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PAULINE LEADERSHIP

IN THE

LOCAL CHURCH

I. C. MALELE
PAULINE LEADERSHIP
IN THE
LOCAL CHURCH
BY:
ISRAEL CEDRIC MALELE

SCRIPT

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER IN LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY
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IN THE
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AT THE
RAND AFRIKAANSE UNIVERSITY

ADVISOR / PROMOTER : PROFESSOR JAN A DU RAND
DATE : OCTOBER 1995
DECLARATION OF CANDIDATE

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my personal Unaided Work.

No part of this dissertation has previously been submitted to, or is to be submitted to any other University for a degree, save to the one in which I am now a candidate.

ISRAEL CEDRIC MALELE
I am mostly deeply indebted to my promoter Professor Jan A. Du Rand for his much appreciated assistance, guidance, encouragement and enthusiasm which enabled me to relentlessly continue with this research, I so strongly believe in. Prof. Jan A. Du Rand has set a bold new standard and assisted me in charting a clear course as I was on the path which was long and arduous. As a theologian Prof. Jan A. Du Rand understands the Scriptures, and he was thus academically qualified to guide me in the mammoth task of completing this research. Without his expertise and extensive wealth of experience this dissertation could not have been possible.

For the development and production of this thesis, I feel a deep sense of gratitude to Professor Jan A. Du Rand for the final editorial of this dissertation, his excellence editing ultimately produced this document.
My darling wife, Cinderella, who is the essence of love, a personal source of encouragement and inspiration and a course of my passionate commitment to excellence in leadership. My wife Cinderella and our Son Destiny, and daughters Kagiso and Kholofelo have been patient, understanding and supportive, during my many travels on speaking engagements on leadership in the local churches. The family has continually provided incentive for the exercise and development of my leadership potential.

My mother Angelinah and late father Elias Nicks Malele. The two gentle giants who parented me and had a desire to see my leadership potentials being unfolded. The ultimate destiny for which I was created which is to manifest the image and glory of the true and living God.

To all the Third World peoples around Africa whose leadership potential are in some cases still suppressed by the opinions and judgements of others.

And finally to the Source and Supplier of all potential, God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

Thanks for the privilege of serving you.
The strong sure biblical leadership so desperately needed in our confused age seems to be conspicuously lacking in our modern society and churches today. There is moral degradation, and World conditions have worsened immeasurably, Church leaders have no willpower and moral decisiveness. There is a great leadership crisis and deficiency.

We are facing an acute crisis in church leadership. Crisis succeeds crisis, yet our many church leaders come up with few solutions, and the prognosis is by no means reassuring. The church has not escaped this dearth of authoritarian leadership, and lack of biblical leadership. The voice of the church that once sounded a clarion call of hope to beleaguered influence of the church in the World Community has become minimal. The salt has largely lost its flavour and the light its radiance. This dissertation takes a more constructive approach and strives to discover afresh the biblical principles of leadership and factors that inspire dynamic spiritual leadership.

The role of elders and deacons, and more qualifications for Spiritual leadership. Pauline writings display incipient qualities of leadership, and character of a church leader and role of women in church leadership.

In Pauline Leadership we find an inspiring prototype of what biblical leadership ought to be like. It will be our purpose in this dissertation to view leadership in the church. We will consider Paul's viewpoints, examine the qualities of leadership, and discover how these traits of qualities contribute to effective church leadership.
This dissertation is designed to assist local church leaders in developing and refining their leadership qualities and to awaken and enhance their spiritual potentials.

The church cannot function without leaders. The dissertation challenges the local church leaders to be innovative, motivated, courageous, knowledgeable, honest, optimistic, enthusiastic, principled, wise and balanced.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

In this study I am going to examine in depth the effects of Pauline leadership in the local church. The study intended to strengthen the leadership of the local Church by providing a better understanding of leadership, offices, functions, organisation and how it can be practised effectively by pastors and lay leaders in the local Church as espoused by Paul in his teachings in the New Testament.

The thesis describes the nature of Christian leadership, the qualities and qualifications of Christian leadership and church leaders. It discusses the leadership roles of pastors and lay people, church government, the ministry of an elder and deacon and their offices respectively. The study highlights congregational ministries and functions on feminine office and leadership, the leader's personal life, spiritual development and leadership offices.

The thesis is an overview of leadership ideas and a distillation of the insights of many. It is a sampler of Pauline leadership theory and practice. It intends to open doors to further study, to guide continuing reflection and practice.

1.2 DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF SOME CONCEPTS

"Leadership cares about effectiveness" while management cares about efficiency. Leadership decides where we are going and why. Management figures out how to get there.
“The difference between leadership and management relates to a pair of spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible, namely leadership and administration. The gift of leadership is mentioned in the list of gifts in Romans 12:8, while administration comes up in another list in 1 Corinthians 12:28. In the original Greek they are two different words”. (Wagner 1985:88).

1.2.1 Definitions of Leadership

Greek Concordance

The Greek work for “leader” is “hodegos” and means a conductor (literally or figuratively) and is translated “guide leader”. It also means to show the way.

“Some uncontemporary Church leaders fancy themselves business men, media figures, entertainers, psychologists, philosophers, or lawyers. Yet those motions contrast sharply with the tenor of the Symbolism Scripture employs to depict Spiritual leaders” (Mac Arthur 1989:3).

Under the plan God has ordained for the Church, leadership is a position of humble, loving service. Church leadership is ministry not management. Those whom God designates leaders are called not to be governing monarchs, but humble slaves, not slick celebrities, but labouring servants. The man who leads God’s people must above all exemplify sacrifice, devotion, submission and lowliness.

In II Timothy 2 Paul uses seven different metaphors to describe the rigors of leadership. He pictures the minister as a teacher (vs. 2), a soldier (vs. 3), an athlete (vs. 5), a farmer (vs. 6), a workman (vs. 15) a vessel (vs. 20 - 21) and a slave (vs. 24). All these images evoked ideas of sacrifice, labour service and hardship. These images speak eloquently of the complex and varied responsibilities of Spiritual leadership.
1.2.2 Leadership: The gift of leadership is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future, and to communicate these goals to others in such away that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God.

1.2.3 The Term Manager and a Leader

The terms manager and leader are frequently used as synonyms. However, contemporary organisational theory suggests that there are some important differences between them. For one thing, every manager needs to be a leader, but not every leader needs to be a manager.

"The leader comes first. Leadership captures concepts, vision, and overall direction. Once those are established, management sees that it is done". (Wagner 1985 : 89).

Richard Hutcheson explains leadership as a function of the relationship between persons, those in charge and those who voluntarily follow. Leadership both shapes and it cannot ignore the constituency. Effective church leadership accurately perceives where the people in the congregation are now, and what their potential is for the future. It then takes steps to motivate them to move ahead and become all that God wants them to be. The leader is always out in front, but not too far. The leader sees possibilities that others do not see, and changes the perspective of the church members to fit these possibilities.

Management is different. Ted Engstrom points out that while leadership is based on vision, faith, and concepts, management operates with realistic worldview.
“There are thousands of major cultures in the world and numerous significant minor variations of them. Part of each cultural context is an intricate system of leadership selection and legitimisation. The people who belong to each culture group expect that legitimate leaders will behave in certain manners and that they deserve to be followed to the degree they conform to that kind of behaviour. When a church is established within that culture, to a large degree the form which effective church leadership patterns will take is determined by that culture.” (Wagner 1985: 90 - 91)

As missiologists continually point out, one of the mistakes that missionaries have frequently made in establishing churches in other cultures is to superimpose a system of church government which makes little sense at all to the people.

1.2.4 Administration

For purposes of this thesis, the concept of administration is considered almost synonymously with the concept of management. Both are concerned with the formulation and execution of policy. Perhaps it will be of some value here to designate two other words which relate closely to the concept of administration.

1.2.5 Organisation

The word organisation has to do with the setting up to the total task in its various aspects, particularly denoting an emphasis on planning and structuring the activities of the program. Supervision places the emphasis upon the leader’s guidance of persons within the framework of the task which they hold in the organisation, therefore, it might not be improper to say that a leader organises the task then supervises group members in the function of the task.

Administration and / or management are words of more general character which describe the total process of the leader in relationship which describes the total process of the leader in relationship to the organisation which he serves. Along with
the definition stated above, other approaches to describing the administration -
management process have been offered. Here are some samples:

"The stewardship of the talents of the people God has entrusted to the leader’s care.

The purpose for bringing together of the means and the end.

Not the direction of things, but the development of people.

The work a person does to enable people to work most effectively together". (Gangel 1981:120)

1.2.6 The Local Church and Leadership

God's pattern has always been that the universal church be manifest in the local
curch (Rom. 16:16), and Acts 2:41-47 represents the local church at Jerusalem
carrying out the purposes and program of the universal church. There is no evidence
in the Word of God that Christ ever abandoned the program and format of the local
curch as the basic foundation stone for all forms of service and mission in the world.

1.2.7 Local Church Membership

Membership in the local church seems to have been taken for granted by New
Testament believers. Various passages seem to indicate that specific roles were kept,
but there is very little clear-cut teaching on the nature of membership rules (Acts 1:
15; 2:41; 6:2-5; 1 Cor. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:9).

1.2.8 Church Organisation

Like the matter of membership, church organisation is not specifically outlined in the
New Testament. It is somewhat assumed by Christ in Matthew 18 when He talks about establishing the facts of a dispute through collective hearing by the church.

As apostolic authority passed off the scene, collective organisation seems to have taken its place. In Acts 8, for example, Peter remonstrates with Simon the sorcerer on the basis of unilateral authority. Just a few years later the apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth that they have the collective responsibility to judge wicked persons in their midst (1 Cor. 5:13).

In a sense the indigenous principle of missions is a more refined development of this earliest principle of organisation. Another characteristic of organisation in the early church is that it rose largely in response to the needs and problems which the church encountered. The selection of the deacons in Acts 6 is probably the most obvious example of this.

1.2.9 Church Government

An important part of organisation in the local church is its government. Although there is a difference of opinion among evangelicals regarding the significance of such words as episkopos (bishop or overseer) and presbuteros (elder), there are several biblical principles of church government which are enunciated in the New Testament.

Young Timothy is a valid representative of early church leadership, and to him the apostle Paul writes that leaders in church are to be in constant conformity to “sounds words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness” (1 Tim. 6:3).

Prof. Warren Bennis of the University of California, in his book on LEADERSHIP recorded some of these differences, and they are enormous and crucial. He states the following between manager and the leader.
The manager administers, the leader innovates.
The manager is a copy, the leader is an original.
The manager maintains, the leader develops.
The manager focuses on systems and structure, the leader focuses on people.
The manager relies on control, the leader inspires trust.
The manager has a short range view, the leader has a long range perspective.
The manager asks how and when, the leader ask what and why.
The manager has his eyes on the bottom line, the leader has his eyes on the horizon.
The manager imitates, the leader originates.
The manager accepts the status quo, the leader challenges it.
The manager is the classical good soldier, the leader is his own person.
The manager does things right, the leader does the right thing.

Leaders are individuals who have declared independence from the expectations of others and have determined to be true to themselves in the face of a society who wants to homogenise them. If you are to become the leader God intended you to be, then it is necessary to challenge the opinion of others and defy the society straight - jacket that stifles the untapped leader within.

It would be remembered that leadership depends on the ability to make people want to follow voluntarily. They are not made by corporate courses, any more than they are made by college courses, but they are made by experience. A true leader is one who discovers himself, his purpose for living and commits to exploring and expressing himself fully to the glory of God. Simply put, a leader is one who deploys himself and by so doing, inspires others to do the same.
1.3 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Today’s society is a corrupt society Timothy 1:9 Titus 2:14, thus the church needs leaders who will know how spiritually to restrain the people from violating God’s laws. The spirit of the day is to cast off all restraints. The last decade has been a manifestation of a lawless spirit in music, art, morality and lifestyle.

Pauline teaching emphasises that today’s generation is also “perverse”. (Phil. 2:5) which means in the Greek language: distorted, misinterpreting, corrupted, twisted, turned around, and reversed, in purity and holiness. Thus the church needs leadership that can untwist these perversities that are in the minds of the people.

