

## 7 Quotes From the Most Influential Church Leaders (and their Key Take-Aways)

Understandably, church leaders trust other leaders who have “been there, done that.” They want to hear how people in their shoes have handled the situations they face each day.

Over the past several months, [StewardshipCentral.org](http://StewardshipCentral.org) has heard from some of America’s leading voices in church leadership and stewardship. Now, we’ve collected their thoughts on several issues that may hit close to home for you. Here’s what these leaders had to say about effective church leadership, along with some key takeaways for your discipleship or ministry.



### 1. **Effective leaders are comfortable in God’s calling.**

“In the beginning of my ministry, I focused on being loved instead of being loving. **I’m trying to focus more on being loving, and it’s making me a much more effective pastor and leader.** . . . People are not always going to be happy with you. So if you find your identity and worth in that, you’re going to find yourself, as a pastor, miserable at times.”

—Pete Wilson, senior pastor of Cross Point Church, Nashville, Tennessee

“When I stop comparing myself to everyone else and focus on God’s standards for me, **I am quickly reminded of how much God has blessed me. I am favored. I am anointed. And I am humbled. Gratitude begins to flow from my heart.**”

—Chris Brown, host of *Chris Brown’s True Stewardship* and the *Leadership Momentum Podcast*

**Key Takeaway:** *Be faithful to the person God called you to be because you ultimately serve an audience of One (Colossians 3:23).*

## **2. Effective leaders focus on kingdom work.**

“It’s not what you have that matters. It’s what you do with what you have that will count for you or against you in the kingdom of heaven. Generosity and compassion were the hallmark of the first-century church. It captured the attention of the pagan world, and I’m convinced that unconditional generosity continues to be our best entry point for showing people the unconditional love of Christ.”

—Andy Stanley, senior pastor of North Point Community Church, Alpharetta, Georgia

**Key Takeaway:** *Challenging members toward acts of genuine compassion and generosity can make a difference for God’s kingdom in this world (James 2:14–17).*

## **3. Effective leaders equip others for ministry.**

“Jesus basically had a four-pronged leadership strategy. He did teach multitudes, and that was one component. He mobilized 70, which is another component. He trained the 12, and He confided in three.”

—Michael Hyatt, author and founder of Intentional Leadership

“You’ve got to have the small-group experience. . . . I see significant transformation as people are cared for and have to dig out God’s Word themselves. I think that’s a big piece of the puzzle where you don’t spoon-feed people, but you make them think and try to lead them.”

—Howard Dayton, founder and CEO of Compass

**Key Takeaway:** *Leaders mentor other leaders so those individuals can share the load and fulfill their own purpose in ministry (2 Timothy 2:2).*

## **4. Effective leaders preach—even money topics—without fear.**

“We come to the Bible for guidance in every area of our lives, and, as pastors, we should be able to preach from the Bible with confidence in every area. Why then are we scared to preach on finances? Jesus talked about finances. Shouldn’t the truth of the God’s Word guide us in this huge aspect of our lives? If people can get free in this area, their lives will be better and churches will grow.”

—Robert Morris, founding senior pastor of Gateway Church, Southlake, Texas

“Pastors know more than they think they know [about stewardship], but they’re afraid to talk much about money because of misperceived motives and because of uncertainty about what they really know. I think that if you know God’s Word relative to money, you know more than the guy on Wall Street—and you can speak to that with authority.”

—Ron Blue, founder of Ronald Blue and Associates

**Key Takeaway:** *Never hesitate to preach what you know to be the truth, including biblical stewardship (2 Timothy 4:1–3).*

### **5. Effective leaders are honest about their personal struggles.**

“Leaders facing hardship should address their problems. When you pretend you’re emotionally healthy and you’re not, you’re building a house on sand. Jesus said something about that at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. . . . The longer you pretend, the bigger the house gets and, when the storm comes and the sand washes away, the bigger the crash is.”

—Perry Noble, senior pastor of NewSpring Church, Anderson, South Carolina

**Key Takeaway:** *Create an environment where it’s safe for people—including you—to confess failures and ask for help (Ephesians 4:1-5).*

### **6. Effective leaders understand the other 90%.**

“The danger of tithing is we tend to think that 10% is God’s and 90% is mine. **But 100% is His.** So tithing is not a rule. It’s the result of a heart change. And that’s where all this stuff works out—in the heart.”

—Ron Blue, founder of Ronald Blue and Associates

“We’re called not just to focus on 10%, but 100%. **It’s been my contention that the body of Christ has suffered from not understanding the other 90% of stewardship.** They’ve adopted the culture’s perspective on that, whether it’s working or honesty, debt or savings, the whole nine yards. We’ve dropped the ball.”

—Howard Dayton, Howard Dayton, founder and CEO of Compass

**Key Takeaway:** *Teach genuine, biblical stewardship through your words and your actions (Psalm 24:1).*

## 7. Effective leaders give joyfully.

“There are ways for us to engage in someone else’s life. And the more we look for them, the more we listen for them, the more they appear. . . . I don’t think there’s any stronger expression of God’s nature than giving, because He is a giver and we’re created in His image. It’s the best way to model life that’s truly life.”

—Brad Formsma, author of *I Like Giving* and creator of [ilikegiving.com](http://ilikegiving.com)

“If you summarize the Bible in the simplest sentence possible, it could be ‘God gives.’ He gave His Son. Jesus gave His life. We are made in His image to be givers. We’re born with the nature to take, and we’re born with the nature to protect. But when we’re born again, we’re born with a different nature—the nature of giving. We just have to learn to do it.”

—Robert Morris, founding senior pastor of Gateway Church, Southlake, Texas

**Key Takeaway:** *Find ways to give generously of your time, talents and resources, and see those as opportunities to reflect Christ to the world (2 Corinthians 9:6–11).*

*Source: [stewardship.com](http://stewardship.com)*