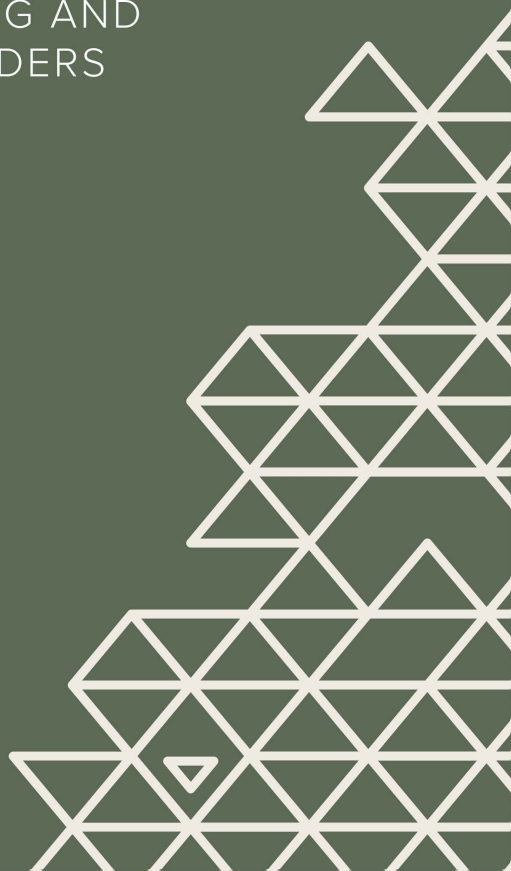


MULTIPLYING **LEADERS**

10 PRINCIPLES FOR RAISING AND
RELEASING KINGDOM LEADERS



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RELEASING KINGDOM LEADERS

GLOBAL ADVANCE

WITH
KEITH WEST

WITH
JOHN HALL

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FOREWORD

This resource was originally developed by an amazingly gifted man named Keith West. It was designed to help pastors and leaders understand and apply principles in their leadership to raise up NextGen leaders. The more the book was used, the more we found how these principles were not just useful for young, NextGen leader development, they are also applicable in the lives of established leaders to improve their leadership and in the multiplication of leaders of any age. As we apply these principles not as mere “behavior modification,” but as manifesting in them the life of Christ, we grow and help others grow in the mysterious and often misused dynamic of leadership.

So, Keith did the hard work, and then I, John, came along and wrote a few more chapters, adding material to the existing copy. I hope I have done appropriate justice to Keith’s work and that our contributions sounds as one voice. I know Keith’s and my heart beat in unison for the development of leaders to shepherd Jesus’ people. My hope is for anyone looking to develop new leaders to engage it as a tool for their lives—a tool to help them develop into leaders who look more like Jesus, and then by modeling, mentoring, and imparting, multiply themselves into new leaders.

Things reproducing according to their kind is a principle built into creation from the start. Our deep hope is that Jesus' Church will grow exponentially as her leaders grow more and more like Him and then reproduce after their own kind.

May the Lord bless you as you engage on the journey through this resource.

INTRODUCTION

“And the things you have heard from me, among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others” —2 Timothy 2:2 NKJV

This resource is designed with the verse above in mind. When the Apostle Paul uses the word “commit,” it is a very specific word. That word “*paratithēmi*” was often used as a banking term. It meant to deposit or entrust something to someone. Paul was urging the young leader he had raised up, namely, Timothy, to deposit what he had received from Paul into faithful men. He wanted Timothy to reproduce the process he had used to develop him, to multiply himself in the lives of other up-and-coming leaders.

This has been the plan all along, but somewhere in the modern church globally we have gotten off track. Please hear me, I am not against education; I have done graduate studies. Education is an absolute necessity. But the old adage attributed to Dr. Howard Hendricks is true: “You can teach what you know, but you reproduce what you are.”¹ Perhaps that is why, in the book of Philippians, Paul also writes, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of

peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:9, NKJV). Notice how comprehensive this is.

Another thing we have tended to surrender to our different cultural mores is the idea of having an authentic relationship with those we are discipling, mentoring, and coaching. We can observe many leaders who seem "out of reach" of the very ones they should be closest to. Some of it is cultural; some of it is actually fear based. Leaders fear losing sheep to other folds, losing power, or losing their jobs! We need to remember that reclining next to Jesus at the last supper on one side was the Apostle John, but on the other was Judas. Jesus did not reject a method because a man was going to betray Him. He knew closeness to someone came with risk, but also with great reward. To use another "Hendricks-ism," "You can impress from a distance, but you can only impact up close."²

So there you have some of the premise of this resource. There is a mandate to multiply leaders, and there is a method—namely, Jesus' method. We have based what we have here for the twenty-first century on some principles we see in the first century. Is it exhaustive? No. Have these principles been learned and experienced as a follower and a leader? Yes. There is much wonderful material on multiplying leaders developed by people all over the world. This is our contribution to that "pool" of resources, and we hope it is helpful.

So, how do we multiply leaders? If there is a short answer to this question, it would be to put into action the principles laid out in this resource. Well, if only it were that simple! In the West, we love things to be in sequence. Follow this step, then the next, and the next, and so on. But the principles included in this book are not necessarily to be followed in a sequence. They must be integrated into our lives and then expressed as the Spirit leads.

One of the most helpful things in my leadership journey (John) was something I experienced that you will read about in the chapter on Transformational Leadership. But all the "anecdotes"

at the start of the chapters are my personal experiences of either being on the receiving end of leadership or my enacting of leadership. As you read them, I would ask you to consider what might the Lord want you to learn or relearn from similar experiences in your life.

The book starts with a chapter on Self Leadership, which might seem strange for a book called *Multiplying Leaders*. However, back to the Hendricks quote. “You can teach what you know, but you reproduce what you are.” May the Lord help us all to, as Peter wrote, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18, NKJV).

PRINCIPLE 1

SELF LEADERSHIP

SOME YEARS AGO, I went through a very difficult season. I was dealing with family loss, working harder than ever, and experiencing some physical issues. Of course, as a pastor and a man, I told everyone I was fine. But I wasn't fine; I was on a fast track to burnout. The late Fuller Seminary professor Archibald Hart used to say often, "Pastors don't get into trouble because they forget they're pastors. Pastors get into trouble because they forget that they're people." The more I tried to pay attention to ministry, the less attention I paid to how I was doing on the inside. I found myself falling into the trap of judging others by their actions and myself by my intentions.

My friends were concerned, but I didn't listen. Rather than walking through a Spirit-led, thoughtful process, I began to make decisions based on how I felt. I felt terrible, and so I made some poor decisions. What turned things around was not actually someone coming and putting their arm around me and saying, "There, there, it's okay." It was my pastor who confronted me strongly, telling me that my attitude and actions were not consistent with who he knew me to be. But more than this, he told me they were not compatible with someone who should be on the pastoral team. It felt like a dagger for a moment

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or two, and then the grace of God hit me; I repented and began to rediscover who God had made me.

I had to do a lot of repenting to folks, but each time I did, I regained strength and clarity and realized how I had “lost myself.” The process did not take long. In fact, very quickly I felt like a load had been lifted off my shoulders, scales had fallen off my eyes, and I had a new energy supply. I had stopped leading myself; instead, I was driving myself, which led me to stop leading others and to drive them as well. Praise God for His grace and His restorative love.

Definition: Knowledge or understanding of one's own capabilities, character, feelings, or motivations:

Quote: “Nothing so conclusively proves a man’s ability to lead others as what he does from day to day to lead himself.” — Thomas Watson¹

Key verses: “And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First, get rid of the log in your own eye; then, you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye” (Matthew 6:3-5, NLT).

Kingdom Value: Those who are committed to being led by the Word and the Spirit are the most likely to lead by the Word and the Spirit.

John Maxwell introduced the concept of the “Mirror Principle.”² For a leader, this is not just an optional process of self-examination but a necessary one. For the Christian leader, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. We can say, as King David said,

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you,

and lead me along the path of everlasting life" (Psalm 139:23,24, NLT).

It's through humble submission to the Holy Spirit that we gain insight into our own hearts. In turn, we can then understand both God and us fully and functionally. A leader must be aware of the influences and experiences that have shaped them. As McNeal points out, "Communication patterns, capacity for intimacy, conflict-resolution skills, view of authority – all enormously important behaviors and attitudes in determining how we relate and respond to others – are initially formed and informed in our earlier years"³. We must know and believe who God says we are in Christ to ensure that our past is a place of reference, not residence. Leaders who neglect these issues may find themselves trapped in cycles, much like ancient Israel, or as Pete Scazzero says, "live as if we were simply paying for the mistakes of our past"⁴.

Honest assessments of levels of maturity and blind spots are vital to the leader's development. Again, McNeal describes self-awareness as, "the single most important piece of information a leader possesses."⁵ Professional and spiritual mentors and peer mentors are necessary, as they challenge each other's biases and decisions. This expands our self-awareness and awareness of the world around us. The self-aware leader can increase their emotional intelligence, perceive how others are being impacted in an interaction, and then develop ways to respond to others mutually beneficially. They become true peacemakers rather than just passive peacekeepers. The Bible says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God" (Matthew 5:9, NKJV, 2013). In addition, trusted companions can ask clarifying questions such as, "How would someone else hear what you just said?" This will increase our self-awareness and opportunities to seek the Lord for His counsel. Self-awareness can lead to self-management and, ultimately, to self-leadership.

Daniel Goleman writes about the need for leaders to stay in control of their feelings and impulses. This enables them to

create a culture of trust and comfort. This ability to manage the leader's feelings overflows into those they lead.⁶ We must deal with our anger, hurt, and rejection. Hurting and rejecting people hurt and reject people. It comes back to a struggle for identity.

Three wrong sources for our identity are:

"I am what I do" (Performance)

This is especially dangerous for men. We often derive so much of our sense of identity from what we do. We can see that because when we meet someone for the first time, what is one of the very first questions we will ask? "What do you do?" If someone asks us about that person later, we will often use what they do as their identity when we describe them. However, for Christians, their identity is not based on what they do but on what Jesus has done. Then, it is based on who God says we are, which He determined before we were even born.

Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are His workmanship—His *poiema* (from which we get the English word "poem")—created in Christ Jesus for good works that He prepared beforehand. God designed us precisely so we could do the good works He knew would need to be done before the earth's foundation. Identity comes first, and works is second. We can't let a "works" mentality compromise our identity. God is after progress, not perfection.

"I am what I have" (Possessions)

Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein." (NKJV)

The world constantly tells us that what we have—our possessions—measures our worth. This is a lie from the pit of hell. Here is a liberating truth for anyone who struggles to seek their identity from what they own: it all belongs to the Lord. We don't own anything. Hallelujah! I don't care how much you or I have; it is all God's. I am a steward on His behalf. And it's all going to burn

anyway! Only two things get out of this world: people and the Word of God.

When we struggle with this issue, it is largely due to using the wrong metrics. The only metrics that matter are WHO we have and WHOSE we are.

Not many people have heard of Edward Kimball, but many have heard of Dwight L. Moody, whose ministry saw more than a million souls come to Christ. Not many have heard of Mordecai Ham, but most have heard of Billy Graham. Billy Graham may have seen more people come to Christ than anyone else.

“I am what others think of me” (Popularity)

When Jesus was at the well with the woman in John 4, He told her anyone who drank the water from that well would get thirsty again. If you drink from the well of what people think of you, you will have to go back for more continually. Your thirst will never be satisfied, and you will never know who you are because you will feel the need to change who you are with the winds of opinion.

People who live for the approval of others or the successes of their ministries are destructive and dangerous to the body of Christ.

4 DISCIPLINES OF LEADING ONESELF

Develop the discipline of being a good follower.

A disciple is essentially a follower and one who develops as they follow.

Develop self-discipline.

Develop the discipline of patience.

Develop strong accountability.

Paul says that if anyone desires to lead, he desires a noble task (1 Timothy 3:1). He then outlines ethics and actions demonstrating the character needed for the “noble task.” So, let’s do a journey through 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

QUALITIES AND CHARACTER TRAITS OF LEADERSHIP FROM 1 TIMOTHY.

DESIRE AND PURSUE SERVICE (V. 1)

This is an inner desire to serve God and care for His people, as well as the discipline and diligence to pursue it. Again, it is not about the office—it is about the work: studying God’s Word and caring for God’s people. John MacArthur said, “Ambition for office corrupts, desire for service purifies.” First Peter 5:2 describes elders as people who should serve “eagerly.” It is not so much a drive to be a pastor or elder; it’s a drive to serve—a desire to do a “good work.”

Question: What is your motivation for being a leader?

LEADERS MUST BE ABOVE REPROACH (V. 2)

Leaders must be honest, humble, and transparent. “Above reproach” doesn’t mean perfect, but it does mean that a leader must be seen to live a life of integrity. It means there are no legitimate concerns about this man’s life that anyone can hold up and criticize. Remember, you are not above reproach because you say you are, but because you open your life to examination by those close to you.

John MacArthur gives several reasons for leaders to live above reproach:

- a. First, they are the special targets of Satan, and he will assault them with more severe temptation than others.
- b. Second, their fall has a greater potential for harm. Satan knows that when a shepherd falls, the effect on the sheep is devastating.

c. Third, leaders' greater knowledge of the truth and accountability to live it brings greater chastening when they sin.

d. Fourth, elders' sins are more hypocritical than others because they preach against the very sins they commit.

Are you living above reproach? How can you be "seen" to be so living?

FAITHFUL TO THEIR WIVES (V. 2)

Where is your heart toward your spouse? There cannot be a hint of sexual sin. What kind of messages are you sending to those of the opposite sex? Be wise. Your primary relationship in the home is marriage. Many are the leaders brought down by sexual promiscuity. Samson succumbed to sexual sin, and so did David and Solomon. In ministry, it is important to enlist those blameless in their relations with the opposite sex.

Paul said the elder must be "the husband of one wife." There have been many interpretations of this throughout the centuries. Some think it means elders must be married, however, this would disqualify Paul, Timothy, and Jesus. Others believe this forbids the practice of polygamy. Others think it disqualifies a divorced and/or remarried man. However, most likely, it has nothing to do with one's marital status at all. It literally can be translated "a one-woman man." It means, if he is married, he is faithful to his wife. If he is single, he doesn't flirt with women. He is not a ladies' man. David Guzik said, "This means that the biblical leader is not a playboy, an adulterer, a flirt, and does not show romantic or sexual interest in other women, including the depictions or images of women in pornography."

When God looks for a person to use for His ministry, He finds someone wise in their relations with the opposite sex.

How are your relations with the opposite sex? Where are your weaknesses?

BE TEMPERATE (V. 2)

The word Paul uses, “temperate,” literally means “wineless” or “unmixed with wine.” Metaphorically, it means to be *alert, watchful, vigilant, or clearheaded*. That may be its primary sense in this passage. A leader must be one who thinks clearly. He must possess the inner strength to refrain from any excess that would dull his alertness.

Excess in any area can affect our spiritual discernment. We must be wise and careful about our eating and drinking, sleep, entertainment, exercise, and relationships. We must be clearheaded to discern God’s will for our lives and others.

Are you temperate—practicing self-restraint? What areas in your life do you find yourself slipping into excess?

BE SELF-CONTROLLED (V. 2)

“Self-controlled” can be translated as “sober-mindedness.” Warren Wiersbe described the elder’s sober-mindedness this way: “He must have a serious attitude and be in earnest about his work. This does not mean he has no sense of humor or is always solemn and somber. Rather, it suggests that he knows the value of things and does not cheapen the ministry or the Gospel message by foolish behavior.”

To the sober-minded believer, faith is the most important aspect of their life. It affects everything they do—they are serious about it. Sadly, many pulpits have been cheapened by the humor proceeding from them. Peter said that preachers should speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11)—as their words come directly from Him.

Are you sober-minded—serious about God and the things of God? Are there areas of life and ministry where you are too casual?

BE RESPECTABLE (V. 2)

"Respectable" can also be translated as "orderly, of good behavior." It is the opposite of chaotic. A spiritual leader must have an orderly, well-disciplined life. Commentator Homer Kent said, "The ministry is no place for the man whose life is a continual confusion of unaccomplished plans and unorganized activities." God is a God of order and not of chaos (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:33)

Do you do what you say you will? Do you return texts, calls, emails?

As we grow in spiritual maturity, we can discipline our mind, body, and life to accomplish the tasks the Lord calls us to.

Are you orderly? Do you conduct affairs in a respectable manner?

BE HOSPITABLE (V. 2)

The word "hospitable" literally means "lover of strangers." His house is open to the saved and unsaved alike. If you come to my house, I want everything to be good. Attitude is everything. It was extremely important in ancient times, as there were not many inns. It also was important for traveling missionaries who visited and stayed in homes as they shared the gospel. Hebrews 13:2 says, "Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" (NLT)

Romans 12:13 tells all believers this about hospitality: "Contribute to the needs of the saints, pursue hospitality." The word "pursue" can also be translated as "practice" or "chase." It can mean a "strenuous pursuit."

Are you pursuing hospitality? How are you practicing love for strangers?

BE ABLE TO TEACH (V. 2)

This is the only non-character qualification on the list. Elders must be students and teachers of God's Word. Titus 1:9 says, "He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it." Therefore, he must have sound doctrine, encourage others with it, and refute those who teach wrong doctrine. This is one of the primary jobs of the elder or overseer.

Teaching is a characteristic of the spiritually mature. Though not necessarily spiritually gifted in it, they have developed the knowledge and the skill to do it. They are also passionate about sharing God's Word, whether in public or in private. You should also be able to defend the faith in your culture using the Word of God.

Are you committed to studying and sharing Scripture? Describe your spiritual disciplines in studying and teaching Scripture. How can you grow in them?

NOT BE DRUNKARDS (V. 3)

Paul says elders must not be given to drunkenness. Obviously, Scripture does not forbid drinking alcohol. Christ drank wine. The early Church used it during the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor 11:20-21). However, Scripture does caution us about drinking and forbids drunkenness. Proverbs 31:4-5 says, "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to crave strong drink, lest they drink and forget what is decreed, and remove from all the poor their legal rights."

Because Timothy was abstaining from alcohol altogether, he was having stomach problems, and Paul tells him to drink a little wine for the constant infirmities (1 Tim 5:23). Elders should, like Timothy, either avoid alcohol altogether to not cause someone to stumble (Romans 14:21) or limit its use. Alcohol can be a major

stumbling block in ministry in many cultures. For this reason, many ministers choose never to drink alcohol, which should be respected. If a culture deems it acceptable to drink wine, the Ephesians 5:18 rule must be followed, “And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery...”

NOT BE VIOLENT (V. 3)

“Not violent” can be literally translated “not a giver of blows.” The elder should not be known for physical violence, either publicly or privately. He must be a man who trusts God to fight his battles. Romans 12:19 says, “Do not avenge yourselves, dear friends, but give place to God’s wrath, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

Obviously, a violent man would greatly hinder God’s work in the church. But this is true for any spiritual leader; he or she would be a cause of discord instead of peace. Not being violent is a quality of the spiritually mature. We get a good picture of this in the story of David after losing his kingdom to his son, Absalom. While marching away from the kingdom, he is mocked by a man named Shimei. David’s men became angry and asked to take off his head. However, David responds, “Let him mock! Maybe, God will see his mocking and restore his blessings on me” (2 Samuel 16:9-12, paraphrase). David, though a man of war, was a man who trusted God to fight his battles.

Are you trusting God with your battles? What is your approach to controlling your temper?

BE GENTLE (V. 3)

The word “gentle” means forbearance and patience when wronged. John MacArthur’s comments are helpful: “Epieikēs (gentle) describes the person who is considerate, genial, forbearing, and gracious, who easily pardons human failure. Such a

person remembers good, not evil. He does not keep a list of all the wrongs done to him, or hold a grudge.”

