do – *human beings are made to image-forth God by doing God's work in the world!*

It's His Creation, but people are given rule over it as His representatives – as His *image bearers*.[7]

Don Carson summarizes it well: "(People have been) charged with the responsibility of looking after (God's) creation (and) in so doing (they) are reflecting something of God."[8]

> **Psalm 8:5-6** "You have made him (people) a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet."

God's Image-Bearers are Given "Dominion"

Having impressed His own likeness on human beings, God entrusted to them a sacred stewardship that's been afforded to no other creature.[9]

When the author of Genesis says that Adam was placed in the garden to "work it," he uses the same Hebrew word used elsewhere in reference to sacred, religious duties, (c.f. Numbers 1:51-53; 3:7-8; 4:23-26).[10]

What Is Being Said Here?...

What's the significance of all this? At least three things in general:
1. Since bearing God's image has to do with having dominion over Creation, working in this world is a primary way by which we reflect God's image.
2. The command for Adam in the garden is no less sacred than that of priestly service. There is no sacred-secular divide when it comes to serving God.
3. Bearing God's image is inextricably linked to serving Him. It's a purpose that He has impressed upon our very nature. ***Our duty is derived from our design***.

Leading the worship ministry, overseeing the sound team, working at the factory, and taking your dog to the vet, are all part of what it means to have dominion and doing what you are made to do.

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[7] Gentry, "Kingdom Through Covenant," 29.

[8] D. A. Carson, *The God Who Is There: Finding Your Place in God's Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 23.

[9] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 31.

[10] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 67.

But Aren't We Sinful?

Yes, sin has infected the entire human race and has had a devastating impact on us.

We still bear God's image – that's part of our make-up – *but because of sin the image we portray is marred.* If we remember the illustration of the mirror we used earlier, we could say that because of sin the glass of the mirror has been shattered – the image we see when we look at each other is distorted.[11]

However, the story of redemption is the good news that which has been broken can be repaired.

Consider what these Scripture texts tell us about what God does for us through Christ:

2 Corinthians 3:18
- People are created to reflect the glory of God in their living, but the effects of the fall have flummoxed this. In Christ, however, God's brings about radical transformation in the believer to restore the image of God by the Holy Spirit.
- David Garland: "The fall tarnished that image and glory, but not irreparably. Now it is being restored. This transformation is brought about through Christ as the image into whom the believers are to grow."[12]

Colossians 3:1-3, 9-10
- There was an "old you" that is no more and now there is a "new you" that is alive in Christ. There's been a death and resurrection – that's a radical change!
- The challenge from Paul to believers is that they ought to live out the new life that they have since their "new self…is being renewed in knowledge after the <u>image</u>

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[11] The notion of a "shattered" image to describe our fallen condition has been used by man. One such example is R. C. Sproul in his teaching series "A Shattered Image," accessed August 25, 2020, https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/shattered_image/the-image-of-god/.

[12] David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 198.

of its creator." That's a reference to Genesis 1:26-27, and an explanation of God's goal in redemption, namely, to restore to us that which was ruined by sin.

Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:1-3
- The restoration of the image of God is the goal of our sanctification that will be fully realized in our glorification.
- The very results we wish to see in the lives of the people we serve in ministry find their roots in God's creative purpose and will be fully realized in the consummation of all things.

This is All Very Interesting, but What Possible Relevance Does It Have to My Ministry?

Consider the following:
- It helps us answer the question we began with: why am I doing this?
  - The reason I do what I do is because I was created to do it. That doesn't mean you are confined to doing the specific task you are doing right now (which might be a relief to hear!). But we see that part of our wiring as human being is to carry out God's work in the world. This is a gloriously high calling, even if we might feel lowly about it!
  - The reason I do what I do is because this is how God works in the world: through people like you and me!
- It also helps us understand the deep biblical roots of ministry –
  - God has been pleased throughout redemptive history to accomplish His will in the world through people – and that includes you!
  - Your ministry is part of this grand redemptive narrative, image restoration.
- The ministry of believers like you and me in the local church is in keeping with our original assignment only now in a greater and more meaningful way – we are participants in God's redemptive purpose for His people that they would reflect the glory of God and the glory of His Son, Christ Jesus, in this life and for all eternity. *This is the ministry*!

In Sum: We Do God's Work Because We Bear God's Image

> **Discussion …**
> a. Based on Scripture, in what way(s) is my ministry related to God's grand purpose in the world?
> b. How does being an image-bearer impact how I think about my leadership responsibility?
> c. What is one way that we can go about keeping these truths at the forefront of our minds as we go about our work?

b. The Pattern is Evidenced in Israel

So far, we are seeing that a biblical model for ministry is one in which we understand that the work of God is carried out by the people of God, under godly leadership. This is established in the Creation account, but it is also a paradigm that can be traced in redemptive history.

The Construction of the Tabernacle: God's People Working Under Godly Leadership

Both the tabernacle and temple were enormously important to the covenant relationship between God and His people, because in both God manifested His presence among them. That was God's desire – to be among His people. He told Moses, "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (Exod 25:8).

What does God intend to do? Be present among His people.

How would He accomplish His purpose? Through the efforts of His people: "let them make me a sanctuary" (Exod 25:8a). God carried out His purpose through His people under godly leadership…

> **Exodus 25-31**: God gives elaborate instructions to Moses regarding how the tabernacle was to be made and all that it should contain.
>
> **Exodus 32-34**: The people almost miss out on the joy and reward through rebellion[13]
>
> **Exodus 35-39**: The people do *exactly* as God directed, to the letter

The Work was Carried Out by God's People:
- There were countless contributors (Exod 35:20-21) – the contributions were so great the people had to be implored to stop giving! (Exod 36:5-8)
- There were many skilled craftsmen who made the tabernacle and its contents (Ex 35:10-19)
- There was a skilled foreman, Bezalel, and his assistant Oholiab (Exod 36:1-2)
- The people played a vital role – nowhere does it say that Moses possessed the skill to build, nor did he do the work itself, but rather oversaw the project[14]

Moses Provided Godly Leadership:
- Moses was responsible to relay God's commands to Israel and then see that those instructions were followed.

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[13] Victor Hamilton points out that indeed the people had blown it and came within a hair's breadth of being part of carrying out God's plans: "The Lord's compassion and graciousness to Israel prevent(ed) the tabernacle from being nothing more than a blueprint on paper." Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 593

[14] R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1973), 235-36.

- God repeatedly told Moses "you shall" build or make something pertaining to the tabernacle, but it was never Moses himself who swinging a hammer, sewing, or carving. Rather, his job was to see it all done correctly.
- When the project was complete, Moses performed an inspection (Exod 39:43) because he was accountable before God for it all.
- As leader he was not solely responsible but *firstly* responsible.

God Played the Decisive Role:
- God called Moses to lead and provided the design and instructions (Exod 25-31)
- God stirred the hearts of the people to give (Exod 35:21)
- God gave the requisite skills to those who served (Exod 31:2-5; 35:34)

The Construction of the Temple: God's People Working Under Godly Leadership:

> **1 Chronicles 22**: David's Plans for Building the Temple
> **1 Chronicles 22, 28**: Solomon Chosen to Build the Temple
> **1 Kings 5-8; 2 Chronicles 1-7**: Temple Construction and Completion

The Work Was Carried Out by God's People (Mainly):
- Contributions came from David and the people of Israel, who gave silver, gold, iron, and bronze, wood, stone (1 Chron 29)
- Materials were acquired from Tyre (King Hiram)
- 30,000 Israelites were conscripted to do the work, 153,000 resident aliens were compelled to work (2 Chron 2:17)[15]
- 3,600 taskmasters oversaw the laborers

Solomon Provided Godly Leadership: A central contention of this study is that in God's economy, godly leaders are vital to carrying out God's work. But can we really say that *Solomon* was a godly leader? Yes, in so much as he was faithful to do what he was charged with doing! Sin played a sad role in Solomon's life, but in during the temple construction we see him at his best: obediently carrying out what he was given to do and giving God the credit (2 Chron 6:4).[16]

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[15] Contemporary readers might find this kind of arrangement distasteful. However, several factors should be remembered. First, the building of the tabernacle was not optional—God commanded it. So, while there was perhaps a stronger sense of volunteerism among the people, constructing the tabernacle was not something the people merely elected to do of their own volition. Being compelled thus to build a temple for God is no less palatable. Second, unlike when the tabernacle was built, Israel was now a monarchy, not a theocracy. When the nation demanded to have a king like all the other countries, God warned them that this would lead to radical changes in their social experience (1 Sam 8). It should be no surprise, then, that workers are conscripted by their king. Third, the temple project was massive in scope. For it to be completed, large numbers of people were needed. Solomon saw to it that the 30,000 Israelites that brought materials from Tyre were given two months off between each month of work. The work was surely strenuous, but rest was ample. Finally, the forced labor of non-Israelites living in the country at the time serve as a reminder of the great victory God afforded His people over her enemies. God's faithfulness to his people put Israel in a position where they were able to acquire what they needed in order to serve Him.

[16] To call Solomon "godly" would require ignoring significant moral failures and lapses in judgment. So, can we really say that Solomon was "godly"? Yes and no. "No" in the sense that he was not exemplary in every season of his life. But "Yes" in so much as he was faithful to do what he was charged with doing in constructing the temple. Remember, outside of the Person of Jesus Christ, there are no flawless leaders of any stripe. Even Moses was forbidden to enter the Promised Land because of divine discipline.

c. The Pattern is Essential to the Great Commission

> **Matthew 28:18–20** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This is the primary mission mandate for the church – to make disciples of all peoples and teach them to grow. To be sure, success hinges ultimately on the Lord (Jesus' words "I am with you always" indicate the true source of strength the disciples would need), yet they would be the appointed vessels by whom the gospel will go global.[17]

d. The Pattern is Explicit in Church Ministry

This brings us back to where we began – Ephesians 4:7-16.

The prescription Paul gives for church ministry is evidenced in a pattern that began in Genesis.

Members are the Ministers (Eph 4)

III.   Conclusion:

God has been pleased in redemption history to accomplish his purposes through people, under leaders who walk in the likeness of his character. This pattern is established in creation, evidenced in Israel (demonstrated here in the construction of the tabernacle and the temple), essential to the Great Commission, and is the explicit means by which Christ grows His church.

Ministry in the local church matters. Equipping the saints is vital. It is prudent and biblical for local churches to equip their people – both as leaders and laborers. People are not incidental to God's plan for accomplishing His will in the world! Therefore, churches are wise to invest in their people to train them for excellence.

> **Reflection…**
> - What has been the most significant part of this study for you personally?
> - What is one effect these truths ought to have on how you view your leadership? Your ministry? Your team members?
> - What is one thing you will do in response to what you've studied

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Notwithstanding the sin in Solomon's life—and it was significant—under him the construction of the temple enjoyed godly leadership.

[17] Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 431.

Session #2
Character is Crucial: The Key to
Leading Well

Outcomes: By the end of this session
the participant will be able to …

- Identify key Scripture texts that pertain to the character qualifications of a Christian leader,
- Demonstrate familiarity with research that affirms the biblical character qualifications for leaders,
- Create and implement a plan for personal spiritual growth.

Introduction:

Question: In our culture, what do people generally look for in a leader? (visionary, courageous, communicator, appear put together, confident, etc.).

Of all the traits we've named, which would you say are most essential? Why?

Example of David: God chose a king for his people who was a man after his own heart – when Samuel went to find him, David wasn't thought of as leadership material. But God does not see as people see! Samuel said, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD does not see as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but *the LORD looks on the heart*" (1 Samuel 16:7 emphasis added).

It's no surprise, then, that when it comes to the local church, God wants leaders of godly character.

I.   Character is Crucial: Key Scripture Texts

a. Godly Leaders are a Must – 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 – Not just anyone qualifies to lead the church!

Read **1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9**

Discussion: Having read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 …
        What do you notice about the character that pastors/elders are to have?
        What must they be like?
        What must they *not* be like?
        Why does it matter?

One might object: Paul is talking about elders and pastors here, not Sunday school coordinators, youth group leaders, clothing closet directors, welcome team leaders, etc. So, are we saying that ministry leaders in general need to be elder material to lead?

Answer: Not "yes," but not "no" either…

No – ministry leaders do not need to qualify as an elder, but …

Yes – it is patently clear that not just *anybody* is fit to lead in the church. I think the best argument for that is when one considers the ministry of **deacons**.

Who are deacons? Deacons are not elders but are servant-leaders in the church who assist the elders/pastors in carrying out the work of the ministry.[18] Consider the following:

- The word "deacon" suggests that theirs was very much a servant role, but they were recognized ministers in the church in so much as they were identified as "deacons"

- They were people with delegated responsibility for ministry with commensurate authority;

- They were not pastors or elders, but are always mentioned with elders wherever they are found in the NT[19]

What else should we know about deacons? They were required to be people of *godly character*!

Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13

The qualifications for deacons are not identical to that of elders, but similar. One major difference is that deacons do not have to have the ability to teach (teaching doctrine to the church is a responsibility of elders).