Pauline teachings depict today’s generation as a ‘transgressing” generation which means in the original Greek language: to go aside, beyond, or over the set limits and to be a lawbreaker consequently, the church needs leaders who will be able to clearly enunciate to Christians God’s prescribed boundaries for their lives.

Paul teaches that it is unfortunate that many people are those who have a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind begins with a rejection of God’s existence, which causes people to worship idols. this worshipping of any created thing above God causes people to turn to different levels of immorality which, when taken to their limits, leads to a mind that is totally unapproved, rejected and worthless toward God (Romans 1:20-28).

The original Greek thought behind a reprobate mind is translated “castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27) and rejected (Hebrews 6:8) is a coin or a piece of metal that is not able to stand the test of the fire.
Thus, the church today needs leaders who are able to persuade men of God's existence and the glory due to His name. The church today needs leaders who can be instruments of the Holy Spirit to save people from idolatry, immorality and reprobation.

Because today's generation is a transgressing generation, it has also become a betraying one in which people do not keep their word or express true loyalty to one another (Romans 1:31 II Timothy 32:1-4). Thus, the church needs leaders who will be loyal and committed both to their people and also to each other.

Because of this generations betrayal of one another and specially of God, it has also become an occult generations. Today drug addiction, rape, incest, homosexuality, sexual perversion, demon worship, satanic churches, spiritism and the like are tremendously growing forces of evil throughout the world. Consequently the church is in dire need of spirit-filled leaders who can bring of down these wicked influences not by more intellectualism but by the power of the spirit and the Word of God.

Church Leadership according to the Scriptures is needed today's because it is only in this way that church leaders will view themselves as keys to both the Church's problems and her solutions.

The church needs the restoration of scriptural leadership because the church has been greatly corrupted by adopting non-Biblical methods of leadership, training and functioning. Non-Christian psychologists, however are the first to admit that they know relatively little concerning the factors that consistently determine a leader's success. Psychologists greatly emphasise the following qualities as common characteristics of successful leaders: intelligence, organisation, wit, will power, creativity, and ambition and surprising too little vague in placing honesty, integrity and purity, faithfulness and character.
Many companies and organisations invest large amounts of time, money, energy and hope into those individuals who evidence such qualities. But in spite of all these investments, psychologists continue to have so many problems with their training programmes that they are continually revising them in an attempt to find the best way to train the people who the companies desire and need. It is a tragedy when the church because of a lack of leadership in this area, adopts non-Biblical patterns for the training of its leadership from these ever-changing programmes of psychologists and Social Scientists instead of the Word of God. Church patterns its educational system after the non-Biblical and non-Christian patterns of the world. When the church finds that her leaders fail to meet the spiritual needs of her people. Today the church needs to return to Biblical patterns of leadership training and education which equips a leader to meet needs of her people by the power of the Holy Spirit.

On the ungodly side, the Church needs leaders who will be able to save Christians from the evils prophesied to increase in these last days (II Tim. 3:1 ff) Specifically leaders must be able to lead Christians away from being depressed during the perilous times, lovers of themselves, covetous of money, boastful, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, immoral without natural affection, disloyal, deceitful and uncontrolled.

In brief, true biblical leaders are first called and ordained by God, not man. They are people who have deeply and personally experienced the reality of the cross of Jesus Christ and who centre their lives not upon feeding the mind of man, but upon the edification of the Christian’s Spirit - the source of man’s sin - but also his salvation.
CHAPTER 2

PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2 I will give a broader explanation of the purpose of the investigation and I shall probe into church leadership as exercised in the Pauline writings.

An investigation of the ministry and its exercise of authority within the primitive church is almost inevitable. The field of investigations would be narrowed to Christian leadership as reflected in Pauline writings. The investigation combine the theology of Church leadership with its practical expressions.

An understanding of the scriptural perspectives would be necessary in order to effectively and uncompromisingly integrate the insights of the broader study of church leadership.

For the purpose of this investigation the researcher will draw from the early church especially Paul. The New Testament offers some further perspective or religious leadership. Although the analysis of Paul's leadership in the early church is directed towards Pauline Church Communities and often exercised within the community. The community members are asked to discern and to test the authenticity of its manifestations.

The earliest New Testament documents are the letters of Paul. These letters are written as early as 50 A.D. by the apostle and continue in the Pauline tradition until approximately 100 A.D. Since these manuscripts are letters, they contain copious
amounts of information about people, situations, abuses, challenges and issues of interest to particular communities. "The communities addressed, such as Thessalonica, Corinth, Phillippi, were well known in the ancient world and insight into their lifestyle and values is readily available in the results of our current investigation. Of special interest are the people portrayed in the letters, primary Paul, but also Timothy, Titus, Silvanus and a host of others who are merely mentioned. Relationships between Paul and specifically persons and communities can be discovered in the writings. In fact the dynamic of the leadership seems to be at work in the letters and a potential development or diversity of leadership styles evident in Paul" (Doohan 1984: 22).

2.2. DATA COLLECTION

The thesis contains a wealth of ideas, principles and insights gleaned from some of the best works in the field of leadership, church government and qualities of leaders and responsibilities of leaders.

Data collection or gathering is an important operation in research. Accuracy and reliability of data can be assumed if information is collected by accurate methods from reliable sources and the usage of scriptures. In investigating Church Leadership in the Pauline writings, important work has been accomplished by the researcher using literature, linguistic, exegetical and theological criteria documents. Commentaries on the writing of Paul and the Bible would be exhausted on relevant matters.

2.3. METHODOLOGY

The socio-historical analysis will be employed to study development in Pauline local church communities and his supposed readers. The investigator would probe into discussions, study of scriptural texts in terms of an inter-disciplinary approach to the
New Testament studies, specifically the Pauline Churches. The social setting of Pauline writings would be considered with special reference to patterns emerging in Paul’s leadership approach. Much information about the composition of early church, and church structures can be gathered by means of the constructive approach. The investigator will also employ the analytical approach which seeks to identify and investigate conflicts, draws information, comparisons about operative norms from ethical exhortations and wisdom saying and endeavours to draw connections between symbolism and experienced reality. The comparative approach involves the comparison of primitive Christian sources with texts that do not originate from or describe early Christian groups. It will be employed to gain understanding of the early Christian movement, either by contrasting it with various aspects of the surrounding culture or by looking for similarities between early Christianity and movements and groups of the times and places. Contemporary methods of empirical research including participant observation. In this research methodology of Pauline leadership, consideration probed on the styles of leadership and the modelling principle etc.

The methodology should serve as a guide for the researcher to come to grips with the fundamentals of the Christian leadership in the Pauline writings. The nature of biblical leadership, qualifications for leaders, church-government and the role of women would be probed into by using scriptures. This research will be done from books which will be extensively consulted, articles and journals from recently published works of the various theologians on the subject as well as unpublished materials. This will include some analysis exegesis on Pauline writings and the theology of Paul.
2.4 SYNTHESIS

The final stage in this research involves stating conclusions based on the analysis and interpretation of equipped data. It is impossible to study Christian leadership of the Pauline communities without considering the nature of Paul’s relationship with them.

The research would be approached scientifically without deviating from the biblical teachings. The researcher would synthesise and blend together ideas, theories, styles of leadership, goal formulating, analysis, comparison, functions, offices and local church government.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The dissertation hopes to achieve a wider perspective of the effects of church leadership as the state of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ is a Spiritual barometer. The research would take cognisant of the vital fact that all vital ingredients of Spiritual leadership are found in principle and example in the Scriptures. The investigation would not merely give techniques, methology or psychological or secular insights instead the research would unfold the character of the church leader God is wanting, illustrating this points from the example of our Lord and Paul in his writings.

2.6 STRUCTURE ON THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

In Chapter 1 the thesis gives a detailed information on the definitions of concepts and the subject of leadership from a biblical perspective, viewing it as a gift and calling from God, and as a ministry to and by God’s people.
I then clarify the primary functions of leadership, state a general definition, and consider several different leadership theories and styles, administration, difference between manager and leader, the local church, organisation and Church government.

Chapter 2 focuses on the importance of the purpose of the investigation, data collection, methodology where the socio-historical analysis is employed in studying Pauline local churches. The final stage of this chapter analyses, interprets and synthesises the data, as well as methodology of Pauline leadership.

In Chapter 3 the thesis focuses on the pattern of the early church and its leadership structure. Paul and the modelling principles in local church for Spiritual virtue. The study of the pastoral letters as well as first Corinthians and Second Corinthians are made.

In Chapter 4 we primarily deal with the understanding of the duties of the minister. The challenges of the minister and his ministries are outlined here. The role of elders and deacons are discussed. Biblically the focal of all church leadership is the elder.

Chapter 5 a distinction between the elder, bishop and pastor is looked into. This chapter also deals with the qualifications of the elder and some parallels in both Timothy and Titus are made. The functions and offices of deacons are considered. The chapter also considers the qualifications of deacons and deaconesses.

Chapter 6 tackles the real issues of church leadership which is qualifications for spiritual leadership. Pauline local church leadership is unfolded in chapter 6. In this dissertation a thorough study of the qualifications is researched. This chapter is of great significance as it is aimed at creating the basis and frame work of this research.
Chapter 7 deals with a major subject in the church viz the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church. This chapter helps us to achieve a clearer perspective of the effects of leadership. Chapter 7 emphatically states that men and women who would make it in local church leadership should be endowed with the Holy Ghost and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Leadership is rooted in what we believe about God and the church, the body of the Son Jesus Christ. In chapter 7 some reflections on Spiritual gifts as espoused by Paul in his writings are researched.

Chapter 8 is geared on the role women in the ministry. The role of women, and women in leadership has become a sensitive subject, it is thoroughly addressed in this chapter. Pauline views on women and their leadership roles are researched. The researcher chooses a balanced view of the role of women in the ministry. References are made to Paul’s substantiation in his teaching by referring back to the original order with Adam and Eve. The researcher depicts a clearer pattern and view of the role of women in the church today. Problem scriptures in Paul’s writings are expounded. The Epistle to the Corinthians dealing with order in the church is analysed and effectively explained.

In chapter 9 the thesis gives concluding assessments and evaluations in Pauline local church leadership. The dissertation makes some challenges on church leadership. The Pauline letters are used in concluding this thesis.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The thesis concludes that there is another factor that is not often discussed and it is quantity and timeliness of the leadership exercised by pastors and elected leaders of congregations. Unique barriers of church leadership are exposed in this study and the letters of Paul are therefore, used especially with regard to requirements for Spiritual qualifications for church leadership to consolidate all the previous chapters.
It is concluded that a man who meets this Spiritual qualifications in leadership would be worthy of honour.

While the church can often muddle through despite the ineptitude of its leaders, the right kind and quality of leadership has significant role in bridging the gap between what is and what can be resulting in a church that is more faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ than it would otherwise be.
CHAPTER 3

THE PATTERN OF THE EARLY CHURCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I have devoted myself to the study of the patterns of the early church and its leadership structure. A study of the leadership of the church, the modelling principle in the local church is looked into. Paul is training and settling Timothy in the ministry. Paul as the pattern leader is seen in II Corinthians - Epistles. Various contrasts and the uniqueness of I and II Corinthians is sketched out in this chapter.

The description of the early church in Acts 2: 42 - 47 gives us a basic outline of what God intends the church to be:

The early church continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

We who love Jesus Christ constitute the true church, the Body of Christ. We belong to the collective body of Christ, whether we are alive or in glory. The Greek word for church is ekklesia, which means "an assembly of called-out ones". The church is made up of people called by God to be His children. We have become united with all other believers by faith in Christ.
The world cannot detect the invisible church of real Christians. They see only the visible church of those who profess to be Christians. The Lord intended for there to be a visible church for a testimony to the world. When we gather together on the Lord’s Day, we are a testimony to the world that Christ has indeed risen. Some people say that we don’t need any buildings or organisational structure at all. However, I don’t think Christ would have agreed. In Matthew 18, for example, Christ implied that the church would have form since it would meet together in a given place. “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church” (vv. 15 - 17).