Many men leave the ministry because they can’t accept criticism. A leader, when wronged, must have no thought of retaliation. In ministry, the elders are constantly criticized and attacked as they serve God faithfully. Therefore, they must be able to respond in a gentle manner—if not, they will aid in causing division and possibly church splits.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” There is a rest in being gentle, but it only develops through intimacy with Jesus. It is manifested by grace through faith.

Would the people you lead see you as gentle? What things cause you to react in a way that is not gentle? How will you grow in this area?

NOT BE QUARRELSOME (V. 3)

Essentially, Paul says elders should not be “contentious.” They are not argumentative, always fighting over something. They must be able to disagree without being disagreeable. Second Timothy 2:24-25 says, “And the Lord’s slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth.” God’s servants don’t quarrel because their confidence is not in their arguments or raising their voices. It is in God. They know God is the one who changes hearts—not them. Short tempers make for short ministries.

Do you find yourself commonly in an argument? What are your triggers? What types of things get you angry and can potentially cause you to stumble? How can you become more even-tempered?

NOT BE LOVERS OF MONEY (V. 3)

Ministry should not be chosen for career and financial aspirations but because of a desire to serve. In 1 Timothy 6:9-11, Paul said about the love of money, “Those who long to be rich, however, stumble into temptation and a trap and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils. Some people in reaching for it have strayed from the faith and stabbed themselves with many pains. But you, as a person dedicated to God, keep away from all that. Instead, pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness.”

Paul’s challenge to flee from the love of money does not just apply to money itself. Leaders should not be materialistic in general. They should not be consumed with clothes, electronics, cars, etc. Money and the things of this world must not have a grip on their hearts.

What material things might have too much of a grip on your heart? Do you struggle with coveting what others have? How can you gain freedom from this?

MANAGE THEIR HOUSEHOLDS WELL (V. 4-5)

Paul said leaders must manage their households well and control their children without losing their dignity. But if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for the Church of God? Managing one’s family is holistic. It includes faithfulness with finances. Does the leader pay his bills on time and stay out of debt? We must not let culture sweep away our children. If we faithfully care for our home, we will be faithful in caring for the church.

Sadly, this characteristic has been largely ignored in the Church. It is common for elders to have unruly children, have all types of debt, and neglect their families for ministry. Instead of managing their home in a manner worthy of full respect, their family is in

disorder. For this reason, elders and Christians in general must prioritize their family, even before the church. In 1 Timothy 5:4, Paul teaches that it is the first place where believers must practice their faith.

How is your family? What areas of growth can you address?

BE MATURE (V. 6)

Paul said a leader must not be a “recent convert.” The phrase means “one newly planted,” referring to a young Christian who has not been disciplined. A young believer might become prone to pride and, therefore, receive God’s judgment. “The church must not lift up those whom the Lord will later have to cut down.” While the spiritually immature are prone to pride, independence, and judgmentalism, the spiritually mature have learned humility, and God exalts them because of it. When God finds a man or woman to use, He finds someone who is mature and, therefore, humble.

Paul said that no good thing dwelled in his flesh (Romans 7:18). This humility opened the door for God to use him. James 4:6 says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

How do you see maturity in your own life? What are you doing to grow even more in maturity?

HAVE A GOOD REPUTATION AMONG THE LOST (V. 7)

“Well thought of” can literally mean “beautiful witness.” He must have a beautiful witness among outsiders. They may accuse him because of his doctrine and belief system, but they acknowledge his honesty, integrity, and hard work. The devil’s snare is the trap that Satan lays for those whose lives are not consistent with their profession and bring dishonor upon God and His Church.

Conclusion:

It is worth saying again that perfection is not expected, but progress is necessary.

Paul Kuzma says, "Healthy pastors are becoming more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible." So, the key to leading ourselves well lies in investing appropriately in our health as followers of Jesus.

Joseph Stowell has a good strategy for this, he says:

Renew daily (Secret Place time with the Lord),

Refresh weekly (draw away from the business and unwind)

Retreat monthly (intentionally go away and spend at least one day with the Lord in prayer, reading the Word, and silence)

Review annually (review to see where the Lord has met you, strengthened you, given you revelation, etc., determine adjustments for the next year)

We can be the kind of leaders Jesus is looking for if we start with ourselves. We must be transformed by the renewing of our minds and be conformed to the image of Christ.

Personal transformation always precedes corporate transformation.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Think about your areas of weakness. Be honest with yourself and with God (Psalm 139:7-12). Write them down as points of prayer in your daily time with God.
2. In what areas do you see your leadership influenced by past hurts and wounds? Forgive those who hurt you, and ask God to show you what you can learn from those experiences to be a better leader.

FOR ACTION

1. Seek out a resource to study that will help build strength in your areas of weakness.
2. Find a trusted friend who can observe your life and leadership and speak into areas when you need help by praying for you and being a sounding board. It has to be someone you trust, respect, and has permission to confront you!
3. Speak out loud and over your life the following Truth Declarations, every day for thirty days.

TRUTH DECLARATIONS

So often, in leadership, we can lose ourselves in the “work of ministry.” I want to encourage you to pray through this list and often declare the truths of Scripture over your life. It will help you stay grounded in God's truth of who you are.

In Christ... (Performance)

I can live righteously. (Romans 1:17, 3:21-22)

I can bear fruit. (John 15)

I can do greater works together than He did. (John 14:12)

I can triumph. (2 Corinthians 2:14)

I can do all things according to Him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

In Christ... (Possessions)

I have peace with God. (Romans 5:1)

I have redemption. (I've been brought back and bought back. Romans 3:24)

I have eternal life. (Romans 6:23)

I can have joy. (John 15)

I can have my prayers answered. (John 15)

I can have the desires of our heart. (Psalm 34)

I have every blessing in the spiritual realms. (Ephesians 1:6)

I have a holy calling. I'm established, anointed, called. (2 Timothy 1:9)

In Christ... (Popularity)

I am who the Bible says I am.

I am forgiven. (Ephesians 4:32)

I am justified. (Galatians 2:16)

I am a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

I am a son (or daughter) of God. (Galatians 3:26)

I am the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

I am seated with Christ in heavenly realms. (Ephesians 2:6)

I am established and anointed. (2 Corinthians 1:21)

FOR PRAYER

Father, you know the areas of my life where I am vulnerable to sin, selfishness, pride, and insecurity. I ask You to make them ever more visible to me so I can cast them at Your feet, repent, and receive the grace I need to overcome. I take heart, Jesus, because You overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil, to be the example of a perfect man and leader; an example that I can follow by grace through faith. I declare that I am Your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that You ordained beforehand for me to walk in. I trust You to make me the person You need me to be, to do those good and great works, and be the leader Your people need for them to do those works You created them for. Amen

PRINCIPLE 2

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

I REMEMBER many years ago when I was the mission pastor of a church; one of my responsibilities was to oversee the sending of short-term mission teams. One day I was talking to another pastor in our city, and he made the statement, “I would never have a woman lead a mission team.” I have to say I was a little shocked, and I didn’t quite know how to respond. There was a woman who had served at the church as my assistant. She had a huge heart for missions. Having been on a number of trips with me, I honestly thought she would make a great team leader.

I did appoint her to lead a team, and she did a wonderful job. I really believe that if I had not had her lead that team, they would not have been led as well. They would probably have had me as the team leader! But also, she would not have had the opportunity to step into the leadership role and answer more fully to the call of God on her life.

The lesson here is to look at the individual, discern what God is doing in their lives, how He has called and gifted them, and ask a question: are they humble, holy, and hungry? Or put it another way: are they FAT? That is faithful, available, and teachable? Just because a person is one gender or the other, a certain age, or

belongs to some other “group” doesn’t mean these FAT characteristics are automatically included or excluded from them. If we favor or dismiss someone from the potential of becoming a leaders based on the “group” they belong to, we operate outside the character and will of God

Definition: A way of efficiently leading a diverse group of people while respecting their uniqueness in an empathetic, prejudice-free way, without discrimination, bias, or favor.

Quote: “Genders and generations, races and graces, that’s where the fullness is.” —Dale Evrist¹

Key Verses: “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 3:27-28).

KINGDOM VALUE: Those who are often considered least by cultural standards are often considered greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is an unfortunate reality in our days that the term “inclusive,” like so many others, has been hijacked to promote an agenda. In this chapter, when the term “inclusive” is used, it means the opposite of exclusive. No believer is summarily excluded because they are part of a “set.” That could be exclusion of an age group or exclusion based on gender or ethnicity. The assumption is made that we are talking about born-again, Bible-believing Christians.

Jesus’ leadership team might have all been Jews, but what a group! Fishermen, a tax collector, the very young (John), and those older. Women might not have been on His leadership team, but they were on Paul’s. Bishop N.T. Wright noted that Phoebe was a woman entrusted with delivering the letter to the Romans¹. He describes her as a deacon and patron; in those times, the one who delivered the letter was expected to explain it. What a position of trust!

Jesus worked with a Samaritan woman to bring the gospel to Sychar, Philipp with an Ethiopian eunuch to Africa, and Paul with Lydia by the river in a Gentile city. The Bible is clear that God is no “respector” of persons; that is, He doesn’t exclude any believer from intimacy with Him and impact for Him if they are humble, holy, and hungry. Our leadership should look like His in every way.

We have to ask ourselves and answer honestly: am I excluding anyone from being raised as a leader based on my prejudices or preferences?

THE PRIMARY EQUIPPING FOR MINISTRY

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.” (Acts 2:16-18)

What Luke described in the book of Acts was the fulfillment of a promise Jesus made to His disciples shortly before His death and again moments before His ascension into heaven. Jesus promised that He would not leave His disciples as orphans but would send another comforter, the Holy Spirit, as a gift to empower them to be His witnesses in the world (John 14:16).

The disciples, obedient to Jesus' command, met together often and devoted themselves to prayer while they waited with holy anticipation. Just as He promised, Jesus Christ baptized His followers with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This unleashed divine power and authority into the community of believers who would later become known as the Church of Jesus Christ. But it wasn’t just the eleven men (apostles) who were present. It was one hundred and twenty men, women, young and old.

Christ did not intend for spiritual leadership to be exclusive or ethnocentric. He would only have poured out His Spirit on a select few if He had. Instead, as the prophet Joel first proclaimed and the Apostle Peter later confirmed, Jesus liberally poured out the Holy Spirit on His Church for the blessing and salvation of the nations.

ALL PEOPLE

*"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people."
(Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17)*

On the day of Pentecost, when the whole Church was gathered together, the sound of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the room where they were meeting. What seemed to be tongues of fire separated and came to rest on "each of them," baptizing them all with the promised Holy Spirit. Luke recorded that "all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." The phrases "each of them" and "all of them" indicate that none were left out or denied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When the Apostle Peter quoted the Old Testament prophet Joel in his anointed sermon, he proclaimed that the Holy Spirit would be poured out "on all people."

From Luke's narrative, we know at least fifteen languages and people groups heard and saw the evidence of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among believers that day. There were possibly more nationalities and languages represented in the crowd listening to Peter since people gathered from all over the known world in Jerusalem each year at Pentecost. What a perfect time and place for the Church to be born and for God to demonstrate the power and blessing of the Holy Spirit who now indwelt His people.

In many nations, certain people groups are discriminated against and denied access to resources and social privileges. Not so in the Kingdom of God! When writing to the Church in Ephesus,

located in Asia Minor, the Apostle Paul assured believers, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household” (Ephesians 2:19). To the church at Colossae, Paul wrote, “Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all” (Colossians 3:11).

We must ask ourselves as spiritual leaders if we are living out the values of the Kingdom of God and reflecting God’s heart for the nations. Jesus said the disciples were to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. We usually think about these in terms of geographical places. But what if Jerusalem represented those near us, “like us.” Judea would be those a little less like us but still somewhat familiar. Samaria would be those we would shy away from in fear, contempt, or even hate. The ends of the earth would be people with whom we have nothing in common; we don’t even think about their existence. Yet, spiritual leaders must be developed from all these groups.

God may be challenging you to step out of your comfort zone to begin building relationships with those in your church whom you have previously ignored. God may be convicting you to be more intentional about identifying, engaging, and nurturing potential leaders who are different from you. They may be male, female, young, old, of other ethnicities, origins, education, rich, or poor. Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will empower you to be a bridge-builder in your community, bringing together “all people” as members of one body in Christ.

The Church of the Lord Jesus is built around relationships. We are first sons and daughters, then brothers and sisters, and are called to become fathers and mothers. Leaders recognize and reinforce these relational dynamics so that everyone in the Church can be equipped and obedient to the Great Commission’s mandate to make disciples. Let’s look at where your next leaders might come from.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS

“In the last days, God says...your sons and daughters will prophesy.”

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, we see that young people were not given much attention or status in society. Even the disciples seemed perturbed when people brought their young children to Jesus so He could place His hands on them and pray. The disciples even rebuked them and tried to hinder them from approaching Jesus, believing He had more important matters to which He should attend. Jesus responded, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14). From this exchange, we learn a Kingdom value.

The Apostle Paul was intentional about cultivating sons in the faith. His greeting to Timothy reflects the quality and nature of their relationship. “To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (1 Timothy 1:2). Paul felt the same way about Titus, another young leader whom he considered his “true son in our common faith” (Titus 1:4).

In Acts 21, Luke records that Philip the evangelist, one of the seven original deacons chosen in the church at Jerusalem, “had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.” God gave them a prophetic ministry in the city of Caesarea, and they ministered alongside their father.

The young are often capable of extraordinary things. Mary was a teenager in a small town called Nazareth. The disciple whom Jesus loved was a teenage fisherman on the sea of Galilee. Even outside the Bible we see the same thing. Alexander the Great conquered most of the known world before he was 29 years old. One of the greatest scientists the world has ever known, Albert Einstein, published his breakthrough theory of relativity at the age of 26. Missionary Mary Slessor was 28 years old when she went to Nigeria. The list goes on and on.

Our call in considering raising leaders is to ensure we do not exclude the sons and daughters because of their age. They are indeed the “future of the Church,” but could they also be the “now” of the church?

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

“Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

When Jesus Christ came, He introduced the values of the Kingdom of God that often stood in stark contrast to existing culture. He declared that He came to break chains and set captives free. This news would have been most welcome and truly liberating to the women who heard Him teach. His grace-filled and respectful interactions with women are well-recorded in Scripture.

According to the Gospel of Luke, as Jesus went about proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God, several women joined His ministry team and were able “to support them out of their own means” (Luke 8:3). These resourceful women were partners in ministry with Jesus. They were greatly responsible for providing the necessary finances for Jesus and the disciples as they ministered.

Paul mentions several women in Scripture as partners in the gospel and courageous believers who contended at his side for the faith. Paul’s dear friend Priscilla and her husband Aquila were church planters and spiritual mentors to high-capacity leaders like Apollos. Lydia was a highly successful businesswoman in Philippi, an influential city in Asia Minor. Through her thriving business, she was able to influence the lives of others. Through her leadership, financial resources, and hospitality, God used Lydia to help plant a thriving church in Philippi. The one entrusted with delivering the letter to the Romans was a woman named Phoebe, who probably also gave answers and explanations to the recipients.

The Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, declared, “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 3:27-28). In Ephesians, Paul tells the church to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. This teaching would not have been popular or easily implemented due to the culture of their day. Yet Paul wrote under the Spirit’s influence and communicated God’s truth and expectations to His church. They were responsible to hear and obey the Word of God, even if it challenged their personal preferences or the customs of their society.

Regardless of your theology of spiritual leadership for your congregation, you can recognize women’s leadership roles in Jesus’ ministry and the early Church. They need to be encouraged, nurtured, and empowered to lead in strategic church ministries and marketplace initiatives. The Holy Spirit has been poured out on them, and it is God’s choice as to what gifts He bestows upon them for the edification of the Church and the enrichment of society.

FATHERS AND MOTHERS

“...your old men will dream dreams.”

A group often marginalized in global society is the elderly. While some societies venerate older generations, many do not. Often, as people age, they experience a shift in societal influence. Their opinions, life experience, and practical wisdom might be sought less and less by those who currently hold positions of influence. They start believing they have little to offer anymore and begin to withdraw, taking their wisdom and talents with them.

If an older man or woman under your leadership is still humble, holy, and hungry to serve and lead, rejoice! Look at these quotes from the Psalms.

“Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come” (Psalm 71:18 NIV). “They will still bear fruit in old age; they will stay fresh and green” (Psalm 92:14 NIV). “...who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Psalm 103:1-5). “I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being...” (Psalm 104:33). “One generation shall commend your works to another...” (Psalm 145:4-7).

In the book of Malachi, chapter 4, verse 6, we read:

*“And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”*

Notice the order. It is the fathers turning to the children first. Why? Can children raise themselves? Can a young, immature believer lead himself to maturity? No. We need to find those fathers and mothers who are committed to raising up the sons and daughters in the body of Christ. Invite them into leadership roles, especially roles that involve raising up the younger ones. There are no one-generational families; the same should be true of the Church.

Our Savior values all generations in the body of Christ. He chose to pour out the Holy Spirit on the young and the old alike. We must lean in to, learn from, then allow the mature and older disciples to use their gifts and experience to help lead God’s people.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Reflect on the leaders you have developed over the past three years. How diverse is this group? Are there

individuals you have overlooked because of their gender, age, or background?

2. How closely do your cultural values and preferences regarding the value of the young, the old, and women as leaders align with the example of Jesus and the teachings of Paul we discussed in this chapter?

FOR ACTION

1. What are some leadership roles you need to establish?
2. How will you expand your leadership team?
3. Set some primary timelines to help you move forward.

FOR PRAYER

Lord, my heart desires to be as inclusive of a leader as Your Son was when He walked this earth. In light of Jesus Christ including others in His spiritual journey and showing respect for young and old, men and women, sons and daughters, help me display that same grace and acceptance. Please help me not to allow cultural norms and peer pressure to keep me from living out Kingdom values regarding the role of women, older people, and young adults in spiritual leadership. Give me the grace to include and invest in others different from me, knowing that You are pleased when I model my leadership after Yours. I ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ, the ultimate leader.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 3

INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

MANY YEARS AGO, I was leading a large mission team on an international trip. In fact, it was the largest team we had ever done, with forty-five people in all. Our trip started with a conference organized by the leader of our church's denomination in that nation. Everything went smoothly at the conference, and everyone was happy. At the end of the conference, I went with this leader to look at what was supposed to be the focus of our trip: the construction of a church. We were to do construction during the day and then outreaches at night.

When we got to the church "location," it became obvious that something was not right. To cut a long story short, our hosts had not started the constructions at all, and they had not purchased any materials. Actually, they had not even purchased the land, and the leader was not one hundred percent sure where it actually was! I was not a very happy team leader. As he dropped me back at the team's accommodations, I asked him what we were supposed to do for the time the team was there. He said he would let me know in the morning. Instead, he left us, drove to the other side of the island, and then did not answer his phone.

I had forty-five people with no transportation, nobody to work with, no projects, nothing! What were we going to do? I had some folks on the team who, while not officially leaders, were people I felt could mobilize to help lead in this difficult situation. I gathered them and explained the situation, and after the shock had subsided, I reminded them of the vision the Lord had given for the team. We prayed. And we prayed some more. Then, I began to get them to talk to the people who were running the facility where we were staying, talk to the church just down the street, etc. When they came back and reported, we prayed and I felt that I had some direction. I told them what I sensed the plan should be, and that the Lord had actually chosen them to be on the team for the specific purpose of leading with me.

I restated the vision over and over again and told the team of the plans, and their individual team leads. We adjusted everything, and by the grace of God, had a successful trip. I am so thankful for God's grace as the vast majority of the team never even knew that something was not right. Good Kingdom work was done, we saw people come to Christ, team members operating in their gifting, and we even had some funds left over! An additional blessing was that four new mission team leaders were developed.

The most common thing they commented on was the intentionality of everything we ended up doing. By not being passive about anything, but intentional in everything, we accomplished the vision for the team, and they forgot that for a little while we were lost!