Summary: God has ordained their contribution to the fulfillment of His plans under godly leaders.

b. Godly Leaders Wield the Word to Equip Workers – Ephesians 4:7-12; 2 Timothy 3:15-4:2

Ephesians 4:7-12 – Notice: one thing that "apostles," "prophets," "evangelists," "shepherds," and "teachers" all have in common: they have Word-centered ministries. God's word is central to the work of each of these leaders. How do they go about equipping the saints for ministry? What's the means by which they exercise leadership? For each of them, Scripture is central.

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[18] Alexander Strauch, *Paul's Vision for the Deacons: Assisting the Elders with the Care of God's Church* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 2017), 52.

[19] Strauch, *Paul's Vision for the Deacons*, 52.

2 Timothy 3:15-4:2 – What would be the primary means by which Timothy would exercise leadership in the local church? Using God's Word!

Summary: Godly leaders wield the Word to equip workers for ministry.

c. The High Calling of Love – 1 Corinthians 13

In his book, *Leading with Love*, Alex Strauch laments the absence of love in Christian leadership literature:

"Although Christianity is unmatched among the religions of the world in its teaching about God's love and the requirements of love for Christian believers, Christian leaders don't normally focus on love when they address leadership. Much good material has been written describing the leadership qualities of courage, resourcefulness, charisma, conviction, perseverance, visionary thinking, self-discipline, decisiveness. Yet few books on church leadership include anything about love. This is a tragic oversight since the New Testament makes it clear that love is indispensable to the gifts of leading and teaching."[20]

Mary Miller shares this lament especially with the lack of research in this area. She writes, "What is missing is leadership research with a focus on love. Especially if leaders are to be transforming the lives of others love is surely an essential ingredient."[21] She asserts that there is no reason more could not be done in leadership theory or the field of psychology to better understand the importance of love to organizational success.[22]

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a – Paul taught that love is essential (1 Corinthians 13:1-8a). Without it, he says, we "gain nothing" and we are "nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:2-3). We might think we're really something, but if we don't love the people we lead, then we are "nothing" special as leaders.

Since love is paramount, we cannot overlook its importance to leadership. Afterall, what kind of a leader is it who lacks credibility and honesty? What kind of a leader is not humble? What kind of a leader is it who is unforgiving and ungrateful toward their team? A leader who is *un-loving*.

A man or woman who attempts to lead a Christian ministry without love is not qualified to lead, and if they try to do so anyway, the results are not likely to be what they could be or should be.

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[20] Alexander Strauch, *A Christian Leader's Guide to Leading with Love* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 2006), 1.

[21] Mary Miller, "Transforming Leadership: What Does Love Have to Do with It?" *Transformation* 23, no. 2 (2006): 94.

[22] Miller, "Transforming Leadership," 103.

> **Reflect and Discuss…**What is your reaction when a leader is …
> - Arrogant?
> - Rude?
> - Self-willed?
> - Irritable?
> - Resentful?
>
> What is one evidence of leadership that is …
> - Patient?
> - Kind?

Summary: Good leadership requires more than love, but *not less*!

II.   Character is Crucial: Empirical Evidence

It is enough for us that the Bible tells us that character counts when it comes to leadership. We trust God and believe in the wisdom of His Word! It is interesting, however, to see the wisdom of His Word affirmed in research.

When researches identify the most important elements of leader character, what do you think they will find? Any predictions?

- **The Foundation of Character: Credibility Produced by Honesty (Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challen*ge)**

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner began in 1982 researching what it is that leaders do when they are at their best.[23] They studied leadership in organizations in multiple countries and at varying levels of authority. Their findings were published in the book entitled, *The Leadership Challenge*. Now, well over 3 decades later the book has yielded its sixth edition and now utilizes up-to-date data collected from over 3 million people. Their conclusion? The single most important factor in anyone's leadership is *credibility*.[24]

Having credibility is often described as "walking the walk" or "practicing what you preach" and "following through on promises."[25] Good leaders have a consistency about them whereby they can be counted on and taken at their word. Thus, in order to be credible a leader must be *honest*.

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[23] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 6th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), xii.

[24] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 42.

[25] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 42.

Kouzes and Posner write: "Overall, (honesty) emerges as the single most important factor in the leader-constituent relationship. The percentages may vary, but the final ranking does not. First and foremost, people want a leader who is honest."[26]

Surveys conducted in every decade since they began their work yielded the same result: honesty is the most esteemed trait in a leader: across all genders, ages, levels of education, types of organizations, and in the vast majority of countries.[27]

Some of the benefits of having credible and honest leaders:[28]
- o Team members are more likely to tell others that they are involved in your organization (i.e. they are excited about it and can't help but talk about it)
- o There is a heightened sense of team spirit amongst workers
- o There is a stronger sense of commitment to the organization

Some of the pitfalls of having leaders who lack credibility:
- o Worker productivity declines (un-motivated)
- o Team members feel unsupported and unappreciated
- o Team members lack a sense of personal affinity with the organization
- o Workers are quicker to look for opportunities elsewhere (i.e. get me out of here!)[29]

- **Humility in Good-to-Great Leaders (Jim Collins)**

In his book, *Good to Great*, Jim Collins and his team of researchers sought to understand the differentiating factors of companies that went from "good results to great results" compared to a control group of companies that did not experience the same degree of success, or who made significant strides that they could not sustain. In other words, the companies that went from being good to great, and who stayed great – what is it about them that they were able to be better than the rest for the long haul?[30]

The biggest difference was in leadership. Here's what they discovered:
- The leaders of good-to-great companies had leaders who had two complementary qualities: 1) they are persistent in being willing to do whatever it takes to make the company great, and 2) they are *humble*.

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[26] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 32.

[27] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 29-31. Note that in China, Singapore, and Turkey, "honesty" did not always rank first overall. However, it was never lower than fourth in these nations and, taken together with results from other countries, it ranked first overall.

[28] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 40.

[29] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 41.

[30] Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . And Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 3.

People who work for good-to-great leaders describe them as: "quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild-mannered, self-effacing, understated"[31]

Collins notes that articles written about the companies they lead were rarely about the leaders themselves. Collins says that good-to-great leaders "never aspired to be put on the pedestal or become unreachable icons." When asked about their successes they give credit to their team or chalk it up to "good luck."[32]

In the comparison companies it is a different story. Leaders of good-to-not-so-great companies tended to be larger-than-life leaders who have a short-term catalytic impact but in due course experience decline. These leaders were more apt to respond to success by accepting credit, while attributing failures to factors external to themselves.[33]

This is not to say that modesty is the only predictor of success – good-to-great leaders are every bit as driven as they are humble. However, where humility is lacking in leadership so are the long-term organizational results.[34]

- **Who Is Worthy to Be Followed? (Patrick Liborius)**

Patrick Liborius (University of Darmstadt) conducted a study aimed that empirically confirmed the positive effects of leader character on followers. Of particular interest was how much a leader's character impacts the willingness of others to follow them.

He created three scenarios, that a participant would read, relaying a narrative in which a leader acted with positive or negative character. For example, a leader was described as acting with integrity and then without integrity and then participants responded to questions about how they would feel if they were the follower in that situation and how willing they would be to serve under such an individual.[35] As you might imagine, the results confirmed the importance of character in a leader. There was a statistically significant increase in a person's willingness to follow a leader who conducted his/herself with integrity, humility, graciousness, and gratitude.

Not only are people more willing to follow leaders of character, but they are also more likely to make meaningful contributions to the organization as well. Liborius found a definite link between leader character and follower voice behavior (willingness to speak up, give input), and a greater likelihood that followers will go above and beyond in their efforts on behalf of the organization.[36]

He also found that how a follower feels about the leader will be impacted by the personality of the follower. For instance, team members who score high in agreeableness

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[31] Collins, *Good to Great*, 27.

[32] Collins, *Good to Great*, 35.

[33] Collins, *Good to Great*, 35.

[34] Collins, *Good to Great*, 29-30.

[35] Patrick Liborius, "Who Is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality," *The Journal of Psychology* 148, no. 3 (2014): 381-83.

[36] Liborius, "Who Is Worthy," 369-70.

(compliant, pleasing, trusting), are affected more by the quality of the leader's character than those who are low in agreeableness.[37]

In practical terms, the researcher gave this advice to leaders: "Be honest, do not say one thing and behave another way, be reliable, be truthful, be humble and forgiving, be interested in those who follow you and give you gratitude to them, not only when they achieve something special, but just for their faithful work."[38]

Reflect and Discuss …
Have you ever had to work/serve under someone who lacked integrity, humility, grace, or gratitude? What was it like? How did it impact your attitude toward the job? How did it effect your attitude toward the organization?
What can we do to be vigilant against allowing such behaviors to become part of our leadership practice?

III. Developing Our Own Character: "Train Yourself for Godliness" (1 Tim 4:7)

As Christians we know that true change – growing in godliness – is something God does in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul says, "it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). The Holy Spirit works in us to transform us "from one degree of glory to another" (2 Corinthians 3:18). But we are not passive in this process! Rather, there are good, healthy habits we as Christians are commanded to engage in for our growth.

Paul exhorted Timothy, "train yourself for godliness" (1 Tim 4:7): godliness would not just come naturally or without giving himself to its pursuit. He explained, "while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way" (1 Tim 4:8). Good leaders make sacrificial efforts to be better prepared to make maximal impact.

Illustration: Major Dick Winters – WWII
Charged with leading men into combat, Maj. Winters counted it necessary to give himself to preparation for that work. In his memoirs he wrote, "Those entrusted to lead must study their profession to become totally proficient…Prior to invasion, I read every tactical manual I could lay my hands on to improve my tactical knowledge and professional competence while the other soldiers were out carousing in the pubs. **While they were enjoying the social life of the neighboring towns, I was reading and educating myself, getting ready to lead the men in combat**. (Prior to invasion) I was studying, developing my own personality, my own personal perspective on command. The intense study paid huge dividends in Normandy. Before the final attack at Noville, I studied the *Infantry Manual for the Attack*. I must have read that manual hundreds of times, but if I could glean one additional insight with another reading, perhaps I might save one more life. The bottom line is that

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[37] Liborius, "Who is Worthy," 371.

[38] Liborius, "Who is Worthy," 372.

leaders have entrusted to them the most precious commodity this country possesses: the lives of America's sons and daughters."[39]

What is entrusted to you? Our stewardship as leaders, even the very lives God has given us, are worthy of doing what it takes to train for godliness. So, how will we go about doing that?...
Consider the following:

- What role does the Word of God play in shaping godly character? (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

- What role does prayer play in growing our godly character? (Colossians 1:3-4, 9-14)

- What role does fellowship play in fostering our godly character? (Hebrews 10:24-25)

- What role does worship play in fueling our hunger for godly character? (Psalm 37:4; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

- What other disciplines of the Christian life are important for growth in godliness? (1 Timothy 4:7-8)

Creating a Plan for Personal Spiritual Growth:
Reflect on your current situation:
    In the past year, how has God grown you in godliness?
    What are 2 or 3 ways you believe God wants you to grow next?
    How will you go about doing that by faith?
    What habits do you need to develop?
    What practices do you need to start or strengthen?
    Write for yourself a plan for personal, spiritual growth. What specific steps you will take in this next quarter to develop as a man or woman of God? Consider including the following: what habits will you endeavor to establish/develop? Who will you enlist to join you, and/or pray for you? Is there a topic you will need/want to study? Something you will need to learn? Are there people you will want to interview to ask about their practice/experience? Is there a Scripture text(s) you will want to memorize? Come ready to share your plan with other group members next time.

Conclusion:
The Bible is clear that godliness is vital to ministry leadership. It is noteworthy that in the marketplace, researchers also see the undeniable virtue of character leadership in healthy and growing organizations. Efforts we make to develop in Christian maturity will go a long way to making us more effective in service for the Lord, being people worthy of being followed. A wise leader will be intentional about personal growth and will reflect upon their attitude and conduct in carrying out their work.

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[39] Richard D. Winters and Cole C. Kingseed, *Beyond Band of Brothers: The War Memoirs of Major Dick Winters* (New York: Berkley Publishing, 2006), 285.

Session #3
Competency is Critical:
The Skills of Effective Ministry
Leaders

ERINDALE
BIBLE CHAPEL

Outcomes: By the end of this session
the participant will be able to …

- Identify important skills for ministry leaders to acquire or develop,
- Describe key competencies for fruitful leadership,
- Explain the ways God has personally gifted them,
- Articulate a plan for personal growth as a leader.

Introduction:
SCENARIO: You are part of a hiring committee, assigned with the task of searching for an appointing two people for two different ministry leadership roles:

> 1st – You must hire someone to lead a new mom and tots' program. This person will be responsible to design and carry out programming for preschoolers and their mothers. They will implement a program, recruit volunteers as needed, and look for ways to share Christ with those families who connect to the church through the ministry.
> **Question**: What kind of leadership skills should the committee expect in the successful candidate for this position? What are the requisite leadership skills for someone to do this well?
> 2nd – You must hire an executive pastor. This person will oversee the day to day operations of the church, including staffing, finances, facilities and the management and overall development of the non-teaching ministries of church.
> **Question**: What kind of leadership skills should the committee expect in the successful candidate for *this* position? What are the requisite leadership skills for someone to do this well?