In the book of Acts, the invisible church became more visible. Although the visible and the invisible church were initially the same, the picture changed as false believers associated with the church. The invisible church became visible as believers began to gather together: Originally, they met in homes. However, by the third century, the church was meeting in its own building as it continued to grow in numbers.

Let’s examine three aspects of the church: its founding, its ministry, and its leadership. Although there are new ways to communicate, new methods to utilise, and new problems to deal with in the twentieth century, I believe the Lord intends the twentieth-century church to follow the same principles that the first century church did.
The first local assembly met in Jerusalem. It consisted primarily of humble people: fishermen, farmers and other poor people. There were also some people who were well off, as indicated by the fact that they were willing to share their goods with the tremendous number of needy people in the church.

The church at Jerusalem was born in a prayer meeting on the Day of Pentecost. The Spirit came and filled those who were waiting in an upper room. As a result, all the Christians experienced a dramatic manifestation of the unity of the Spirit and the love of Christ, causing the church to grow rapidly. In fact, it acquired 3,000 new Christians on the first day (Acts 2:41).

Acts 2:42 delineates the basic ingredients of church life: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread [communion], and in prayers." The only other thing you can add to that was preaching the good news of Jesus Christ. They proclaimed it in the streets, in the Temple, in homes, and everywhere they had an opportunity. As a result, "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (v.47). They had all the ingredients they needed to have a functioning, Godblessed, Spirit-directed church.

Today, churches often uses gimmicks and entertainment to try to get people into church. They are a sign that the people there aren’t following the biblical pattern and depending on the Spirit’s leading. The Jerusalem congregation began in the energy of the Holy Spirit and continued in it. They were preoccupied with the Spirit’s power and with ministering in Christ’s name.

Twelve apostles led the early church until it spread out and elders and deacons were trained to lead and serve in other congregations. Since everyone was a new convert in the early church, God left the Twelve with the Jerusalem church for at least seven years.
After some years had passed, the apostles felt that some of the men had developed to a place of spiritual leadership and maturity. They chose some to become evangelists and teaching pastors. A great illustration is Philip, who started out as a deacon and wound up as a church-planting evangelist.

The apostle Paul, Silas, Barnabas, and others planted several independent churches. Since each church was ultimately led by the Holy Spirit, there were no denominations holding them together organisationally - they were one in the Spirit. The early Christians had a common bond. In Romans 16:16 Paul says, "The churches of Christ greet you." There was a oneness among the independent congregations. They were composed of Jews and Gentiles and all classes of believers: rich, poor, educated, and uneducated. Christians from a wide spectrum of society were functioning together as one. The only organisational structure they had was that which was instituted by the Holy Spirit.

"The church has changed a great deal over the centuries. It has become very complex and businesslike. Today it is a massive organisation with denominations, commissions, committees, councils, boards, and programs. It quite often functions like a business rather than a body, a factory rather than a family, an a corporation rather than a community. Churches have become entertainment centres, giving performances to placid piles of unproductive churchgoers. Most all the devices are geared to get people into the church, but not to do something with them once they come". (Mac Arthur 1989: 67)

We need to look at three New Testament Epistles - 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus - because they tell us what the ministry and the organisational structure of the church should be. Timothy and Titus were evangelists. In the early church, an evangelist was a church planter who went to an area where there were no Christians, won some people to Christ, and established a congregation. Usually he would stay with the
congregation as long as a year and maybe even longer, until he had taught them sufficiently. When some of the people had matured, he would then appoint elders in that city to care for the church and teach it. Then he would move to another place and do the same thing all over again.

“The basic take of the church is to teach sound doctrine. It is not to give some pastor’s opinion, to recite tear-jerking illustrations that play on your emotions, to raise funds, to present programs and entertainment, or to give weekly devotional. In Titus 2:1 Paul writes, “Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine”.

If the church of Jesus Christ is to be protected from false doctrine, the elders who lead it must be faithful to teach sound doctrine. Many other things are good, but they are not priorities. As a minister of Jesus Christ, I am first of all responsible to God for the purity of the church and its protection from false doctrine. All ministers of the gospel are answerable to Christ for how faithfully they protect and nurture the flock. Unfortunately, there are many pastors whose churches expect them to do everything under the sun and not what Christ intends - teaching the Word of God. Their energies are dissipated into other duties rather than their prime duty.

Some other passages that enjoin biblical preaching:

2 Timothy 1:13-14 - “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in us.” The word “form” implies that the regular practice of instruction for the church should be the teaching of sound words.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 - “The things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” A pastor teaches his congregation sound doctrine so that they can teach it to others.
2 Timothy 2:15 - "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The effective ministry centres on teaching doctrine, and the key is diligent study.

2 Timothy 2:24-25 - "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose him, if God, perhaps, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth".

2 Timothy 3:14-17 - "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast know the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, or reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. If Christians are to become spiritually mature, then church leaders must preach form all of Scripture.

2 Timothy 4:1-2 - "I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be diligent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine".

So the ministry of the church is simple: teaching sound doctrine. The only way we can ever please the Lord and obey the Spirit is to preach sound doctrine in the pattern of the early evangelists.
In the New Testament church, the leadership of the church belonged collectively to a group of elders who were its leaders under the Spirit of God. One man was not responsible for doing everything. That's how it should be. "The pastor is not the professional problem-solver who runs around with an ecclesiastical bag of tools, waiting for the next problem to repair or the next squeaky wheel to grease" (MacArthur 1989: 69).

An elder is also referred to as a "bishop" in the New Testament. Elder emphasises his title, and bishop meaning "overseer," refers to his duty. He oversees the flock. The New Testament describes it as a spiritual ministry that is concerned with two things: prayer and the teaching of God’s Word.

The elders who rule in the local church are ultimately and primarily responsible to Christ - not to the congregation or some council. First Timothy 5:17 says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." An elder is not necessarily involved in teaching doctrine; there are other capacities in the design of the Spirit. All of them however, are responsible for making decisions after prayer and Bible study so that they can be made with the mind of Christ in the energy of the Spirit. Only then can they lead the church with positive effects for the entire congregation. Ruling as an elder is a high calling.

As previously stated, at Grace church we are committed to the idea that when a decision is to be made among the elders, it needs to be made unanimously by men who have the mind of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 2:16). It should be made by the common consent of those men after prayer, the study of the Word, and possibly even after fasting. Then in a unified way they are able to deal with problems in the church.
Titus 1: 9 -- 11 says that an elder should be “holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to refute the opposers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake”. The elders are to keep false teachers out.

The elders are to discipline Christians who fall into doctrinal error; Second Timothy 2: 17 - 18 speaks of the destructive teaching of “Hymenaeus and Philetus, who, concerning the truth, have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some”. The presence of heretics in the church is a serious problem that must be dealt with.

First Timothy 1: 19 records how Paul dealt with Hymenaeus and Alexander: “I have delivered [them] unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme”. When a person teaches doctrinal error, he is put out of the fellowship until Satan has brought him to the place where he is willing to abandon his error. Then God can begin to restore him.

Elders were ordained in every city where there was a church (Titus 1: 5). They were chosen out of the congregation. A church is strongest, I’m convinced, when its own people rise to its leadership. The elders who are chosen have been qualified by the Spirit of God and prepared to serve in the local church.

The highest position of authority in the church belongs to elders, who rule under Christ as undershepherds. Elders are responsible for teaching doctrine, administrating, disciplining, protecting the flock, praying for the flock, and studying the Word of God. They are answerable to Jesus Christ for their ministry.
3.4 PAUL AND THE MODELLING PRINCIPLE IN LEADERSHIP FOR SPIRITUAL VIRTUE

One of the most important things Paul did to this spiritual child Timothy, was to train and settle him in the ministry. This is evident where Paul said “As I urged you when I went into certain men to teach false doctrine” Timothy’s Assignment: Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus with the important mission of preserving the doctrinal purity of the church there. The contents of this epistle show that Timothy was the leader of the whole church, responsible not only to maintain its doctrinal purity but also to appoint and supervise the elder and deacons.

Ephesus was religiously and politically the principal city of Asia Minor. Paul had laboured there for more than two years. During this time there was one of the most amazing movements of church growth in history, when the gospel radiated to all Asia (Acts 19:10) and churches were established all over the province. This was typical of Paul’s strategy, to establish churches in key cities from which a witness could be initiated in surrounding areas. Considering the importance of the church in Ephesus its leader needed to be a key person. Timothy was given this assignment. Timothy was “urged” by Paul to do so. His timid nature may have shrunk from such a big responsibility. Besides, he was still rather young (4:12). But Paul knew Timothy’s ability and despite what seemed like numerous disqualification, he gave him the job.

Paul probably expected this letter to be read out publicly in the churches in Asia. As the people heard this letter, they would know that Timothy was assigned the important role of leadership in the church by Paul himself. Part of Timothy’s duty was to “Command” certain men not to teach false doctrine”. The word translated “command” is a military term meaning “give strict orders” because Timothy’s position is an authoritative one he could afford to act with authority. We can see how statements like these would help butress Timothy’s authority. Here incidentally, we also see the first of many suggestions given in this epistle about the attitude Timothy was to have.
towards false teaching (see I Tim 1 - 3, - 11, 19, 20, 41, - 16, 6 : 3 - 5, 20, 21). Here as elsewhere, Paul urged Timothy to take a firm stand. There can be no accommodating attitude on something so serious; false teachers were not to be allowed to teach in the church.

The greatest measure of leadership effectiveness is the level of productivity in the local church, business, classroom, government or department in your absence. If your presence is required for followers to function, then your leadership is weak and perhaps ineffective. The purpose for leadership is to inspire others to exercise their leadership capacity. One is successful leader when one's followers can lead others.

Jesus, demonstrated his effectiveness as a leader by leaving. He was so confident of his leadership success, that he transferred the completion of his mission to the leadership of the men he had once called to follow him.

The assignment given by the Lord to the leadership of the Church, as presented in the epistle to the Ephesians, clearly signifies the principle of leadership production and reproduction:

"He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to prepare (train) God's people for the works of service (Leadership), so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature (responsible, independent), attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants ..." (Ephesians 4 : 10 - 14).

These words confirm God's purpose for setting up leadership in the church to train, develop and produce effective, quality leaders who were transformed from infants into adults, followers into leaders, and dependant's to independence. The ultimate test of leadership effectiveness is not how many people are following you, but how many are following them. Simply put, success without a successor is failure.
Paul wrote Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (v. 12). The Greek word translated “example” is *tupos*, which means “model”, “image” or “pattern”. To use a pattern in making a dress, the dressmaker will lay the pattern on top of the material and cut the material to match the pattern. An artist uses a model so he might be able to reproduce it in the style of his painting. When you sent an example, you are giving people a pattern to follow. Someone once said, “Your life speaks so loud I can’t hear what you say.” Your lifestyle is your most powerful message.

The New Testament is replete with injunctions for setting a pattern of godly living. Note these commands from the apostle Paul:

1 Corinthians 4:16 - “I beseech you, be ye followers of me.” You might think Paul was being egotistic. He wasn’t - he was simply exhibiting the character of a godly man who knew he was to be an example. Now obviously he knew he wasn’t perfect, but it was his objective - as much as was humanly possible - to be what the people were to be. No man should aim for less than that and still be in ministry. The Greek word translated “followers” is *mimetes*, from which the English word *mimic* is derived.

1 Corinthians 10:31, 33; 11:1 - “Do all to the glory of God .... Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”.

Philippians 3:17 - “Be followers together of me, and mark them who walk even as ye have us for an example”.

Philippians 4:9 - “Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do.”
1 Thessalonians 1:5-6 - "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance, as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord."

2 Thessalonians 3:7,9 "Ye yourselves know how ye ought to follow us; for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you ... but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us".

2 Timothy 1:13 - "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me".

The author of Hebrews said, "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow" (13:7). When you minister in the church, you are to lead a life that others can follow. That's a tremendous challenge, which is why James said, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgement" (James 3:1). It's a serious matter to be guilty of teaching error or living hypocritically. A man's life must match his message. Tragically, that principle is violated constantly in the ministry.