Definition: "Intentional leadership is being crystal clear on what you're trying to accomplish and taking the right action every day to do it."¹

Quote: "If you aim at nothing you will hit it very time."² —Zig Ziglar

Key Verse: “Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons” (Mark 3:13-15).

Kingdom Value: Intentional leaders hear from God and then do everything on purpose, with purpose, and for purpose.

Jesus was an intentional leader. He did everything on purpose. His choice of apprentices was not random or spontaneous. He knew exactly whom He wanted on His team and what needed to be done to help them become world-changing leaders. His strategy was simple and extremely successful.

The desired outcome was stated in His original invitation to follow Him. Come with Me. I’ll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. Only one out of twelve disciples failed to meet this expectation. The rest eventually became the bold, transformational leaders that He prepared them to be, because Jesus was intentional. What were the steps that Jesus took in His leadership development strategy?

HE WAS CRYSTAL CLEAR ON HIS MISSION AND COMMUNICATED IT WITH CLARITY AND CONSISTENCY

Now it may seem that the idea of Jesus communicating His mission with clarity and consistency is wrong. After all, look at how many times the disciples misunderstood or just were plain wrong! But we today are still benefiting from his clarity and consistency—and from being on this side of Calvary and Pentecost! Take time to read the following scriptures, and then write down how the Lord has called you to walk and labor. Are you clear? Are you communicating it clearly and acting in a way that’s consistent with it?

Mark 10:45

Luke 4:18,19

Luke 4:43

Luke 19:10

John 3:17

John 10:10

Now there are all kinds verses that could have been listed; these are certainly only a few. Take some time to search out more and when you can, and communicate the vision to your new leaders as clearly as you can. Also, say it often!

SET AN EXAMPLE WORTH FOLLOWING

“He appointed twelve that they might be with him.”

Jesus desired for His disciples to be up close and personal. He set a perfect example of spiritual leadership and was comfortable living an examined life in close proximity with those He called. They got to see Him nearly every waking hour for three years as He provided the perfect example of spiritual leadership.

Jesus was being intentional when He washed the feet of His disciples shortly before His death. He seized the opportunity to leave an enduring example of servant leadership. When He had completed this menial task, motivated by a practical need (their feet were dirty and needed washing) and a desire to demonstrate His enduring love for His disciples, He told them that they would be blessed if they followed His example.

Jesus also revealed that He followed His Father’s example throughout His earthly ministry. He told them He did what He saw His Father doing. He enlightened them to the fact that His Father was always working, and how He came to finish His Father’s work. Our Heavenly Father was the example Jesus followed in complete obedience throughout His earthly life, and Jesus became the example for all believers who wish to walk in that same obedience. We are to complete the work Jesus gave us to do, and we accomplish it by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the

author and perfecter of our faith, and by walking in His footsteps.

"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." 1 Corinthians 11:1

The Apostle Paul also set an example worth following. In true humility, he was able to exhort the believers in the church of Corinth to follow his example as he followed Christ. Few spiritual leaders would feel qualified to make this statement; however, this is exactly what we should be saying to new leaders. We are all imperfect vessels, jars of clay, but by God's grace and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we can set a proper example of spiritual leadership and true discipleship as we follow the example of Jesus Christ.

All new leaders desperately need Christ-like examples. They are not looking for perfection, but they are seeking authentic, humble, Spirit-filled leadership modeled up close and personal.

STEWARD YOUR AVAILABILITY

When Jesus launched His ministry, He immediately chose twelve men from various backgrounds and vocations to be His disciples. He left behind His career as a carpenter in order to focus full-time on preaching the gospel, healing the sick, casting out demons, and developing these men into mature spiritual leaders.

For the next three years, these leaders-in-training lived with Jesus and followed Him wherever He went. It was His intent that they be with Him, have complete access to Him, and maintain top priority in His daily schedule. In addition to His other leadership responsibilities, He set aside special time with Peter, James, and John.

Jesus often pulled back from incredible ministry opportunities and speaking engagements in order to properly steward His time and availability with the twelve disciples. There was always more that could be done and said among the multitudes. Some-

times there were people who went away without having their spiritual and physical needs met. It wasn't that Jesus was insensitive or selfish, but rather He was modeling proper balance in ministry and stressing the importance of spiritual and physical replenishment in order for a leader to maintain proper health, spiritual growth, and ministry fruitfulness over the long haul.

Jesus set an example for leaders from all generations regarding strategic stewardship of time, energy, relationships, and influence. He was able to set healthy boundaries and did not allow people's expectations to set His agenda. Developing leaders need to have access to your leadership, and that only happens if you properly steward your availability.

EXPAND YOUR INNER CIRCLE

Although Jesus had an innermost circle of three disciples and an intimate circle of twelve, He still made room in His life for a larger circle of followers He trained, sent out, and debriefed when they returned from their ministry service. Depending on which of the Gospels you read, the number of this team was either seventy or seventy-two. Regardless, the principle is the same. Jesus sometimes expanded His inner circle to include and make Himself available to a larger group of devoted followers and potential future leaders.

You probably have a small inner circle of spiritual leaders you are mentoring. You may even have an intimate circle of ten to twelve leaders who have access to your leadership. I want to encourage you to expand your inner circle from time to time to allow some new leaders to have access to your leadership. Give them strategic opportunities to learn from your leadership and permission to ask questions. Provide meaningful ministry assignments that stretch their faith and creativity. Occasionally, invite one or two of them into leadership staff or elder board meetings to learn how healthy leadership teams function. Spend a few minutes after the meeting to allow them the opportunity to

ask questions or share their observations. Take a small group of young leaders to conferences you attend, or take them on a spiritual retreat to model connecting with the Father in deeper ways.

You don't necessarily have to create new time and space in your existing schedule in order to expand your inner circle. Simply think of ways to utilize the meetings and commitments you already have, and invite them to tag along. These opportunities will mean a great deal to them, and will help them learn valuable lessons from your leadership. You may find that such moments become the highlight of your week.

Although the majority of your spiritual investment will be in your innermost circle, it is good to follow the example of Jesus by occasionally expanding your circle. The seventy plus disciples who Jesus sent out got to experience amazing ministry, and they saw God work in and through them as they carried out the task that Jesus entrusted to them. His occasional investment in this larger group yielded significant Kingdom results. You may find that your investment in additional leaders yields similar results.

Even now, God may be convicting you to enlarge your inner circle. He may be giving you an idea or two on how to engage developing leaders in occasional leadership development opportunities. Pray for guidance, plan well, and follow through. It will be worth the relational investment and spiritual deposits you make in new leaders.

MODEL GREAT LEADERSHIP

Jesus modeled great leadership. This was indeed the point of allowing the disciples to be with Him and follow Him for three years. He wanted His leadership to significantly influence and inform theirs. The disciples had many opportunities to see Jesus model what He was teaching. They saw how He treated people, what He prioritized, how He gave thanks for meals, when He chose to pull back from a busy ministry schedule and spend time with His Father, and how He demonstrated His love to

people with whom no one else wanted to associate. Jesus modeled greatness through meekness, love through service, patience through suffering and persecution, and forgiveness and grace.

Leaders in your church or business need great leaders to follow. They need you to model excellent leadership and to help them nurture their own leadership. Again, greatness does not mean perfection, but rather Christlikeness and excellence. Are you modeling great leadership for potential new leaders?

NURTURE A HEALTHY LEADERSHIP CULTURE

Jesus chose men from different socio-economic backgrounds, religious beliefs, and vocations. He allowed them to be themselves, with all their imperfections, prejudices, and doubts. They had freedom to be sinners who were loved unconditionally, even as they argued amongst themselves, tattled on each other, and tried to be first in line and most important. Although Jesus was transforming them into adventurers who would boldly take the Good News to the ends of the earth, He understood that spiritual formation is a process of learning and maturing that can at times be messy and slow. He saw the diamonds inside the rough exteriors and the great leadership potential hidden behind spiritual immaturity.

What were some of the elements of the leadership culture that Jesus established? First, each of these leaders knew they were chosen. Jesus purposely sought out each individual and personally invited him to be on His team. They knew they belonged. Second, Jesus always spoke the truth in love. Peter and the other disciples knew this element of Jesus' leadership quite well. Third, Jesus created a culture of servant leadership marked by personal humility and willingness to take the lesser place. Fourth, Jesus created a missional leadership culture, ministering to the sick and the poor, spending time with tax collectors and prostitutes, and modeling generosity and compassion toward

those who were in need. Jesus created a leadership culture that was marked by grace and forgiveness.

CREATE MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND PRACTICE

Jesus gave His disciples many opportunities to practice what they had been taught through observation and authoritative teaching. Two well-known examples are when He sent the twelve disciples on a mission to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out demons. He commissioned an even larger group of disciples to go and do likewise. Jesus expected a great deal from His followers. He sent them on a mission trip without a suitcase, no trip cash, and no hotel reservations. They basically went out armed with a message and the clothes on their backs. Yet they came back home rejoicing from both assignments, excited that God had used them mightily and that they had been entrusted to perform an important task without Jesus showing up to take over the ministry. He trusted them to figure out a place to stay, to find places to preach and teach, and to have the boldness and creativity to engage people in need of hope. Jesus could have gone along as a silent observer, but He wanted them to learn to apply what they had learned in ways that increased their confidence and made an eternal difference in people's lives. When they came back home and reported to Jesus what God had accomplished through them, Jesus didn't sit them down and immediately tell them how they could have done it better. He rejoiced and celebrated with them. He was happy for their successes. In fact, He depended on these intentional training exercises to prepare them in advance for a future global mission.

You, too, have the ability to create meaningful opportunities for new leaders in your church or organization to practice and reinforce what they are learning from your leadership. However, for this to be a reality, some leaders reading this book will need to make some important adjustments. First, you must learn to trust your newer leaders. Trust that they have been listening to you and observing your leadership more than they appear to be.

Trust that when given an opportunity to step up their leadership, they will rise to the occasion.

Second, you must show that you believe in their potential to do amazing things. What do your words and body language communicate when you interact with them? Third, you need to stretch their faith and encourage their imagination. Give them important problems to address. Allow them the latitude to figure out solutions and attempt initiatives without micro-management or unnecessary interference from you. Trust in the Holy Spirit's activity and direction in their lives and trust them. They need to learn and practice in a grace-filled leadership culture. You have no idea what new leaders are capable of until you give them opportunities to engage and apply their influence in important ministry or business projects.

FOR THOUGHT

1. How are you intentionally developing the leadership culture of your church or business? Would it be described as a grace-filled, forgiving, authentic culture, or would some describe it as a culture of performance, fear, or control?
2. What is your plan for developing new leaders? Are you intentionally implementing a plan?
3. Do you think new leaders feel that they have access to you?

FOR ACTION

1. Take time to write out a plan of intentional steps to identify and develop new leaders.
2. What are three potential opportunities that you can create to expand your inner circle to include new leaders?
3. Pray and then write down the names of three people who are currently not on your leadership team that God might want you to invest in and raise up.

FOR PRAYER

Jesus, Lord and Master, thank you for being an intentional leader. You were purposeful in who You selected to join Your innermost circle. Yet You had time to occasionally expand that circle in order to develop other spiritual leaders and accomplish important tasks. Help me to follow Your example of intentional leadership. Help my life to set a godly example of excellent spiritual leadership in my home, community, and workplace. Give me wisdom to submit to the Holy Spirit's leadership as together we create a leadership culture in my church or business that is healthy, full of grace and forgiveness, and focused on developing new leaders. Help me be a better steward of my time and leadership in order to leverage them for Your eternal purposes. I pray this in Your name, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 4

RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WHEN I LIVED in Mexico and served as a missionary, one of my roles was that of the worship pastor. How I ended up in that role is a long story for another time. I didn't speak Spanish, but I learned through the songs that were part of the worship catalog. As much as I enjoyed leading worship, what was the most fulfilling was working with all the young musicians and singers. They had been used to working with someone who was a little more autocratic and personally distant from them. This worship pastor had little contact with them except at rehearsals or on Sundays in the services. Now they had a "leader" who was totally dependent on them to teach him how to do his job!

This inevitably meant we had to spend more time together. It was those times we spent together that allowed us to become a community of worshippers, and in fact, me as their leader. The more time we spent together the less time we actually spent on the business of "doing worship." More and more our times together became about talking about life, the Lord, and living in a culture opposed to the things of God. It was a rich time.

One of the things the young people would do fairly often was to come to our house at 11 o'clock at night (maybe ten of them),

and just sit with my wife and I and talk, laugh, and sometimes pray. We loved having them in our home and they seemed to love being there. Our fellowship never caused them to get sloppy, to try to get away with not being on time, or not do their best. We became a family, and everyone wanted to honor the Lord and each other by doing excellent service.

After some time, one of the young men asked me, “Pastor John, would it be okay if we called you, “Papi Juan?” Juan is the Spanish for my name, John. “Papi” is an affectionate term like “Dad.” This was very bold and not common in the church setting, but it brought tears to my eyes. It showed we had built a deep relationship. They were in my home, as sons and daughters, who had authentic relationship, and the culture we developed spread through the growing worship arts community and impacted the whole church.

Definition: Relational Leadership is a people-centric form of leadership that focuses on the individual rather than their output. Relational Leadership values relationship over position, process, or policy.¹

Quote: “Leadership is a relationship” —Kouzes and Posner²

Key Verse: “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead I have called you friends...” (John 15:15, NIV).

Kingdom Value: Relationships are the currency of the Kingdom. First is our relationship to the King, our ultimate leader, and then flowing from that are relationships with everyone else.

PRACTICE HOSPITALITY

Jesus told one would-be follower, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). It seems difficult to practice hospitality if you don’t have a domicile. However, we must see hospitality in a broader sense than entertaining guests in our home. Henri

Nouwen described hospitality as “primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines”³.

When Jesus entertained Nicodemus, who fearfully sought Him out under the cover of darkness, He created sacred space for the gospel. When Jesus took His disciples away for a spiritual retreat, He was practicing hospitality, orchestrating a time and space for His disciples to sharpen their leadership skills and increase their learning.

We, too, must see hospitality as a key ingredient for building deeper relationships with others. For many spiritual leaders, practicing hospitality is as natural as breathing because it has deep roots in their culture. For others, practicing hospitality seems unnatural and can be quite intimidating. It might be helpful to view hospitality in a broader sense that includes opening your home, your life, your schedule, and your heart as sacred space for others to see and hear the gospel.

ESTABLISH AUTHENTIC MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Think back on your early years of spiritual leadership. Who were the people who most influenced you during those formative years? You may readily name one or two who made significant spiritual deposits in your life. Upon deeper reflection, you might even name four or five people who helped shape you into the leader you are today.

In the 1990s, Paul Stanley and Robert J. Clinton conducted a study of spiritual leaders who finished well. After surveying over one thousand spiritual leaders, they were able to identify five particular characteristics they all shared. One commonality was that they each had a network of meaningful relationships and several important mentors during their lifetime. Stanley and

Clinton define mentoring as “a relational experience through which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources”⁴.

Establishing authentic mentoring relationships should happen on two levels. First, you should have mentors in your own life in order to finish well and set an example to others. You need peer mentors who are beside you in your spiritual journey, and you need at least one mentor who is further along in the journey than you are. Once these relationships are in place, you will be properly fortified and equipped to mentor others more effectively. Second, you should develop authentic mentoring relationships through which you may empower new leaders by sharing your God-given resources with them.

A word of exhortation is in order. Don’t take a passive stance in developing mentoring relationships, waiting for new leaders to have the courage to approach you. Be proactive. Approach young people in whom you see potential for spiritual leadership. There are many examples in Scripture of great spiritual leaders who deliberately and strategically selected those they desired to mentor. Elijah chose Elisha. Jesus singled out twelve future apostles. Barnabas went in search of Paul. Paul selected Timothy, Titus, and other young leaders from Asia Minor. Priscilla and Aquila sought out Apollos and “invited him into their home to explain the way of God more adequately” (Acts 18:26, NIV84).

ENCOURAGE CONSTELLATIONS OF MENTORS

According to Stanley and Clinton, “A growing leader needs a relational network that embraces mentors, peers, and emerging leaders in order to ensure development and a healthy perspective on his or her life and ministry”⁵. Stanley and Clinton were among the first to use the term “constellation of mentors” for the group of mentors that a person gathers around their life. No single mentor can meet all the mentoring needs of a growing spiritual leader.

Not every mentoring relationship is meant to be long-term. Sometimes God calls people alongside us for a particular phase of our spiritual development, and then calls others to take their place or join them in mentoring us. Leaders should not take this mentoring dynamic personally, but should understand that the Holy Spirit uses a constellation of mentors to develop spiritual leaders.

There are several reasons for having a group of mentors around us. First, our mentoring needs change at different stages of our spiritual journey. For example, if God is calling a young leader to plant a new church, he or she would be wise to seek out a new mentor who has experience in planting and growing a healthy church. A seasoned church planter will undoubtedly have more insightful advice and perspectives regarding birthing a church than other mentors might possess.

It is not disloyal for a young leader to change mentors or add new mentors to their mentoring relationships. In fact, a discerning mentor should anticipate that changes are needed and should assist the young leader in the process of approaching an additional mentor. It is wise to discuss this possibility when you first establish your mentoring relationships with a new leader. Give them permission in advance to adjust their mentoring constellation as necessary, and offer to assist them with re-assessing their mentoring needs. Affirm them for taking ownership of their mentoring relationships. This should relieve any unnecessary anxiety and false guilt on their part if adjustments are needed.

A second reason to encourage a constellation of mentors is that no one mentor possesses all the wisdom, experience, and perspectives young leaders need to develop in their journey. We all have certain spiritual gifts, practical skills, and life experiences to offer, yet we don't have them all. We must think of ourselves soberly and with Christ-like humility, and realize that those we seek to mentor often need a different or additional mentor in order to reach their God-given potential. Remember

that our task as mentors is to cooperate with the Holy Spirit's agenda rather than our own.

Allow me to use a personal example. I am currently mentoring a young man who recently revealed that he senses God is leading him into a new business venture. He has a certain degree of practical experience, but has never started this type of business. I prayerfully suggested for him to seek out a Christian business professional who has successfully started and grown a healthy business of this nature. I made a recommendation of a potential mentor and introduced them via email. They have recently reached out to one another and plan to meet soon to discuss the possibility of entering into a mentoring relationship. Rather than feeling uncomfortable about this, I am pleased that I am helping this young man along in his spiritual journey. I still provide spiritual mentoring, but he requires an additional mentoring relationship in order to best prepare him to move in the direction he believes God is leading.

A third reason for having a constellation of mentors is to gain consensus when we are having a difficult time discerning God's guidance. A wise person seeks council from trusted sources. Often God will speak to our hearts through a consensus of other believers who know and care about us. This type of council affirms that our anticipated course of action is wise and in line with God's activity in our lives. If only one mentor or peer mentor agrees with us, and two or three others have serious concerns, this should be reason for us to pause and address their misgivings before moving forward.

A fourth reason for a constellation of mentors is that we see it modeled in Scripture. Paul instructed Timothy to mentor others while Paul was still mentoring him. Those people Timothy mentored were to be actively mentoring others at the same time they were being mentored by Timothy.

I want to suggest a simple starting point to build a healthy mentoring model in your own life. Let me use an example from

everyday life. When a new house is built in our community, often a tree is planted in the front yard. Because mature trees are often too expensive to transplant, most homeowners will purchase a young tree, not much more than a sapling. Immature trees need structural support while they are growing and putting down roots. Often a stabilization method is used to ensure that the plant will stay upright and straight during seasons of rain and high winds. The planter will drive stakes in the ground at equal distances a few feet from the tree, and will tie strands of wire or tubing to the stake and the tree for the necessary support.

Visualize your own life as a young tree in need of strong and reliable support in order to be firmly rooted and continue growing straight and tall. Think of the support stakes as mentors in your life: a Barnabas to encourage you, a Paul to challenge you, and a Timothy to keep you sharp in your leadership development. The wires represent accountable and authentic relationships binding you to these mentors. If the wires become broken or relaxed, the stakes are ineffective. If the wires are too tight, the tree will not retain the flexibility to grow strong and ability to withstand storms. There must be strong and secure mentoring relationships, bound together and held in place by the Holy Spirit for new leaders to develop properly.