OBSERVATION: Some requisite skills are *common* to most leadership situations, and some are *particular* to the area of ministry being led.
In our scenarios above, the moms' and tot's coordinator and the executive pastor will have requisite qualities in common BUT the best candidate for one job is not likely to suitable for the other!
In this session we will look at common skills for ministry leadership and think about how God has enabled you in particular.

I.   Competency is Critical to Effective Ministry

Exodus 35:30-33 "Then Moses said to the people of Israel, 'See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, <u>with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship</u>, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft.'"
Daniel 1:17 "As for these four youths, God gave them <u>learning and skill</u> in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had <u>understanding</u> in all visions and dreams."
1 Corinthians 3:10 "According to the grace of God given to me, like a <u>skilled</u> master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it."
**1 Timothy 5:17** "Let the elders who rule <u>well</u> be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching, and teaching."

- What qualities might have been common among the people mentioned in these verses?
- What capacities were particular to the people mentioned in these verses?
- What is one observation about these texts you think leaders should notice?

II.   Key Skill: Communication

Is there one silver-bullet leadership skill that will make for a great leader? Probably not. However, if there was one area that every leader would do well to develop to the best of their ability, it's communication.

Dr. R. Albert Mohler argues that the ability to communicate is the most essential leadership skill. He perceptively writes, "Leadership doesn't happen until communication happens." He continues, "The leader may have the most brilliant strategy in his mind, the most breathtaking vision in his sights, and an irrepressible passion in his heart, but if these are not communicated to others, real leadership just doesn't occur."[40]
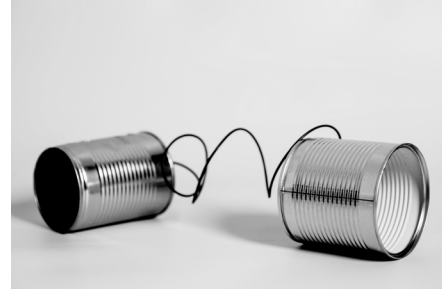
Communication Advice for Ministry Leaders: Use the Right Method for the Message

What kinds of **messages** do ministry leaders need to communicate?
What are the **methods** by which we communicate?
What are the *advantages* of each of these methods?
What are the *limitations* of each of these methods?
Principle: *Choose the best method for the message.*
For example: What *method* of communication would be best for each of the following?

- Communicating a new sign-in policy to Sunday School teachers
- Communicating strategies for how to deal with a small group member who dominates the conversation
- Correcting a team member who is chronically late
- Other (participant suggestion) …
- Other (participant suggestion) …
- Other (participant suggestion) …

Question: What are some practical ways we can go about growing as communicators? What have you done or seen done that could be helpful for the group?

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[40] R. Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 91.

Illustration: "When Teams Work Best" – Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson conducted extensive research on teams in organizations. They identify 6 competencies that they discovered the best team leaders possess and practice. Effective team leaders:

1. Focus on the Goal – articulating clearly defined purpose for the team,
2. Ensure a collaborative climate – fostering open, candid discussion,
3. Build confidence – making sure important issues are understood and that issues being dealt with are clear; trusting team members with sufficient autonomy,
4. Demonstrate sufficient technical know-how – they don't have to be the expert, but the team leader needs to know enough about what the team is doing in order to be a genuine support,
5. Set priorities – in the face of competing demands, knowing what needs to happen next and directing the team accordingly,
6. Manage performance – clear expectations, providing helpful and honest feedback, resolving performance issues, rewarding success.[1]
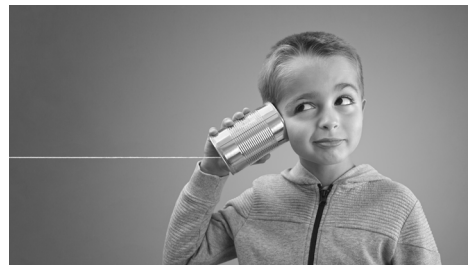
What do you notice about this list? All (except perhaps #4) depend on the ability to communicate!

Remember: Communication Includes Listening!

Proverbs 15:22 "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed."
Proverbs 18:13 "If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame."
James 1:19 "…let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak …"

A Cautionary Tale: When Senior Managers WON'T Listen –

Researchers Dennis Tourish and Paul Robson conducted a review of the communication practices in a large healthcare corporation. Of particular interest was the functionality of communication between senior managers and their general managers and other staff. The results were alarming – not only was communication poor, but senior management was oblivious to the problem and even defiant in the face of critical evidence!

- From the top down there is a lack of clarity and adequate mechanisms for disseminating information. Comments from staff included, "We hear things through the grapevine rather than from supervisory staff," "Communication is haphazard," "There is no formal strategy for communication," "I don't see senior managers; they never come near you."[41]
- Communication from the bottom up was equally frustrating: "I sent about X letters last year to senior managers and did not get a reply to any one of them," "Upward feedback is ad hoc," "The CEO has a vision, but he thinks that only he

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[41] Dennis Tourish and Paul Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations: Process, Problems and Implications for Communication Management," *Journal of Communication Management* 8, no. 2 (2003): 158.

has a vision. His vision is not widely understood. He is so verbose. I don't understand him."[42]

- What is perhaps most striking was the attitude of the senior management team when the researchers shared with them the criticisms they had unearthed.
    o There was a "universal refusal to accept that the data in any way represented the actual mood of the people" in the organization (they were so certain that the researcher's data was in error that they had called in a statistician to verify their findings – which he did – and the senior management teams rejected *the statistician's* analysis too!)[43]
    o Negative feedback was met with far greater scrutiny than positive feedback
    o The research team noted a "tendency to reinterpret negative feedback as positive." For example, when they were told that some employees view them as "control freaks," the response was, "I see that as a compliment. All it means is that we have high performance standards, and that is being recognized."[44]

- The reluctance among senior leaders to relinquish power and create an environment where constructive criticism is welcome and valued were undermining the organization in far greater ways than the senior leadership team was willing to acknowledge. Employees lived in fear of harsh reprisals for speaking up, and while the leaders of the organization spoke about being open there was a gap between what they said and what they did.[45]

- Even those within the senior leadership group were not willing to speak truth to each other: "A new member of the (senior management team) who had earlier indicated that she viewed her new colleagues as 'a bunch of control freaks' approached the research team to say she had disagreed with the tone and approach of these colleagues in the face of the report. During the meeting in which they were present, however, she was unwilling to do (anything) other than echo the dominant view being expressed – sometimes as stridently as her colleagues...Thus, the (senior

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[42] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 158-59.

[43] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 160.

[44] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 161.

[45] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 162.

management team's) flawed approach presented them with a misplaced collective view of a perfectly functioning communication system…The group's eventual decision was to suppress the report and take no further action on its contents."[46]

> **Discussion** …
> - o What do you think it would be like to work there? Have you experienced this?
> - o What are some of the problems that will happen if they don't change course?
> - o To what extent is their ability to make good decisions being hampered by poor upward feedback?
> - o Why do you suppose *we* are sometimes unwilling to receive critical feedback from our team members?
> - o What are some existing barriers that prevent us from getting helpful feedback from our team members?
> - o How can we go about getting constructive feedback from our team?
> - o Listen carefully to what God says: **"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice" (Prov 12:15).** What is one personal response you have to this verse?
> - o What other scripture texts can you think of that would give us God's perspective on this issue?

III.   "The Leadership Code" – "Rules" Every Leader Should Follow

The authors of the book, *The Leadership Code,* argue that there are 5 skills that every leader in every context must have. They describe them as "**rules**" that effective leaders follow:[47]
- Rule #1: "shape the future" = leaders must be strategists who can envision the future and create it
- Rule #2: "make things happen" = leaders must be executors who can put a strategy in motion
- Rule #3: "engage today's talent" = good leaders are talent managers who can build a team toward achieving a desired result
- Rule #4: "build the next generation" = the ability to ensure long-term sustainable ministry and developing people

Note: Many leaders are especially strong at only *one* of these four – nobody excels at them all!

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[46] Tourish and Robson, "Critical Upward Feedback in Organizations," 162.

[47] Dave Ulrich, Norm Smallwood, and Kate Sweetman, *The Leadership Code: Five Rules to Lead By* (Boston: Harvard Business Press), 13-17.

- Rule #5: "invest in yourself" (or "personal proficiency") = being and becoming a person of character

Note: The most important "rule" is the fifth: "Personal proficiency is the ultimate rule of leadership…If you are not grounded through your values and beliefs, credible through your judgment, emotionally mature through your ability to analyze yourself and connect with others, and willing to learn and grow as a leader, you will not be prepared to be a strategist, executor, talent manager, or human capital developer."[48]
The authors argue that these "rules" or competencies are up to 70% of what is required to succeed as a leader in *any* setting.[49] These are skills that one has, needs to acquire, or ought to develop.[50]

Reflect and Discuss…
In which of these areas are **you** strongest? Which of these do you think you need to grow in most?
In general, what are some ways that we can acquire / develop leadership skills?
How do you handle it when you begin to feel overwhelmed or inadequate – like you don't have what it takes?

How Has God Gifted You? God-Given Capabilities vs. God-Directed Capabilities[51]
Every person is a unique individual (Psalm 139:13-16). God has never made any two people identical to one another. We may have similarities – physically, emotionally, intellectually, ability – but no two people are exactly the same. God has made you to be you and nobody else! The key is for us to recognize how God has made us, what He's given us, and to take full advantage of the opportunities we have to develop and grow to be all God calls us to be.

Aubrey Malphurs has a helpful way of thinking about our make-up. He suggests that everybody has two kinds of capabilities: those that are God-given, and God-directed.[52]
God-Given Capabilities = what God gives you at birth or at your new birth. These include…
- Natural Talents – for example, some are naturally artistic, creative, communicative, etc.

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[48] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 129.

[49] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 11. The methodology employed was a combination of interviews with experts, extensive reading of leadership literature in search of an identifiable "code." In the end they discovered a pattern in the data and organized their findings into this set of five "rules."

[50] Ulrich, Smallwood, and Sweetman, *The Leadership Code*, 22.

[51] Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 73-89.

[52] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 73.

- Spiritual Gifts – special kinds of enablement given to believers (1 Cor 12; Romans 12). Together with natural talents, these gifts will be key to your ministry leadership.
- Passion – something that motivates you to take action and to keep at something because the results matter to you. It's the "capacity to commit oneself fervently over an extended period of time to meeting an objective."[53] This is all about what drives you, it's your "why?"
- Temperament – your unique inborn (God-given) behavioral style – i.e. how you're "wired." To understand a person's temperament, many organizations and churches use personality profiles such as DISC, or Myers-Briggs.[54] When you do one of these "tests" it's not a matter of "pass" or "fail," but gaining some insight into your personality.

What are your God-given capabilities? If you don't know, how can you discover them? Knowing our God-given capabilities is a huge advantage:
- It helps us see how best we fit in ministry
- It enables us to be more at peace with who we are and how God has shaped us
- It reveals to us what we need to develop
- It helps us see who we need to add to the team to complement us (for example: you may realize that your ministry would be greatly assisted by someone with a gift of administration, or who is a teacher, encourager, exhorter, etc.)

How Do We Discover our God-Given Capabilities? (Adapted from William J. McRae, "The Discovery of Your Gift")[55]
- Prayer – ask the Lord to show you how He has gifted you and to help you to be faithful in being a good steward of His grace (Philippians 4:6-7)
- Study – study the Scriptures and the lives of the saints around you: we learn about God's gifts to us first in the Bible (some key passages: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4); we also learn about God-given capabilities by watching the lives of those around us in the church – what are their gifts? What capacities do we see in them? How are they applied?
- Desire – what we want to do, enjoy doing, find ourselves gravitating toward is often an indicator of how God has gifted us (c.f. Psalm 37:4)
- Ability – that God has given us capabilities in a certain area is confirmed over time by our ability to do it. Ultimately, if you really want to know how God has gifted you, the best way to discover it is by doing. Thomas Schreiner says, "We

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[53] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 78.

[54] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 82.