Timothy was young, probably under 40 years of age, and was therefore subject to a certain amount of questioning. So Paul told Timothy that he had to be respected if people were going to follow him. But since he was young, Timothy would have to earn that respect. How was he going to do that? By being "an example to the believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim 4:12).

3.5 IN WORD

The conversation of the servant of God is to be exemplary. In Matthew 12:34 Jesus says, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh". Whatever comes out of the mouth reveals what is in a person's heart. That's why Jesus said, "Buy thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (v.37).
Ephesians 4 tells us what our speech should be like. Verse 25 says, “Putting away lying”. A servant of the Lord should never speak any falsehood. He shouldn’t talk out of both sides of his mouth - telling one thing to one person and another to someone else. Then Paul says, “Speak every man truth with his neighbour” (v. 25). You should speak the truth to everyone. The credibility of a leader is destroyed when people compare notes about the lies he has told them.

In verse 26 Paul says, “Be ye angry, and sin not”. “There’s a place for holy wrath and righteous indignation, but not for the sin of anger - especially the smouldering kind of anger that lasts into the next day and longer. No excellent servant is to reach the point where he is so upset that his words are bitter, vengeful, or ungracious. His speech is to “be always with grace, seasoned with salt” (Col 4 : 6).

Verse 29 says, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth”. The speech of a believer should never be less than pure. It is embarrassing to hear someone who claims to serve Jesus Christ speak ungodly words. That just reveals a dirty heart. There’s no place for corrupt or filthy communication in the Christian life.

Speech that glorifies God “is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (v.29). There’s a place for fun and joy, for “a merry heart doeth good like a medicine” (Prov. 17: 22). But there’s no place for perverse talk, angry speech, and a lying tongue.

3.6 IN CONDUCT

You are to be a model of righteous living - a person who lives out his convictions based on biblical principles. The things you do, the places you go, the things you possess - any aspect of your life is a sermon. That sermon will either contradict or substantiate what you say.
"What do you spend your time, money, and energy on? The lifestyle propagated by the world today is completely incompatible with the standards of Scripture. Many families disintegrate because both spouses want to work so they can buy a bigger house or a bigger car. They devote what little spare time they have to firming up their bodies instead of building up their souls, their families, or their children. And the church, instead of maintaining an alternative lifestyle, too often mimics the world's perspectives.” (Mac Arthur 1988 : 141).

3.7 IN LOVE

Ministering in love doesn’t necessarily mean you are to be a handshaker and a back-slapper: The Apostle Paul and Epaphroditus showed their love to the church by hard work (1 Thess. 2 : 7 - 12; Phil 2 : 27 - 30. We all are to offer self-sacrificing service on behalf of others.

3.8 IN FAITH

The Greek word translated “faith” in 1 Timothy 4 : 12 could be translated "faithfulness", "trustworthiness", or "consistency". Timothy was to be consistent, faithful, and trustworthy in his ministry. People can follow that kind of Leader. In 1 Corinthians 4 : 2 Paul says, “It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”. Consistency separates those who succeed from those who fail.

Paul had the reputation of being faithful. So did his co-labourers. Epaphras (Col. 1 : 7) and Tychicus (Col. 4 : 7) were just two of many faithful servants of Christ.
IN PURITY

The Greek work translated "purity" (hagneia) refers not only to sexual chastity, but also to the intents of the heart. If your heart is pure, your behaviour will be pure as well.

History has shown us that a ministry can be devastated by sexual impurity on the part of its leaders. Men in leadership are vulnerable in that area when they let their guard down. We all must maintain absolute moral purity.

PAUL: A PATTERN LEADER AS SEEN IN II CORINTHIANS - EPISTLES

One of Paul's richest epistles concerning ministry and leadership principles is his second letter to the church at Corinth. Written approximately 58 or 60 A.D. on Paul's third missionary journey, this epistle was probably written from a city in Macedonia. Macedonia is a beautiful piece of land on the planes of the gulf of Thessalojica which was famous for wood and precious metal.

Paul's attitude in writing this letter could be expressed with the words that it was "written with a pen dipped in tears". II Corinthians is an impassioned self-defence of a wounded spirit to some of his own spiritual children who were erring and ungrateful. Consequently, this letter is the most personal and emotional of all of Paul's writings. One can see some of the deep emotions that Paul expressed in this letter in the key words of the letter: gift, sorrow, glory, gospel, ministry, suffering, historical facts about Paul, his escape from Damascus in a basket (II : 32 - 33); his being caught up into the third heaven (12 : 1 - 4). his thorn in the flesh (12 : 7); and some of his different sufferings (11 : 23 - 27).

In looking at both I and II Corinthians we can see an uniqueness of contrast between them. The following show the various contrasts between these two letters of Paul:
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FIRST CORINTHIANS</strong></th>
<th><strong>SECOND CORINTHIANS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Is very objective in its character and nature.</td>
<td>1. Is very subjective in its character and nature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Is very practical in its approach</td>
<td>2. Is very personal in its approach.</td>
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<td>c. Gives insights into the character, character and ministry of an early church</td>
<td>3. Gives new insights into the character and ministry of an apostle. (Paul)</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Gives deliberate church and instruction.</td>
<td>4. Gives a more personal life and experience instruction.</td>
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<td>e. Deals with the problems of a local church.</td>
<td>5. Deals with the problems of a ministry.</td>
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<td>f. Disciplines as a father</td>
<td>6. Disciplines as an apostle</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Demonstrates church principles</td>
<td>7. Demonstrates ministry principles.</td>
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This second epistle also deals with certain problems to which Paul makes special reference. These specific problems are the following:

a. The Problem of Accusations against Ministry (1:13-17, 10:9-11)

b. The Problem of Restoration after Discipline (2:6-11)
c. The Problem of Ungratefulness (4:8 - 13 ; 6:1 - 10 ; 11:7 - 9)
d. The Problem of Being Unequally Yoked (6:13 - 18)
e. The Problem of Impurity (7:1 - 10 ; 11:1 - 3)
f. The Problem of Insincerity (8:1 - 10)
g. The Problem of Comparing with One Another (10:12 - 13)
h. The Problem of Deception (11:1 - 4)
i. The Problem of Disguised Ministries (11:13 - 16)
j. The Problem of Glorifying after the Flesh (11:18)
k. The Problem of Debates, Envying and Wrath (12:20)
l. The Problem of Strifes and Backbiting (12:20)
m. The Problem of No Repentance (12:21)
n. The Problem of Reprobates (13:5)
o. The Problem of Receiving Apostolic Correction (13:6 - 12)

Each of these problems is a study in itself. Our goal here, however, is to view a thread of truth which is common to all of these problems: the Corinthian's rejection of Paul as an Apostle of Jesus Christ and a definite pattern leader, i.e., a leader to be copied by all others. It is very obvious throughout his letter that Paul is defending his apostolic ministry and authority against false accusations and false ministries (1:6, 12, 17, 23, 2:4, 17, 3:6, 12, 4:1, 3, 5, 8, 5:14, 21).

The Corinthians expressed their mistrust of Paul as an apostle and a pattern leader in various ways. They accused him of lightness and indecision, of purposing at one time to visit them and then of having changed his mind (1:10 - 19). They charged him with pride and domination (1:24). They also suggested that he was deceitfully cunning in his conduct (12:16) and therefore, denied his apostolic authority (12:11 - 12). Finally, some of Paul's own spiritual children said that his outward appearance was base and his speech very contemptible (10:1 - 10).
To say the least, this church made Paul very sad in his spirit. Even though the signs of an apostle were wrought among the Corinthian Christians, they did not accept Paul’s apostolic authority, which would make him a pattern leader for all leaders in the Body of Christ to follow. Paul, however, was ordain by God Himself to be an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1; I Corinthians 1:1; II Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1, 11-24; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1), and it is understandable that Satan would desire to challenge any such fact to attempt to protect his various realms of spiritual darkness. Since Paul was an apostle of God and ordained with His authority in doctrine (I Corinthians 14:37) and practice, all leaders must look to him as a pattern for all leaders. The following verses demonstrate that Paul was and is a pattern leader to be followed.

* a. “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form (pattern) of teaching to which you were committed (by me)” (Romans 6:17).

* b. “I (Paul) exhort you to be imitators (patterns) of me” (I Corinthians 4:16).

* c. “Be imitators (patterns) of me just as I also am of Christ” (11:1).

* d. “I (Paul) urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he, Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and in the same steps (pattern)?” (I Corinthians 12:18)

* e. “Brethren, join in following my (Paul’s) example (pattern), and observe those who walk according to the pattern that you have in us” (Phillippians 3:17)

* f. “You also became imitators (patterns) of us and of the Lord” (I Thessalonians 1:6).
So that you became an example (patterns) to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia" (I : 7).

"For you yourselves know how you ought to follow (imitate) our example (pattern), because we did not act in an undisciplined way among you: (II Thessalonians 3 : 7).

"Not because we do not have the right to do this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model (pattern) to you, that you might follow our example (pattern) (3 : 9).

These scriptures clearly indicate to us that Paul is a pattern leader for all Christians, but particularly for all other leaders, to imitate and to follow. Every leader should spiritually blend the principles of leadership from the lives of all of the leaders in the Bible particularly Jesus Christ and Paul, in their preparations for positions of responsibility in God’s kingdom. The final part of this section lists out the many different principles of leadership from II Corinthians. Every leader can use this list also to discern how he measures up to Paul, the pattern leader. The leadership principles are as follows:

* Local Church leaders must serve in the place to which God has called them (II Corinthians 1 : 1; Galatians 1 : 1; Acts 13 : 2).

* Local Church leaders must comfort them which are in any trouble with the same comfort they have received in the Lord (1 : 4 - 6).

* Local Church leaders must be dependent upon prayer (1 : 11).

* Local Church leaders must be people of Integrity in their dealings with the world and in their dealings with the Church (1:12; Acts 6 : 3; I Timothy 3 : 7).
* Local Church leaders must have the interest of others at heart (1:13-23; 7:12).

* Local Church leaders must be anointed by the Spirit (1:21-22).

* Local Church leaders must not be interested in having dominion over other believers (1:24; Luke 22:24-27).

* Local Church leaders must work the principle of forgiveness so Satan cannot acquire a foothold in the people of the Lord (2:10).

* Local Church leaders are to be triumphant in Christ (2:14).

* Local Church leaders are to sweet savour (good fragrance) unto the Lord (2:15).

* Local Church leaders should find their sufficiency in God (3:5).

* Leaders must remember that they are made into able ministers by the Lord Himself (3:6).

* Local Church leaders should use plain (open; bold; confident; outspoken; free; blunt) speech (3:12).

* Local Church leadership must themselves be experiencing change from glory to glory (3:18).

* Local Church leaders must show forth the glory of the Lord by doing these things (4:1-2).
a. Renouncing hidden and shameful things.
b. Not walking in craftiness.
c. not adulterating the Word of God.
d. Manifesting forth the truth in their lives
e. Commending themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

Local Church leaders must minister the Word by the power of God and not by the strength of man (4:7; I Corinthians 2:1-5).

Local Church leaders must realise that the Glory of God is the earthen (human) vessel (4:7).

Local Church leaders can encounter affliction, but they must not be crushed by it (4:8).

Local Church leaders may be in perplexity, but they must not be in despair (4:8).

Local Church leaders may encounter persecution but must never feel forsaken (4:9).

Local Church leaders may be cast down with discouragement but must not be destroyed by it (4:9; II Timothy 2:3-4; Psalm 116:10).

Local Church leaders must be determined to fulfil their charge before the Lord (4:1,10)

Local Church leaders must cause men to relate to Christ and not to themselves (4:5)
Local Church leaders must have a vision for the things of the Lord (5:7-9).

Local Church leaders must have a motivation that is acceptable to the Lord (5:9).

Local Church leaders must remember that they will be judged for their actions both now and in the future judgement (5:10).

Local Church leaders should conduct their lives in such a way that the people of the Lord can be proud (5:11-13).

Local Church leaders should be motivated by the love of God to lay their lives down for the sheep (5:14).

Local Church leaders must see people of the Lord as the Lord sees them (5:16-17).

