

LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

Key question

What is the nature of leadership and ministry in the church and how is it to be different from the world?

Key text

Ephesians 4:11-12

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ;”

Key Definition

The Church

The church is that spiritual organism of which Christ is the Head, composed of all regenerate people from Pentecost to Rapture.

Introduction

1. Three basic questions
 - a. What is the nature and purpose of the local church?
 - b. What does a healthy church look like?
 - c. What is my responsibility in my local church?
2. We can divide this study into three parts
 - a. The nature of ministry.
 - b. The nature of spiritual authority.
 - c. Decision making in the church.

A. The Nature Of Ministry

1. **Slaves, sons, and bond-slaves**
 - a. The drama of redemption must be understood (Rom.8:15).
 - b. The motives for ministry are critical (Rom.10:1-4).
 - c. When we were under the law we were slaves motivated by fear. We have been set free in Christ as sons (I Cor.6:12, Rom.8:15). We are called to freely submit ourselves to Christ as bond-slaves (Rom.12:1-2).

2. **Sodality, modality, and integrity**

- a. Both sodality (task-oriented) and modality (people-oriented) approaches to ministry are needed in the church. See Matt.28:18-20 and I Pet.5:1-5.
- b. The church can be identified as a soft sodality or a modality with direction.
- c. We must respect the pattern of the N.T. writers in their emphasis upon modality with direction.

3. **Motivations, ministries, and manifestations** (I Cor.12:4-6)

- a. **Motivations** — that which constitutes our basic drive or aptitude in ministry. See Rom.12:6-8
 - 1. **Prophecy** — to reveal unrighteous motives or actions by presenting God’s truth.
 - 2. **Service** — to demonstrate love by meeting practical needs.
 - 3. **Teaching** — to clarify truth.
 - 4. **Exhortation** — to stimulate others to faith and action.
 - 5. **Giving** — to entrust personal assets to others for the furtherance of the ministry.
 - 6. **Leading**— to coordinate the activity of others for the achievement of common goals.
 - 7. **Mercy** — to identify with and comfort those who are in distress.
- b. **Ministries** — that which constitutes our recognized role or function in the church family. See I Tim.4:14
- c. **Manifestations** — that which constitutes the effect of our ministry in others. See I Cor.12:7-11

Motivations	Ministries	Manifestations
Aptitude	Ordination	Word Effected (result)
Creative powers	Administrations	Operations
Distribution	Recognition	Contribution
By the Holy Spirit	When ordained by elders (church)	To the body of Christ To the world
When? At the moment of salvation	When? At the time of ordination the body recognizes the gifted one.	When? When “gift”, “ministry”, and “the Holy Spirit” work together.
How many? Basic motives, gifts, aptitudes	How many? Infinite number	How many? Infinite number
Gifts of the first order (Rom.12)	Gifts of the second order (Eph.4)	Gifts of the third order (I Cor.12:7)

B. The Nature Of Spiritual Authority

1. Biblical Wisdom — the mark of authority
 - a. Insight
 1. Into God’s general revelation (common sense).
 2. Into God’s special revelation: Scripture and Holy Spirit.
 - b. Example
 1. Of how to apply insights into one’s personal walk.
 2. Of how to “walk in the light” of the reality of human weakness and God’s grace.
 3. Of how to relate to others successfully.
 4. Of how to give and receive ministry.
 - c. Responsibility
 1. For guarding the Gospel message.
 2. For shepherding God’s people.
2. The Structure of Authority in the Local Church
 - a. Elders, bishops, pastors — I Tim.3:1-7, Titus 1:7-9, I Pet.5:1-5
 1. Spiritual oversight (Acts 20:28).
 2. Official and informal authority (I Tim.5:17, I Thess.5:13).
 3. Plurality (Acts 14:23).
 - b. Deacons — I Tim.3:8-13, Acts 6:1-6
 1. Serving the elders.
 2. Serving the congregation.
3. The responsibility of shepherds (Ezek.34:1-16, Acts 20:28)
 - a. Feed the sheep not themselves.
 - b. Serve with humility, not severity or a dominating spirit.
 - c. Seek the lost, heal the wounded, bring back the scattered.
4. The moral virtues associated with leadership.