[55] William J. McRae, *Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts: How to Discover, Develop, and Exercise Spiritual Gifts in the Body of Christ, The Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 103-19.

will discover our gift(s) when we pour ourselves into the lives of other believers, when we get involved in the life of the body."[56] (1 Peter 4:10-11)

- Blessing – Look for fruit in what you do and seek the confirmation of other believers. "If a spiritual gift is exercised in the energy of the Spirit of God, blessing will accompany it. It may simply be the joy of our overflowing hearts. It may be the salvation of souls, the edification of believers, the encouragement of a broken heart, the recovery of a backslider or the successful completion of a project. God's blessing will accompany it." (William J. McRae).[57] (1 Corinthians 12:7)

God-Directed Capabilities = abilities that are acquired and developed over time[58]

- Character = we looked at this extensively last time; this is an area that good leaders will commit to developing, growing in holiness and Christlike living.
- Knowledge = you can learn things you need to know, acquire skills and develop competencies to help you be a better leader (or whatever else it is you learn)
- Skills = there are relational skills that have to do with our ability to relate to people, and task skills that have to do with getting the job done (i.e. preaching, teaching, lesson planning, organizing, strategizing, communicating, etc.)
- Emotions = your moods, how you feel and how you deal with how you feel. It also has to do with your ability to recognize the emotions of others (i.e. empathy)

Doris Kearns Goodwin on **Abraham Lincoln**: "Lincoln possessed an uncanny understanding of his shifting moods, a profound self-awareness that enabled him to find constructive ways to alleviate sadness and stress. Indeed, when he is compared with his colleagues, it is clear that he possessed the most even-tempered disposition of them all. Time and again, he was the one who dispelled his colleagues' anxiety and sustained their spirits with his gift for storytelling and his life-affirming sense of humor. When resentment and contention threatened to destroy his administration, he refused to be provoked by petty grievances, to submit to jealousy, or to brood over perceived slights." (Doris Kearns Goodwin)[59]

The combination of these God-given and directed capabilities goes together to make up who/what you are today as a leader. Having any good combination of these attributes does not guarantee

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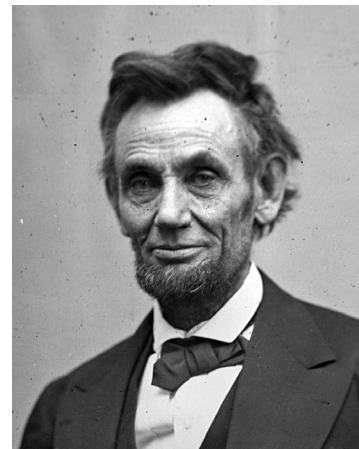
[56] Thomas Schreiner, *Spiritual Gifts: What They Are and Why They Matter* (Nashville: B & H, 2018), 83.

[57] McRae, *Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts*, 118.

[58] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 80-86.

[59] Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), xvii.

success – remember, God is the decisive factor! But we can develop what we have and do our best to gain what we need to take the next step to serve the Lord with excellence.[60]

Assignment: A Personal Capabilities Profile – Identify and Reflect on Your God-Given capabilities

Part 1: Reflect on Your God-Given Capabilities

1. What are your *God-given* capabilities?
    a. My natural talents include …
    b. My gift(s) is/are …
    c. I am passionate about …
    d. My personality can be described as …
2. Complete a DISC assessment (feel free to use a free version online). Write down your results.
3. What advantages do your *God-given* capabilities afford you as a ministry leader?
4. What *God-given* capabilities would you be wise to look for in others to *complement* your leadership?

Part 2: Reflect on Your God-directed Capabilities

5. In the past year, how have you developed in …
    a. Character?...
    b. Knowledge?...
    c. Skills?...
    d. Understanding and managing your emotions?...

6. In this next year, how do you want to develop in…
    e. Character?
    f. Knowledge?
    g. Skills?
    h. Understanding and managing your emotions?

7. What steps will you take in order to develop your God-directed capabilities? (Hint: think about different resources available to you: Is there a course you could take, book you might read, study you might go through? Is there someone you might talk to? Consider also people resources – perhaps another ministry leader, pastor, our counselor could help?)

Come ready to share a draft of your plan next meeting.

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[60] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 88.

💡 AN IDEA …

An Idea: Commit to a self-directed reading course OR small-group reading course – you and 2 or 3 others read helpful books together and meet to talk about how it is helping you, or how you can apply the principles of the books to your leadership:

- Sept-Dec: *Leading with Love* (Alexander Strauch) – essential leadership character and practice
- Jan-Apr: *Do More Better* (Tim Challies) – productivity, focus
- May-Aug: *The Peacemaker* (Ken Sande)

Conclusion:

While character is crucial, competency is also critical for ministry leadership. No leader can be all things but can learn to recognize and develop important capacities. Among the many skills that leaders should possess, communication is one worthy of their attention and effort to grow. Good leaders will identify capacities God has given them and seek to develop them, while working at acquiring and developing other complementary skills to better serve the Lord.

**Session #4
The Three "R's" of Ministry
Leadership: Managing
Your Team**

ERINDALE
BIBLE CHAPEL

Outcomes: By the end of this session the participant will be able to …
- Explain the three "R's" of ministry leadership,
- Diagnose common barriers to people volunteering,
- Describe four keys to recruitment
- Employ an actionable strategy for recruitment, training, and reviewing team members,

Introduction:

When I was a kid, my mother had a poster on the wall in our kitchen with this little story:

"Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody"

"There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have."

- It's a cute story that's not so cute when it plays out in church ministry!
- But if you follow the story closely, who is it who actually does the job? Yep … "Nobody" gets it done (haha!)
- Here's the truth: ministry leaders often feel like "Nobody!" – they are the ones left doing the job! And in your lowest times you're tempted to feel like a "nobody" because an apparent lack of interest in what you're doing.

Ever sign up to lead a ministry and end up really short-handed and doing most of the work yourself? "Nobody's" laughing now.
It shouldn't be that way. No ministry leader should be left without adequate people resources to do the Lord's work. That's not to say that you've somehow failed if you don't have the help you need – it's just a statement of fact that if what you are doing is part of carrying out the mission of the church (to make disciples of Christ) then it is a worthwhile endeavor for people to be part of – it shouldn't be understaffed! BUT it often is.
The other side of this tragedy is that there are lots of people missing out on opportunities to have a kingdom impact! Weeks roll by in which they could be serving God by serving others, but way leads on to way and they find themselves rarely with their hand on the plough and missing out on seeing God at work.
So what do we do about that? What can we do as ministry leaders to get the help we need and engage people in service of the King of kings?
That's what this session is about. We are going to look at what we will call the 3

"R's" of ministry leadership: **recruit**, **ready**, and **review**. Remember, God is the decisive difference-maker – so, on their own, the 3 "R's" are not going to turn our ministries around – but by faith these are helpful (and proven) means of staffing our ministries and building up our church family.

The First "R": Recruit
Church ministry is a team effort – we are not meant to go at the work of the Lord on our own!

- **Romans 16** – Paul mentions 33 people by name who were partners with him in the gospel. He also names and alludes to multiple churches.
- **1 Corinthians 12** –Within the church are a variety of gifts that God has given for the health and growth of the church. Paul reminds the Corinthians that they are a body consisting of many members and each one is important.
- **1 Peter 4:10-11** – Peter exhorts his readers to use the gifts God has given them – "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10): there's a plurality to the ministry that is by divine design

Effective ministry requires a team of people to do the job. Therefore, good ministry leadership requires a strategy for recruitment.

The Killer "B's" – Barriers to Getting Involved:
Almost every ministry needs help. But there's rarely a rush to fill the need. Why? There's lots of reasons people are reluctant to serve. Here are 7 killer "b's" – barriers to volunteering:

1. Some people feel like they are too BUSY
2. Some people have been BURNED in the past
3. Some people feel that some ministries are BENEATH them
4. Some people feel that your ministry opportunity is BEYOND them
5. Some people are BLIND to the opportunity your ministry affords them
6. Some people have been BY-PASSED by you and others
7. Some people have volunteered in the past but got BORED

Let's diagnose each of these one at a time:

       To what extent are these legitimate excuses to volunteering?
       What do each of these teach us as ministry leaders?
       What can we do in response to each of these people?

Getting over the hurdle of the killer "B's" requires a good recruitment strategy. Here are 4 keys to encouraging people to get involved, find the help we need, and enable the ministry to flourish.

Four Keys to Recruitment:

#1 – Create Good Job Descriptions
A basic tool for recruitment is having a good job description that outlines the ministry opportunity you want people to fill. Every position in your ministry should have a job description. If you have no written job descriptions in your ministry, then start by making them for existing roles (include your team members in this – they'll help you write it!).

Jonathan McKee and Thomas McKee: "Effective recruiting demands a very clear, complete, and brief presentation of the roles and responsibilities of the position you're recruiting for. This not only helps people know what to do once they get started, it also helps them evaluate if they're a good fit to begin with."[61]

A good job description should have the following:[62]
- Job title: what is the position called (i.e. Sunday School teacher, visual ministries team member, outdoor greeter, connection desk attendant, etc.)
- Purpose: Purpose and/or Importance of the role (why does this ministry matter?)
- Reports To: Who the volunteer reports to (i.e. reports to pastor of family ministries, visual ministries leader, welcome team leader, etc.)
- Role Description: A brief summary of the role (two or three sentences that provide an overview of the task)
- Time Commitment: Approximately how many hours per week (or per month) does this position require? Be realistic!!!
- Qualifications and Training: Any requisite skills, experience required, and what training you will be offered to prepare them (e.g. applicant must have basic ability to operate a pc, training in operating pro-presenter will be provided)
- Benefits: How the volunteer will benefit by being involved in this ministry (one or two sentences about how one can anticipate be blessed by serving in this area)

Note: there's lots of flexibility in terms of how the job description can be laid out and how it can be worded, but these are some things that people need to know about the opportunity you are presenting.
Make it clear (it should make good sense what you're looking for, what is required and expected)
Make it accurate (it should be a realistic representation of the role)
Make sure it inspiring (think about why you love this ministry!)

#2 – Use a "Taste and See" Approach to Recruitment
How is anyone going to really know if they are a good fit for your ministry? You can tell them about it and hear a bit about what's involved and why you're passionate about it; they can talk to others about it and that can give them some objective insight; but the best way for someone to get a sense of your ministry and whether or not it is for them is by seeing it for themselves firsthand. A great way to do this is by using a "taste and see" approach to recruitment. Some people call it "shoulder tapping," while others think of it as going on a blind date. The idea is to give prospective volunteers a first-person look and the ministry before they say "yes" or "no."[63]

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[61] Jonathan McKee and Thomas W. McKee, *The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21st Century Volunteer*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Group Publishing, 2012), 52.

[62] Adapted from Marlene Wilson, ed., *Volunteer Job Descriptions and Action Plans*, Group Volunteer Leadership Series 3 (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2004), 53.

[63] Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Colorado Springs: Group Publishing, 2005), 45.

Have you used a "taste and see" approach? How has it worked?
What other advantages do you see with this? What are some potential limitations?

#3 – Remember that Asking is Better than Announcing
One of the most common reasons people don't volunteer is that nobody asked them. That might sound crazy – 'We announced it for 6 weeks!' – but for many people, the nudge they need is to be directly asked.

Have you ever got involved in something that was a truly positive experience only after somebody asked you? Tell us about that.

What are some advantages in asking people instead of just announcing?

Who is somebody you can think of right now that you think would be good to ask to be involved with your ministry team?

#4 – Tell them "Why"
Read **Romans 1:15-17**: Think about Paul the Apostle's ministry labors – why did He do it? What was Paul's "Why?"

Read **1 John 1:1-4**: Think about John the Apostle's ministry labors – why did He do it? What was John's "why?"

Read **Hebrews 12:1-2**: Think about Christ Jesus and His ministry – why did He do it? What was Jesus' "why?"

Nobody will buy-in to your ministry (nor stick with it) if they do not have a compelling reason to do so.

Simon Sinek: "WHY: Very few people or companies can clearly articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. When I say WHY, I don't mean to make money—that's a result. By WHY I mean what is your purpose, cause or belief? WHY does your company exist? WHY do you get out of bed every morning? And WHY should anyone care? When most organizations or people think, act or communicate they do so from the outside in, from WHAT to WHY. And for good reason—they go from clearest thing to the fuzziest thing. We say WHAT we do, we sometimes say HOW we do it, but we rarely say WHY we do WHAT we do. But not the inspired companies. Not the inspired leaders. Every single one of them, regardless of their size or their industry, thinks, acts and communicates from the inside out."[64]

Reflection: What's *your* "why?" Why do you do what you do?

The Second "R": Ready
We need to prepare, equip, train, or "ready" our team members to be able to do what we are asking them to do. Remember, equipping the saints is fundamental to flourishing ministries (**Ephesians 4:11-16**). It can be helpful to think of training in 3 phases:

1) At the start – what does a new volunteer need to know/be able to do BEFORE they start?

2) On the go – what can our ministry teams learn or in what ways can they develop WHILE they serve? Or, what kind of ongoing training is good for our team to undergo? The idea here is developing and improving our ability to be fruitful.

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[64] Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Action* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 39.

3) Interventions – where specialized help is needed to overcome a problem (this might be one-to-one or as a group depending on the nature of the issue). The idea here is correcting a problem. These will be rare but can be necessary.

Let's Talk about It:
> What kind of training do you do right now?
> What kind of training/development do think would be helpful for you to start?
> What are some different ways we can train our teams?
> What will it take for you to start training? Where will you begin?

The Third "R": Review

Churches who have high standards for service among their volunteers, also attract good volunteers who are themselves committed to high standards of service. Good volunteers are attracted to ministries where excellence is valued.[65]

- **Genesis 1:31** – God reviewed His own work of Creation and found it was "very good"
- **Exodus 39:43** – Moses inspected the work the people, "and behold they had done it"
- **1 Corinthians 3** – Paul says that in the end, God will review our work, "and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done" (1 Cor 3:13). Where one has been faithful to the Lord, their work will be rewarded. Where one's work is not pleasing their work will be "burned up…though he himself will be saved" (1 Cor 3:15)

There is biblical precedent for reviewing the work being done under our leadership – including our own!
> Marlene Wilson makes this pointed assertion:
> "It's the ultimate put-down for volunteers to feel that what they do is so unimportant that it doesn't matter if they do it well – or even at all."[66]

When we "review" we are assessing the **ministry** and the **ministers**.
> The Ministry: to what extent are we achieving our purpose? How are we doing at achieving our goals? What opportunities are before us? What barriers need to be addressed? It is important to involve your team members when reflecting on how the ministry is going. Sharing an update with the pastor/elders is very helpful.[67]
> The Ministers: conducting intentional reviews with your team members is important to ensuring their ongoing engagement and fruitfulness in the ministry.