Local Church leaders should have a ministry of reconciliation (5:16-17).

Local Church leaders should be representatives for the Lord in such a way that people know that they are representatives for the Lord (5:20).

Local Church leaders must not give an offence in anything so that the ministry will not be corrupted or blamed (6:1-3).

Local Church leaders must prove their ministry “in” (6:4,5).

a. Pureness
b. Afflictions
c. Necessities
d. Distresses
e. Stripes
f. Imprisonment's
g. Tumults
h. Labours
i. Watching
j. Fasting

Leadership must prove their ministry "by" (6: 6 - 8)
a. Pureness
b. Knowledge
c. Long-suffering
d. Kindness
e. The Holy Ghost
f. Love unfeigned
g. The word of truth
h. The power of God
i. The armour of righteousness
j. Honour and dishonour
k. Evil report and good report

Leaders must prove their ministry "as" (6: 8 - 10)
a. Deceivers yet true
b. Unknown yet well know
c. Dying yet living
d. Chastened yet not killed
e. Sorrowful yet always rejoicing
f. Poor yet making many rich
g. Having nothing yet possessing all things
* Leaders must be able to speak openly to those they minister to and enlarge their hearts unto them (6:11).

* Leaders must cleanse themselves in flesh and in spirit in the fear of God to perfect holiness (7:1)

* Leaders must be honest and truthful so that the accusers will have nothing to say (7:2)

* Leaders should not condemn but edify the people of the Lord through the channels of relationship and love (7:3)

* Leaders should give themselves to and for the people (7:3)

* Leaders should experience what the people experience (7:3)

* Leaders and the people must be open to one another (7:2-4)

* Leaders and the people must be free to share with one another their experiences (7:2-4)

* Leaders have to support (comfort) one another (7:5-7)

* Leaders must esteem themselves as lowly persons (7:6)

* Leaders should be comforted with the fruit of their labour, which is the positive response of the people to their instruction and reproof (7:5-7)

* Leaders should chasten the flock as a father, bringing them to godly sorrow, and worldly sorrow; because correction in love brings life, but correction in any other manner brings death (7:8-13).
Local Church leaders should reveal their care and concern for the flock, even if they have to show it to them by rebuke (7:12)

a. Carefulness in the sheep’s walk
b. Clearing of self (repentance unto good works)
c. Indignation towards evil
d. The fear of God
e. Vehement desire for God
f. Zeal for God
g. Revenge against sin
h. Comfort to the leaders

Local Church leaders should exhort the sheep to do good works even when they notice them already doing good works (7:13).

Local Church leaders should remember that when they reveal truth to the Body, the then the Body will reveal that truth to others (7:14).

Leaders should be open to be comforted by the people as well as by God (7:6,13).

Leaders must have confidence in the sheep, as well as have confidence in themselves, but always mainly trusting in God (7:16).

Leaders must have perseverance in trials with joy (8:6).

Leaders must be willing to sacrifice (8:4).

Leaders must be willing to ‘let go and let God’ (8:6).
* Leaders must exhort in love and diligence (8:7)

* Leaders must not only have a willingness to serve but be able to put that willingness into the action of brotherly love (8:9)

* Leaders must include mutual helpfulness (8:14)

* Leaders must be able to give wise counsel (8:10)

* Leaders must look to God as the source of their supply, although God may use many different instruments through which He meet their needs (8:15)

* Leaders must be thankful (8:16)

* Leaders must be zealous for the Lord (8:18)

* Leaders must be people of integrity and blamelessness (8:20)

* Leaders should be honest in the sight of God and man (8:21)

* Leaders are to be good messengers (8:23)

* Local Church Leaders must realise that they are not alone but also have fathers in the faith (8:23)

* Local Church Leaders should challenge the people to demonstrate their faith and ministry (8:24)

* Local Church Leaders must have hearts that are birthed in love (8:24)
Local Church Leaders must often use repetition in teaching the people of the Lord (9:1)

Local Church Leaders must encourage a positive focus in the people of the Lord (9:2)

Local Church Leaders should sometimes remind the people of their own words (9:3-4)

Local Church Leaders should collect money regularly before it is coveted by the givers (9:5)

Leaders mean receiving from the Lord (9:6-11)

Local Church Leaders should remind the people that giving blesses both the receiver and the giver (9:13)

Local Church Leaders should teach the people that giving is comparable to praising God in spiritual sacrifices (9:12)

Local Church Leaders should boast of the good in their people so that the people will try and live up to it (9:13,14)

Local Church Leaders must come in the boldness of the Spirit and not in the boldness of the flesh (which manifests itself in the elevating of the leader above the people) (10:2-3)

Local Church Leaders must look on the inward root of rebellion and disobedience and not focus on outward appearances (10:5-7)
Local Church Leaders must exercise their authority for the edification of the flock and not for its destruction (10:8)

Local Church Leaders must be what they speak and not compare themselves with others (10:12)

Local Church Leaders must only come with what the Lord hath given them and not try to impress the people with a lot of religious jargon (10:13-14)

Local Church Leaders must bring those who are under them into perfection, as he himself grows in the Lord (10:15-16)

Local Church Leaders must boast only in what the Lord has given him and not boast in the knowledge of his own heart (10:15-16)

Local Church Leaders must always protect those under their charge and not flee from trouble, as the hireling does (11:1-3)

Local Church Leaders must always demonstrate a servant spirit and not be a burden to those to whom he is ministering (11:5-9)

Local Church Leaders must provide their own way when necessary and not expect the people to always do so (11:7-9)

Local Church Leaders must warn the flock against false ministries and be alert to the ways of the adversary (11:12-15)

Local Church Leaders must always be motivated by the love of the Lord (11:11)
CONCLUSION

I firmly believe that the leadership of the church should be the very best, not only in being an example for people to lead it. The chapter does not suggest that a Church leader has to be completely perfect or superhuman, but he should have a living, growing personal relationship with our Lord. The chapter strongly advises that the church leader should be a follower who is patterned after the qualifications of a church leader. The church leader should present a life style of commitment and dedication to their Lord and church.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 is a vital chapter in this thesis. The church leader should be continually fed by the word. The researcher in this chapter focuses on the value of good doctrine which encompasses the teaching of biblical truth and the application of its principles. Spiritual growth is based upon our interaction as church leaders with biblical truth. Spiritual ends can be achieved only by spiritual men who employ spiritual methods. The issue in ministry is godliness. Godliness is the pursuit of the excellent minister. The minister used all the means of grace available - prayer, bible study, the Lord's table, confession of sin, active service, accountability and the discipline of godliness. The highest position of authority in the church belongs to elders. Eldership are responsible for teaching doctrine, administrating, disciplining, protecting the flock, praying for the flock and studying the word of God.

In 1 Timothy 4:6 - 16 the apostle Paul lists the qualifications "Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ". In a sense, it is the underlying theme of the whole epistle which was written to instruct Timothy on how to minister to the church at Ephesus.

The Greek word translated "good" could better be translated "noble", "admirable", or "excellent". It is used in 1 Timothy 3:1 to speak of the work of ministry and now it is used to identify the kind of man to be in ministry.
“Ministry” is the translation of the Greek word diakonos, from which we get the English word deacon. It means “servant” and is used of those who hold the office of deacon in the church. Although the word is not used here in a technical way to designate that office, it implies that anyone who serves in any capacity in ministry must see himself as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word diakonos is different say from the word doulos, which is also often translated “servant”. Whereas doulos often refers to a slave under subjection, diakonos emphasises a servant with a higher degree of freedom who yet serves willingly. The word conveys the idea of usefulness and implies that all Christians should seek to be useful in the cause of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 Paul says “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” We are called to be servants and stewards, managing that which belongs to God in a way that will bring honour to His name. Paul’s instruction to Timothy is applicable for all who serve the Lord.

In 1 Timothy 4:1-5 Paul talked about doctrines of demons propagated by seducing spirits through lying hypocrites. Having warned Timothy that false teaching isn’t human but demonic, he then tells Timothy how to be a good and effective minister in the face of false doctrine. Yet in instructing Timothy how to deal with false doctrine, he majors on the positive, not on the negative. Rather than encouraging Timothy to develop a defensive ministry of refuting and denouncing error, Paul emphasises taking the offensive approach by teaching the Word of God (vv. 6, 11, 13, 16). The church leader’s ministry should primarily involve building up the people of God, not exclusively identifying and attacking error.

In verses 6-16 Paul gives eleven characteristics of being an excellent minister of Christ. They are practical and helpful objectives for everyone who desires to serve the Lord by leading His people.
THE MINISTER SHOULD WARN PEOPLE OF ERROR

Although the ministry is not to be dominated by a negative approach, that doesn’t mean there isn’t a place for warning others about the destructiveness of false doctrine. Paul makes a transition from exposing demonic doctrines to explaining how to be an excellent servant of Jesus Christ by instructing Timothy to warn the church about such doctrines. “Put the brethren in remembrance of these things” (v. 6). There is a necessity to remind Christians of error. Ministry demands warning.

The Greek word translated “to put in remembrance of” means “to lay before.” Its use here as a present participle speaks of continually reminding people of the reality of false doctrine. There is no idea of commanding people, but of giving them counsel and advice in a gentle, humble manner. A servant of Christ must teach people to be discerning by encouraging them to think biblically.

Identifying error is not to be the theme of the average pastor’s ministry, but a recurring reminder. When Paul met with the Ephesian elders he said, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch, and remember. that for the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up” (Acts 20:29-32). Paul continually made the Ephesians aware of error and pointed them to the positive solution of the Word. The truth supplies the foundation from which error can be dealt with properly.

Christians are prevented from being “children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14) by being firmly grounded in the Word of
God. First John 2:13-14 reinforces the fact that a believer learns to deal with satanic error by being strong in the Word, which is the sword of the Spirit. That’s the only way to fight and win against beings who disguise themselves as angels of light and ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:14-15).

The church’s failure to be discerning in this generation has allowed it to be infiltrated by all kinds of error. It is confused, weak and in some cases apostate. Limp theology and convictionless preaching have replaced strong doctrine and clear exposition of Scripture. The legacy has been tragic. The church has been flooded with Charismatic confusion, unbiblical psychology, occult influences, success-oriented philosophy and prosperity theology.

The church must draw the lines between error and truth and build up its people in the Word of God.

4.3 THE MINISTER SHOULD BE AN EXPERT STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

An excellent minister is also an expert student of Scripture: “Nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, unto which thou hast attained” (v.6). Sad to say, many a Christian pastors have a minimal understanding history of the church when the great students of Scripture and theology were pastors. Puritan ministers, rather than being just good communications, were first and foremost students of God’s Word. They worked at understanding, interpreting, and applying the Word of God with great precision and wisdom.

The Greek word translated “nourished up” is a present passive participle, implying that being nourished with the Word of God is a continual process of feeding. That involves reading Scripture, meditating on it, interacting with it, and studying it until you have mastered its contents.
It is essential that we be continually nourished by “the words of faith”. That phrase refers to the body of Christians truth in Scripture. We are to master Scripture. We’ll never do it, but that’s our pursuit. We are to be experts in that area; not just good communicators who tickle people’s ears and make them think they heard something enjoyable (2 Tim. 4:3). We need to accurately interpret and defend the Word of God.

Not only are we to be nourished directly by “the words of faith” but also by “good doctrine” (Gk., kale didaskalia). “Good doctrine” encompasses the teaching of biblical truth and the application of its principles. Spiritual growth is based upon our interaction with biblical truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 - Paul said, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. “We are called - above and beyond all other elements in the ministry - to be expert students of the Word.

Ephesians 6:17 - We are to use “the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God” with great precision.

Colossians 3:16 - Since the Word of God “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”, therefore we must know it if we are to equip others spiritually.