Overseer I Tim.3:1-7	Deacons I Tim.3:8-13	Elder Titus 1:5-9	Opponents
“good works”			“worthless for any good deed” Titus 1:16
“above reproach”, “good reputation”	“above reproach”	“above reproach”	Bring reproach on the church Titus 1:11-14
“one-woman man”	“one-woman man”	“one-woman man”	Seduce women II Tim.3:6

“self-controlled”		“self-controlled”	Uncontrolled II Tim.3:6
“hospitable”		“hospitable”	Upset house churches II Tim3:6
“skilled teacher”		“able to exhort with sound teaching and rebuke”	Teaching a different gospel I Tim1:3
“so not fall into the devil’s snare”			Taken captive by the devil I Tim1:20
“gracious”		“not arrogant”	Teaching results in “quarrels” II Tim.2:23
“not a lover of money”	“not greedy”	“not greedy for gain”	Think godliness is a “means of profit” I Tim.6:5
“managing his own household well, having submissive children”	“managing their children and their own household well”	“having faithful children, not . . rebellious”	“disobedient to parents” II Tim3:2

5. The characteristics of all “good leaders.”

- a. HOPE - They see clearly how things SHOULD be. They have a clearly communicated and socially compelling vision. They are not managers posing as visionaries. We see Jesus model this in his many parables of the Kingdom.
- b. FAITH – They see how things CAN be. They motivate with their expectations and faith in others. They are not cynics posing as cheerleaders. We see Jesus model this in his prayer that his followers would be united in love, in the world but not of it, and experiencing the love of the Father.
- c. LOVE – They see how things ARE. They graciously accept reality. They are not perfectionists posing as pastors. We see Jesus model this when he loves his disciples to the end, in spite of their failure to love and trust him.
- d. FEAR – They know how to MANAGE fear. They respect the fear in followers and help them manage it with courage. They are not worriers posing as courageous. We see Jesus model this in the many times that he tells his disciples to “fear not” and “don’t be anxious for your life.”

C. The pastoral responsibility of pastoral leaders. (Acts20:17-35). Leaders in the church should be:

1. **Vulnerable not infallible** – “*28 Be on guard for yourselves*” Leaders do not have a free pass on temptation and failure. As a matter of fact they face some unique and especially devastating challenges to holy living. With power and position come temptations to pride, privilege, and profit that can destroy ministries and lives.
2. **Protectors not abusers** – “*28 ... and for all the flock*” Leaders are to guard the flock as they do their own souls. This means that they must understand human nature and the MO of the devil, the world, and the flesh.
3. **In-touch not aloof** – “*28 ... among which*” Human leaders are also sheep and they minister among those who are like them in many ways. They should make sure that others sense this. Leaders should not be aloof or living apart from the flock even though it is tempting to do so in attempts to impress so as to have authority over.
4. **Ordained by the Spirit not by self** – “*28 ... the Holy Spirit has made you*” Spiritual leaders are not to be self appointed but ordained by the Spirit. This means that while a personal passion for service is not enough. It must be notarized by the Christian community and especially by existing leaders.
5. **Protective of not careless with the flock** – “*28 ... overseers*” The Greek word used here is the term from which we get the word “Episcopal” and is translated “overseer” or “bishop.” The meaning of the term is “to watch over.”
6. **Servants not masters** – “*28 ... to shepherd*” Leaders are shepherds not managers, CEOs, ranchers, stock holders, etc. A shepherd in ancient Israel was seldom an owner (more often a steward) with specific responsibilities to
 - a. make sure the flock was well fed,
 - b. make sure the flock was safe,
 - c. tend to the weak and straying individuals.
7. **Centering their ministry on the church community not the secular community** – “*28 ... the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood*” The leader’s first calling is to minister to the needs of the church. This does not mean that leaders should not set the pace in showing God’s love to the world but it does mean that they realize that the best witness to the world is a well cared for and healthy flock.
8. **Drawing people to Christ not themselves** – “*29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.*” In attempts to lead others a person can draw attention to themselves thinking that confidence in human leadership is the key to building the Kingdom. Christ is the chief Shepherd and He alone deserves the attention and faith. Healthy churches are built on the cornerstone of Christ.
9. **Minister with humility and passion.** “*19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials*”