Unlike a young tree that eventually has no need for external support, you and I will always need mentoring relationships to keep us strong and growing in the right direction. The moment we think we no longer need others speaking into our lives and journeying with us is the moment when pride and self-sufficiency begin to creep into our hearts, causing us to be vulnerable to our own fleshly natures, sinful influences in the world, and spiritual attacks of the evil one.

BUILD COMMUNITY

I love how the Gospel of Mark describes the relationship that Jesus built with His twelve disciples. He intentionally sought them out “that they might be with Him.” He decided they should become friends as well as followers. For three years, He invested not only in quality time with His disciples, but quantity time as well.

Jesus decided that His leadership development methods would include participating in life with His disciples, letting them see Him throughout the day in the moments when the crowds weren’t watching. They saw Him when He was tired, hungry, in need of silence, and craving solitude. They saw Him express emotions of frustration with their lack of faith and watched His anger flare at the hypocrisy and spiritual blindness of the Pharisees. They watched Him grieve and weep at the loss of a close friend. He modeled authentic leadership and invited the twelve into deeper spiritual companionship. He made room at the fire for small talk, friendly banter and deep spiritual conversations. He built a faith community that was a model for all of us to emulate. Jesus invested in honest relationships with emerging spiritual leaders, fashioning them into an authentic community around the central belief that He was their Lord and Christ, and they were His friends. And so should we.

I encourage you not to follow the example of spiritual leaders who feel they should remain aloof and distant from others within their congregations or businesses. Regardless of their reasons, we do not see this leadership model encouraged in Scripture. Instead we see spiritual leaders like Jesus, Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Priscilla, Aquila, and Titus opening their lives to other believers and making themselves available as companions on the shared spiritual journey. God also knows our human limitations, so it is wise to select a handful of relationships like Jesus did.

Perhaps the biggest reason some spiritual leaders insist on remaining distant is that they are afraid—fearful of being vulnerable, unwilling for others to see who they really are and how they really act behind the scenes. They are terrified of being seen as human and sinful, which is what all of us truly are. God never expects perfection. He knows how we are formed, that we are dust. But He does expect truth and authenticity from spiritual leaders. May God relieve us of the burden of living for the approval and accolades of others. May He free us to be real with those we lead, living authentic, imperfect and forgiven lives, depending on the goodness and mercy of God rather than on a false persona of spiritual leadership.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Take a moment to reflect upon the spiritual mentors and peer-mentors that the Holy Spirit sovereignly placed in your life when you were a younger leader. Take a moment to thank your Heavenly Father for bringing them into your life. Consider contacting them if possible to express your gratitude for their spiritual investment and support.
2. Draw a chart of your current constellation of mentors with you in the middle. Who is ahead of you in the journey? Who is beside you as a peer mentor? Who is behind you in the journey that sees you as their spiritual mentor? Who is missing from this constellation?
3. How are you doing at practicing the spiritual discipline of hospitality? Is there sacred space in your life for new authentic relationships with new leaders? What actions might you take to open your heart, calendar, home, or mentoring constellation to offer hospitality to young leaders?

FOR ACTION

1. From your reflections on the questions above, identify three potential leaders with whom you can build authentic relationship.
2. Speak with each of the above individuals and set a time to meet with them, informally, to begin to share life.
3. Begin to identify in each of these new mentees areas of their lives and leaderships where relationship with you can help them grow and flourish.

FOR PRAYER

Father, thank you for the spiritual mentors You have strategically placed in my life throughout my spiritual journey. They have made an eternal difference, and I am grateful to them and to You for their influence. Lord, help me create sacred space in my life for new mentoring relationships. Give me courage to reach out to potential new leaders to make sure I give them the spiritual support they need to develop as great leaders. Father, I want to run the race well and finish strong, bringing other spiritual leaders with me in the journey. May we all hear “Well done” from Your lips at the end of our shared spiritual journey.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 5

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

I HAVE a friend who is a pastor in the country of Mexico. I have known him for over 25 years now. He is a great servant leader for those in the churches he has planted. Both leaders on his team and people in the congregation know they can call him, and he will help. He has rescued people stranded on the freeway when their vehicles have broken down. He will receive a call and jump in his truck with his tools. He does whatever it takes to get them back going again. Other times, he will get a call from a family struggling with a child in the middle of the night. He will pray, encourage, and, if necessary, go and visit them. Always in his mind is the model of Jesus, who came to serve, not to be served.

His approach to his leadership team is the same. He is always seeking to find ways to serve them so that they grow as believers, leaders, and examples to their congregation. He wants to see the “good work that Jesus has started in them brought to completion” (Phil 1:6) so they can fulfill their destinies in Christ. To me, he is a great example of a servant-leader.

Definition: Servant leadership is a style of leadership that priori-

tizes the growth, well-being, and empowerment of employees being served.¹

Quote: “The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve and to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”² —Robert K. Greenleaf

Key Verse: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45, NKJV).

As with much in the life of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, things seem upside down! Jesus touches a leper (Mark 1:40, 41), and instead of Him becoming unclean, the leper is cleansed. Then, regarding the Kingdom of God, “So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 18:4, NLT). Finally, Jesus said, “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matthew 23:11). There is something different about how things work in the structure of God’s idea of relationships and roles in leadership.

The greatest example of servant leadership is found in Philipians 2:5-11. The passage describes Jesus laying aside all the rights and privileges of divinity to serve the Father’s mission to redeem lost humanity. First Peter 2:21 asserts that Jesus endured this humiliation to leave a pattern for His believers to follow. This type of servanthood is spiritual and must be “caught” rather than “taught.” Sanders states that Jesus was not interested in mere behavioral change when speaking of servant leadership, but rather, “Jesus wanted to impart the spirit of servanthood.”³

These verses are often used to support a biblical basis for servant leadership.

“But Jesus called them to Himself and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your

servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave” (Matthew 20:25-27, NKJV).

“For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves” (Luke 22:27, NKJV).

“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded” (John 13:3-5, NKJV).

While the biblical principles of servant leadership have been around for thousands of years, it wasn’t until the 1970s that the concept entered the business world through Robert Greenleaf. He was a retired executive of a giant communications company in the United States. He had some connection to Christianity, but his ideas, while aligning with the Bible in some areas, are not exclusively Christian or “faith-based.” His ideas were stimulated by a book about a group that went on an incredible journey. The servant who did all the menial chores was the one who sustained the group with his spirit and songs. One day, he went missing, and the group quickly fell apart. Years later, a group member found him and was astonished to know he was the head of the organization that sponsored the whole enterprise. He was a great and noble leader.

Does that sound like anyone else we know?

Kingdom Value: The one with the greatest authority has the greatest responsibility to serve.

So, what can we learn from the principle and practice of servant leadership as Christian leaders?

1. THE CHRISTIAN LEADER MUST SERVE GOD FIRST BEFORE SERVING THOSE THEY LEAD.

Murray says of Jesus, “He felt Himself the Servant of God for the men who God made and loved. As a natural consequence, He counted Himself the Servant of men, that through Him God might do His work of love.”⁴ Moses got into trouble in the book of Exodus when he forgot he was supposed to serve God first, and then God would use him to serve the people. In Numbers 20:10, we read, “And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, ‘Hear now you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’” Those words, “must we,” were his downfall. God would bring the water out of the rock as Moses served Him through obedience. Of course, we also see what happened when Aaron forgot who he was supposed to serve, and he served the people by building a golden calf! Not a good plan.

2. SERVANT LEADERSHIP IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

We can’t get a better example than we see in Philippians 2:

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.”

Enough said!

So, what does servant leadership look like?

CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT LEADERS

One of the foremost experts on servant leadership, Larry Spears, identified the following characteristics of a good servant leader⁵. These characteristics can be good indicators for determining whether we manifest authentic servant leadership. Of course, it all starts with the heart. So, at the end of each paragraph, we have a reflection question to help in some self-assessment. This allows us to let the Lord search our hearts and change us so that we might then be agents of change in the lives of others. We can also see how the Bible supports the manifesting of these characteristics.

1. Listening:

Proverbs 18:13: “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame” (ESV).

James 1:19: “Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.” (NLT).

We usually expect leaders to speak, direct, give instructions, etc., but for the Christian leader, God says we must start by carefully listening—first to God and then to those we lead. Leading like Jesus is impossible without listening to God. “For I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak” (John 12:49, NASB20)

How often are people disappointed or offended because a leader has given them an answer on what to do before they have even asked a question? How can we serve those we lead well if we don’t know—through a lack of listening—what they need? When people feel heard, they are strengthened and more willing to change.

Reflection Question: How well do I listen to those I lead?

2. Empathy:

Romans 12:15: “Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep” (NLT).

What is empathy? Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Our assurance that Jesus has empathy for us is found in Hebrews 4:15-16: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin” (NIV).

What a comfort to know that Jesus leads us with perfect empathy. He is not detached from our experiences nor dismissive of our hurts.

Servant leaders seek to understand before being understood. They recognize that it is the grace of God for them that allows them to be in the position to serve. People need to feel a sense of acceptance from their leaders. C.S. Lewis once said that friendship begins when one person says to another, “You too?”⁶ Empathy can often be expressed in the same way. Empathy can build trust. Trust increases the strength of “followership.” Elmore states of Jesus, “He didn’t shout his orders from heaven, but came to live with us in our miserable state, and ‘mentored us from below’”⁷

Reflection Question: How do I communicate empathy to those I lead?

3. Healing:

Psalm 147:3: “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

God is in the healing business! So many in the Church are still suffering from the effects of brokenness brought on by the attacks of the world, the flesh, and the devil. A primary avenue for these attacks is through the breaking of relationships. A

servant leader seeks to bring wholeness in the relationships of those they serve, with God, self, and others. In his essay, “The Servant as Leader,” Greenleaf writes, “There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.”⁸

In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says we are to come to Him, and He will give us rest—a sense of peace, well-being, and shalom.

Reflection Question: How do those we lead find “rest” when they come to us?

4. Awareness:

Romans 12:3: “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”

One of the greatest things we can be is “self-aware.” What do we mean by this? It means understanding our own thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs, and actions. If those align with Jesus’, our leadership will look like His. Awareness helps us understand issues involving ethics, power, and values. It helps us view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. It is vital to ensure we are leading and not manipulating for our benefit or leading from prejudices or biases.

Rightly knowing ourselves means recognizing when we tend to lead from the flesh, even “positive flesh,” rather than by the Spirit.

Reflection Question: How well do you know yourself and recognize how it influences your leadership?

5. Persuasion:

Second Corinthians 10:1 NKJV: “Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—

who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.”

Another characteristic of servant leaders is a reliance on persuasion rather than on position. The servant-leader seeks to convince rather than coerce. It is one of the most explicit distinctions between the traditional authoritarian or “command and control” model and servant leadership. Again, persuasion is not manipulation. That would be utterly counter to servant leadership. Persuasion involves helping someone see, perhaps by confirming what they sense the Lord has already spoken to them, that a particular course of action is the Lord’s will. Second, it is for their benefit. Manipulation is trying to persuade someone to do something for our benefit!

Reflection Question: How do you convince those you serve in leadership to carry out assignments?

6. Conceptualization:

“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord...”
—Isaiah 6:1

The prophet Isaiah had a tremendous vision that shook him to his core. However, it did not impact him for just a moment; instead, it was the guiding force for his entire ministry. One of the things that can hinder us is becoming preoccupied with day-to-day activities. We then can view those we lead as means to “get the job done.” This erodes our ability to keep the big vision God has given us clear and “front and center” in our thinking, which does the same for those we lead. Servant leaders have to steward God’s gift to see the big vision. We have to see beyond the day-to-day, and as the angel said to John in Revelation, “Come up here.”

Reflection Question: How are you preventing the day-to-day details and challenges from clouding the big picture?

7. Foresight:

"...the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do..."
 —1 Chronicles 12:32, NKJV

Foresight is very similar to what we just looked at with conceptualization. It is the ability to learn from the past, discern what is happening in the present, and "see" what God wants in the future. It is not necessarily a prophetic gift, but it can be. It is knowing by intuition. We know and see, but we are not sure exactly how. As servant leaders, one of our responsibilities is to anticipate and act so that the best outcomes for those we lead come to pass.

If we commit to being led by the Spirit moment by moment, we can have this foresight. This is what Jesus said in John 16:13:

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Reflection Question: How are we making sure we are connected to the Holy Spirit moment by moment?

8. Stewardship:

"The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the Lord." —Psalm 24:1

"Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God."
 —1 Peter 4:10

Do we realize we own nothing? Not even our very lives? When we received Christ, we died and rose again to the new life He had purchased for us. We are His, and everything we have is His—not just our time, talent, and treasure but even the spiritual gifts He has given us. One of those gifts is the gift of leadership

(Romans 12:8). All we have and are is a trust; we have been made managers of on God's behalf. We maximize His return on that investment in us by glorifying Him and serving others. Servant leaders take responsibility for the resources, integrity, and ethics of those they lead. Stewardship is a great responsibility and a sacred trust.

Imagine now that we are stewards of those we serve in leadership, and think of the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. In that story, the servants who made the most of what had been entrusted to them received a great reward. As stewards of those entrusted to us by the Lord, maximizing their fruitfulness for the King leads to our reward.

Our spiritual legacy—and therefore rewards in heaven—will not be maximized by what we do but by what those in our stewardship do.

Reflection question: How are we reminding ourselves that those we serve are entrusted to us by the Lord?

9. Commitment to the growth of people:

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests but also for the interests of others."

—Philippians 2:3-4, NKJV

Following on from the idea of stewardship, a natural outworking should be the commitment to the growth of others—notably, those we serve in leadership. When leading the people of God, we must see them as the Lord sees them. They have intrinsic value beyond what we can even imagine. They are on their own journey to being conformed to the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29) and to bear great fruit for the Kingdom (John 15). We have the honor of the Lord using us in this journey. We will discuss some

ways to walk out this commitment in the chapters on Grace-filled Leadership and Empowering Leadership, but the commitment starts with the heart. That is always the place Jesus is looking to for us to represent and re-present Him.

Reflection Question: How are we demonstrating our commitment to the growth of those we lead?

10. Building community:

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” — Acts 2:42-47, NKJV

These verses might look like a list of activities, but really what was happening was the creation of a community. One definition of a community is “a group of people who share common interests, values, beliefs, or characteristics and come together to support and interact with one another.” A servant leader can facilitate the creation and building of a healthy community. Helping those we lead to lean into the common beliefs, values, and behaviors of the family of God takes time, vulnerability, and humility. Still, nothing is as beautiful as the people of God walking in love and unity (Psalm 133). We must take every opportunity to reinforce, not just in words but actions, the values of our community. Seeing those we lead exhibiting these values is an excellent opportunity to affirm and encourage them. This

builds up not just them, but the whole community is strengthened. Servant leaders are culture creators of the highest order and help everyone identify with something more significant than themselves. Now, all are engaged with a common purpose and have become a force on the earth.

Reflection Question: How are we intentionally building the people and community of faith over which we have been given leadership?

Other experts have compiled their lists of characteristics of a servant leader. Sipe and Frick took the original work of Greenleaf and developed their own list of characteristics for a servant-leader. Their list looks like this.⁹

A servant leader is:

A person of character

Puts people first

A skilled communicator

A compassionate collaborator

Has foresight

A systems thinker

Leads with moral authority

Servant leadership functions best when it is not only part of the makeup and behavior of the leader but is a dynamic of the culture we create in our context. Nevertheless, there is such a strong identification with the leadership of Jesus that we must take it seriously and allow the Holy Spirit to transform us by renewing our minds (Romans 12:2). As we become more and more like Jesus, these characteristics will come more and more naturally to us and flow more and more freely through us.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Take some time to look through the different lists of characteristics of a servant leader and evaluate your progress in each. Where are adjustments needed?
2. Ask the Lord to show you areas in your life and ministry where you can lead by serving

FOR ACTION

1. Write down any of the characteristics of a servant leader where you sense you are struggling. Identify and begin to put into practice serving in these areas.
2. When you see servant leadership in someone in your leadership sphere, make a point to not just recognize it and thank them, but look for an opportunity to publicly celebrate it.
3. Memorize Philippians 2:5-11.

FOR PRAYER

Jesus, we have no greater example of servant leadership than You. You were the suffering servant the prophet Isaiah wrote about. Help me to not avoid serving because it might involve suffering or surrendering some of my dignity. You are our example of the greatest act of service when You came and died—that all might have life through faith in Your sacrifice. I want to be like David when he danced on the entrance of the ark of Your presence into the city of Jerusalem. He did not hold on to his dignity in front of the people, but he lavished his love and worship on You, ignoring what might be said of him. You, our King, came not with a scepter and throne, but with a brain and a towel. Show me what that should look like in my life. In Your name I pray. Amen.

PRINCIPLE 6

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WHEN I WAS young and before I became a follower of Jesus, I often found myself in situations where I was the “leader.” It was just something that came naturally to me. Of course, at the time I did not know about the gift of leadership the Father has hard-wired into some of us (see Romans 12:8). In these times, I confess, my leadership was more about me and whatever it was that needed to be done. Once I came into a relationship with Christ and joined a church, it did not take long for the leadership gift to begin to manifest. I found myself leading a home group within a few months of joining a church.

After a few years, I went through a very difficult season where I was under the leadership of someone who was struggling with their own calling and gifting. Suffice to say, I was treated pretty badly. Maligned and hurt, I wanted to either strike out or quit, but something restrained me. Now I know it was the grace of God by the Spirit. I served as humbly and quietly as I could and let the Lord work on my heart.

Years later, I was reading a fictional book about King David and his relationship with his predecessor King Saul and his son Absalom. His predecessor was a terrible leader who persecuted

him to preserve his position; his son was a rebel who tried to remove him from his throne. At the end of the fictional account, one of David's advisors asked him if he was going to deal with his son and—not to put too fine a point on it—kill the rebel. David's response was astounding. He said, "I was not an Absalom as a young man, I will not be a Saul as an old man."¹ David's heart had been transformed by God, probably during the years between his being anointed by Samuel and his becoming King of Israel. This transformed heart and his undivided worship of Yahweh was why he was called "a man after God's own heart."

It was in this difficult season of life and leadership when the refining work of the Spirit was transforming me so that I would neither be a Saul or an Absalom. As a result of this season and God's grace, I embraced the idea that I could and should lead for the glory of God and the good of others. This was my journey, but it doesn't have to be the journey for you. Looking back, I wouldn't trade it for an easier way. I am thankful for God's grace enabling me to come through the testing. I still have a long way to go, and I am committed to continue being transformed by the renewing of my mind.

Definition: Transformational Leadership is leadership that focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve a shared vision through personal growth and development.²

Quote: "Transformational Leadership is not primarily about what one does, but first a matter of who one is." —Michale Ayers³

Key Verse: "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think" (Romans 12:2a NLT).

Kingdom Value: We must be transformed ourselves if we are to facilitate others being transformed

What is "Transformation"?

To Transform: to change completely the appearance or character of something or someone.

Transformation is a process.

The word in the Bible for transformation is the Greek word "*metamorphoō*." It is where we derive the English word "metamorphosis." It is used four times in the New Testament. We use the word metamorphosis to describe what happens to a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. When the caterpillar goes into its cocoon, it actually dissolves and ceases to be recognizable until it is reformed into what we see as a butterfly.

In the Bible, it was used to describe what occurred with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, where it is translated as, "transfigured" (Matthew 17:2, Mark 9:2).

It is also the word used in the Romans 12:2 verse above.

Finally, it is used in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The inference scripturally is that to transform something is to completely change the appearance or character of something or someone to make it wholly new and better.