To be able to think and speak biblically, a pastor must spend a large portion of his time interacting with the text of Scripture. It is an inexhaustible treasure that demands a lifetime just to begin to understand its riches. There is no virtue in being ignorant. Unfortunately we are a generation of people who do not like to sit and think; we prefer to be entertained. In spite of that we are to commit ourselves to studying, understanding, and articulating the Word of God.
Sadly, there are many men who have no delight in their studies. They spend an hour now and then, or even no time at all. Study seems for many an unwelcome task that interrupts an easy schedule of activity. They like to have guests as often as possible in their pulpits so they don't have to spend time studying, and prefer the variety of administrative tasks and meetings. The minimal study that they do produces a weak sermon that fails to penetrate the hearts and minds of the listeners.

William Tyndale, the man responsible for getting the New Testament translated into the English language in 1525, was in prison facing martyrdom. He wrote a letter to the governor in chief, asking that these possessions be sent to him: a warmer cap, a warmer coat, and a piece of cloth to patch his leggings. Then he said, “But most of all I beg and beseech and entreat your clemency to be urgent with the commissary, that he will kindly permit me to have the Hebrew Bible, Hebrew grammar, and Hebrew dictionary, that I may pass the time in that study” (Mozley 1937: 334). Any seminary student who has struggled with Hebrew cannot relate to such a request. But later in life when the plunge more deeply into the Word of God, it’s wonderful to be able to say that what you cherish most is what helps you understand the Word of God the best.

4.4 THE MINISTER SHOULD AVOID THE INFLUENCE OF UNHOLY TEACHING

“Refuse profane and old wives’ fables” (v. 7). “Fables” is a translation of the Greek word muthos, from which the English word myth is derived. Second Timothy 4:4 says that some “shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”. So truth and fables are seen as opposites. The Christian is to be nourished by the truth and refuse that which opposes it.

“The identification of fables with old women has a cultural meaning. The phrase was used in philosophical circles as a sarcastic epithet when one wanted to heap disdain
on a particular viewpoint. It conveyed the picture of a enile old lady telling a fairy tale to a child. It was applied to things lacking credibility.

The mind is a precious thing. God wants those who serve as spiritual leaders to have pure minds saturated with the truth of God's Word. There's no place for foolish myths or unholy contradictions to the truth. Yet somehow our society would rather follow them than biblical truth.

The mark of theological scholarship in some circles is no longer how well a man knows the Bible but how well he understands the speculations of the secular academic establishment.” (Mac Arthur 1989: 133)

4.5 THE MINISTER SHOULD DISCIPLINE HIMSELF IN PERSONAL GODLINESS

J. Oswald Sanders says in his book Spiritual leadership, "Spiritual ends can be achieved only by spiritual men who employ spiritual methods" (Sanders 1980: 40). The issue in ministry is godliness. It is not how clever you are or how well you communicate; it's whether you know the Word of God and are leading a godly life. Ministry is an overflow of the latter.

First Timothy 4:7 says, "Excuse thyself rather unto godliness." The English word gymnasium comes from the Greek word here translated "exercise" (gumnazo), used of those who trained themselves in athletic endeavours. It implies a rigorous, self-sacrificing kind of training. In Greek culture, the gymnasium was a focal point of the city for youths between the ages of 16 and 18. Since athletic ability was highly esteemed, there was usually a gymnasium in every town. The cultic exaltation of the body resulted in a preoccupation with exercise and athletic training and competition, not dissimilar to our own day.
Paul alluded to that cultural reality in exhorting Timothy to exercise himself for the goal of godliness, saying in effect, “If you’re going to go into training, concentrate on training your inner nature for godliness. The Greek work for godliness would be an accurate way to translate Paul’s exhortation to Timothy.

Paul understood the importance of discipline in the ministry: “I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27. NASB). He told Timothy to “endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (2 Tim. 2:3 - 5). As a soldier endures hardship, makes sacrifices, and cuts himself off from the world to please the one who enlisted him; and as an athlete must diligently train and compete within the rules, so must a servant of God make sacrifices in disciplining himself and confining himself to God’s standards.

Physical exercise profits little (v. 8). First, it benefits only the body and not the spirit. Second, it’s good only for a short time. You could spend years getting yourself in shape, but as soon as you let up, you immediately start losing what you’ve worked so hard to achieve.

In contrast ‘godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come’ (v. 8). Godliness is profitable not only for the body, but also for the soul. If you’re not spending time in the Word of God every day and cultivating godliness. The present benefit of spiritual discipline is a fulfilled, God-blessed, fruitful, and useful life. If you get involved in spiritual gymnastics the blessings of godliness will carry on into eternity.
“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance” (v.9) is a formula Paul used four other times in the pastoral epistles (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). “Worthy of all acceptance” adds emphasis to his affirmation. It identifies a trustworthy statement or an axiom that is patently obvious. The greater benefit of spiritual discipline is an obvious truth.

It is spiritually immature to preoccupy ourselves with our bodies. Doing so betrays a limited perception of spiritual and eternal realities. It should be axiomatic in the church that Christians are a group of people who are in spiritual training to be conformed to the will of God, not a group of body worshipers.

Godliness is the pursuit of the excellent minister. He uses all the means of grace available - prayer, Bible study, the Lord's Table, confession of sin, active service, accountability, and sometimes fasting - in the discipline of godliness.

Godliness is said to be at the heart of truth (1 Tim. 6:3). It comes through Christ (2 Pet. 1:3), yet we still must pursue it (1 Tim. 6:11). It brings trouble from a hostile environment (2 Tim. 3:12). And it blesses us eternally - but not necessarily with temporal prosperity (1 Tim. 6:5-8).

4.6 THE MINISTRY SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO HARD WORK

Having called us to be godly, Paul now brings us back to earth. The ministry is a heavenly pursuit, but it is also an earthly task - its hard work. “We both labour (strive) and suffer reproach” v. 10).

In 2 Corinthians 5:9 Pauls says, “We labour, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him”. Then Paul gives two reasons for working hard. First, in verse 10 he
"We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ". We will stand before Christ and be eternally rewarded for the service we have rendered him. The reward we receive will be commensurate with the service we have rendered Christ, whether good or useless (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

Then in verse 11 Paul, says “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” Here Paul was looking beyond himself to unregenerate people. They won't experience a time of reward; they will face judgment. And since we know that, we should persuade them with the truths of the gospel in hopes that through salvation they might avoid judgment.

Paul worked hard because he knew his effort had eternal consequences - reward for himself and the possibility of changing the destiny of unbelievers. That is the perspective that propels the servant of God. There is an eternal heaven and an eternal hell.

In verse 10 “labour” (Gk., kopiao) means “to work to the point of weariness”. “Suffer reproach” (Gk., agonizomai) means “to agonise in a struggle”. Work to the point of weariness and exhaustion, often in pain, because we understand our eternal objectives.

J. Oswald Sanders wrote that if a man is unwilling to pay the price of fatigue for his leadership it will always be mediocre” (Sanders 1980:175). He also said, “True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole man, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid” (Sanders 1980:169). We will not mitigate that price because we understand the urgency of our ministry. Weariness, loneliness, struggle, rising early, staying up late, and forgoing pleasures all come with excellence.
In 1 Corinthians Paul says, “Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! ... So fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection” (vv. 16, 26 - 27). That describes Paul's tremendous effort and commitment to a ministry with eternal consequences. In 2 Corinthians 11:24 - 27 Paul tells of the many times he was beaten with rods and a whip, and endured weariness, suffering, pain, agony, and shipwreck. He endured all those perils because he was totally committed to the ministry at hand. Why? Because he had eternity in view. He realised that the destiny of souls hung in the balance.

"Because we trust in the living God" (v. 10) literally means, "We have set our hope on the living God". Missionaries who preach the gospel of Jesus Christ through the years deprive themselves of almost every earthly pleasure because their hope is set on the living God. They believe He will provide life for them beyond this life. None of us should try to amass a fortune here so we can indulge ourselves before we leave. Our hope is set on the future.

Not that Paul speaks of God as "the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (v. 10). In what sense is God the Saviour of all men? How is He specially the Saviour of those who believe? Many suggestions have been made. The key to interpreting this phrase is to stay in its context.

When Paul preached to the learned men of Athens on Mars' Hill, he said that God is not “worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things ... for in him we live, and move, and have our being ... For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:25,28). In a general sense God is the provider and sustainer of life for all people.
During a storm at sea, Paul said to the crew, “Take some food; for this is for your health” (Acts 27:34). The Greek word normally translated “salvation” is here translated “health”. Paul wasn’t talking about spiritual salvation but physical health.

In James 5:15 James writes, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick” (emphasis added). So the Greek words translated “salvation” or “save” aren’t limited to describing the salvation of the soul. They can speak of deliverance from disease or trouble or of sustenance from food.

That is that analogy Paul is using in 1 Timothy 4:10. We have seen God’s sustaining and providing power on a world-wide basis. We have seen His great temporal provision for all people. But that provision is especially glorious for the believer because it is not only temporal but also eternal.

Paul’s argument is this: we labour and strive in the ministry because we believe the consequences are eternal. We have set our hope on a living God, and we know He will save the souls of those who believe because we have seen His sustaining power at work in the world. That’s why we work hard.

Richard Baxter wrote that the ministerial work “must be managed laboriously and diligently, being of such unspeakable consequence to others and ourselves. We are seeking to uphold the world, to save it from the curse of God, to perfect the creation, to attain the ends of Christ’s redemption, to save ourselves and others from damnation, to overcome the devil, and demolish his kingdom, and set up the kingdom of Christ, and attain and help others to the kingdom of glory. And are these works to be done with a careless mind or a slack hand? Oh see then that his work be done with all your might Study hard, for the well is deep, and our brains are shallow”. (Baxter 1960:164-65) Our whole work is a labour, but not human labour. Paul said his goal was to “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. 1:28). Then he said, “For this I also labour [Gk., kapiuo, “agonise”], striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily” (v. 29). Our work isn’t performed in the flesh. Through the Spirit the Lord energises those who serve Him.

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"These things command and teach", Paul instructed Timothy (v. 11). The Greek word translated "teach" in verse 11 refers to passing on information, in this case passing on instruction or doctrine. It is to be done in the form of a command.

There is much popular, entertainment-oriented preaching today, but not much that is powerful or transforming in nature. Are the weak suggestions coming from the pulpit these days really what God wants? According to Acts 17:30, God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (emphasis added). When did we decide that was only a suggestion?

Matthew 7:28-29 says, "It came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings [the Sermon on the Mount], the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority."

Paul told Timothy many times to be authoritative. In 1 Timothy 1:3 he says, "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine." Then he said, "These things command" (5:70). In 5:20 Paul urges Timothy to rebuke people publicly. Then in 6:17 he gives him commands to give to rich people in the church. In Titus 2:15 he says, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

That doesn't mean we are to be abusive or ungracious. But we are to confront people when they disobey God's Word.

The faithful servant is bold. He challenges sin head on. He confronts unbelief, disobedience, and lack of commitment. God said of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son ... hear ye him" (Matt 17:5). The excellent servant carries on that directive, commanding all men to repent and listen to Jesus Christ.
"Till I come," Paul told Timothy, "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (v. 13). The Greek verb translated "give attendance" is prosecho. It is present active imperative, a continuing command. Paul is commanding Timothy to continually give attention to reading, exhortation, and teaching. It was to become Timothy's way of life. Commentator Donald Gunthrie tells us that the verb "implies previous preparation in private" (Gunthrie 1978: 97). The same verb is used in of the priests who were continually devoted to their service at the altar. So Timothy was to centre his ministry on reading, exhortation, and teaching.

In verse 13 a definite article appears in the Greek text before the word translated "reading". Timothy was to give attention to "the reading". In the services of the early church a time was set aside for the reading of Scripture. It was followed by an exposition of the text.

That model of expository preaching comes from Nehemiah 8:8. They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Scripture needs to be explained so people can understand it. Obviously the further we are removed culturally, geographically, linguistically, philosophically, and historically from the original text of Scripture, the more necessary it becomes to research those facts. That's the challenge for the Bible teacher, and where his effort is needed.

If the reading and exposition of Scripture tell us what it means, what is the exhortation all about? It is a call for people to obey with a view toward judgement. We are to encourage people to respond properly, telling them about the blessings or the consequences of their actions. It is always binding on a person's conscience to amend certain behaviour.
The Greek word translated 'doctrine' (didaskalia) means "teaching." That means systematically teaching the Word of God in both group and individual settings. Didaskalia appears fifteen times in the pastoral epistles. That gives us some idea of its importance to the life of the church. No wonder the pastor must be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). Since the church's ministry revolves around teaching the Word of God, how could anyone ever hope to lead in a church if he's not a skilled teacher.