10. Teach the grace of God in the whole counsel of God's revealed purpose with a call to repentance toward God and faith in Christ.

D. The administrative responsibility of pastoral leaders. (Acts 6:1-7)

1. The challenge that is addressed here comes in the context of rapid growth. Growth brings some unique challenges.
2. The challenge has to do with a growing tension that falls along ethnic cultural lines – Jews and Greeks.
3. The challenge has to do with justice in the use of resources.
4. The Apostles' approach to the problem follows these steps:
 - a. They respect the complaint.
 - b. They involve the congregation in its resolution.
 - c. They affirm their own responsibilities and boundaries.
 - d. They offer counsel to the congregation as to how the problem can be addressed.
 - e. They take responsibility for ordaining those who will be used to solve the problem.
 - f. They won the congregation's trust and support.
5. The term for "full of the Spirit" is the same term used in contexts where "maturity of character" is implied as opposed to "charismatic power."
6. It is interesting to note that the men ordained for this ministry had Greek names. The Greeks were bringing the complaint and it was their people who would be given responsibility to make any corrections necessary for social justice. This was important in that the Apostles were all Hebrews and therefore seen as having a potential bias.
7. Stephen and Philip would be mentioned later in Acts as men with significant ministries.

Lessons

1. Don't underestimate the power of the Spirit working through wise administration.
2. Good leaders:
 - **Respect complaints** and do not marginalize them.
 - **Know their boundaries** and will not neglect them.
 - **Involve people** and do not try to solve problems for them.
 - **Offer counsel to aid people in problem solving.** They do not leave people on their own.
 - **Take responsibility** for those chosen by the people as a part of the solution.
 - **Do not "provoke to anger"** those under their authority. Eph.6:4
3. One of the greatest responsibilities of spiritual leadership is the discernment of who to ordain to a task.

4. Leaders must not be afraid to limit their involvement. It would be very easy to succumb to the complaint that the leaders did not want to get their hands dirty by doing servant work.
 5. Leaders who want to win the hearts of the people they lead would do well to take heed to this text.
- E. The responsibility of the congregation with respect to leadership. (I Tim.5:17-25)**
1. Provide generous material support – vs.17-18
 2. Protect from character assassination – vs.19 Do not entertain accusations unless by multiple witnesses.
 3. Punish harshly those who sin and refuse to repent – vs.20 Do not exempt leaders from the public exposure required in Matt.18:15-20 when there is no repentance.
 4. Treat fairly – vs.21 Do not give special exceptions to leaders.
 5. Ordain carefully – vs.22 Do not encourage others to take an authoritative role too quickly.
- F. The submission of the congregation to spiritual leadership. (I Pet.5:5, I Tim.5:1-2)**
1. Appeal to spiritual authorities as you would to a parent. I Tim.5:1-2
 2. Younger men are to “be subject” to elders. I Pet.5:5
 3. Obedience to leaders makes their work joyful and encourages them to serve well. Heb.13:17, I Cor.16:16
- G. Be on guard against an unhealthy view of authority.**
1. Signs of an unhealthy relationship with authority.
 - a. When everything must be clear in black and white look out. Insistence upon complete closure on all issues is a red flag.
 - b. Complete unquestioned trust in another person is not wise.
 - c. The inability to trust another person at any level is a sign of trouble.
 - d. A lack of balanced reason with respect to experience, tradition, community, Scripture, and inner prompting of the Spirit is not good.
 2. Cardinal rules of submission to authority.
 - a. Accept responsibility for your beliefs and conduct while recognizing that we each have different constraints and gifts.
 - b. Respect God-ordained institutions (government, family, church) while at the same time realizing that they are not infallible.
 - c. Approach your understanding of the Bible with humility, expectancy, reverence, and patience.
 - d. Present yourself as a living sacrifice while taking active responsibility for your life and ministry decisions.
- H. What is the role of human authority in the believer’s life?**
1. Spheres of human authority.
 - a. **Civil** - Jn.19:11 Jesus addressing Pilate, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.”