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[65] Morgan and Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers*, 73.

[66] Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Encouragement, Evaluation, and Accountability,* Group's Volunteer Leadership Series 6 (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2004), 65.

[67] One of the purposes of this project is to sharpen this area of our church ministry in the following ways: (1) clarifying direct reports for ministry leaders (to whom do you report and with whom do you review your ministry?), (2) establishing a mechanism whereby ministry progress is regularly reviewed.

Conducting Reviews with Ministry Team Members
This sounds like a really uncomfortable, daunting task – but it doesn't need to be! The point is to encourage your team members, equip them, and to give them an opportunity to give you feedback too. If you feel uncomfortable doing reviews, consider following the outline below. But as you do so, keep in mind the following:

- Good volunteers want to do their job well and are often **eager** to hear helpful feedback that will enable them to serve with **excellence**;
- Conducting regular reviews (once or twice per year) does not mean that there is a problem – it can be a built-in opportunity to **show appreciation** and **get helpful feedback** from your team;
- You are not on your own – where there are significant problems there is support from the church leadership!
- A review is an opportunity to **revise expectations**, explore **new ways** a volunteer might be able to serve, and find out if there are other ways you can better **support** your team.

Here is a suggested way of doing non-threatening but meaningful reviews:
- Prior to meeting, ask the volunteer to write down the following –
    - **Accomplishments**: Write down key accomplishments from the past term – what are some things you have done, experienced, accomplished that you are excited about, encouraged by, etc.?
    - **Ambitions**: What are some opportunities you anticipate in the next term? Or, in what ways do you want to develop, or grow in this next term?
    - **Area(s) for Growth**: What are some challenges you are experiencing, or anticipate encountering?
    - Ask them to review the expectations for their role and identify one they feel really good about (and why), and one they want to pay attention to in this next term.
- Meet in Person –
    - discuss with the team member their own evaluation (this can be an informal or formal meeting)
    - Ask good questions: what is working well right now in this ministry? What could be better? If you were me, what is one thing that you would do?
    - If there is constructive feedback you have for them, state it specifically, clearly and directly (we will talk about how to handle hard conversations in greater detail later).
- After Your Meeting –
    - Follow up with an email, phone call, note, card – thank them again for their ministry and for taking the time to meet with you;
    - Provide a brief summary of what you discussed; note any agreed-upon action steps;

- Keep a record of your meeting, including the self-assessment and any assessment you have used.

What other suggestions do you have for reviewing your ministry and ministers?

Conclusion and Assignment:
Ministry leaders will be greatly assisted in their work with a strategy for recruitment, training, and reviewing the team.

Assignment: Prepare job descriptions for every role in your ministry and come ready to get input from the group next time to help you sharpen them. (Note: if you already have job descriptions you may want to review and update them).

Session #5
Goal Setting and Hard
Conversations

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B I B L E   C H A P E L

Outcomes: By the end of this session the participant will be able to …
- Articulate a biblical view of confrontation,
- Describe key elements to having difficult conversations with others,
- Have difficult conversation with ministry team members or direct reports,
- Set actionable goals for their area of ministry.

Introduction:

Having Hard Conversations
It was not easy being Timothy. He loved the Lord and had a clear calling to ministry (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). He was convinced of the truth of the gospel, the necessity of evangelism, the urgent need for planting churches, and the importance of seeing them healthy and holy. But certain aspects of ministry leadership did not come naturally to him – perhaps you can relate?

In fact, it is apparent that there were some things about ministry leadership that he found particularly difficult. In his second epistle to Timothy, Paul urged his young protégé to take courage: "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God" (2 Tim. 1:7-8). Being a gospel minister in a pluralistic society would take strength and spiritual resolve that was not natural to Timothy.

Not only did he need strength to deal with people outside the church, he needed a deep resolve to deal with people *inside* the church too. In 1 Timothy 1, Paul implored Timothy to do something that would be very difficult to do, but also very necessary: to confront certain people and stop them from spreading false teaching in the local assembly. Paul said, "As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:3). Notice: Paul "urged" him – it's not something Timothy was *asking* to do! It was probably something he'd rather *avoid* doing (can you blame him?). But it was critically important that Timothy have the hard some conversations! False teachers left unchecked would lead believer's astray, undermine the testimony of the church and threaten the souls of countless people in Ephesus and the surrounding area. Much work had been done in that region that would be undercut if "certain people" weren't stopped.

So … Timothy had to do it. But it surely wasn't easy.

Is it ever easy to have hard conversations with people? If so, it isn't likely a hard conversation! But sometimes they are necessary. There are occasions where it is best for a pastor or elder to have that conversation, but for ministry leaders to be effective it is important that they be able to talk with people about uncomfortable issues that arise, even when they would rather not.
But it's not enough just to take a deep breath and say what you have to say. No, the Bible

says that truth is to be spoken in love (Eph. 4:15). That's what Paul told Timothy: "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Tim. 1:5). So, it's not enough just to tell someone they're wrong and need to change, rather we must do so with the kind of love that is consistent with our calling in Christ.

So, how do you do that? How do you speak the truth in love when the "truth" is something the other person maybe doesn't want to hear? How do you communicate difficult yet necessary messages to people on your team, and do it in a way that pleases God and is truly edifying for everyone involved?

That's what we will discuss in this session.

What are some hard conversations ministry leaders sometimes have to have?
How do you feel about having hard conversations? Why?
What are some of our fears about hard conversations?
What are some of the consequences of avoiding hard conversations with people?

Kerry Patterson, et al.: "Twenty years of research involving more than 100,000 people reveals that the key skill of effective leaders, teammates, parents and loved ones is the capacity to skillfully address emotionally and politically risky issues. Period."[68]

- Where hard conversations are had, organizations respond 5 times faster to financial downturns, are 2/3 more likely to avoid injuries or death due to unsafe work conditions.[69]

- Companies save $1,500 per day for every crucial conversation held between employees.[70]

- Team members experience increased trust together, and bullying, conniving and incompetence is checked[71]

- 87% of employees report leaving performance reviews without a clear plan for improvement.[72]

- When 1,000 respondents were asked about bullies, manipulative, dishonest, and incompetent people in the workplace, 93% said they were "untouchables" in their

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[68] Kerry Patterson, et al., *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes Are High*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012), 9.

[69] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 12-13.

[70] Patterson et al., Crucial Conversations, 13.

[71] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 12-13.

[72] Vital Smarts Research, "Avoiding a Déjà vu Performance Review," accessed September 29, 2020, https://www.vitalsmarts.com/resource-center/?fwp_resource_type=position-paper%2Cresearch-study.

organization, not held accountable for four years or longer.[73] In other words, there's no crucial conversations taking place! Avoiding conversations that need to be had often only exacerbates existing problems.

- 93% of respondents work with people whose bad behavior negatively impacts morale, quality of work, and productivity; 91% say this behavior goes unaddressed for more than one year.[74]
- Less than 50% of respondents (158) spoke up when they were unclear about a medical diagnosis, treatment options, or next steps; 20% of those people suffered "substantial" health complications as a result of not asking.[75]

In most relationships, hard conversations need to take place and this is especially true when we are in positions of leadership.

Preparing for the Conversation – Before you start, it's important to prepare …

a. Get a Biblical View of Confrontation

2 Samuel 12:7–9 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. [8] And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. [9] Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.

Proverbs 9:8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

Proverbs 13:18 Poverty and disgrace come to him who ignores instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is honored.

Proverbs 15:12 A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

Matthew 16:23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Galatians 2:11–14 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. [12] For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. [13] And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. [14] But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Philippians 4:2–3 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. [3] Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side

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[73] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations,* 13.

[74] Vital Smarts Research, "Corporate Untouchables," accessed September 29, 2020, https://www.vitalsmarts.com/resource-center/?fwp_resource_type=position-paper%2Cresearch-study.

[75] Vital Smarts Research, "Confronting Your Doctor," accessed September 29, 2020, https://www.vitalsmarts.com/resource-center/?fwp_resource_type=position-paper%2Cresearch-study.

with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

2 Timothy 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

Jude 3–4 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Ask: What are some conclusions we can draw based on these Scripture texts?

b. Get Yourself Prepared

  a. Prepare your mind – get clear in your mind what the issue is, what it is you want, and what you don't want. Avoid the "fool's choice."[76] The fools choice says you have to choose

   i. between speaking up and maintaining unity,
   ii. between addressing problematic behavior and keeping the relationship
   iii. between speaking the truth and loving the other person

   BUT as Christians, do we really have to choose? Is there a way to do both? That's the key.
   What is the outcome that you want?
   What is the outcome that you do not want?[77]

  b. Prepare your heart – "Pray that God will open your eyes more fully to the glory of what Christ has done for you. Learn to delight in reading about, meditating on, and rejoicing in Jesus' completed work on the cross. When your soul, your thoughts, and your conversation are saturated with the gospel, it will overflow into other areas of your life, bringing hope and encouragement to others, even if you are talking to them about their need for repentance and change." (Ken Sande)[78]

  c. Prepare your words – think through what you are going to say, especially how you will start the conversation; plan your opening statement by writing out what you will say. Think about what particular words you may use, and anticipate how the other person may respond to what you say.[79]

  d. Prepare your response – what are you going to say in response to anticipated challenges?

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[76] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 46.

[77] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 46.

[78] Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 165.

[79] Sande, *The Peacemaker*, 176-77.

c. Have the Conversation (Adapted from Dr. Tim Cochrell)[80]:
   a. Begin with shared goals and purpose – show that you want to work toward something you both want; show that they can trust your motives
      i. Example: "I have some thoughts about how we can involve more volunteers on the welcome team each Sunday, and even be more effective in greeting new people. This might be a bit of a sensitive conversation, but I think it could help us if we can talk it through."
   b. Share your facts, tell your story, and invite a different perspective[81] – resist making accusations, don't assume that you have full knowledge of the situation. and describe the issue – describe the nature of the problem as you see it, include examples, and ask the other person for their perspective
      i. Example: "Ever since I started serving on the street evangelism team, I've got the impression that you are reluctant to have me say anything directly to the people we meet. When I joined, I understood that I would be watching for the first three weeks, and then be given opportunity to participate directly in conversations with people. I have been serving now for six weeks and have not been allowed to proceed beyond observation. In fact, when I went to say something to someone last week, you cut me off and didn't let me back into the dialogue. As far as I know, this is not how you have handled other new people in the past. I don't know if this is intentional on your part, but I am beginning to feel like you don't trust me, or that you maybe think I am not clear enough about what we believe. I have even started to wonder if you are worried that I might embarrass you or our church. Can you help me understand what's going on?"
   c. Talk Tentatively – Don't talk as though your interpretation of the situation is unassailable; use phrases like, "it appears to me," "I get the impression," "perhaps you weren't aware," or "in my opinion."
   d. Encourage Two-Way Engagement – this is a conversation not a declaration; let your tone, body language, and explicit invitation for

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[80] This section, "Have the Conversation," is adapted from a seminar by Timothy Cochrell, "Having Hard Conversations in Ministry" (lecture, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, January 10, 2019).

[81] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 136-47.

feedback throughout the conversation convey openness, warmth, and sincerity.

e. Summarize and restate outcomes/conclusions.

f. Learn to Look (Patterson, *Crucial Conversations*) – "(People) only become defensive when they no longer feel safe. The problem is not the content of your message but the condition of the conversation."[82] Two common responses when people feel unsafe: "silence" or "violence."[83] Watch out for these and be careful not to allow the conversation to devolve when these tactics are present. These are clues that people are being defensive – failure to recognize them can undermine your desired outcomes.

   i. Silence tactics include[84]

     1. Masking: sarcasm, sugar-coating; withholding your true opinion

     2. Avoiding: discussion avoids sensitive subjects (illustration: media scrum)

     3. Withdrawing: avoiding all conversation, physically leaving

   ii. Violence tactics include[85]

     1. Controlling: "coercing others to your way of thinking…done through either forcing your views on others or dominating the conversation"[86]

     2. Labeling: "putting a label on people or ideas so we can dismiss them under a general stereotype."[87]

     3. Attacking: verbally abusing others, putting them down or attempting to embarrass them, issuing threats.

d. Follow Up After the Conversation – a brief follow-up note, email, etc. soon after the conversation can help to reiterate your conclusions and especially affirm your love in Christ.

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[82] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 57.

[83] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 58-61.

[84] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 58-59.

[85] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 60-61.

[86] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 60.

[87] Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations*, 60.