Paul describes and commands that we as believers pursue the process while acknowledging that it is God, by the Spirit, who accomplishes the work. The biblical meaning of transformation has nothing to do with behavior modification or self-improvement. Simply trying to conform to the words we read in the Bible is like a monkey imitating the actions of a human being. What you see is a mere learned behavior, not a genuine expression of a human. That is because the monkey doesn't have the "life" of a human.

God knows we can't meet the standard in His Word on our own. So, how can we live a life that expresses who God is? God's way

is to give us His divine life and allow that life to operate in us, causing us to undergo deep change.

The “quality” of His life is what Jesus described as the “*Zoe*” life in the tenth chapter of John’s Gospel. It is the born again, Spirit-filled life that is the foretaste of the life to come. It demonstrates the reality of our having been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light and of the Son.

No wonder Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:21, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”

So, that is the nature of the believer’s transformation, accomplished by grace through faith. It is by the truth of the Word and the power of the Spirit—to the end that we all become like Jesus.

Transformational Leadership is defined as an approach to leadership that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. It elevates the character and morality of all.

Transformational Leaders, according to Hickman, “stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes, and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity.”⁴

Before we talk about facilitating Transformational Leadership, we must look at ourselves and examine if we are truly “in process.” Are we really true disciples, daily becoming more and more like Jesus?

Are you more like Jesus today than you were yesterday?

BE BEING TRANSFORMED!

Shortly before His crucifixion, Jesus spent significant time in prayer for His twelve disciples and for all future disciples who would soon follow in their steps. He prayed that His Father would sanctify those entrusted to Him before they were sent out on their global mission.

Jesus knew that “being” preceded “doing.” He wanted His disciples to be spiritually transformed and set apart by the Father through the Word of truth before they launched their Great Commission ministry. When God’s Word penetrates the heart, it burns like a fire. It refines the character, purifies the thought life, and renews the mind. It penetrates deeply into the soul and spirit of believers. This is why the disciples who met the resurrected Christ on the road to Emmaus described the encounter as one that made their hearts burn within them. God’s Word, communicated in the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Jesus, transforms the hearts of spiritual leaders.

Many leadership-development ministries, seminaries, and Bible colleges focus on the head and hands of leadership, meaning the knowledge and skills necessary to become a better spiritual leader. This emphasis is important and helpful to the body of Christ. What sometimes gets less attention, however, is a significant emphasis on the spiritual formation of the heart that is required for spiritual leaders to be transformed on the inside. A leader with immense knowledge and an impressive skill set may go far in business or ministry, but what causes the hearts of others to burn within them when they are around a spiritual leader is the inner transformation taking place in the leader’s heart. Few things make the gospel more attractive than a truly transformed life.

Saul of Tarsus had immense theological training and possessed the leadership skill set necessary to gain him a position of significant influence in Jewish society. Yet it was not until his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus when he experienced a transformation of the heart. What a transformation it proved to be! It was after this complete metamorphosis that Jesus changed Saul’s name and gave him a new calling in life. He was then able to use his knowledge, skills and renewed heart in concert to become one of the greatest spiritual leaders the world has ever known.

What about your heart? Does it burn within you when you read and meditate on the Word of God and when you sit under the empowered teaching of others? Is your mind being renewed and your life being transformed by the Spirit of God, or are you allowing the world to shape you into its mold? Are you relying mostly upon your knowledge and skills to propel your ministry forward, or are you prioritizing an intimate relationship with Christ that transforms your heart?

Being proceeds out of doing! God looks at the hearts of men and women and determines what He wants to accomplish through them. Gerald Hartis once said, “Ministry is what we leave in our wake as we follow Jesus.”⁵ Is that statement true of you? Is following Jesus your highest priority? His invitation still holds true, “Come, follow me, and I will make a new kind of fisherman out of you.” Are you ready for that kind of transformation to take place in your heart? What’s holding you back?

What is Transformational Leadership?

Jesus was (and is) the greatest transformation leader in history!

Transformational Leadership is a relational, not transactional, process. In contrast to most other forms of leadership that focus on the leader’s traits, skills, or charisma, it is not primarily “leader focused.” It is much more oriented to the followers and the common good. (Sounds like Jesus!) There are aspects where personality does affect the dynamic. Transformational leaders are often strong, competent, articulate, and even charismatic. All of those characteristics, however, can be double-edged swords. It is only when used under the leading and guiding of the Spirit of God that they are good. Used with bad motives, the leadership produced is actually manipulation.

There are four facets of Transformational Leadership for us to look at and see in the life of Jesus. Jesus, of course, did not need to be transformed in the same way as you and I, being the sinless Lamb of God. What He did do though, was to leave us an example and give us a “pattern.” The apostles, and especially

Paul who perhaps had the most radical transformation, followed this pattern, and we can too. Again, everything must be done in us and through us according to the truth of the Word and the power of the Spirit. As we are transformed, these attributes should be manifested in us and experienced by those we lead.

The Four “I”s.

1. Idealized Influence. The transformational leader acts as a role model, setting the vision for an organization and leading by example.

The leader’s commitment to the highest ethical standards invites emulation. They stimulate the followers’ emotions and strong identification with the leader by prioritizing their (the followers) needs over the leader’s own needs. Jesus was the perfect role model, and Peter, despite a few bumps in the road, became a role model too. In the final chapter of John’s Gospel, Peter confesses his love for Jesus in the strongest possible terms (John 21:15-17). Like all the other apostles—with the exception of John—their faith in and emotional attachment to Jesus their Lord would see them give their lives rather than deny Him. They followed His example of laying their lives down.

Read Philippians 2:5-11 and look at the type of role model Jesus was.

How are you modeling the life and leadership of Jesus?

2. Inspirational Motivation. The transformational leader articulates a clear, compelling, and appealing vision and explains how the vision can be attained.

The leader speaks and acts confidently (not arrogantly) and optimistically, expressing confidence in followers. They use dramatic, symbolic actions to emphasize key values. Think about the dramatic and symbolic act of Jesus washing the disciples feet.

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate followers to reach ambitious goals that may have previously seeming unreachable⁶.

Hickman again says that, transformational leaders “stimulate and inspire followers to bother achieve extraordinary outcomes, and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity”⁷. Think of what Jesus told the disciples, “you will (will be able) to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Wow! That is a big vision and goal!

He also, gave them a vision of eternal life that was compelling—a Kingdom vision way beyond their vision for the kingdom being restored to Israel. Through the centuries, men and women of God, captured by the vision of Jesus have inspired others to make great sacrifices for the King. Could we be those who continue this legacy?

Read John 14:12 and see the vision Jesus gave His disciples.

Are you imparting an inspiring vision to those you lead?

3. Intellectual Stimulation. Transformational leaders are creative, risk-takers, and open to new ideas from those they lead.

Transformational leaders encourage followers to think for themselves and listen to the Holy Spirit. They are gracious and forgiving of followers’ mistakes and seek to use them as learning opportunities. Sometimes we hear the criticism that Christians don’t think, they are just sheep, blindly following the leader. Unfortunately that can be the case. That is poor leadership. Remember when Jesus sent out the 12 and the 70? He gave them some simple instructions, but not everything they needed to know. When they came back and were slightly off in their perspective, He affirmed yet corrected them (Luke 10:20). At the feeding of the five thousand, He told them, “You give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37). Then, He led them through a process of thinking and assessing their resources, ultimately

revealing to them their need for Him to provide in all things. They were then encouraged to do the work.

Some of history's greatest thinkers, scientists, and artists have been Christians who have allowed the Spirit of God to lead their ways of thinking in ways never before done.

Read Mark 6:37-42.

Are you encouraging those you lead to lean into the Spirit of God for creative solutions to problems? How about new and creative ways of reaching the lost?

4. Individualized Consideration. Transformational leaders make each person they lead feel important. They care!

The transformation leader creates a culture of openness, acceptance, and care. They provide a listening ear, an open mind, and a tender heart toward those they lead. They take time to support, mentor, and coach those they lead, always looking to develop them to their fullest potential in God. Have you ever been in conversation with a leader who made you feel like you were the only person in the room? That they were really listening to you? Conversely, have you been with a leader who seemed to either not pay attention to what you were saying or just barked an instruction at you and walked away? The best type of leader is the transformational leader, practicing this "individualized consideration."

This facet of transformational leadership takes a lot of time and effort. That is why its goal must be the development of leaders who can lead in the same way. It is so that no one person becomes completely overwhelmed with an unmanageable number of people to care for, but the leadership role is shared among many so that many more can receive the care they need.

Read the accounts of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman in John 4, the Syro-Phoenician woman in Mark 7, and the woman with the issue of blood in Matthew 9. See how Jesus practices individualized consideration.

How are you creating a culture of listening and individualized concern?

FACILITATE TRANSFORMATION WITHOUT (CULTURE)

When Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God had come to earth, He began to preach good news and teach principles of the Kingdom. It was clear to those who listened that His message was often counter-cultural and controversial. Although the transformation started in the hearts of all who heard and responded by faith, it wasn't confined there. The transformation Jesus brought about was meant to flow out of redeemed hearts like streams of living water gushing forth from a limitless source. These refreshing streams are designed to bring about spiritual and cultural transformation as believers share and demonstrate the Good News that has been entrusted to them.

Although Jesus meant for His Church to be a life-giving community and a preserving presence in culture, often the Church finds itself retreating from culture and insulating itself from a world that desperately needs its influence. Andy Crouch, in his book *Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling*, explains that there are five common ways the global Church relates to culture. It may condemn, critique, copy, consume, or create culture⁸. Although each of these responses are necessary from time to time as a gesture to society, none of the first four responses brings about lasting cultural transformation. The only gesture capable of bringing about lasting change is the fifth response of *creating* culture.

Crouch believes that often the Church of Jesus Christ moves from making a gesture of condemning or critiquing society to assuming a permanent posture of condemnation. This causes the church to isolate itself from culture and remove any potential for being the salt and light it was meant to be. On the other hand, sometimes churches copy or consume culture so readily that there is no real difference between the community of faith and

the surrounding culture; therefore, they minimize the transformational impact of the Kingdom of God upon society by being so much like it. As Crouch affirms, if churches all over the world decided to create new culture as Jesus did, then we would begin to see significant and lasting community transformation take place.

Young leaders especially, desperately desire to be creators of new culture. They want to be stakeholders in new initiatives that take on some of the greatest challenges facing the global community. They believe the Church of Jesus Christ has the ability to address some of the greatest injustices and unacceptable conditions facing the nations, and that believers have a responsibility to lead the way through the love of Jesus Christ and the power of the gospel.

We want to partner with the Holy Spirit to help churches and organizations like yours prepare and mobilize leaders to be ambassadors of Christ and creators of culture. Transformational Leadership is a powerful tool in that pursuit.

FOR THOUGHT

1. As you reflect on the four “I”s of Transformational Leadership, how are they being manifested in your life and leadership?
2. Would you describe your own spiritual leadership as being transformational? In what ways is your inner transformation bringing about outer transformation in your community?
3. How is your church or business currently relating to the surrounding culture? Have you insulated yourself, taking on the posture of a critic or a condemner of culture, or are you engaging in ways that allow you to be salt and light in your community and nation?

FOR ACTION

1. If you have identified an area of weakness in one of the four aspects of transformational leadership, write down your plan to be built up in that area.
2. Find an opportunity to engage your community and have your church join you in intentionally expressing the transformation you are experiencing. An example might be the church doing a project to clean an area of a community of rubbish. It is an opportunity to demonstrate your stewardship of God's creation, and testify to it being a picture of what He does in our lives.

FOR PRAYER

Father in Heaven, thank you for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to usher in the Kingdom of God. Thank you that Your eternal Kingdom is both now and not yet. We see a foretaste of Your Kingdom now, but will one day it comes in all its fullness. May Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Father, transform my heart by the gospel and Your eternal Word. May the streams of living water that the Holy Spirit birthed within me burst forth from my heart and touch the lives of my family, community, and nations. May I be an ambassador of Christ and creator of culture as You continue to transform me into the image of Your Son.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 7

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

PASTOR KEN WAS QUITE a bit older than me. We had a natural connection because, like me, he was from England. He was an associate pastor at the church in Los Angeles, California, that my wife and I began attending after we became followers of Jesus. We had been at the church about a month when we took our first class, which was a “foundations in the faith” class. Pastor Ken was an amazingly humble and kind man, and we just fell in love with him. We also noticed how he walked in great peace; there was a “quietness” in everything he did. He delivered the content of the class in a warm and winsome way, and it felt as though we were the only people in the room.

I remember attending one of the sessions of the class for a second time. Although he delivered the same content, it was almost like a different class. I went to him afterward and asked him how he did that. He told me that he looked over the list of all the people who were taking the class, and then he prayed and asked the Holy Spirit to shape and lead the class. He also asked the Spirit to give him the words that would give each person what they needed and also what they would need for the call God had on their lives. He said every class was different because of the different people attending and that the

leader of the class was the Holy Spirit who knew what each one needed.

This was a great lesson for me: leadership in the body of Christ ultimately belongs to the Holy Spirit. He is the only one who can truly lead like Jesus. So, as leaders, our primary task is to be filled with the Spirit and ask Him how He wants to lead in any situation and with any person or group of people.

As the four-week class ended, I went to Pastor Ken again and asked him what I should do now. He said I should pray and ask God what my next step should be, and he would do the same, then we could talk. When I went back to him after praying, I told him that I felt I should take more Bible classes and be equipped to, at some point, become a home group leader. He was very excited and agreed and immediately asked if he could lay his hands on me and pray. Of course, I agreed! He prayed a blessing over me and for the empowerment of the Spirit. Though I can't remember the words he spoke, I do remember the impact it had on me, and the strengthening my spirit received.

My encounters with Pastor Ken were my first interaction with spiritual leadership, and I will always remember feeling that here was a man I could follow as he led me to become more like Jesus. I saw Jesus in him. I have also always aspired to remember and honor, in my leadership roles, the legacy he left.

Definition: "I define spiritual leadership as knowing where God wants people to be and taking the initiative to use God's methods to get them there in reliance on God's power. The answer to where God wants people to be is in a spiritual condition and in a lifestyle that display His glory and honor His Name."¹

Quote: "Spiritual leadership is based on the character of Christ."² (King)

Key Verse: "So Jesus explained, 'I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what He sees the Father

doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does” (John 5:19 NLT).

Kingdom Value: Spiritual leaders are, first, people led by the Spirit of God in their following of Jesus before they lead others in their following of Him.

It may seem strange to illustrate spiritual leadership by using a verse from the Bible that speaks of being a follower, not a leader. But this is often how things are in the Kingdom. They are the opposite of how they are in the world. Spiritual leadership was personified by Jesus Christ. This verse in the Gospel of John clearly and succinctly reveals the essence of Christ’s leadership. It is meant to be the touchstone for all who would bear His name and take up the mantle of spiritual leadership.

In 2014, Keith wrote the following blog entitled “Spirit-filled Savior” based on this passage:

Scripture records that our Savior embarked upon His earthly ministry full and sent, empowered and anointed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1-19). This intimate relationship fueled His ministry of preaching the Good News of the Kingdom and demonstrating the Father’s love for the world. It was “through the eternal Spirit” that Jesus “offered Himself unblemished to God” for our salvation (Hebrews 9:14, NIV). The Apostle Paul declared, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9 NIV). This relationship of fullness sustained Jesus during His temptation and triumph in the wilderness, His passion in the garden, His agony on the cross, and His victory in the resurrection. In many ways, the life of Jesus was higher than, yet in other ways it was meant to be imitated. He commanded us to love, serve, and go as He did. He invited us to lose our lives in His greater life, to take up our crosses and follow Him, and to do even greater things than we saw Him doing. However, He instructed His disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait

for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit who would clothe believers with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8). What He expects His Church to accomplish and who He expects His Church to be is utterly impossible without the indwelling and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Why would the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, exhort believers to be filled with the Spirit and walk by the Spirit? Because that's what Jesus did. We are compelled to fix our gaze upon our Savior and imitate His Spirit-filled, Spirit-led life as we obey His commands to be His witnesses, to be His compassionate hands and feet in the world, and to be His Church on display—loving, serving, forgiving, and uplifting one another. How is this accomplished? By allowing ourselves to be controlled by the indwelling Spirit of God as we prayerfully surrender our wills and offer our lives to the Spirit's divine leadership. If we submit to the Holy Spirit's influence as Jesus did, we too, will experience fullness as we walk in the very footsteps of our Spirit-filled Savior (West 2014).³

Most spiritual leaders would agree that we don't always *feel* spiritual. In fact, sometimes we feel anything but spiritual because we know all too well our own thoughts and motives, weaknesses and sinful habits. We occasionally feel like imposters when people commend us for our spiritual leadership, and now and then we find ourselves operating under our own control rather than the unction of the Holy Spirit.

Even our role model, Paul, shared in Romans 7:24 that he was a wretched man who needed deliverance from this body of death. We are all in the same condition; however, praise be to God who has delivered us from condemnation by the law of the Spirit. Therefore, **we can lead God's people with humility, authenticity, confidence, and joy, knowing the Holy Spirit is leading, filling, empowering, and anointing our leadership, making it truly spiritual.**

J. Oswald Sanders in his classic book *Spiritual Leadership* offers the following analysis of the difference between natural and spiritual leadership:

Natural Leadership Spiritual Leadership	
Self-confident	Confident in God
Knows men	Also knows God
Makes own decisions	Seeks God's will
Ambitious	Humble
Creates methods	Follows God's example
Enjoys command	Delights in obedience to God
Seeks personal reward	Loves God and others
Independent	Depends on God

Take some time to prayer fully examine your leadership using the above table. Write down any areas where you see your leadership is more natural than spiritual. Repent and ask for God's grace to lead more like Jesus.

Our generation is here to advance the gospel and provide spiritual leadership to the global Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We are also tasked with raising up new spiritual leaders, teaching them to walk by faith and by the Spirit of God.

How do we accomplish this important task? Here are five suggested activities that will help you begin to see some progress in engaging and nurturing new of Great Commission leaders.

PARTNER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE NEXTGEN LEADER

"In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers...while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they fasted and prayed, they placed

*their hands on them and sent them off.” — Acts
13:1-3*

The elders in the church in Antioch understood that spiritual leadership involves partnering with the Holy Spirit in the work of the ministry. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate leader of the Church and provides direction and power to fulfill His redemptive purposes throughout the earth. Spiritual leaders in the global Church are called to respond in faith and obedience to the Holy Spirit’s direction.

This passage of Scripture indicates the elders postured themselves in worship, prayer, and fasting in order to receive instructions about future ministry from the Holy Spirit. This stance of humility and utter dependence upon God among leaders of a successful church ministry is instructive to all of us. How often do you and the leaders of your church or business gather together in a posture of worship and submission, waiting upon the Holy Spirit to reveal His instructions? How often, on the other hand, do you forge ahead with your own ideas and plans and then ask the Holy Spirit to bless your intentions?

Barnabas and Saul were two of the elders who participated in these activities. It was during their extended time of worship and prayer when the Holy Spirit revealed His plans and callings for their lives and for the church to which they belonged. The Church of Jesus Christ is forever indebted to the Antioch elders who were patient and humble enough to seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance and then partner with Him in sending out two of the greatest missionaries in Church history.

What if God intends such plans for new leaders in your congregation or business? Could there be a Barnabas or Saul in your midst who is being called by the Holy Spirit into a new work? How will you know unless you lead your team in spiritual activities that allow the Holy Spirit to make His intentions clear?

You may have many plans and intentions for new leaders, and you may be asking the Holy Spirit to bless those plans. Why not submit your plans and ideas to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in prayer, worship, and fasting? If you wait upon the Lord, He will make His intentions clear and will identify future leaders, and you will know what you must do to cooperate with His plans and purposes.

LEAD FROM A SPIRITUAL POWER BASE

“The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet before the Lord. The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.”