- b. **Commerce** - Col.3:22-23 “Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”
 - c. **Church** - Heb.13:11 “Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”
 - d. **Family** - Col.3:18-20 “Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them. Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.”
2. The two fold responsibility of those under human authority.
 - a. **Obedience** - a spirit of submission
 - I Pet.2:13 “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority. or to governors as sent by him”
 - b. **Appeal** - a need for accountability
 1. I Tim.5:1-2 “Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father . . . older women as mothers.”
 2. Col.4:1 “Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.”
 3. Two positions that those under human authority must avoid.
 - a. **A spirit of resignation** - (blind obedience) - The failure to make a proper appeal to authority and hold authority accountable.
 - b. **A spirit of rebellion** - (selfish pride) - The failure to cultivate a spirit of submission.
 4. Attitudes that reflect spiritual maturity.
 - a. A willingness to **forgive**. Eph.4:32 “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”
 - b. A willingness to **forebear**. Prov.25:15 “By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue breaks the bone.” Eph.4:2 “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love.”
 - c. A willingness to **compromise**. On issues of fundamentals to the faith we should not compromise but we must decide on what other issues we are willing to stand firm on. In many cases, the unity of the church is more important than having our preferences on every issue.
 - d. A willingness to **yield**. In order for there to be harmony and unity in any organization there must be a willingness to yield to others, usually the majority or the leadership. This does not mean that there is no room for debate or appeal but at some point there must be a willingness to yield.
 5. How to appeal to those in authority.
 - a. Deal with the human spirit of **autonomy**.

Rom.12 “¹ I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, {which is} your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by

the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1. All are to submit to the authority of God.
 2. Those who are submitted to God’s authority will respect “God ordained” authority – civil, church, family, etc.
- b. **Expect God** to use circumstances to develop and demonstrate your character.
1. The pressure of circumstances can reveal your hidden motives and spiritual strongholds.
 2. Your response to circumstances is the sphere where you have responsibility and control.
- c. The **prerequisites** to an effective appeal to authority.
1. We cannot appeal without **love**.
 2. We cannot appeal without **humility**. It should be recognized that we all are going to make mistakes of the tongue (Jas.3:1-12) and we each will have areas that are vulnerable to critique.
 3. We cannot appeal without **facts**.
 4. We cannot appeal without **respect**.
- d. **Talk to God** - Pray - We are to cast our cares on God because He cares for us. I Pet.5:7 “casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”
- e. **Talk to those responsible** (not about them behind their back).
1. As much as possible, when giving a negative report, speak as though the person you are talking about is present.
 2. Do not share negative reports with people who are not a part of the problem or the solution.
 3. Distinguish between facts and feelings in speaking to or about others.
 4. Note that those in positions of leadership are vulnerable and easy targets for misunderstanding and criticism, which has the effect of undermining their ability to perform their duties. For this reason, they need protection and respect above and beyond that of others.
- f. **Be gracious with both favorable and unfavorable responses.**
- g. Be sensitive to the right **timing**.
1. Speaking the **truth in love**. Eph.4:15 “but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects unto Him, who is the head, even Christ.”
 2. Speaking **graciously**. Eph.4:29 “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”
5. How are leaders to respond to those who resist or question their decisions?