First Timothy 5:17 says, 'Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.' The harder a man works in teaching God's Word, the more honourable he is. It's sad to realise that many men in ministry have been diverted into nice pursuits, but not the most important one.

We need to be relentless teachers. The Puritan clergyman John Flavel wrote, "It is not with us, as with other labourers: They find their work as they leave it, so do not we". Picture the cabinet maker who leaves his unfinished work and comes back to it as it was the next morning. Flavel continues, "Sin and Satan unravel almost all we do, the impressions we make on our people's souls in one sermon, vanish before the next". (Flavel 1968:569)

We fight against the unravelling process all the time. That's why I repeat much of what I teach. Every good pastor and teacher knows that people forget what he teaches. So he must be repetitive. But he also realises that people become familiar with what he teaches. When they realise they are being taught something they have already heard, they think they know it and become bored by it. The challenge for the teacher is to repeat his teaching in such a manner that makes the people think he is teaching them something new. It would be very easy for me to pack up a hundred sermons, go out on the road, and preach them over and over again. The challenge for me is to stay in the same place, say the same things over and over, yet have people think I'm teaching them something they've never heard. If you study the Bible, you'll
find that Scripture does the same thing. Its principles are repeated over and over in different contexts and through different narratives.

4.9 THE MINISTER SHOULD FULFIL HIS CALLING

In 1 Timothy 4:14 Paul writes, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." There are people who go into the ministry and bail out because they weren't called there in the first place. But sometimes people who are called into the ministry bail out, and that is a defection from where God intends them to be.

"Neglect not the gift" may indicate that Timothy was about to neglect his ministry or had already begun to neglect it. He may even have been close to a point of departure - a point at which people can't handle the internal and external pressure of their situation. The Greek verb translated "neglect not" is a present active imperative. It is a command with a view toward continual behaviour: The Greek word translated "gift" is charisma, a reference to a gift of grace from God. Every believer is given a gift, which is a means or channel by which the Spirit of God ministers to others. Comprehensive lists of all the gifts are in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, with references in Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4.

I like to think of spiritual gifts as divine enablements. They are given to us by the Spirit of God with a sovereign design. The Church is made up of many people. It functions like a body, and every person is a part of the body. The spiritual gifts we've been given blend together to enable the body to function properly. Timothy had the gift of teaching. That's why Paul told him to teach, preach, command, and exhort. He was to do the work of an evangelist, making full proof of his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5). He was gifted in the areas of evangelism, preaching, teaching, and leadership - all blended together as his own unique spiritual gift.
Each of us has spiritual gifts a blend of the different gifts the Spirit has put together of each of us. Like a painter who is able to create an infinite number of colours by mixing any combination within you. as a result, you have a unique position in the Body of Christ, with an ability to minister as no one else can.

In verse 14 Paul says Timothy's gift was given to him by prophecy. That’s the objective affirmation of Timothy’s call to the ministry. I don’t believe he received the gift through the prophecy, but I do believe there was a public affirmation of his gift by direct revelation from God.

“The laying on of the hands of the [elders]” (v. 14) was the collective affirmation of Timothy’s call. The church affirmed Timothy’s gift. I’m sure that happened during the time Acts 16: 1 - 5 describes.

When the elders laid hands on Timothy, the church was affirming that Timothy was the right man. Through the voice of a prophet the Holy Spirit affirmed his call. And Timothy’s own desire to preach and teach affirmed his calling. That’s the way God continues to call people into ministry. The person first must desire to minister. Next there must be the confirmation of the providence of God through circumstances. And finally, a collective assembly of spiritual leaders must put their hands on him, thus recognising he is qualified. So Paul encouraged timothy to fulfil the call of God and not neglect the gift that was confirmed in him.

There are many people in ministry who serve for awhile but quickly fade away. They’re like shooting stars or short candles. But I’m in awe of those who are faithful to minister the word of God right out to the end of their lives. I call them spiritual marathon ministers. They may have a small congregation, they may be unknown, but they remain faithful and fulfil their calling. In a spiritual sense, they die with their boots on.
“Meditate upon these things,” Paul told Timothy, “give thyself wholly to them” (v. 15). An excellent minister is single-minded, as opposed to the double-minded man, who is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8). The Greek word translated “meditate” (meletao) conveys the idea of thinking through beforehand, planning, strategizing, or premeditating. When a minister is not doing the work of the ministry, he’s to be planning it.

“Give thyself wholly to them” literally reads “be in them” in the Greek text. We’re to be wrapped up in ministry, totally absorbed in it. It doesn’t take much of a man to be a minister, but it does take all of him. An excellent minister is totally absorbed in his work.

A minister can’t have a double agenda. He can’t divide his efforts between being in the ministry and becoming a tennis pro, a golf pro, making money, or developing a business on the side. People who fall into that trap never realize their full potential because they have too many things to distract them and drain their energy. A good servant of Christ must bury himself in his ministry, just like Epaphroditus, who nearly died fulfilling his ministry (Phil. 2:25 - 27).

In 2 Timothy 4:2 Paul tells Timothy to “preach the Word; be instant.” Greek scholar Fritz Rienecker tells us that the word translated “instant” (ephistemi) is a military word. It means to stay at your post, to stay on duty. A servant of God is never off duty, always at his post. A preacher ought to be ready to preach, pray, or die at the moment’s notice.

Paul told Timothy to “be instant in season, out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2). A servant of Christ is on duty when it’s convenient and when it’s not. I went home one Sunday
night and was really tired. All I wanted to do was get something cold to drink and sit in a chair and rest. I had no sooner sat down when the phone rang. A family was having major problems. I spent forty minutes on the phone, during which time the food my daughter had prepared for me became inedible. As soon as I hung up the phone it rang again, and it was a bigger disaster this time. I suppose that's the Lord's way of letting me know that I'm always on duty. That's how it is in ministry - you have to be totally absorbed in it.

4.11 THE MINISTER SHOULD CONTINUALLY BE PROGRESSING IN HIS SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“That thy profiting may appear to all,” (v.15) suggests that Timothy's spiritual progress should have been obvious to everyone. That implies he hadn't yet reached perfection. A minister should not try to convince his people that he has no flaws, but should allow them to see his growth. The standard for a servant of Christ is high, and we all fall short of it. Even Paul said “Not as though I had already attained ..... I press toward the mark “ (Phil. 3:12,14). Paul had his faults; he wasn’t perfect (Acts 23:1,5). People need to see our integrity and humility. I’m not perfect, but I hope I’m progressing.

The Greek word translated “profiting” (prokope) is used in a military sense to speak of an advancing force. It was used by the Stoics to refer to advancing in knowledge. It was used of a pioneer cutting a trail by strenuous effort and advancing toward a new location. We are to be advancing toward Christlikeness, and we need to let people see that.

People sometimes point out to me that what I've said on one tape does not agree with what I said on a later tape. My response to them is that I am growing. I didn’t know everything then, and I don’t know everything now.
Humanly speaking, no one is fit for the task of ministry. The Lord knows that: the me Lord who gave us high standards knows we can never meet them on our own. Yet when we yield to the Spirit of God and depend on Him for what we can never accomplish on our own, His power will work through us.

Paul concludes 1 Timothy 4 by saying “Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them” (v. 16.) “Take heed” means “pay attention”. Timothy was to focus on two things: his conduct and his teaching. Those two things are the heart of the ministry. The eleven qualities we’ve seen in this passage can be summed up in those two commands.

Scripture repeatedly affirms that those who are genuinely saved will continue in the faith. Paul assured Timothy that his continuing in personal holiness and accurate teaching would move him along the inevitable path of final and glorious salvation: “For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee” (v. 16). His perseverance would be the proof that his faith was genuine.

If we persevere in godliness and truth, our lives will affect others; we’ll bring them the message of salvation. We don’t actually do the saving, but are used by God as we preach the Word of God and live godly lives. All the qualifications of an excellent servant ultimately result in the salvation of souls. That is our purpose in life and the reason we remain in the world after we’ve been redeemed. If all God wanted was our worship, He could take us to heaven at the moment of our salvation. But He wants us to bring the message of salvation to lost people. That’s the sum of ministry. It’s a high, holy, and glorious calling.
The New Testament clearly indicates that elders were uniquely set apart or appointed to their office. The term normally used for the appointing of elders in the New Testament is kathistemi, which means, "to ordain". The concept of ordination implies official recognition by the leadership of the church and a public announcement setting men aside for special ministry.

In 1 Timothy 4:14 Paul says to Timothy, "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery".

Interestingly, the laying on of hands comes from the Old Testament sacrificial system. When a sacrifice was given, the hands of the offered were placed upon the sacrifice to show identification. So the laying on of hands became a means by which one could identify himself with another.

In the same way, the New Testament ordination ritual demonstrated solidarity between the elders and the one on whom they laid their hands. It was a visible means of saying, "We commend you to the ministry. We stand with you, support you, and affirm your right to function in a position of leadership in this church".

Paul, however, writes to warn Timothy, "Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin" (1 Tim. 5:22). That emphasises the seriousness of the statement of solidarity. In other words, Paul is saying, if you lay hands on a man who is sinning, and thereby ordain him to the pastorate, you have entered into his sin. If you don't want to be a participant in sin, don't fail to seek the mind of the Lord in the process.
A man should be considered for ordination only after he has proved himself suitable for a ministry of leadership through a period during which he is tested. Then he may be tempered for a time, during which he is observed functioning in a limited position of delegated oversight. If he demonstrates capability in leadership and loyalty to the message, he can be publicly acknowledged as one who is to be trusted in the service of leadership. The church should have men in all phases of the proving process as it looks toward its future needs.

Biblically, the laying on of hands was done by the recognised leaders of a church. In his way they identified themselves with those who were becoming leaders. But the process of identifying leaders may also have involved the people. Acts 14:23 says, “When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed”. The word for “appointed” in that verse is cheirotoneo, which literally means, “to choose by raising hands”. It is the same word used to describe how votes were taken in the Athenian legislature. It came to mean “to appoint”.

Some think that the use of cheirotoneo implies that a congregational vote by show of hands was taken. That is forcing the word. The context of Acts 14:23 indicates that only Barnabas and Paul were involved in the choosing.

Second Corinthians 8:19 uses cheirotoneo to describe the appointment of an unnamed brother “appointed by the churches” to travel with Paul. There the plural “churches” indicates that he was selected not by a single congregational vote, but rather by the consensus of the churches of Macedonia - probably as represented by their leaders.

So using the term cheirotoneo in an exaggerated literal way is not sufficient to support the idea of the election of elders by congregational vote, although the assent of the congregation may be implied.
Acts 6:5 is often submitted as proof for congregational selection: "The statement found approval with the whole congregation, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch". Note, however, that those chosen were not called elders. They were servers whose task was to free the apostles for approval - not the reverse (v. 6). The congregation acknowledged them to be godly and qualified men, but the apostles appointed them to their task.

The New Testament church is seen in transition. Patterns of church leadership developed as the first-century church matured. We can trace three steps in the process of ordaining leaders. Initially it was the apostles who selected and ordained elders (Acts 14:23). After that, elders were appointed by those who were close to the apostles and involved in their ministry. For example, Paul specifically charged Titus with the ordaining of elders (Titus 1:5). In the third phase, the elders themselves ordain other elders (1 Tim. 4:14). Always the ultimate responsibility for appointing elders was a part of the function of church leadership.

Today there are no apostles but the biblical pattern still holds. Church leaders—whether they be called elder, bishop, pastor, missionary, evangelist, apostolic representative, or whatever - should have the responsibility of identifying and ordaining other elders.