—1 Samuel 3:19-21

From childhood, Samuel was set apart by the Lord to be a spiritual leader to the nation of Israel. The source of his power to lead and communicate effectively was the presence and voice of the Lord in his life. The Lord was with Samuel throughout his childhood and adolescence, sovereignly laying a foundation for spiritual leadership. The Lord did not allow a single word that Samuel spoke to be wasted or ineffective, even in his adolescence. The Lord appeared and revealed Himself to Samuel through His word in a time when the word of the Lord was rare in the nation of Israel (1 Samuel 3:1). God lovingly and intentionally nurtured a new leader into the role of national spiritual leadership.

Eventually, Samuel became the prominent leader of a nation. The source of Samuel’s spiritual power as a mature leader was not based on his position, education, or pedigree; rather, it emanated from a lifetime of personal encounters with the God of Israel, starting with his first response to the voice of God: “Speak, for

your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10). No doubt this was a statement he repeated many times throughout his spiritual journey. Samuel led from a spiritual power base.

The term “power base” is one I first heard from J. Robert Clinton’s Leadership Emergence Theory, which proposes that spiritual leaders are not born leaders, but rather their leadership emerges over a lifetime under the sovereign power and activity of the Holy Spirit. Clinton defines power base as “the source of credibility, power differential, or resources that enables a leader to have authority for influencing followers”.⁴ He describes two types of power bases in spiritual leadership.

The first type is a positional power base. The source of this leader’s power, influence, or credibility is derived from their position in an organization. King Saul in the Old Testament is an example of someone who led solely from a positional power base. Eventually, his leadership was characterized by jealousy, fear, intimidation, insecurity, and control. King Saul created an unhealthy and paranoid leadership culture that drove away talented leaders and created fearful and insecure followers. Saul had trust issues, and often accused loyal followers of being disloyal merely because they disagreed with his actions or perspectives. He even accused his own son Jonathan of disloyalty because of his friendship with David. Saul’s use of a positional power base contributed greatly to his failure as a leader.

The second is a spiritual power base, where a person’s authority and influence are not derived from their position in an organization, but rather by a spiritual power that is evident in their lives. David, a shepherd boy who later became King of Israel, led from a spiritual power base. This is demonstrated early in his life when, as a youth, he confronted and defeated the giant Goliath who defied the God of Israel. As he courageously engaged a seasoned warrior who was immensely taller and stronger than any of the Israelites, he declared, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name

of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied" (1 Samuel 17:45).

God would eventually give David a powerful position as King of Israel, but he still led from a spiritual power base throughout his lifetime, with one exception. When David failed to go to war with the army of Israel, the ensuing season of unfaithfulness surrounding his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba and the accompanying murder of her husband Uriah revealed that he was currently leading from a positional power base. The Holy Spirit's power was no longer the base of his leadership. He used his position as King of Israel to summon Bathsheba to his palace for an adulterous affair and to orchestrate the conspiracy to have Uriah killed. Although David later received God's forgiveness and spiritual restoration, this disastrous decision was not only an abuse of the leadership that God had entrusted to him, it also proved to be quite costly. The resulting consequences were painful, and this event signaled a plateau and gradual decline in his leadership influence. Throughout King David's life, his greatest influence, credibility, and power differential came from an intimate relationship with God by His Spirit.

God may have granted you a position of power, influence, and credibility within your organization and community. It would be easy to rely heavily on your position to influence others and get things done. Let me encourage you to lead from a spiritual power base regardless of your position. Model this type of spiritual leadership for new leaders. Explain to them the difference in these two power bases and be willing to share lessons you learned from seasons in your life when you may have led or were tempted to lead from the wrong power base. Speak the truth in love when you see talented leaders vying for positions of power and influence. Humbly challenge their motives and remind them of where their true power is found. God gave Zechariah a message for a leader named Zerubbabel that all leaders need to remember. "'...Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6).

MODEL A POWERFUL PRAYER LIFE

"Then Moses said to him, 'If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and your people unless you go with us?'" —Exodus 33:15-16

Moses was a leader who modeled a powerful prayer life, especially in front of his young aide, Joshua. Joshua observed firsthand the intimacy Moses shared with God. When Moses spent forty days up on Mt. Sinai speaking with the Lord, Joshua was on the mountain with him (Exodus 24:13-18; 32:15-19). When Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord in response to the rebellion and disbelief of the nation of Israel after the spies gave their reports of the Promised Land, Joshua observed Moses humbling himself before God and interceding for the people (Numbers 14:5-6).

Undoubtedly, Moses' intimate relationship and conversations with the God of Israel made a profound impact on Joshua. The book of Exodus records, "The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent" (Exodus 33:11). What reason might Joshua have to stay at the tent of meeting after Moses left? Some might say he was staying to guard the tent. This is highly unlikely for some obvious reasons. First, the tent of meeting was not a dedicated sanctuary. Exodus 33:7 says, "Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the 'tent of meeting.'" Apparently, Moses took whatever tent was currently available and designated it as a private place where he and the Lord could meet face to face. The tent was simply a vessel, an instrument of hospitality and therefore had no intrinsic value when not in use. Second, God's presence does not need protecting or guarding. He is fully capable of protecting His own glory and does not need a mortal to protect Him.

Perhaps the most plausible reason for Joshua to stay at the tent of meeting was that he knew it was where God met with Moses face to face. Maybe Joshua hoped that God would one day invite him in to the tent of meeting for an intimate encounter, and he wanted to remain in close proximity to the presence of God. As the heir-apparent of Moses, Joshua understood Moses relied upon prayer and guidance from God to lead His people, and he wanted to emulate the example of his mentor.

Moses' physical countenance was radiant after he spent time with God. God listened to Moses and honored his requests because of the depth of intimacy they enjoyed. How about you, dear leader? Are you different in your spiritual countenance after spending intimate time with your Father in Heaven? Are your prayers being answered and are you being changed as a result of your prayer life? Do new leaders know how to pray more powerfully and effectively because you and I have modeled it consistently for them? Do young leaders long to experience intimacy with Christ because of what they see in our relationship with Him?

Let's commit together to erect a new "tent of meeting," a prayer closet, a sacred space, where we enter to meet with God daily in deeper and more intimate ways. Let us model a consistent, powerful, and transformative prayer life that new leaders would want to emulate.

PRACTICE AND ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." —Mark 1: 35

"After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." —Matthew 4:2

Jesus practiced spiritual disciplines throughout His earthly ministry. Some of the more obvious activities included solitude, prayer, and fasting. Jesus practiced spiritual disciplines for various reasons. First, He craved intimate time alone with His Heavenly Father. Second, He used these activities to prepare Him for the rigors of ministry, opposition from religious leaders, and intense spiritual warfare. Third, He used spiritual disciplines to help Him recharge and replenish His strength after seasons of intense ministry or opposition.

Jesus taught His disciples that spiritual preparation is needed in order to be successful in certain confrontations with the evil one. When His disciples were unable to cast out a demon on one occasion, causing Jesus to step in to complete the task, they asked Him privately why they had been unsuccessful. "He replied, 'This kind can come out only by prayer and fasting'" (Mark 9:29). From this response, it is clear there are certain deep-seated and entrenched spiritual strongholds that require the application of spiritual disciplines in order to be demolished. Jesus' answer implied that these disciplines were what allowed Him to be in a constant state of readiness to confront spiritual opposition.

Many established spiritual leaders need to be encouraged to practice the spiritual discipline of rest. Often we push ourselves to do more than we should in a given week, and if we are honest with ourselves, our motivation is sometimes misguided. Fear of disappointing others if we don't show up for church functions or events, fear of what others think about our dedication to our organization, a desire to prove that we are working harder than anyone else to set an example, fear of important ministry or business not getting done if we take a day off...these are just some of the motivations for spiritual leaders not practicing the discipline of rest. What emotions may lie at the heart of these excuses? Could it be pride? Or false guilt? Or addiction to work? Could it be a lack of faith in God or others? These questions are worth pondering if you find yourself unable to take a regular Sabbath

rest to disengage and recharge your physical, emotional, and spiritual batteries.

In his book *The Rest of God*, Mark Buchanan states, “Sabbath was made for man. It was something God prepared long ago, inscribed into the very order of creation: a day when all other days loosed their grip. They were forced to. It’s a day that God intended to fuss over us, not we over it. It was designed to protect us, pay tribute to us, coddle us, in all our created frailty and God-imprinted beauty and hard-won liberty, in our status as men and women whom God made in his own image and freed by his own hand and own blood.”⁵

What kind of example are established leaders setting for new leaders in regard to spiritual disciplines? Are we helping them better understand the benefits and blessings of a healthy balance and rhythm in our lives? Are we teaching them how to flourish in life and ministry through the application of spiritual disciplines? Are we equipping them with the tools necessary for spiritual warfare? Spiritual disciplines are better “caught than taught.” New leaders need to see a positive example set by those who would seek to nurture them into mature spiritual leaders.

IMPART SPIRITUAL BLESSING

The first Fatherly blessing is recorded in Genesis 1 after God created man and woman. He blessed them and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28). Later, after the great flood had destroyed the face of the earth, God blessed Noah and his sons and gave them the same command as their forefather, Adam. Perhaps the most famous blessing is that of Abraham in Genesis 12 where God promised to bless his descendants with an eternal blessing.

The practice of imparting a blessing resurfaces again and again throughout the Old Testament in the lives of patriarchs, prophets, priests, and kings. When instructing Aaron and his sons in the duties of the priesthood, the Lord told Moses to have

them pronounce the following blessing on the Israelites: “The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you; The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace” (Numbers 6:24-26). Thousands of years later, this same blessing is pronounced regularly in church services all over the world and is imparted and received with sincerity and gratefulness.

The blessing was seen as a prophetic and powerful act by a member of one generation toward the next or by a loving God to a chosen servant. It was taken seriously by giver and recipient alike. The blessing was meant to impart favor from the giver, to provide direction regarding the future trajectory of the recipient’s life, to instill confidence in the goodness and favor of the Lord, and to indicate the passing of the baton of leadership from one generation to the next.

The practice continued in the narrative of the New Testament. Jesus blessed His followers during the Sermon on the Mount. He blessed the little children who came to Him, and He was blessed by His Heavenly Father at both His baptism and transfiguration. The Apostle Paul blessed his sons in the ministry and blessed the elders whom he appointed in every town before moving on to plant more churches. There is no doubt that the blessing was, and still remains, an important aspect of leadership and family life.

Some of the established leaders reading this book have never experienced a blessing from their fathers or mothers. Others have never experienced a blessing from a spiritual father or mother. This reality often brings with it a sense of pain and unfulfilled longing. The withholding of a blessing can feel as painful as a curse. It is difficult to understand why a blessing would be withheld from us. Yet in ministry and business, new leaders sometimes feel the blessing is being withheld from them. They long for established leaders to speak prophetic and powerful words over their lives. They ache for established leaders to believe in them and to trust that they will take up the

mantle of leadership when their time comes and will wear it well.

Most of the reasons for withholding a blessing from the next generation are not legitimate. At their root, we will often find that the underlying motives are more selfish than we care to admit. Established leaders may be prideful, insecure, fearful, controlling, or skeptical as to whether or not new leaders have what it takes to take up the mantle of leadership.

What about you, fellow leader? Is there a leader in your sphere of influence who desperately needs to receive a spiritual blessing from you? What is holding you back from imparting a spiritual blessing? What might God be prompting you to do or say to be His mouthpiece and hand of blessing to the next generation of Great Commission leaders?

FOR THOUGHT

1. Read Luke 4:1,14 again. Ask yourself whether or not your current relationship with the Holy Spirit reflects that of Jesus Christ who was full of the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and empowered by the Spirit.
2. Reflect upon the definition of a power base and the two types of leadership power bases we discussed. Are you currently operating more from a positional power base or from a spiritual power base?
3. How are you currently practicing spiritual disciplines like solitude, prayer, fasting, and rest? What actions are needed to help you create margins in your schedule to make time for practicing and modeling these spiritual disciplines? What actions are needed to help you grow in this area? Record them in the section below.

FOR ACTION

1. What actions are needed to help you create margins in your schedule to make time for practicing and modeling these spiritual disciplines? What actions are needed to help you grow in this area? Write them down and commit to growth day by day.
2. Study biblical leaders, both good and bad, but especially Jesus, and write down how you see spiritual leadership in action. Then, write down how to emulate them.

FOR PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Your Son Jesus Christ set the perfect example of spiritual leadership. May I emulate His leadership. Thank you for His influence in my life and family. Thank you for both the positive and negative examples of spiritual leadership recorded in Scripture. Help them to inform my own leadership practices. Help me to lead from a spiritual power base instead of a positional power base. Give me an increased desire to practice spiritual disciplines in order to be the best leader I can be for Your Kingdom. Father, grant me the unselfishness and confidence to impart spiritual blessing on new leaders, and help me to prepare them admirably for the mantle of leadership they will one day wear. Help my prayer life to be powerful and effective, and help me to model a commitment to prayer for the new leaders You have entrusted to my care.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 8

GRACE-FILLED LEADERSHIP

I HAD GOTTEN myself into a bad place. I felt like I was working harder in the ministry than anyone else (I really wasn't), and I didn't like anybody. I think my main problem was that I was trying to do ministry without Jesus. For a pastor, that's not a very good idea. I started complaining and in "side conversations" suggesting that we were all on a sinking ship—mainly because things were not being done "my way."

I justified my poor attitude and less than excellent ministry performance and began to blame everyone, especially my senior pastor. What I did not realize was that I had just simply lost my way. I began to look at everything in terms of how it affected me and lost very bit of joy I could have had.

Thankfully, my senior pastor confronted my poor attitude. It was a tense meeting for sure. I read one time that grace is often courage under pressure.¹ My pastor had that! I was part of the senior leadership team of the church, and I was being like a rock in his shoe. Now, if things had gone badly in that meeting, it would have had some resinous consequences for the ministry, but of course I needed to be held accountable. In a quiet but firm voice, my pastor said he knew I was better than my attitudes,

words, and actions were demonstrating. He carefully uncovered things that I wasn't seeing myself, and he offered me a choice: let him and our executive pastor help me remove who I was, what I was called to do, and take some time off to get refreshed and refocused, or not continue in my present position.

The mist cleared almost immediately. I felt a huge relief as I repented and we prayed. I did take a week or so away, but quickly felt re-energized and clear on how I could serve more effectively and with much more grace and joy.

A short while later, another pastor in our city told me that our senior pastor had been speaking about me to some other pastors. The things he had said about me were so kind and affirming. There was no mention of my foolishness, only the great work I was doing and the potential I had for even greater Kingdom impact.

That was grace-filled leadership.

Definition: Grace-filled leadership calls forth God-given gifts in others, cares for them as He does, causes them to flourish, and, clothed in love and humility, forgives those who stumble.

Quote: "To lead with grace, to me, means to lead with gratitude and with courage. It means to lead with forgiveness and to lead in the service of others. It means to lead with authenticity and with a combination of confidence and humility."² — James Ryan

Key Verse: "We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)

Kingdom Value: Not only is salvation by grace through faith, everything in our lives and leadership should be by grace through faith.

John Baldoni developed this helpful acronym in his book, *Grace: A leader's Guide to a Better Us*.³

Generosity - leaders lead with a spirit of abundance and want to share.

Respect - leaders view people with an open mind seeking to assume the best in others.

Action - leaders bring out the best in people in pursuit of the mission.

Compassion - leaders seek to connect with empathy to the person, not just their results.

Energy - leaders find ways to redirect thinking from negative to positive, bringing life.

Take a few minutes and analyze your leadership in terms of the above acronym. Does this look like your leadership? Write down where you might need to make adjustments, and then spend some time in prayer, asking for the grace to change.

Many times when we hear the term “grace-filled leadership,” we can think it is style of leadership, that accepts excuses, or overlooks sin and faults. But that is not biblical grace. Biblical grace is a Divine enabling of the Holy Spirit, to live righteously and to rightly. Grace is married with truth, and both sit under the umbrella of love. If we can learn to lead like this, our leadership will look a lot more like that of Jesus’.

CREATE “ENVIRONMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS OF GRACE”

I first heard the term “environments and relationships of grace” from a book by Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and Ken McElrath called *The Ascent of a Leader: How Ordinary Relationships Develop Extraordinary Character and Influence*.⁴ I highly recommend this book to established leaders and new leaders alike.

According to the authors, “Most people know an environment of grace when they see it. They simply point to the results: people feel safe, they grow up, they trust each other, they live authenti-

cally, they celebrate each other, they laugh a lot, they produce better...people feel empowered...they discern a positive spirit that acts as a catalyst in their soul, giving them a sense of hope that 'this is a place where I belong.'"⁵

The authors further explain that environments of grace "work hand in hand with relationships of grace to create cultures in which trust, creativity, hope, and other positive outcomes emerge." On the other hand, "In an atmosphere of ungrace, all favor and love must be earned. When humans, who all fall short, feel they cannot earn favor or love without meeting a too-high standard, they lose hope"⁶.

These environments and relationships of grace sound quite familiar when we look at the culture Jesus created for His disciples in their three years of life and ministry together. We see these grace-filled environments and relationships lived out in the pages of the New Testament in the home of Lazarus in Bethany, in the temple courts and village synagogues, and by the charcoal fire or in the upper room. Jesus created environments and relationships of grace that became a model for community life and work culture in the body of Christ. The disciples knew they were valued, loved, believed in, and celebrated for who they were. They were free to be themselves around Jesus because of authentic relationships and a grace-filled environment.

The early church in Jerusalem is a wonderful example of a healthy church culture. Although imperfect, this church modeled a culture of grace, authenticity, trust, creativity, generosity, freedom, hope, and love. The apostolic leaders shaped a church culture based upon the relationships and environments of grace they personally enjoyed with Jesus Christ.

What about your current culture? How would leaders in your organization describe the environment? Would they characterize it as a culture of fear, control, or favoritism? Or would they affirm that it is a grace-filled leadership culture? I encourage you

to have some fruitful discussions with your new leaders regarding your organizational culture. Invite them to be candid in their assessment. If no one offers an opinion or everyone seems fearful to say anything that might be construed as negative or disloyal, then you probably have an “ungrace environment.” Even healthy organizational environments have opportunity to improve, and I encourage you to invite new leaders to be significantly involved in helping to create environments and relationships of grace in your organization.

Jesus was full of grace and truth. He left an example that leaders should follow. If leaders are full of grace and truth, then they will be instrumental, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in creating environments and relationships of grace in their organizations. God’s work in all domains of society—the marketplace, education, religion, the arts, science and technology, family, or government—deserves no less than to be characterized as full of grace and truth.

OFFER SECOND CHANCES

Some of my favorite stories in Scripture involve second chances. Who doesn’t love the story of the prodigal son whose father gave him a second chance? We all love to hear of John Mark’s second chance to be a spiritual leader, thanks to his cousin Barnabas who refused to give up on him. The woman caught in adultery received a second chance from Jesus. Zacchaeus definitely received a do-over, and Jonah may have received the biggest second chance of all, although he failed to appreciate it as much as we would like.

Perhaps the most touching second chance in Scripture is the story of Jesus reinstating Peter on the shores of Galilee. As serious as Peter’s denial was, especially in light of his prideful statement of fidelity made just hours before the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, we see a perfect example of a spiritual leader

lovingly confronting failure and helping a young leader regain his sense of calling and purpose. “Simon, son of John, do you love me? ... Feed my lambs... Take care of my sheep... Feed my sheep” (John 21:15-17). Jesus built a fire, fed His disciples, fellowshiped with them in an environment and relationship of grace, then went about the important leadership task of getting a good leader back on his feet. As painful as it must have been for Peter, it was just what he needed, scarce hoped for, and desperately longed for—a second chance! We are all grateful for Peter’s reinstatement as a spiritual leader. Imagine how different our Church history and Scriptures would be if spiritual leaders were not given second chances.

The Apostle Paul, as respected of a leader as you will find in Scripture, had his own failings as a leader. One such failing was his inability to give a young leader, named John Mark, a second chance. Paul’s lack of forgiveness and flexibility caused him to fracture a relationship that the Holy Spirit had forged. “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” If the Apostle Paul had listened to Barnabas and given John Mark an honest second chance, he would have preserved one of the best missionary teams the world has ever known and would have been pleasantly surprised in the spiritual growth of John Mark. Graciously, God gave the Apostle Paul second chances also.