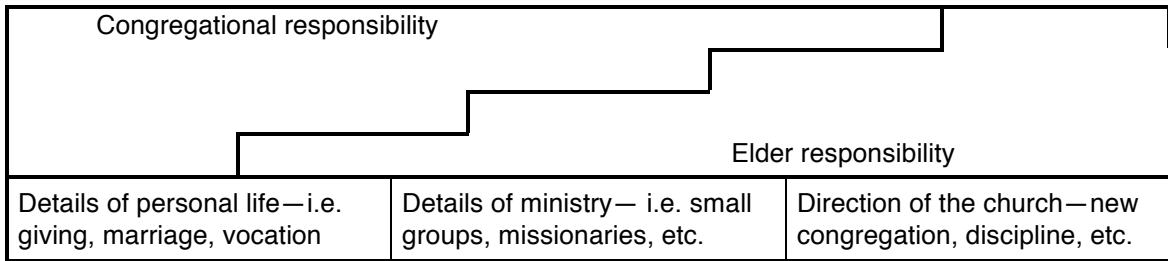
I Pet. 5 “¹ Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as {your} fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ² shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to {the will of} God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown

of glory. ⁵ You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for *God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*”

- a. Leaders are to take the role and attitude of a **servant**.
- b. Leaders are to recognize that they can easily **abuse** those under their care.
- c. Leaders are to respect the wisdom that can come from **diversity** of perspective.
- d. Leaders communicate love to those under their charge as they work hard to **listen to, understand, and show respect** for those who challenge them.
- e. Leaders must **discern the spirit** of those who resist them.
 - 1. A rebellious spirit must be disciplined while a Godly spirit is to be respected.
 - 2. A “weaker” or “younger” believer is to be given more grace and forbearance than a “Pharisee”.

I. Decision Making In The Church

1. The Role of Sheep and Shepherds



- 2. Consensus Among the Elders
 - a. Plurality and corporate mentality is to be cultivated.
 - b. Procedure in decision making for major issues:
 - 1. The issue is presented.
 - 2. Secret ballot (+5 to -5).
 - 3. If no agreement—discussion, prayer and more information gathered.
 - 4. Second ballot (+5 to -5).
 - 5. If no agreement—table for a week for prayer, discussion and more information.
 - 6. Third ballot (+5 to -5).
 - 7. If no agreement—tabled indefinitely.

J. Financial support and ministry

- a. Paul’s tent-making vocation reflected his gracious spirit.
 - **I Cor.4:12** “and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure;”
 - **II Cor.11:7** “Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of god to you without charge?”

- **II Cor.12:17** “Certainly I have not taken advantage of you through any of those whom I have sent to you, have I?”
 - **I Thess.2:9** “For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.”
 - **II Thess.3:6-15** “⁶Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep aloof from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. ⁷For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, ⁸nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we {kept} working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you; ⁹not because we do not have the right {to this,} but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, that you might follow our example. ¹⁰For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat. ¹¹For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. ¹²Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. ¹³But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good. ¹⁴And if anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame. ¹⁵And {yet} do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”
- b. Paul recognizes the validity of vocational ministry.
- **I Tim.5:17-18** “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.’ And ‘The laborer is worthy of his wages.’”
 - **I Cor.9:3-18** “³My defense to those who examine me is this: ⁴Do we not have a right to eat and drink? ⁵Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? ⁶Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? ⁷Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? ⁸I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? ⁹For it is written in the Law of Moses, “*You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.*” God is not concerned about oxen, is He? ¹⁰Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher {to thresh} in hope of sharing {the crops.} ¹¹If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? ¹²If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. ¹³Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the {food} of the temple, {and} those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? ¹⁴So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. ¹⁵But I have used none of these things. And I am not

writing these things that it may be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one. ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. ¹⁷ For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.”

- In this passage Paul supports the principle of vocational ministry by appealing to “rights” vs.1-7 “Mosaic Law” vs.8-9, and logic vs.10-11.
- It is important to note the larger context, which makes the point that Paul freely gave up his rights to authenticate his motives.