The E.N.C.O.U.R.A.G.E. model of confrontation – Paul David Tripp[88]

E – Examine Your Heart – "Because we struggle with indwelling sin, we must begin with ourselves."[89] We need to be honest about our own shortcomings and humble before the Lord before we can take up a difficult matter with someone else.
N – Note Your Calling – you are there as a representative of the Lord Jesus, and the local church. That doesn't mean your 100% right, but you want the outcome and how you handle yourself to be honouring to Him.
C – Check Your Attitude – beware of your attitude, and the kinds of words you choose
O – Own Your Faults – keep in mind that we need the Lord's grace just as much as the other person
U – Use Words Wisely – we must plan what we will say; "We need to ask God to help us use words that carry his message, not get in the way of it."[90]
R – Reflect on Scripture – "We should enter moments of confrontation with a specific understanding of what Scripture says about the issues at hand."[91] Remember, the Bible is the final authority on all matters of life. Don't just go looking for a Bible verse that makes your case but be sure to speak and act according the principles of Scripture and approach every issue through a biblical lens.
A – Always be Prepared to Listen – the best kind of confrontation is a two-way conversation where each party hears and understands the other, where questions are asked and answered, where clarification is made, where confession can occur, where the parties involved can perceive each other's hearts. See James 1:19.
G – Grant Time for a Response – Don't assume that resolving an issue will happen at once; it often takes time and is a process. How often have *you* been challenged about your attitude or actions and it took time for the Lord to work in *your* heart?
E – Encourage the Person with the Gospel – "Scripture says that it is the kindness of God that leads people to repentance (Romans 2:4). The truths of the gospel – both its challenge and its comfort – must color our confrontation.[92]

> **Is there someone with whom you need to have a difficult conversation? Using the guidelines above, begin making specific preparations to do it.**

Setting Goals
A goal is simply "a target to be strived for," and is established for setting a direction to "focus the energy and efforts of the individual or an organization toward a worthwhile end."[93] Simply put, it is something you intend to do.

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[88] Paul David Tripp, *War of Words: Getting to the Heart of Your Communication Struggles* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2000), 153-55

[89] Tripp, *War of Words*, 153.

[90] Tripp, *War of Words*, 154.

[91] Tripp, *War of Words*, 154.

[92] Tripp, *War of Words*, 155.

[93] Gary Bredfeldt, "Developing Goals and Objectives," in *Management Essentials for Christian Ministries*, ed. Michael J. Anthony and James Estep, Jr. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 76.

Goals are specific commitments toward measurable results within a specific period of time.[94]

When you are setting a goal, you are …

- Making a specific commitment to something that helps carry out your mission/purpose
- Aiming at something that is measurable
- Determining to accomplish it in a specific period of time
- Identifying something that needs to happen (priority)
- Going to consider steps that will need to be taken to achieve the goal

Setting Good Goals – Make S.M.A.R.T. Goals

S – specific / stated – write them down, make them clear; it is one thing you are setting out to do

M – measurable – you have to be able to determine that it is accomplished

A – ambitious – goals that are too easily met do not motivate, unify, inspire; it should require "reach"

R – reachable – good goals are not overly ambitious; good goals stretch but are not impossible

T – timely – it is something that needs to happen? Is it a priority? Think about the current needs in your ministry (the people you serve, those you minister with, equipment and resources at your disposal. What needs to happen now? What's needed next?

Examples: The mission of the church is to glorify God by being disciples of Jesus who make disciple-makers. With this in view, let's consider some possible goals ministry leaders might set out to make…

- Goal: To worship the Lord in fervently
- Goal: To teach my class better
- Goal: To make coffee time more enjoyable

What do you think of these goals? To what extend are they SMART? What would make them *better*?
More Examples:

- Goal: To recruit 2 new members to our team
  - Step: I/we will review and update the current job description
  - Step: I/we will compile a list of potential candidates
  - Step: I/we will draft an announcement for the newsletter

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[94] Bredfeldt, "Developing Goals and Objectives," 77.

What do you think about this goal? Is it SMART? How might we improve it?
- Goal: To provide practical training for my team members
    - Step: I will identify specific topics to address
    - Step: I will contact a trainer/ find relevant material
    - Step: I will coordinate a date and facilities

What do you think about this goal? Is it SMART? How might we improve it?
- Goal: To improve our scheduling system for volunteers in my area of ministry
    - Step: I will survey the team for feedback on the current system
    - Step: I will appoint someone to research options and pricing
    - Step: I will arrange for training

What do you think about this goal? Is it SMART? How might we improve it?
> **Think about your ministry – draft 3 goals for this next season of ministry.**

Conclusion:

Having hard conversations and setting goals are very different skillsets but both are important to leading ministries well. Taking a disciplined, strategic and courageous approach will enable ministry leaders to handle these tasks well. When done wisely and lovingly, the Lord is honored, and people have the opportunity to be more fruitful to the glory of God.

APPENDIX 7

EXPERT PANEL CURRICULUM EVALUATIONS

Curriculum Evaluation Rubric: Dr. John Brown

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.				4	Each lesson was well introduced from Scripture with subpoints clearly supported/illustrated by different passages. The writer foresees and answers objects from Scripture (in lesson & footnotes).
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.				4	Desired outcomes & goals are clearly stated in the course intro and highlighted at the beginning of each lesson. Subtitles reinforce the goals. Conclusion & Reflection at the end of each lesson nail down the desired outcomes.
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.				4	The direction of each lesson is laid out at the beginning, and key points/ milestones are emphasized in the headings. Lesson conclusions pull together the points that have been developed.
The content of each lesson is consisted with the stated outcomes and goals.				4	The content definitely supports and moves toward the stated goals.
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.			3		The course includes teaching/lecture, Scripture reading by participants, time for personal reflection—including getting students to put parts of the teaching in her/his own words, and discussion. Case study/role playing (Lesson 3).
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.				4	As stated at the beginning of Lesson 1, every person in Christian/church ministry periodically asks, Why am I doing this? Directly and indirectly the course answers this question from different angles.

				Outstanding chapter (2) on creating and implementing a plan for personal spiritual growth—perhaps the most crucial area of "relevance". Good quotes/references on leadership, incl Kouzes & Posner, Collins, Liborius, Strauch, LaFasto/Larson. Very useful for participants to evaluate their own strengths and areas for growth (lesson 3).
The lessons include clear points of practical application.			4	Yes, participants are asked to identify at least one practical response to the teaching of each lesson. The challenge at the end of Lesson 2 to write a plan for personal spiritual growth is outstanding (as well as the fact it will be shared one week later). Very good reminder to create appropriate job descriptions (Lesson 4).
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.		3		This is an excellent introductory course for church ministry volunteers. It well addresses the biblical call and some key spiritual disciplines of ministry leaders. Church work is now so specialized, however, with such high expectations & rigorous reporting required by church members/seekers and denominational/government overseers, that many course participants would require additional practical training in their departments; e.g. children & youth work, treasurer, counseling, home & hospital visitation, etc. In an introductory course for all your church leaders, there is no way all aspects of ministry leadership can be handled. Follow-up training could include more on the Cost of Leadership, the need for flexibility ("this isn't what I signed up for"), and how to get to really know the people you minister to. Goal-setting is addressed in Lesson 5, but fairly quickly. This could be expanded in follow-up sessions or leaders' retreats.

Curriculum Evaluation Rubric: Dr. Dan Degeer

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.				✓	Your material is well grounded biblically and theologically throughout. Your first chapter especially so in laying your foundation for your whole presentation.
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.				✓	Very specific and very clearly stated!
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.				✓	Very well organized with great flow.
The content of each lesson is consisted with the stated outcomes and goals.				✓	Yes! After reading each lesson, I went back to the beginning to remind myself of the outcomes and goals and found that in each case, I was able to answer concur that the material answered each one.
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.				✓	The combination of lecture, interactive discussions, power-point visuals all serve to accomplish this.
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.				✓	Very much so. I found myself resonating how this material could be/could have been utilized in real-life scenarios.
The lessons include clear points of practical application.				✓	Your reflection questions will serve as a good catalyst for reinforcing the practical aspects of your material. The varied assignments -i.e. reading, designing personal plans, establishing specific goals, etc. underscore the intensely practical nature of your material.
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.				✓	Mentoring and training is such a broad subject, but you have selected key elements to accomplish your goals. Well done!

Curriculum Evaluation Rubric: Gord Martin, Vision Ministries Canada

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.				x	Very good and generous use of Scripture
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.				x	These are clearly stated
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.			x		
The content of each lesson is consisted with the stated outcomes and goals.			x		
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.		x			I was less aware of this, but you did say you were using ppt which I didn't see
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.				x	I would liked to have seen an emphasis on the experience of the trainer, modelling what he is training. The apostles, prophets and evangelists don't just teach and equip with information, they have "the smell of smoke on them", examples
The lessons include clear points of practical application.		x			I would like to have see those equipped have practice opportunities with reporting and reviewing
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.				x	I like the "hard conversations" section, very valuable, if practiced.

Curriculum Evaluation Rubric: Dr. Linda Reed, Heritage College and Seminary

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.				✓	Lesson 1 – superb/maybe
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.				✓	
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.				✓	
The content of each lesson is consisted with the stated outcomes and goals.				✓	
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.			✓		
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.				✓	
The lessons include clear points of practical application.				✓	
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.				✓	

Ross Kearney has given us a text we can effectively use as ministry leaders. It addresses key areas of leadership, areas we sometimes forget to address (ministry descriptions, goal setting) and areas we often fail to address (confrontation).

I'm really thankful we have all of this biblical material and practical leadership principles in one document. Thanks so much!

Curriculum Evaluation Rubric: Dr. Hugh Rodger

Ministry Leadership Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The content of the lessons is biblically and theologically sound.				x	
The outcomes and goals of each lesson are clearly stated.				x	
The lessons are well organized and have a logical flow.			x		
The content of each lesson is consistant with the stated outcomes and goals.			x		
Instruction accommodates various learning styles by utilizing a variety of teaching methods.				x	
The lessons are relevant to the leadership of ministries.				x	
The lessons include clear points of practical application.			x		
The curriculum is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material to equip ministry leaders.				x	

APPENDIX 8

MINISTRY PLAN FOR DEVELOPING AND RECRUITING
MINISTRY LEADERS AT EBC

A MINISTRY PLAN FOR MINISTRY LEADERS AND

MINISTRIES AT ERINDALE BIBLE CHAPEL

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A Ministry Plan

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Doctoral Project of Michael Ross Kearney

_____

by

Michael Ross Kearney

ross@erindale.org

November 2020

INTRODUCTION

The following ministry plan for Erindale Bible Chapel (EBC) is designed in partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Ministry project that is focused on training church members for ministry leadership.

The project consists of four goals. The first goal was to assess the current level of ministry preparedness among ministry leaders at EBC. This goal was achieved by administering a Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI) to every ministry leader. This goal was considered met when every ministry leader completed part or all of that survey. Some of the findings of that inventory are reflected in the plan outlined below.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to train ministry leaders at EBC for their work. This curriculum consisted of five sessions and was measured by a panel of experts who utilized a rubric to evaluate its fitness for equipping ministry personnel to lead. This goal was considered met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level.

The third goal was to implement the curriculum by teaching it to ministry leads at EBC. This goal was measured by a pre and post-survey that assessed the knowledge, confidence, and competencies of participants to carry out their responsibilities. This goal was considered met when a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive, statistically significant difference in the pre and post-survey scores.

The fourth goal of this project is to create a ministry plan for developing members at EBC for ministry leadership. What follows is an attempt to achieve that objective. This plan will be evaluated by an expert panel who will utilize a rubric to assess its biblical faithfulness, clarity of purpose and goals, scope, and functionality. When a minimum of 90 percent of all the rubric evaluation indicators meet or exceed the sufficiency level, this aim will be considered successfully met.

RATIONALE

An extensive theological and theoretical backdrop for this ministry plan is outlined in chapters 2 and 3 of this project. However, some salient points will be rehearsed here for context.

A primary contention in this project is that God carries out His work in the world through His people under godly leaders. This is a fact that is:

- Established in Creation (Genesis 1-2),

- Evidenced in Israel (in the construction of the tabernacle and later the Temple),

- Essential for the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), and

- Explicit in the New Testament paradigm for church ministry (Ephesians 4:7-16).

A central component of this project has been to provide training for ministry leaders in order to equip them to serve effectively and fruitfully in the local church. Too often churches assign willing volunteers to leadership roles for which they are ill-prepared. The results are often disappointing if not frustrating for all involved. However, intentional steps can be taken toward greater likelihood of ministerial success.

Thus, a core element of this project was the design and delivery of a training curriculum for ministry leaders. At the heart of this instruction was an emphasis on the biblical-theological basis for ministry, as well as consideration as to the kind of character that is called for in Scripture. Additionally, time was devoted to important skills for leading others in order to enhance each participant's competence and confidence in his or her ministry roles.

While training leaders for their work is important, a single course of instruction on its own will yield insufficient results if it is not accompanied by a plan for further leadership development. The purpose, then, of this plan is to provide a guide for enhancing leadership effectiveness and fruitfulness at EBC.

In their book entitled, *Designed to Lead,* Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck insist that too few churches have a plan for equipping their people to lead. A study they conducted showed that less than one in four pastors had any specific plan for leadership development.[1] Having a training course is an important step in equipping people to lead, but in order for EBC to maximize its impact on its people and influence in the world, a broader strategy is needed. This plan is intended to help fill that gap.

ASPECTS OF THE MINISTRY AT ERINDALE BIBLE CHAPEL TO BE ADDRESSED

Three aspects of the ministry of EBC that have been identified for development through this project. Additionally, one aspect of the ministry will be reviewed and refreshed.