How about you, dear leader? Like Paul, are you hesitant to offer second chances when a newer leader falters? Are you inflexible and unforgiving when leaders lose their way? Let me encourage you to follow the example of Barnabas. See the untapped potential in leaders who are struggling with failure, lack of confidence, weakness, and fear. Remember how many second chances you have been given in your leadership journey. Take your cue from Jesus and be willing to lovingly confront, affirm, and restore leaders who have lost their way.

It must be said here that certain behaviors have consequences preventing a spiritual leader from assuming the same role in an

organization that they previously held. In fact, it may not be possible for them to stay within the organization because of environmental circumstances or existing culture. This should be the exception rather than the rule in grace-filled cultures. Grace, discernment, and wise counsel are necessary in difficult situations that will undoubtedly come up.

Part of your leadership role may be to help a new leader find a new place of service in an environment where he or she can receive a fresh start. For those who enjoy sports analogies, a leader who has failed may have received a “yellow card,” but the Lord hands out very few “red cards.” Taking appropriate time for reflection, confession, restoration, counseling, and mentoring is always recommended before putting a leader back in the game. Your mature influence will help them to eventually re-engage and will give them every opportunity to be successful as a leader.

BE PATIENT WITH IMMATURITY

When the disciples argued amongst themselves about who was the greatest, they were demonstrating their spiritual immaturity. Instead of reprimanding them for arguing and wanting to be greater than their fellow disciples, Jesus redirected their conversation by teaching them how they could be truly great. He took a little child in His arms and began to teach them His idea of greatness. According to Jesus, the path to greatness in God’s economy is a sincere desire to be the least. The fastest way to the front of the spiritual leadership line in the Kingdom of God is to put everyone else in front of you. These were truths that Jesus would rather they meditate upon. It wasn’t wrong for the disciples to want to be great. They simply had the wrong idea of greatness. Thanks to the patient instruction of Jesus, they learned important lessons in spiritual leadership.

When Jesus told His disciples, in John 14, that He was going to prepare a place for them and He would one day come again to

take them to their new home, Philip responded, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered, “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?” (John 14:9) The nature of Jesus’ response to Philip’s statement indicates that Philip did not have a mature perspective.

Sometimes, when nurturing new leaders, you will assume your wisdom and insight are sticking, and that they are really catching on to what you are teaching and modeling for them. Then in a moment, their immaturity may surface, and you may be thinking, “You’ve got to be kidding me! We’ve gone over this a thousand times! I thought you had mastered this and were moving on! Are you listening to a word I say? Get me a new mentee, someone who will actually get it!”

Mentoring emerging leaders can try your patience. Remember, as Paul told young pastor Timothy, to keep your head in all situations. They have so much talent and potential waiting to be drawn out, but sometimes dealing with their immaturity can cause us to lose sight of the gradual progress they are making. “Correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction” (2 Timothy 4:9).

The occasional frustrations in dealing with immaturity are worth the eternal results, so be encouraged and be patient. Remember that new leaders also have to exercise patience when relating to established leaders who at times can be inflexible and slow to take action. It is a shared journey of patience and collaboration.

BE TIMELY AND ENCOURAGING IN YOUR FEEDBACK

“When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida...” Luke 9:10.

Jesus had just sent His twelve disciples out on a mission with His power and authority to preach the Kingdom of God, heal the

sick, and cast out demons. Upon their return, He wasted no time in receiving a detailed report of their experience. He immediately took them aside for a spiritual retreat in Bethsaida. Although the crowds soon found them and brought their planned retreat to an early conclusion, this is still indicative of a spiritual leader who sought to be encouraging and timely in His feedback. His assignment was a test of their collaborative leadership, faith, and courage. It was important to debrief what they had learned by doing. Good teachers and mentors take advantage of teachable moments, not only to celebrate, but to reinforce learning.

As an established leader who seeks to nurture the next generation of Great Commission leaders, it is your privilege and responsibility to create learning tasks that test the leadership, faith, and courage of new leaders. They need to be stretched, and they need to apply their learning in real time settings to reinforce what you have taught them. There is a certain degree of intentionality that must be applied to leadership development, and you must learn to follow up quickly while the experience is still fresh in their minds and hearts.

Encourage new leaders to keep a journal of each ministry task you have given them so they can give an accurate report of their daily experiences and reflections. Be sure to celebrate successes and new learning. Re-direct when necessary, but guard against being overly critical. Remember that all leaders have to learn by doing, and sometimes mistakes are made and opportunities missed because of lack of experience. In most cases, no permanent harm is done. It's important to remember learning, doing, reflecting, and adjusting are part of the adult learning process. I encourage you to think about your current leadership style. When you assign a task to a new leader, how strategic and intentional are you about leveraging the opportunity to provide helpful advice, encouragement, and appropriate feedback? You won't be sorry that you followed up quickly.

FOR THOUGHT

1. How would you describe the leadership culture in your current environment? Would you characterize it as “environments and relationships of grace,” or would it best be described as a culture of control, fear, intimidation, or isolation?
2. Would your staff describe the current environment as healthy or dysfunctional? Would they be fearful to answer such a question in your presence? Are you afraid of their response?

FOR ACTION

1. Who is a leader in your sphere of influence that may need a second chance or a spiritual blessing from you? What is holding you back from responding to their need?
2. How might you be more intentional in providing learning tasks and timely feedback for leaders? Take a few moments to plan a ministry event that will stretch their leadership, faith, and courage. Plan a follow-up meeting or retreat to provide timely and encouraging feedback.

FOR PRAYER

Father, my heart's desire is for Your Holy Spirit to create a leadership culture in my organization that would be characterized as “environments and relationships of grace.” Lord, only You can transform hearts, but use me to lead our people into grace-filled authentic relationships with each other. Drive out any fear or intimidation, cast out any desire to control, and help me establish a healthier culture than we have ever experienced. Father, give me the grace to offer second chances and to be patient with immaturity, just as your Son Jesus did with the leaders You entrusted to Him. I want our culture to reflect the values of Your eternal Kingdom rather than the pattern of the world. I pray these things in the name of Your Son, Jesus.

Amen.

PRINCIPLE 9

TEAM LEADERSHIP

WHEN I first began to lead mission teams, I was not very good at it. I thought I had to do everything and ensure everyone was doing what they were supposed to and that they were doing well. I felt a personal responsibility for everyone's functional effectiveness and physical and emotional well-being and for being the team pastor. Added to that was the need to be the liaison between the team and our hosts. Oh, and did I mention I was also leading the music team and preaching? I expended a huge amount of effort but missed so much because I lost sight of the big picture, and so much was happening outside my field of view. I didn't notice, for example, that a young man and young lady were getting much closer than they should have been!

In the US, we have an expression: "I felt like I was herding cats." I don't know if you have ever tried to herd cats, but they are spectacularly uncooperative. It appears their level of cooperation decreases the more effort you make. That is how leading this first team went.

Of course, I am sure you are already way ahead of me and saying to yourself, "Why did he not develop a team and delegate to them some of this so he could focus on what things that only

he could do?" I think I have read something like that in Exodus chapter 18 when Moses's father-in-law Jethro told him the same thing. That seems so obvious looking back, and I am happy to say I have recovered fully from trying to do everything myself. I have discovered the joy of developing a team of people and letting them operate in their giftings. This blesses those we serve and those doing the serving, the Lord, and even me. The sense of relief and liberation from sharing the load is immeasurable.

You may be in the place where you feel like I did on that first team. It might be for several reasons, some of which could result from your insecurities, preferences, or fears that there will be a mess. Perhaps it is all three. Take heart; you, too, can be healed just as I was! Developing a team can make your ministry more effective than ever, release more people into their destiny, and see more souls saved and disciples made. There are no guarantees, though; messes will still probably happen. The blessing is that you won't have to clear them up alone.

Definition: Broadly speaking, team leadership involves aligning a group of people toward a common goal and ensuring they have all the support they need to achieve it.

Quote: "None of us is as smart as all of us." —Ken Blanchard¹

Key Verse: "...but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Kingdom Value: No one of us is as gifted as all of us.

The body of Christ often adopts a ministry model more akin to the Old Testament than the New Testament. The pastor or leader (also known as Moses) goes up to the mountain and gets the "word of the Lord" for what is supposed to happen. Then, he comes down to those he leads and tells them what God has said

and what they need to do about it. If it doesn't work, it is, of course, either because God changed His mind (not a too popular option, but some still seem to use it), the people didn't give enough, it was the timing, etc. Lack of success may be due to any or all of these factors, but it also might have been that the leader just did not see the whole picture. This is a bit like my experience with leading the mission team. It is the most common way churches operate around the world. But it shouldn't be like that, and it doesn't have to be.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF "TEAM."

God created the first team in the very first chapter of the Bible (Genesis 1:26-27), and then in Genesis 2:18, He reaffirmed the necessity of a team. "The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" God knew that the man could not carry out God's directives for serving and worshipping Him by himself. He needed a teammate to help with the work of worship.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 are verses about the benefits of a team.

"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

A great example from the New Testament is Acts 6.

"Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 'Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business' (Acts 6:2-3, NKJV).

We tend to think the Apostle Paul was a “one-man show.” However, several times in his letters, the apostle Paul mentions different co-laborers in his work. He is talking about his “team” (See Romans 16:3, 1 Thessalonians 3:2, Philemon 1.1, to name a few). He mentions 76 people on his “team” in varying degrees of intimacy and collaboration.

Of course, there is Jesus. His primary team was the group of 12 with whom He spent the most time, but there seem to have been others. Some women helped with administration and finances. There were host homes like Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. There were unnamed individuals like the man who supplied the donkey for Him to ride when He entered Jerusalem (Matthew 21:2-3).

This is a great definition of a team.

“I define a team as an enthusiastic set of **competent people** who have clearly defined **roles**, associated in a **common activity**, working cohesively in trusting relationships, and exercising personal **discipline** and making individual **sacrifices** for the **good of the team.**” —Robert Quinn, *Deep Change*.²

As you read the above, ask yourself if you have a team.

A few practical benefits of having a team include:

Perspective – seeing the fuller picture.

When I was on a church pastoral team, we believed that each of us saw a part and knew a part of whatever we were discussing. We practiced what we called “prophetic percentages.” We aimed to gain the fullest picture of what the Lord was directing us to do. We knew each team member would see it from a slightly different perspective, experience, and insight. Our goal was, of course, to see 100% so that we would be as fruitful and effective as possible. One team member might have 75% of what was needed and another 15%. Our premise, though, was that we

needed everyone to bring what they were “carrying” to the table because it might just be that critical 1%.

Having a unified, functional team exponentially increases the clarity and completeness of vision.

Partnership – sharing the work.

Studies show as many as 50% of pastors and leaders experience “burnout.” Look at this definition of burnout from the American Psychological Association.

“Physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitudes toward oneself and others. It results from performing at a high level until stress and tension, especially from extreme and prolonged physical or mental exertion or an overburdening workload, take their toll.”³

Some primary causes of burnout are overwork, lack of provision, community, and justice. Pastors and leaders seem to think they should be everything for everyone, which is misguided and dangerous. Jesus said we should not do things alone but be on His team.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30, NKJV).

Jesus is not talking about resting from work but finding rest in work because He, by His grace, does the “heavy lifting.” When Jesus walked the earth, He was the Christ in a body. Now, He is seated at the Father’s right hand; we are the body of Christ. So, part of how we yoke up with Him is to yoke up with one another. In the sixth chapter of Galatians, Paul says we are to carry our own load, i.e., those things that are our assignment, but

also to bear one another's burdens; share those things that weigh us down and limit our ability to carry our own loads. It's teamwork that gets the task done without exhausting everyone!

Permission – allowing people to use their gifts most effectively.

I am one of the world's worst "handymen." I cannot build, repair, or design practical things with my hands. It could be a bit embarrassing, except my wife and I have learned how best to use our gifts. We just had a bookcase delivered to our house, requiring us to assemble it ourselves. I looked at the pieces and the instructions and told my wife that I thought I would go and cook our meal. I am a good cook; I love to cook. If I try to assemble that bookcase, a few things will happen.

1. I will get very frustrated and eventually have to repent for my bad attitude.
2. It will probably collapse as soon as we put a book on it.
3. There will be several pieces left over.

But I know if I take my time to make our meal, we will have full stomachs and happy hearts. We will also have a happy home. My wife will put together the bookcase because she is really good at that sort of thing. I will make our dinner because that is what I am good at. We have learned to use our gifts for the right things and at the right time.

This is what a fully functional team does. Each person is permitted to use their gifts and talents in situations where they are most needed. This doesn't mean we are excused from cleaning the floors or taking out the rubbish. That is about being a servant. It means we glorify God by using how He has designed us appropriately. When we do things together, we are like a wonderful orchestra or a championship football team. Our individual part or role becomes less important than the glory of God and the fulfillment of His mission. John Maxwell says, "The goal is more important than the role."³

As leaders, do we sometimes appoint people to tasks out of preference, for punishment, or because we don't want to do it? Or maybe we don't have someone do something in case they get credit for it, when we would like that for ourselves?

A famous sports coach once said, "It is amazing how much can be accomplished if no one cares who gets the credit" (John Wooden). Or put another way, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10, NIV).

FINDING YOUR TEAM

Jesus withdrew to a mountain away from the crowds to select His team.

"And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach"
(Mark 3:13,-4, NKJV emphasis added).

Jesus called them for a purpose; a purpose they were not yet fit for. He called them to be with Him so they could see, hear, learn, and "catch" who He was and what He was doing. They weren't rich, super smart, or popular and influential. They had other qualities that were perhaps invisible to the physical eye. One thing they had was rapid obedience. He called, and they followed. In Mathew 4:20, the Bible says they "immediately left their nets." In a previous chapter, I talked about finding those who are FAT (faithful, available, teachable) or "Triple H's (holy, humble, and hungry). In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes to Timothy that what he has received from Paul should be entrusted to faithful men who will then be made able to teach others. Too often, when we think about leaders, we look for the "able" and hope they will become "faithful." It usually doesn't happen, and it often doesn't end well.

Another area where we see problems is when family is involved. How often is someone appointed to leadership because they are a family member, especially a son? It may be that this person is the one to be on the team, but it must be because of the above virtues, not merely because they are a family member. There are untold numbers of miserable men who were pushed into leadership in the church because they were a son or other relative. They weren't gifted or called for it, they have no heart for it, and the body of Christ suffers. It isn't their fault. It is ours who appointed them without regard for their anointing. They might have been outstanding marketplace ministers.

Take your time finding your team because you will also have to spend time with them—just like Jesus did—to form them into the team the Lord has already designed them to be.

FORMING YOUR TEAM

Jesus spent three years with the disciples, and at the end of it, they were still making horrible choices and mistakes. Thank goodness for Pentecost, or perhaps we would never have been here in the Church today! He didn't send them to school during those three years, but they got an education. He didn't hire them to work for Him, but they sure did work. He called them to be with Him, and so they were. Just because you call people to become a team doesn't mean it will just happen without your intentional effort.

Isn't it interesting that when concrete is poured to make a foundation, floor, or wall in construction, a "form" is used as a mould to ensure the concrete hardens in exactly the shape needed for the function? This is what you are called to do with your team. It is an individual and collective process. You must take time to hone each member's character, giftings, dependency on the Lord, and interdependency on each other. Individual team members must be healthy for the team to be healthy. Spending one-on-one time with them is an absolute must. Use the same set

curriculum with each one, and then have discussion times with the group where they can encourage and challenge each other with what they are learning and how Jesus is growing them by the Spirit.

Remember again what theologian C.S. Lewis once said: “The typical expression of opening Friendship would be something like, ‘What? You too? I thought I was the only one.’” This common perspective and experience strengthens each one individually and is also part of the “forming” of a team.

A methodology called “Direction, Alignment, and Commitment” can be a helpful tool for forming a team and maintaining its ongoing effectiveness.

Direction: There is agreement about its direction and what they are trying to accomplish together.

There has been much written on vision. I like Andy Stanley’s description of vision as “a picture of a preferable future.” I would add, though, that it is important for the picture to be divinely drawn, not a result of anything to do with the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life. Too many ministries are focused on being “big” to feed something other than the Master’s glory.

Do you have a clear and agreed-upon vision for what your church or ministry is called to do? Of course, our ultimate vision is the fulfillment of the Great Commission, but what part is Jesus calling you to play in that? One note: the vision must be greater than your church or ministry and bigger than you can see right now.

Paul had a great vision. Romans 15:20 (NIV): “It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation.”

For the word “ambition,” we might use “vision.” It was his earnest desire and passion. You can see that Luke and others agreed with him on his journeys.

So, do you have a team that knows what they are called to do and agrees?

Here is a great example of how the agreement should work. In Acts 15, we read about the “Jerusalem Council.” This was a convening of leaders to address the issue of what to do with the Gentiles who were coming to faith in Christ. Some said they needed to become circumcised and effectively become Jewish first before they could be Christians. Others said no, that wasn’t what was needed. There was debate and discussion, but there was also listening to the Holy Spirit. In Acts 15:28, we read that the council’s determination “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us.” It could have been translated as, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, **and so** it seemed good to us.”

Alignment: Is there alignment for effective coordination of the work in service of their shared direction?

Let’s look back at the beginning of Acts 6. There was a disagreement because one segment of this new community called the Church (ekklesia in Greek) was being neglected in the daily distribution of resources. The Holy Spirit taught the Church some unique and wonderful cultural dynamics through this episode, but for now, let’s look at the solution more generally.

“So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:2-4, NIV).

We see agreement, cooperation, and coordination among the different giftings and callings. The result was that everyone was in the right place at the right time, doing the right things with

the right people. Those neglected were cared for, and the overall result in verse seven was tremendous growth.

How much growth are we restricting by not coordinating people's gifts and responsibilities toward the shared vision?

Some ways you can see when there is good alignment are:

Everyone is clear about each other's roles and responsibilities.

The work of each individual/group fits well with the work of other individuals/groups. There's a sense of organization, coordination, and synchronization.

This is when we experience the joys of "team."

Commitment: There is a strong commitment to prioritize the success of the collective.

A wonderful example of commitment is seen in the fourth chapter of Acts.

"And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need" (Acts 4:33b-35, NIV).

The people in this new community were committed to its success. One measure of their success in obeying Jesus' command to love one another was the lack of "needy persons!" Their revelation changed their perspective from "I, me, and mine" to "we, us, and ours."

The Philippian church was not big and certainly not a wealthy one, but it generously supported Paul's ministry. In his commendation to them in Chapter 4, he recognizes how their gift of provision was not something he was seeking for himself; the gift was about the fruit it would bring forth for the gospel and it

would be credited to them. They were committed to the cause and willing to sacrifice for it, knowing that on this side of heaven, they would not see the fruit of it. Such was their belief in the gospel and the hope of their salvation.

Some indicators of commitment are:

People give the extra effort needed for the group to succeed.

There's a sense of trust and mutual responsibility for the work.

People express considerable passion and motivation for the work.

FLOURISHING YOUR TEAM

Once you have found and formed your team, the work has only just begun. Now, to fulfill the vision, the team has to flourish. The leader's primary responsibilities are to ensure the team's ongoing well-being, excitement, and energy. The leader has to create a culture on the team that says, "We are going somewhere significant, we are all in this together, God is with us, and each of you matters for who you are, not merely what you do."

Leaders promote a positive climate, relationships, communication, and meaning to create a positive performance.⁷ We can help the team remember successes, rehearse positive history, recalibrate after problems, and rejoice always. We need to be the primary carriers of the joy of the Lord.

We should also follow the early church's example in Acts 4, which includes the arrest of Peter and John, Acts 13, the commissioning of Barnabus and Saul, and Acts 15—the Jerusalem Council. Praying together for the ministry is really important, but so is praying for the ministers. Our team should know our love for them and our commitment to their experiencing the blessings of the Lord in their lives and the lives of their families.

One way to help our team flourish is by how we deal with problems. Authoritarian leaders can tend to look to assign blame,

trying to keep any sense of it off themselves. A better way would be to describe the situation (rather than evaluating it), identify objective consequences or personal feelings about it (rather than blaming), and suggest acceptable alternatives (rather than arguing about who is right or at fault)."

Another way is to ensure the team's leadership is shared and a blessing. We must share in taking responsibility for mistakes but deflect credit to others. Ensure the team feels they have authority in final decisions. Lead from the position of servanthood, not power. Pay attention to the team's "soul care" and encourage honesty (speaking the truth in love; Ephesians 4:15).

Above all, we must lead our team, recognizing that we are stewards on the Master's behalf. Paul told the Ephesian elders ("elders" plural, i.e., team), "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

We use the term "our team," but remember they are His, and we are all on Team Jesus! A team is a wonderful way to maximize our spiritual legacy. We can then go even further and release individual team members to form their own teams and see more people raised up to use their God-given gifts for His mission.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Do you have a team? Or are you the leader who just has people who do what you want them to do? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you.
2. In the ministry, do you have a leader with a team, or is there a team that has a leader?
3. If there is a team, are they all headed in the same direction, aligned with your values, and committed to the success of the team?

FOR ACTION

1. As you think about ministry initiatives coming up, whose perspective needs to be included in the planning and execution? Identify people who should be on the team, and enlist their perspective and partnership in the planning and execution.
2. Take time to bring your leadership team together and make sure they are all clear on the direction the Lord is leading the ministry, and ask them how things might shift in their specific areas to be more aligned. Commit to them that you will help, encourage, and empower them to be successful. Then, ask them to commit to the team's efforts.

FOR PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I can see the perfect team in the Godhead. Would You show me how to develop a healthy, functional team where everyone is able to function in their areas of giftedness so that together we can produce the most fruit for Your glory. Help me, Lord Jesus, to hold on to people on my team with a grip of love, not control. Holy Spirit, help me to cast clear and compelling vision, see hearts aligned, and lead from a place of commitment to Your mission. Lord, be the leader of my team so that all we do would be blessed. In Jesus' name. Amen

PRINCIPLE 10

EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

IT WAS my first mission trip. My wife and I had sensed the Lord asking us to go on a mission trip to Mexico as part of the first team from our church. We were leading a home group at the time, and one of the families in the group was originally from Mexico. One day, Sal, the father, came to me and said, “You lead worship—why don’t we translate some songs, and we can do them as part of the outreach programs?” I said that I didn’t speak Spanish, but he assured me that he could and would help me.

I went to the missions pastor and asked what he thought about it. It had not been on his radar to do this at all. There were no plans to have outreaches with music or for the team to really do anything in the services with our partner church. He knew my music background and that I was wanting to serve the team however I could. He simply said, “Okay, you lead it.” Again, I said I didn’t speak Spanish, and he said, “Well, then you had better ask the Lord to show you how.”

Sal and I set about the task of translating several songs that were popular at the time in America, and Sal taught me how to sound

out the words. I recruited a couple of other singers (including my wife) and another musician, and off we went.

Fast forward two and a half years, and my wife, daughter, and I were living in Mexico, where I was the worship pastor and my wife directed the choir. Did I feel unqualified? Of course. Unprepared? Yes. Did the Lord help us and did a vibrant worship arts community develop that became a model for many churches in the city? Yes!

What would have happened if the missions pastor had simply said, “No”? I can’t even imagine. But despite my limitations, his empowering of me for the assignment changed the course of our family’s life. As a result, the lives of many, many people were also changed, not the least of which was a young man who was not a Christian but was at our first outreach; more than two and a half decades later, he is now a spiritual son to my wife and I and is the worship pastor at the church.

Definition: Empowering Leadership is a process of sharing authority with followers so they might grow into the leaders they were designed to be, while equipping and encouraging them with the necessary tools.

Quote: “When you delegate tasks, you create followers, but when you delegate authority, you create leaders.” —Craig Groeschel¹

Key Verse: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12).

Kingdom Value: We all receive a spiritual inheritance and are all called to leave a spiritual legacy. We are to steward our inheritance to maximize our legacy, but that legacy will only truly be maximized by those we raise up and release into their destiny in Christ.

Far too many leaders in the body of Christ do not think past the existence of their own personal ministry. This has led to a

constant struggle with a leadership gap between the generations and a lack of succession plans, resulting in too many “one-generation” ministries.

Jesus empowered His twelve disciples. After three years of intense preparation, He envisioned a day when they would do even greater things than they saw Him doing. Of course, the source of these “greater things” would be the authority of Jesus and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus always intended to leave the task of the Great Commission and the birth and growth of His Church to the apostles and to all the disciples who would follow in their footsteps. Gospel ministry and spiritual leadership development are about empowerment. The ultimate goal of leadership preparation is to release them when they are ready to lead with our blessing and unwavering support. It is astonishing how some established leaders see leadership development from a negative perspective, thinking of it more like a chore of ministry than a privilege. Hopefully this resource is challenges this mindset.

In Matthew’s Gospel, we find a story of empowerment of leaders. Matthew 14:15-16 states, “As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, ‘This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.’ Jesus replied, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’”

What if Jesus had agreed to the disciples’ suggestion to send the crowds away? The problem would have solved itself somehow. Thousands of people would have been sent away with their stomachs empty, and probably too few markets or homes would have been available to adequately provide for their physical needs. They may have gone hungry for a few days, then eventually returned to their towns and villages. What if, on the other hand, Jesus supernaturally took away the physical hunger of the multitudes and sent them home for the evening? Everyone would have gone away satisfied, and the disciples would have been pleased with themselves that they were the ones who

reminded Jesus of the people's needs. Yet they would have missed the opportunity to participate in a miracle of God's abundant provision that still inspires believers today.

Instead, Jesus gave His disciples a meaningful opportunity to learn and experience a profound lesson of faith in God's abundant provision. The disciples knew, humanly speaking, they had no chance of providing food for more than a few dozen people. Yet Jesus commanded them to feed the people with the meager resources that they scrounged together. Think how silly they must have felt bringing Jesus such a small resource when thousands of hungry people milled about nearby. Conversely, think how joyful they must have felt when Jesus took their offering and miraculously turned it into exceedingly more than enough food to fill every empty stomach.

As the disciples clutched their baskets brimming with leftover bread and broiled fish, we can only imagine how their faith swelled and their knowledge of God deepened as the sun began to set on a day like no other. They became possibility thinkers that day. If Jesus could take five loaves of bread and a few small fish and feed a hungry multitude, what could He do with the offering of a surrendered life and a simple act of faith?

God wants to use you to stretch the faith and challenge the assumptions of new leaders. They need to be given intimidating problems to solve, not just to watch you solve problems for them. They need to learn to look for resources that God has already provided, even if they seem insignificant at the time. They desire to be participants in miracles of God's provision and blessing. Are you giving them an opportunity to do something epic for the Kingdom of God? Are you encouraging them to take risks and trust God? God wants to raise up a generation of leaders who are possibility thinkers, and it is our task to help them get there.

What are some things we can do to facilitate the raising and releasing of new leaders?

BE AN ADVOCATE FOR NEW LEADERS

Where do established leaders start when it comes to empowering the next generation of Great Commission leaders? We start with a conviction that God wants us to raise up new leaders and a heart of love for them to become who God (not us) intends for them to be.

Let's be completely honest. Each of us has likely heard or participated in conversations where the current generation speaks negatively of the new generation of young adults between the ages of 18 and 35. In North American contexts, it is often said that Millennials don't have a strong work ethic, that they have difficulty consistently showing up to work on time, and how they are not dependable in positions that require a great deal of responsibility or perseverance. The word "entitled" often comes up when referring to Millennials. They are sometimes stereotyped as restless, selfish, coddled, or lazy. Although there are undoubtedly adults that fit these descriptions, they are certainly not confined to one particular age group. To be honest, this is simply not a fair assessment of a whole generation, and frankly it does them a disservice.

Younger adults today often have a different world view, different priorities, values, and beliefs from the previous generation. This could be said of countless generations of young adults throughout history. We must be careful not to think our generation is superior. We have plenty of problems of our own.

Rather than write off a generation because they view and respond to the world differently, established leaders need to adopt an open learning posture toward the next generation. Here are a few ideas to help you engage new leaders.

Have authentic conversations with them. Get to know what they believe and value.

Be open to different ideas and interpretations of culture, politics, and religion.

Be willing to listen to their beliefs and opinions even if you don't understand or agree with them.

Invite them over for a meal in your home.

Find out what you have in common.

Share your story and your life with them.

Treat them as adults and equals. In a word, offer your respect.

If God has entrusted a new generation leaders with the Great Commission and has empowered them with His Holy Spirit, then we must follow His lead. We must do our best to prepare and encourage them to grow into the men and women God desires them to be. They need leaders on their side who will act as sponsors, coaches, and champions for their generation. I believe our generation will be held accountable for how we engage, defend, prepare, and empower the next generation that God has commissioned.

ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Building authentic relationships with the next generation of leaders is invigorating and enjoyable. For over 25 years, I have intentionally entered into mentoring relationships with young adult leaders, and I believe it has been one of the highlights of my ministry. There is so much energy, creativity, and innovation that flows from young leaders who are not afraid to dream big and take risks for God. What they lack in wisdom and maturity, they make up for in passion and action. Both generations working together blends these respective strengths into an effective leadership team.

Let's face it—established leaders need young leaders as much as young leaders need us. We tend to think more in terms of safety, predictability, comfort, and status quo the older we get. We often fear failure more than we fear being irrelevant in our methodologies. The next generation challenges our static tendencies and

comfort zones and encourages us to move forward with innovation and fresh creativity for the sake of the Kingdom.

A term we all need to make a regular part of our leadership vocabulary is *ideation*. The dictionary defines ideation as “the capacity for or the act of forming or entertaining ideas” (Merriam-Webster Inc. 2016). Synonyms for ideation are imaginativeness, inventiveness, and originality. Younger leaders are full of imagination, creativity, and original ideas. How are you doing at capturing these resources for the sake of the Kingdom?

How might it enhance your ministry if you were to create a safe space in your ministry to encourage fresh ideas and collaboration? It would need to be an environment with few rules and no lid on creativity. What if you were to invite younger leaders to attend an ideation retreat with some of the established leaders in your organization? The two generations could enjoy getting to know each other better and thinking outside the box for a day or two? What new projects might you involve new younger leaders in shaping with their own imagination and passion? You might be surprised how ingenious, transformative, and successful their ideas prove to be.

CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF FAITH AND FREEDOM

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

“So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free” (John 8:36).

The fullness of life and freedom that Jesus promised to those who come to Him does not only apply to the act of conversion. It is a promise for the entire spiritual journey. Our Savior wants His people of all generations to embrace the freedom and fullness He purchased for us with His precious blood. It does Him a disservice when believers create cultures in Christian organiza-

tions that are more about control and conformity than about freedom, faith, and fullness. When younger leaders feel a lack of freedom in regard to their spiritual gifts, passions, creativity, and natural abilities, something is wrong in the organization. When they experience a tight lid on their leadership, a disregard for their ideas, or an adversarial relationship with established leaders, this is indicative of an unhealthy leadership culture.

Established leaders have a God-given responsibility to encourage the next generation to be men and women of faith and freedom. I often tell young adult leaders that God has given them “the freedom to dream and the courage to explore.” God desires for His leaders to be strong and courageous, and that they experience the freedom to dream and take risks for the sake of the gospel.

Are you an encourager and a fellow-risk taker for the Kingdom of God? Is your faith meter on full, or is it nearing empty at this stage of your spiritual journey? Would you characterize your own leadership as courageous? There is a generation rising who needs to be encouraged to be a people of faith and freedom. Your task is to nurture this attitude among the next generation and to model faith, courage, willingness to take risks for God, and the freedom to pursue the God-given desires of your heart.

DELEGATE STRATEGIC TASKS

So many of the younger leaders today and the leaders of tomorrow are stimulated by challenges. They want to be part of something heroic, not just the “same old, same old.” They want to be a part of collaborative teams that make a transformational impact on culture. They want to be stakeholders and partners with established leaders and organizations. Many of them like to start new initiatives or take new initiatives to a whole new level. Sometimes the greatest barriers to their leadership and creativity are not their own limitations, but rather those limitations placed

upon them when they are not given strategic opportunities to participate and lead in organizations.

Part of empowering younger leaders involves demonstrating trust in their judgment and leadership ability. It is important that they possess the humility to perform some of the less glamorous tasks of leadership when called upon, but it is equally important to give them opportunities to lead in tasks where the stakes are higher and more is expected of them. They need to be given God-sized problems and assignments from time to time.

Years ago, when I was a firefighter recruit, I spent weeks in the classroom learning about how to fight structure fires. I appreciated the education and felt that my knowledge was sufficient to keep me safe and to help me be successful in extinguishing fires. However, all the theory in the world would not adequately prepare me for the real-life challenges I would soon face. Watching my instructors extinguish large fires would be an opportunity to learn, but it would not give me the necessary training I required to do my job. If the only firefighting activity I was allowed to practice was putting out small fires with a fire extinguisher, I would have been ill-prepared to enter a building that was fully engulfed with flames and smoke. Our class of recruits was given numerous opportunities to extinguish structure fires and oil spill fires in a controlled environment while we were still in the instructional phase. This preparation gave us the confidence and hands-on experience to be released to our respective fire stations, knowing we were adequately trained. It also gave the seasoned veteran firefighters confidence that they could depend on us in important situations. Our abilities had been thoroughly tested and our learning demonstrated.

In the same way, if established leaders only teach and model leadership, they are not adequately preparing new leaders for future real-life situations. They must present opportunities for young adults to lead in strategic initiatives while still in their training phase. This preparation will give new leaders greater

confidence in their leadership abilities and will assure others that they are adequately prepared for future ministry challenges.

COMMISSION AND RELEASE

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age’” (Matthew 28:18-20).

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” (Acts 13:2-3).

“Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust” (Acts 14:23).

All leaders must eventually be commissioned and released in order for them to realize the destiny God has planned for them. It is a natural part of spiritual leadership development, and it is meant to be an important rite of passage in their spiritual journey. Often, younger leaders are ready to be released before established leaders are ready to let them go. Sometimes established leaders know that the younger leaders are ready before they know it themselves. Some young leaders need to be prompted to be patient and wait for God’s timing, while others have to be lovingly shoved from the nest and encouraged to embrace new responsibility before they think they are ready.

In some of the churches Paul and Barnabas planted, they did not have the luxury of staying for an extended period of time to develop pastoral leaders. At other times, they were able to invest a good deal of time and effort into leadership development. There were some cases where they only had a few weeks to plant a church before persecution or the prompting of the Holy Spirit caused them to move on. As difficult as it may have been at times to commission and release new leaders to take on the responsibilities of church leadership, Paul and Barnabas had no choice but to officially appoint them, pray and fast for their divine empowerment and success, and commit them to the Lord.

Trust in the Lord is really at the heart of commissioning and releasing leaders. Paul and Barnabas “committed them to the Lord in whom they had put their trust.” Fear is often the chief motivator for holding back or holding on too long to leaders, sometimes to the detriment of the proclamation of the gospel and the growth of the global Church.

There was a great deal more that the apostles needed to learn when Jesus ascended into heaven. He left some of the necessary leadership development to the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “I have much more to teach you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 10:13). This is instructive for established leaders. There will always be more learning that needs to occur in the lives of younger leaders. You must rely upon the Holy Spirit to continue to develop their leadership and teach them what they must learn. You have to let them go with your blessing to fulfill the God-given desires of their hearts. Make their release an enjoyable and memorable experience for them. Encourage your church or business to affirm and bless them. Don’t let them leave your organization with a sense of guilt or isolation simply because you are not ready to release them or you fear that they’re not ready. The Holy Spirit is the One who decides when the time is right, and we all must submit to His leadership and celebrate their release to fulfill their God-given destinies.

Commissioning and releasing new leaders does not imply that we cease to be involved in their leadership, but rather that the nature of our relationship changes, much like the relationship with our natural children changes when they are launched into adulthood. We still love them and desire to be involved in their lives, but the role and responsibilities are different.

Upon the commissioning and release of new leaders, your new role may be that of a counselor, mentor, spiritual companion, or peer. It is advisable to give them space and allow them the initiative to define the future nature of your relationship and the frequency of interaction. Assure them of your ongoing support and availability, and encourage them to reach out to you whenever they desire. This will mean a great deal to them as they move forward.

Once commissioning and release has taken place, it is time for you to engage a new group of potential leaders. Continue to build on your own learning experiences as you become more proficient at nurturing young adults. Remember that the process of leadership development we see clearly outlined in 2 Timothy 2:2 involves continuing to entrust what you have learned to others, while those you have nurtured begin to do the same. Leadership development eventually becomes exponential as you and those you have invested in continue to invest in others, just as the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy to do. What could be more exciting to a spiritual leader than to see a spiritual son or daughter they have raised up and released into leadership begin to mentor other potential leaders? This is the culmination of commissioning and releasing. What a privilege to be involved in such a transformative process. Let us thank the Lord together for the blessed privilege of raising up new leaders.

FOR THOUGHT

1. Who was the leader who most empowered you when you first began showing a capacity to lead? What were their most effec-

tive strategies for helping you gain confidence as a leader? Take a moment to reflect on the impact this leader made on your life, and think about the exponential results of their original investment in you. Thank the Father for placing an established leader in your life.

2. Is there a young leader who left due to being under-utilized or frustrated with a closed-leadership culture? How might you follow up and affirm them? Are you willing to take some constructive feedback from them in order to learn and change?

FOR ACTION

1. When you hear terms like “stakeholders, collaborators, and partners,” with regard to new leaders and their desire to be engaged in leadership opportunities, what ministries or initiatives come to mind in your organization that would be a good place to start including them in strategic tasks?

2. Which of the leaders you are developing needs to be commissioned for a new assignment or level of leadership? Set a time to publicly lay hands on them and pray for them, affirming their authority.

FOR PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you that You were and still are an empowering leader. Thank you that, although there was so much more You could have taught the original disciples, You entrusted what remained to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and You commissioned and released them for a strategic task. Jesus, thank you for coming and dying so we all can experience freedom and fullness in You. Thank you that You instill faith, divine authority, and Holy Spirit power in each of us to help us fulfill our destinies as Great Commission leaders. I am grateful for the opportunity to be commissioned and released for the sake

of the gospel. Holy Spirit, I ask You to continue to empower me so I can empower other leaders to follow in Your steps. Amen.

CONCLUSION

I read once the statement that Christianity is only one generation away from extinction in the United Kingdom.¹ This was a quote from a former Archbishop of Canterbury. Also in that article was the comment from the then Archbishop of York; he said, “Evan-gelize or fossilize.” Before we get too carried away and say, “Well, that is the UK,” let’s realize these statements are true for every nation on earth. One of the best ways of ensuring that our faith doesn’t become extinct is to multiply it into a new genera-tion. This will take leadership; leadership that understands the new generations coming up, leadership that has had models and mentors to look to for who to be as a leader, and those who know how to lead.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this book, this is not a sequential, step 1 then step 2 book. Each of the chapters have as much to do with who, as leaders, we are becoming and then how that is expressed, as it does with “how to do this leadership thing.” Paul wrote to the Ephesians in chapter two, verse 10, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Our hope is for this book to help you become fully His workmanship as a leader, and then do the good work of multi-

plying yourself in the lives of new leaders who will carry on the work.

Fellow leaders, we must engage, prepare, and empower new leaders to fulfill this great task that has been entrusted to them. Collectively, we can be a “Barnabas” to the next generation. Let us join other established spiritual leaders in organizations and churches all over the world in the high privilege of nurturing new leaders. Together, we will help them rise up and take their place in the *Missio Dei*.

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