Three Identified Areas for Development

The Leadership Preparedness Inventory (LPI) was administered to ministry leaders at EBC.[2] In all, there were 18 respondents. From the answers given, combined with the theological and theoretical findings of chapters 2 and 3 of this project, it is apparent that an adequate ministry plan for EBC ought consist of structural development, people development, and communication development.

1. **Structural Development – 1 Corinthians 14:40 "But all things should be done decently and in order."**

In the context of 1 Corinthians 14:40, Paul is addressing the church at Corinth about the manner by which their worship services ought to function. There was a measure of confusion and chaos in some of their gatherings that Paul sought to correct. He

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[1] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 181.

[2] A fuller explanation and analysis of the LPI is given in chap. 5 of this project.

reminded his readers that "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33). Gathering for worship is of enough importance to warrant attention to order.[3] Therefore, their meetings should be marked by unity, harmony, and organization. Confusion in the local church does not honor God nor does it bless the people. The same can be said more broadly when it comes to other ministries in the church. What is done in the name of Christ Jesus and in His service matters enough to be done thoughtfully and in an orderly fashion with minimal confusion.[4]

Several ministry leaders at EBC are indicating that there is lack of clarity around to whom they are to report. When asked in the LPI, "I can name the person at Erindale Bible Chapel who I am to report to about my ministry," 28% of leaders said "disagree," while 17% said "agree somewhat." Combined, that is almost half of the current ministry leaders expressing uncertainty about lines of authority and accountability. Likewise, when asked an open-ended question about what can be done at EBC to help ministry leaders do their work more effectively, six respondents expressed a need for greater structural clarity.

One leader responded saying, "clearer structure of ministries and who reports to who" is needed, further explaining that "at the moment leaders are acting alone without accountability to church members." This comment is an alarming observation from a frontline ministry lead! Another called for "clearer structures for accountability" and yet another said "(I need to) know who I report to," echoing the confusion others also feel.

Part of the desire for structural clarity is to enable real accountability and feedback on how ministries are proceeding within the broader mission of the church. One leader said, "Each ministry should be held accountable by reporting on a regular basis –

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[3] Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 7 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1985), 195.

[4] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 183.

at least quarterly – to an elder regarding his/her ministry." Likewise, another leader said they desired "constructive feedback" to help them improve and develop their ministry. At present, all paid staff undergo annual performance reviews, but no other ministry worker gets the benefit of any such intentional feedback.

This plan will attempt to provide structure where it is lacking, drawing clear lines of accountability combined with regular constructive reviews of ministry leaders and their ministries.

Planned Interventions: *create an executive pastoral team, create ministry staff team*s

2. People Development

Matthew 28:19a "Therefore go and make <u>disciples</u>…"

Ephesians 4:11-12 "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

When churches develop ministry personnel, they are really doing the work of discipleship. Part of a believer's discipleship is serving God by serving others. Thus, integral to ministry is developing the Lord's people. The Bible is clear that God accomplishes His will in the world through people. Therefore, every effort to train, encourage, equip and raise up the saints at EBC is worth it!

Equipping people is, at least in part, a means of empowering them to make the ministry their own. Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens remind their readers that people are empowered not merely when they are assigned responsibility, but when they are given ownership of the ministry.[5] When people have what they need to succeed and given the

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[5] Tony Morgan and Tim Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry* (Colorado Springs: Group Publishing, 2005), 220.

freedom to use what they have to move the mission forward, the reach of the church increases.[6]

In the LPI, when asked what EBC can do to help ministry leaders, eight respondents noted a need for more training. The training course created in this project is one important piece toward meeting that need, but other steps must be to be taken to complement it. This plan will include a strategy for developing members at EBC, not only through direct instruction, but also by employing a leadership "pipeline" model.

The "pipeline" motif is posited by Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel in their book, *The Leadership Pipeline: How to Build the Leadership Powered Company*. This approach focuses on developing people from within an organization by moving them up the "pipeline" by increasing levels of responsibility. This model accounts for differing degrees of competency that is needed at each level of leadership.[7] To move people up from one level to the next, they must be adequately equipped to succeed. This requires an objective set of criteria for assessing one's fitness for the role and removes the subjectivity that so often causes churches to put people in positions for which they are not prepared.[8] Each passage has requisite skills for which leaders prepare before assuming the role. The net gain for a church that uses the pipeline strategy is that it emphasizes growth and development of people internally.[9] To put it another way, it is a tool for discipling members through ministry.

While Charan, Drotter, and Noel argue that there are up to six levels in an organization's pipeline, Geiger and Peck suggest in many local churches there might only be four: 1. lead yourself, 2. lead others (i.e. small group leader, Sunday school teacher,

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[6] Morgan and Stevens, *Simply Strategic Volunteers*, 220.

[7] Ram Charan, Steve Drotter, and James Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline: How to Build the Leadership Powered Company*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 2.

[8] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 4-5.

[9] Charan, Drotter, and Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline*, 32.

camp counselor), 3. lead leaders (ministry leader, deacon), and 4. lead ministries (i.e. pastor/elder).[10] Implementing a pipeline will require an internal review of existing leadership structures, identifying requisite competencies for each level of leadership, then a careful and prayerful implementation of the pipeline model in the church.[11]

This plan will attempt to provide a strategy for people development at EBC to raise up more leaders and equip people to serve the Lord.

Planned Interventions: *Ministry leaders training course, ministry leaders training refresher course, implement a pipeline paradigm for EBC.*

3. Communication Development

Hebrews 10:24 "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.";

Colossians 4:7 "Tychicus will tell you all about my activities."

Ministry to one another is vital in local churches. The author of Hebrews exhorted his readers to holy creativity in finding ways to encourage each other in the ministry. A central means by which Christians inspire each other is through good communication. Just as the first readers of Hebrews received a pastoral directive to spur one another on in ministry, so also the saints in any local church need the direction and correction of godly leaders to maximize their fruitfulness.

What is more, saints who serve have a desire and biblical obligation to support, encourage, and motivate each other. If, however, leaders rarely hear from elders nor from their ministry colleagues, they will feel very much alone, and churches will likely underperform.

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[10] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 187.

[11] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 189-99.

When asked in the LPI what EBC can do to help leaders be more effective in their ministry, the most common suggestion was to improve communication. Ministry leaders note that there is a communication deficiency both among the ministry leaders themselves, as well as with the elders and pastor. Several leaders indicated a need for more "constructive feedback" and another said "more direction" is needed. There is especially a felt need for clearer expectations and goals. To this end one commented, "EBC should provide clear, written guidelines and expectations for each ministry," and another said, "named goals and a practical strategy" are needed to provide guidance.

There is also a desire for more occasions to collaborate together. One called for "more opportunities for leaders to meet and share ideas (and to give) verbal support and encouragement." In all, eleven different ministry leaders identified communication as an area needing improvement, including conveying expectations, identifying goals, and platforms for encouragement and constructive feedback.

This ministry plan will attempt to implement regular opportunities for collaboration, a mechanism for feedback, and opportunities to share needs and celebrate successes.

Planned Interventions: *Create ministry staff teams, implement a leader review process*

Review and Refresh EBC's Mission

Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

In the great commission, Jesus expressly states what EBC exists to do: to make disciples who make disciples. Do the saints at EBC know this? Is this front of mind as they volunteer to work with seniors, teenagers, children, and new Canadians? Is this at

the fore of their motivation when they agree to volunteer in the clothing ministry or welcome people to Sunday gatherings? These are relevant questions when one considers what is at stake, namely the advance of the gospel in the community in which the Lord has placed EBC.

It is important that the saints at EBC are clear about what it is they are called to do. To this end, a review and refreshing of the church's mission would be a timely exercise for key leaders to undertake. When asked in the LPI if they know how to assess the effectiveness of their ministry, 33% of EBC leaders said they did not, while another 39% indicated they only *somewhat* did. On one hand, this might be indicative of too little attention paid to clarifying ministry goals. On the other hand, it also suggests that there is a foggy understanding of what "success" actually is in the context of the local church. A true, biblical measure is one that is rooted in the Great Commission.

This ministry plan will include a review of the church's mission statement and strategy for carrying out the Great Commission. This could yield an updated mission statement but must at least result in a clear expression of how EBC will fulfill its mission mandate, and how the ministries of the church fit into that endeavor. Leading a review of the church's mission statement and strategy for discipleship will afford the opportunity to unify ministers and ministries together around a common biblical purpose.
Planned Intervention: *EBC mission consultation.*

A 52 -WEEK MINISTRY PLAN

Part 1: Propose this Ministry Plan for EBC to the Council of Elders and Deacons –

(Weeks 1-6)

EBC is an elder-led church and as such any shift in philosophy or strategy needs their endorsement. What is more, their gifting, calling, and knowledge of the church is indispensable for fine-tuning this plan for maximal effectiveness. The support and participation of the council of elders will be vital. The efforts put forth here cannot

merely be the ideas of the author but needs to be the shared convictions of the plurality of leaders God has put in place in His local church. Therefore, the starting point for this ministry plan will be to take the following steps:

- Step 1: Review this Proposed Ministry Plan with the EBC Elders – Review the ministry plan in detail with the council of elders, along with supporting theological and theoretical rationale. The elders will also be invited to provide feedback, including suggestions for improvement.

- Step 2: Make appropriate revisions to this ministry plan based on consultations with the elders of EBC.

- Step 3: Review any amendments with the elders and confirm their endorsement.

- Step 4: Present the ministry plan in full to the elders, deacons and other key ministry leaders together. The author will welcome feedback, suggestions for improvement, and will then seek confirmation from the broader leadership body. Emphasis will be placed on the role that leaders themselves will play in implementing the plan.

By the conclusion of week 8, the author will attempt to have this plan understood and supported by the elders and deacons of EBC. The key leaders in the church will be looking forward to next steps and will anticipate their own involvement at various points in the process.

Part 2: Create an Executive Pastoral Team – (Weeks 7-12)

Whereas some churches employ an executive pastor who, among other duties, oversees the church staff and leaders, this ministry plan proposes the assembly of a *team*. This executive team will include the Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor and at least one or two other elders or deacons. Their responsibility will be to serve as direct oversight for all

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EBC ministry leaders and their ministries. The team approach will enable pastoral staff to have ongoing interaction with the ministry teams, providing ongoing relational breadth within the church without blurry lines of accountability.

- Step 1: Share the proposal and rationale with the council of elders, inviting input, revisions, and ultimately, ratification. In this process it will be critical to find agreement in who should serve on this executive. It will also be necessary to determine:

  - Length of term(s) for members of the team;

  - Extent of authority and breadth of jurisdiction;

  - Reporting processes to the council of elders and to the congregation;

  - Guidelines for the functionality of the team itself in terms of frequency of meetings, recording of minutes, and how they will relate to the elders and EBC board of directors.

- Step 2: Communicate the plans incrementally and broadly to the congregation, beginning with deacons and ministry leaders.

- Step 3: Assemble the team and provide training regarding all functions, expectations and requirements as determined by the council of elders.

Part 3: Create Ministry and Staff Teams – (Weeks 13-24)

The objective in this part of the plan will be twofold: 1) to improve the organizational leadership structure at EBC, and 2) to organize ministry leaders into compatible staff teams for accountability and mutual encouragement.

- Step 1: Share the proposal (details below) with the elders, casting the vision for greater cooperation, communication, and accountability.

- Step 2: Place EBC Ministries into Teams – a plan will be drafted for grouping together complementary ministries into clusters, with their leaders forming a "staff" team. Each EBC ministry will be assigned to a group, and each ministry leader will form the staff team. For example, the "Sunday Morning Team" will:
  - Include the following ministries: worship, welcoming, choir, connection center, sound, and audio-visual ministries,
  - Consist of the following ministry leaders: worship director, welcome team deacon, connection center coordinator, the sound director, and the audio-visual ministry director,
  - Report to the executive pastoral team, or an appointed liaison. That liaison will conduct ministry leader reviews, review ministry leader goals, and be their direct report.

Other ministry teams will include:
  - the outreach team (ESL ministry, the Clothing Closet, summer camp, missions committee),
  - the discipleship team (growth groups, discipleship groups, Kids Zone Sunday school, women's ministry, men's ministry, youth, library).

The ministry leaders will function together as a staff team: meeting regularly for mutual encouragement, prayer, and accountability. They will inspire creativity, celebrate successes, assist one another in problem solving, and aid each other in refining ministry goals.

- Step 3: Draft a staff teams guide, outlining the purposes of the staff teams, expectations, and guidelines for ministering together.

- Step 4: Implementation – Together with the executive pastoral team, work with the ministry leaders to commence meeting and collaborating together.

Part 4: Implement Leader Review Process – (Weeks 25-28)

Having an intentional review process for all ministry leaders and their team members will enhance two-way communication, provide built-in accountability for ministries at every level, enable everyone involved to have ongoing clarity regarding expectations, and help to gauge volunteer satisfaction and ministry effectiveness.

- Step 1: Create a standardized review guide both for ministry leaders and their team members.

- Step 2: Determine frequency and time of year for regular reviews.

- Step 3: Review and finalize the guide and process with the executive pastoral team and implement the review process.

- Step 4: Provide training to ministry leaders on how to conduct and participate in meaningful reviews.

- Note: feedback on the process should be gleaned from ministry leaders as to its effectiveness and usefulness.

Part 5: Sermon Series – (Weeks 29-32)

The heart of EBC's teaching ministry is the weekly preaching of God's Word. It is not the only teaching venue, but it is the primary one. As such, growth in ministry leadership and engaging the congregation in the mission of the church must be given attention in the pulpit curriculum. To this end, a sermon series on Christian ministry is a vital part of this ministry plan. A four-week preaching series presenting the biblical-theological model for ministry outlined in this project will be given to unify the church in mission, and to encourage and inspire participation in ministry.

Part 6: An EBC Mission Consultation – (Weeks 33-36)

On the heels of the preaching series, key leaders at EBC will be asked to participate in a consultation in which the mission of the church will be reviewed. Ministry leaders will be energized by a church that is going somewhere for the Lord. Recruitment is better when it is not be a matter of "come and help" but "come and be part of this!"

To this end, time and consideration will be given to:

- prayer, seeking God's leading and direction in the next season of our church's history.

- The EBC Mission Statement – is it time for it to be refreshed? Is there a different way for the calling of EBC to be stated that will rally God's people and clarify their purpose?

- Articulating a "ministry pathway" – what is the whole process at EBC by which a person is discipled? How does a person go from being outside the church to being on mission with EBC?[12]

- Who else is likeminded with whom EBC can or should partner? In Romans 16 Paul identifies 33 different people with whom he served in the ministry, as well as several churches. Clearly, partnerships are vital to the advance of the gospel. With whom will EBC partner?

Completing this phase of the plan will require at least the four following steps:

- Step 1: Determine date(s) and a time frame for the consultation.

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[12] See Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 200-201. Some will call this by different names, such as a "discipleship pathway." See Scott Ball, "How to Build a Discipleship Pathway," The Malphurs Group, accessed November 3, 2020, https://malphursgroup.com/how-to-build-a-discipleship-pathway/.

- Step 2: Prepare preliminary material for review and reflection prior to gathering. This will include introductory thoughts on the subjects noted above, a clearly stated purpose and goals for the consultation, as well as an agenda.

- Step 3: Host the consultation on-site at EBC.[13]

- Step 4: Schedule any follow up meeting(s) for further discussion and/or follow up on actionable items emerging from the consultation.

Part 7: Create a Pipeline Paradigm for EBC – (Weeks 37-46)

As outlined above, a ministry pipeline is a model for raising up leaders from within the local church. It will provide clarity in terms of requisite skills for different levels of leadership and responsibility. Implementing this paradigm at EBC will be adapted from the outline commended by Geiger and Peck:[14]

- Step 1: Time needs to be taken to explain the pipeline concept to the elders and key leaders, especially how it can be a useful tool for EBC.

- Step 2: "Diagnose" – identify existing levels of leadership in the church ministry and the differing types of leadership roles.[15]

- Step 3: "Design" – plan the pipeline, particularly how it will take shape in the context of EBC.[16] This will be an extensive study in which the following must be determined:

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[13] At time of writing, local restrictions on gatherings in the region of Peel were quite strict due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, alternate plans will be considered for doing this consultation online should an in-person gathering not be feasible.

[14] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 190-200.

[15] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 193.

[16] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 193-94.

- What competencies will be needed at each level of leadership?[17]

- How will those competencies be expressed in differing ministries?[18]

- What training will need to be provided for leaders to move from one passage to the next?[19]

- Step 4: Begin Implementation – overall, this is an ongoing process. Initially this will require clear and careful communication, along with a patient but intentional approach to aligning each ministry with the vision for developing personnel.[20]

- Step 5: Evaluate – beyond even the timeframe of this ministry plan, it will be important to continue to monitor the progress of pipeline implementation. In this vein, attention must be given to whether or not people are progressing through the passages or if they are becoming disengaged – these can be tell-tale signs of systemic problems that need to be understood properly and addressed.[21]

Part 8: New Leader Training and Refresher – (Weeks 47-51)

- Step 1: Teach the EBC Ministry Leadership Seminar to New Leaders

- Step 2: Write a 1-session refresher ministry leaders' course for current leaders

- Step 3: Teach the refresher course to existing leaders.

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[17] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 193.

[18] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 195.

[19] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 197.

[20] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 197-98.

[21] Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 198-99.

**Part 9: Review Progress, Celebrate Success, and
Calibrate for the Future – (Week 52)**

Proverbs 16:9 says, "The heart of a man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps." In other words, while making plans can be an important stewardship for church leaders as they set out to serve the Lord effectively into the future, the results are anything but certain. Instead, it's important that any plans put forth for the church be committed to the Lord. The results depend ultimately on Him because all that transpires is under His good providence.[22]

By the conclusion of this 52-week plan, pause should be taken to look back to see what has happened as each part has been attempted. Notice should be taken of what has gone according to plan, and also what was unexpected. Where there has been progress, those involved should be encouraged by that and, together, celebrate success by giving thanks to God. There may be parts of this plan that are yet to be fulfilled, or perhaps need to be amended going forward.

The question will then need to be answered, "What's next?" How will the saints at EBC continue to develop ministries and ministers? It is likely that some parts of this plan will still be very much a work in progress. In that case, recalibration may be necessary as new plans are envisioned for the future.

CONCLUSION

While the above plan is ambitious, especially within the intended timeframe of one year, these measures will address pressing aspects of the ministry at EBC that need attention. Confident that the Lord will build His church (Matthew 16:18) and sure in the conviction that He accomplishes His will in the world through His people (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:7-16), investing in a strategy for enhancing ministry functionality and fruitfulness at EBC is a worthy endeavor. By the end of this ministry plan it is

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[22] Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary, vol. 14 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993), 155.

intended that ministry leaders and volunteers will experience the benefits of intentional structural, communication, and personnel development, and be more united together on mission.

APPENDIX 9

MINISTRY PLAN CURRICULUM EVALUATIONS

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The plan is biblically faithful.				X	• Though qualified academics are cited right through the report, their observations are mainly used to corroborate the points made by Scripture
The plan is clear in purpose.				X	• The central purpose is stated early and clearly: to provide training for ministry leaders in order to equip them to serve effectively and fruitfully in the local church; this includes providing a guide for enhancing leadership effectiveness and fruitfulness at EBC—over the long term • I am not sure that the rationale for and effectiveness of delegating oversight of church ministry leaders from pastor/executive pastor to an executive team was clearly spelled out (pp. 11f)
The plan has clearly articulated goals.				X	• Right on page 1 the four project goals are clearly set forth
The plan is thorough in scope and application.				X	• Ross emphasizes that the "leadership pipeline" model will be used to ensure ongoing ministry leadership in the future • The project emphasizes that the motivation behind EBC ministries needs to be Matt. 28:19-20. • Perhaps the highlight of the report is Ross' statement: A true, biblical measure must be rooted in the Great Commission. • The 1-year action plan ensures that existing leaders/elders are kept informed and convinced of each segment's veracity and viability
The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.				X	• The 52-week Ministry Plan (pp 11f) is divided into coherent, timed segments—with process and intended results explicitly spelled out • The discussion in Sec.8/Wk 52 wisely emphasizes that though major steps have been taken in the previous year, church leaders must never stop considering next steps and launching new initiatives

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The plan is biblically faithful.				4	Well done Ross. You have been thoughtful about creating a good biblical foundation to your plan. Would love to see the teaching/content portion of chapters 2-3.
The plan is clear in purpose.				4	Very clear. The purpose is to develop leaders at EBC.
The plan has clearly articulated goals.				4	Clear goals. The four goals of the overall project and here the focus is on the fourth goal of developing a ministry plan for developing leaders.
The plan is thorough in scope and application.				4	Yes, Ross does a good job of making this practical, developing training and also addressing systems that will make it possible to more effectively develop leaders at EBC. The LPI revealed a need for structural, people and communication development. Ross responds to these concerns with plans to improve them.
The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.			3		Yes, the plan has clear action steps but I would encourage developing these to include individual implementation plans for each significant step in the plan.

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The plan is biblically faithful.				✓	Solidly biblical; good theological framework communicated.
The plan is clear in purpose.				✓	Very clear!
The plan has clearly articulated goals.				✓	Yes!
The plan is thorough in scope and application.				✓	Very thorough!
The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.				✓	Very specific and clear action steps!

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The plan is biblically faithful.			x		It is hard to say that the Bible provides a clear foundation for a one-year church leadership redevelopment plan. However, I see that the author is making a strong effort to develop a plan that is based on Biblical precepts.
The plan is clear in purpose.				x	I like the clarity about the three areas of deficiency. Identifying the lack of clarity about the mission and the need for accompanying markers of success is also important.
The plan has clearly articulated goals.			x		The goals are mostly about building consensus for restructuring and training people for leadership at EBC. I think it could be helped by using a couple of org charts and a timeline chart. It was confusing to keep names for each group clearly fixed in my mind: elders, executive pastoral team, deacons, ministry teams, staff teams, key leaders, new leaders etc I like the idea of the consultation and the ministry pathway. I didn't see much on how ministry success will be measured differently in the future
The plan is thorough in scope and application.				x	Yes
The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.		x			Yes, it has clear action steps for dialogue, teaching, proposal and significant implementation. But I am concerned that the implementation of a revised may be inadequately addressed. What will the likely barriers be? How will they be overcome? How will those decisions be made? Do you have flag bearers for the "going" part of the great commission? What will the role of the elders and the staff be?

Ministry Plan Evaluation Tool				
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary				
Criteria	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments**
The plan is biblically faithful.				X	I appreciated the solid biblical and theological foundation underlying the plan. Framing leadership development as part of discipleship helps keep the focus on spiritual growth and maturation (as opposed to more secular concepts of leadership development)
The plan is clear in purpose.				X	The plan addresses three identified areas of need in the life of EBC: 1) greater organizational/structural clarity and order; 2) intentional development of ministry servants as part of their discipleship pathway; 3) enhancement of communication and feedback for those leading and those being led. The plan addresses these three areas of need with a clear intention of seeing growth in all three areas.
The plan has clearly articulated goals.				X	I was pleased to see specified outcomes set forth for each of the three areas of need and the additional initiative of reviewing/refreshing the EBC mission statement.
The plan is thorough in scope and application.			X		My concern with the scope of the plan is not that it fails to be thorough but that it may be overly ambitious given the 52-week time frame. My sense is that leaders and ministry workers may be fatigued with the change process in the later part of the year. Specifically, I wonder if there will be energy to implement the Leadership Pipeline at the stage when it is scheduled. My advice would be to view the 52-week time frame with some flexibility. If it takes a longer than a year to accomplish all the goals, that is not a sign of failure. Progress rarely happens at the pace leaders want it to happen. So, I would advise Pastor Ross, the elders, and the Executive Pastoral Team to monitor the needs of the congregation as they seek to carry out the plan. It's wise to have a plan, but also wise to make mid-course modifications. Praying for wisdom will need be an ongoing part of the process.

The plan has clear actions steps for implementation.			X	Each Part of the plan had clearly identified "Steps" designed to accomplish the goals and objectives of the overall initiative. I was impressed by the way these action steps were laid out in a linear, sequential and logical pathway.
				Summary Thoughts: The Leadership Development plan set forth by Ross Kearney has much to commend it. The biblical focus on discipleship shapes the overall vision for leadership development. This is a wise way to approach the project. Ross has obviously put much thought into discovering the areas needing attention. The plan addresses needs felt by EBC ministry leaders and workers. This will help ensure buy-in from the congregation. The plan is well-conceived in that it is broken down into more manageable parts, with specific action steps for each part. As noted above, I fear it may be overly ambitious regarding the time frame to complete all that Pastor Ross seeks to see accomplished. I had a wise professor once tell me, "We over-estimate what we can accomplish in one year and under-estimate what we can see accomplished in five years." My encouragement would be to go at the pace the people can handle; adjust as needed. I'm excited for the growth that will take place in the lives of the people of EBC as a result of this initiative. I'm also expectant that Pastor Ross will continue to grow as a godly leader by guiding the process with his leaders. May the Lord be glorified and His church be built up! Rick Reed President, Heritage College and Seminary November 25, 2020

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ABSTRACT

TRAINING MEMBERS OF ERINDALE BIBLE
CHAPEL IN MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO,
FOR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

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Chapter 1 describes the purpose of this project, namely, to train members of Erindale Bible Chapel in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, for ministry leadership. Ministry leaders are crucial for the mission of the church, but only when they are adequately equipped will they flourish in their roles. Thus, this project intended meet this need. The context in which the project was conducted is described, along with the rationale and specific goals. Additionally, the research methodology is outlined, and definitions, limitations and delimitations are stated.

Chapter 2 consists of the biblical basis for this project: God has been pleased throughout redemptive history to accomplish His will through His people under godly leaders. In chapter 3 it is argued that since the work of the ministry is carried out by God's people under godly leadership, it is then vital to train ministry leaders in godliness and skill so that members can lead and serve with excellence.

Chapter 4 is a detailed description of the project, both its design and implementation. The fifth and final chapter provides an evaluation of the project, including an evaluation of its purpose, goals, strengths, weaknesses, as well as theological and personal reflections.

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