Those who would be elders must desire to serve in this capacity. First Timothy 3:1 says, "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do". The starting point in identifying a potential elder is the desire in the heart of the individual. First Peter 5:2 says, "Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God."
In other words, we are not to go out and recruit men to become elders. One who is qualified to be an elder will be eager to give his life totally to the teaching of the Word of God, and the leading of the flock of God, without any thought of gain at all. He will desire the office, pursue being set apart, and devote himself to the Word of God. No one will have to talk him into it; it is his heart’s passion.

Furthermore, he serves “voluntarily, according to the will of God”. His service as an elder is a calling from God. The desire to serve as an elder is in his heart because God put it there.

If a man has the desire, feels he is called, and has all the qualifications, there is still one thing necessary before he can be ordained. The elders must together seek God’s will and affirm that He is in the decision. Acts 14:23 describes the process the apostles followed in selecting elders: ‘And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed’. Before they appointed any elders, they gave themselves over to prayer and fasting. They viewed the eldership with great seriousness as the very highest calling.

Acts 20:28 affirms the Holy Spirit’s work in the selection of elders: “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (emphasis added). In response to His call, God plants in a man’s heart a passion for the ministry, and then confirms it by the leading of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the leadership through prayer and fasting.

When in my youth I sensed God’s heart and mind, and affirming that call in my heart before I stepped into the preparation for ministry. Every elder ought to view his calling as that serious, for it is. A man should not become an elder just because he has a vague notion that he would like to use his gifts and abilities to help the church. He should be motivated by a burden that causes him to seek God earnestly.
Acts 13:2 says that the instructions from the Holy Spirit to set apart Paul and Barnabas came “while they were ministering to the Lord [worshipping] and fasting”. The call of God is not to be taken lightly, and the will of God is not to be sought superficially. God’s will in the matter of ordaining of church leaders will be expressed through the collective sense of God’s working among the leadership. They must be sensitive to it. The church is where the call is confirmed.

So elders are a group of specially called and ordained men with a great desire to lead and feed the flock of God. They are initiated by the Holy Spirit, confirmed by prayer, and qualified through the consistent testimony of a pure life in the eyes of all.

4.13 THE LOCAL CHURCH AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ELDERS

Even in the early church some elders were paid by the church for their labour. First Timothy 5:17-18 says, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honour, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing”, and “The labourer is worthy of his wages”. “Honour” in verse 17 is the Greek word time, which, as the context show, refers to financial remuneration.

In I Corinthians 9:1-9 Paul says,

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ... My defence to those who examine me is this: Do we not have a right to eat and drink? Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and
does not use the milk of the flock? I am not speaking these things according to human judgement, am I? Or does not he Law also say these things? For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing”. God is not concerned about oxen, is He?

In other words, it is bound into the very nature of ministry that those who minister should be supported. Soldiers are supported by the government. Farmers eat of their harvest. Shepherds drink milk from the flock. Even oxen get fed through the work they do. So the pastor is to be supported by the church. He adds in verse 13, “Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple?” Just as the priests lived off the offerings of the people, so those who minister under the New Covenant should be supported by those to whom they minister.

Nevertheless, Paul also establishes the fact that such subsidy is optional. It is a right, not a mandate. In verse 6 he says, “Do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working?” He and Barnabas were supporting themselves through work outside the scope of the church. They had given up their right to refrain from working. As ministers they had the right to be supported by the church, even if they chose not to exercise that right. Their working was out of choice, not necessity, because they wanted to offer the gospel without charge (v. 18), and they did not want to place the burden of their support on the church (1 Thess. 2:9).

Every elder has the same right. If the Lord called him to be and elder and the church has recognised his calling, he has the right to be supported by the church. If he senses the leading of the Spirit of God to seek subsidy so that he can be more free to do what God has put in his heart to do, the church is obligated by the recognition of his pastorate to support him.

But the “tentmaking” role is also an option. If an elder chooses to gain income in another way, that is within the latitude of Scripture. Elders may choose to support
themselves by working outside the church, as did Paul, for a number of reasons. They may not wish to put the burden of their support on the church. They may feel their testimony has a greater impact if they do not seek support. In a church with a plurality of elders, it is likely that some will support themselves, and others will be supported by the church. Either way it does not affect the man’s status as an elder.

The terms lay and clergy are non-biblical. That doesn’t mean they aren’t helpful. In certain circumstances it may be useful to distinguish between those whose full support comes from their service to the church and those whose main source of income is another occupation, but in Scripture, no such artificial distinctions are drawn. There are not different classes of saints, and in terms of position, there is biblically no difference between a lay elder and a pastor. Each elder is charged with the oversight, care, feeding, protection and teaching of the flock. All the elders together constitute the leadership and example for the rest of the church. All have been ordained by the church, called by God, and set apart by God to a shepherding function as defined in the Scriptures. They are all called to the same level of commitment and to the same office. Subsidy should not be a dividing issue. Every elder has the option to receive support or to support himself - which ever reflects God’s will.

In fact, those who choose not to accept support from the church may have an advantage in the ministry they could not enjoy if they were paid by the church. They are in a position to display to the world their testimony of being above reproach. They are more exposed to unbelievers in the workplace, and are on the cutting edge in a different dimension of life, able to interface with people who the church might otherwise have no contact with. They may bring a greater amount of credibility to the entire group of elders. So an elder’s subsidy is optional, his spiritual qualifications are not.
Elders are called and appointed by God, confirmed by the church leadership, and ordained to the task of leadership. To them are committed the responsibilities of being examples to the flock, giving the church direction, teaching the people, and leading the congregation. Scripture implies that anyone at a lower level of leadership should be under the elders' authority.

Because they share unique responsibility and position in the church, elders are worthy of great respect, love, and co-operation. The great feeling of appreciation is to arise "because of their work." We are to respect them because of the calling that they are fulfilling - not only because of their diligent labour and the task they have, but primarily because of the calling to which they've been called.

Hebrews 13:7 says, "Remember those who led you, who spoke the Word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith." That emphasises both the elder's responsibility to live as an example, manifesting in his life the result of virtue, and the church member's duty to be mindful of those who have led them in this way.

Verse 17 adds another dimension of the congregation's duty toward their spiritual leaders: "Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will given an account. let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you." In other words, the congregation is spiritually accountable to the elders, and the elders are accountable to God. The congregation should submit to the elders' leadership and let the elders be concerned with their own accountability before the Lord. And if the congregation is submissive and obedient, the elders will be able to lead with joy and not with grief, which is ultimately unprofitable for everyone.
That does not mean, however, that if an elder sins openly his sin should be ignored.

First Timothy 5:19-21 says,

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles with out bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

An accusation of sin against an elder is not to be received lightly. Nor is it to be overlooked. Elders are to be disciplined for sinning in the same way anyone else in the church would be. In no way are they to receive preferential treatment.

The testimony of the church is most visible in the lives of the elders. If they ignore the biblical mandate for holiness, the church will suffer the consequences. Equally, if the church is not submissive to the leadership God had ordained, its testimony will suffer, its effectiveness will be diminished, its priorities will be unbalanced, and ultimately its savour as the salt of the earth will be lost.

My desire is to see God’s church functioning as He has ordained, with strength and purity in the midst of a weak and wicked society. My strong conviction is that when the church submits to God’s pattern for leadership, we will begin to experience His blessing beyond anything we could ever asks or think.
The church is a living community of people redeemed by Jesus Christ. Elders are called and appointed by the church. One of the distinctives of the ministry over the years have been an emphasis on the leadership of elders. The researcher concludes that a strong and unified church leadership which is based on biblical pattern is the vital key to church growth and influence. It is concluded that proper biblical government by leaders does strengthen the church, and the biblical norm for church leadership is a plurality of God-ordained elders and deacons, further more, it is the very pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament. The investigator strongly believes that in Scripture we never find a local assembly ruled by majority opinion, or by one pastor.
CHAPTER 5

THE OFFICE AND FUNCTION OF AN ELDER

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the dissertation concentrates on the functions and offices of elders. In this chapter, Paul described the bishop, the deacon and the church itself. By understanding these three descriptions, we shall be able to give better leadership to the ministry of the church. Everything rises or falls with leadership whether it be a family or a local church. It would be noted in this chapter that the church is an organism, i.e. must be organised or it will die. Leadership is a part of spiritual organisation. It is observed in this chapter that Paul used the word “presbytery” in 1 Timothy 4:14 referring not to a denomination, but to the “eldership” of the assembly that ordain Timothy. A distinction is made between “elders” and “bishops” these are two names for the same office Titus 1:5,7. These were mature people with spiritual wisdom and experience.

5.2 THE OFFICE AND FUNCTION OF AN ELDER

I am confident that a return to the biblical pattern of leadership would do much to revitalise the contemporary church. The church, like every other dimension of God’s kingdom manifested upon earth, depends upon its leadership. The strength, health, productivity, and fruitfulness of a church directly reflect the quality of its leadership.

Under the plan God has ordained for the church, leadership is a position of humble, loving service. Those who would lead God’s people must exemplify purity, sacrifice, diligence, and devotion. And with the tremendous responsibility inherent in leading
the flock of God comes potential for either great blessing or great judgement. Good leaders are doubly blessed; poor leaders are doubly chastened, for "from everyone who has been given much shall much be required" (Luke 12:48). James 3:1 says, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricture judgement".

Biblically, the focal point of all church leadership is the elder. It is the elders who are charged with teaching, feeding and protecting the church, and it is the elders who are accountable to God on behalf of the church. Many elders and pastors from across the country, I do not understand either the gravity or the potential of their role. Being uncertain of their function or their relationship to the Body, they are greatly hindered in their ability to minister effectively.

5.3 THE TERM ELDER

"The term elder is of Old Testament origin. The primary Hebrew word for elder (zaqen) was used for example, Numbers 11:1 and Deuteronomy 27:1 of the seventy tribal leaders who assisted Moses. There it refers to a special category of men who were set apart for leadership - much like a senate - in Israel. Deuteronomy 1:9-18 indicates that these men were charged with the responsibility of judging the people. Moses communicated through them to the people (Ex. 19:7; Deut. 31:9). They led the Passover (Ex. 12:21), and perhaps other elements of worship.

The Old Testament refers to them as "elders of Israel" (1 Sam. 4:3), "elders of the land" (1 Kings 20:7), "elders of Judah" (2 Kings 23:1), "elders ... of each city" (Ezra. 10:14), and "elders of the congregation" (Judge. 21:16). They served in the capacity of local magistrates, and as governors over the tribes (Deut. 16:18; 19:12; 31:28). (MacArthur 1989:153).
Another Hebrew word for elder is *sab*, used only five times in the Old Testament, all in the book of Ezra. There it refers to the group of Jewish leaders in charge of rebuilding the Temple after the Exile.

The Greek word for *elder*, (presbuteros), is used about seventy times in the New Testament. Like *zaqen*, which means “aged” or “bearded”; *sab*, which means “gray headed”; and our English word *elder*, presbuteros has reference to mature age. For example, in Acts 2:17 Peter quotes Joel 2:28: “Your old men shall dream dreams”. The Hebrew word used for “old men” in Joel is *zaqen*, and the Greek word used in Acts is *presbuteros*. Used in that sense elder does not constitute an official title; it simply means “an older man”.

In 1 Timothy 5:2 the feminine form of presbuteros is used to refer to older women. There, older women are contrasted with younger ones: (Appeal to) the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity”. In that context, the term also signifies only mature age, not an office in the church.

“According to MacArthur in his book SHEPHERDOLOGY There as in 1 Timothy 5:2, presbuteros the word is used to contrast between age and youth. In such a context, presbuteros is generally understood to mean only “an older person”, not necessarily an officeholder of any kind. That is the primary meaning of the term in general Greek usage.

In the time of Christ presbuteros was a familiar term. It is used twenty-eight times in the New Testament to refer to a group of ex officio spiritual leaders of Israel: “the chief priests and elders” (Matt. 27:3), the “scribes and elders” (27:41), “officers of the Temple and elders” (Luke 22:52), and “rulers and elders of the people” (Acts 4:8). In each of those instances and every similar usage, presbuteros refers to recognised spiritual leaders in Israel who aren’t defined as priest of any kind. They seem to be the Sanhedrin, the highest ruling body of Judaism in Jesus time.
Matthew 15:2 and Mark 7:3, 5 use the phrase “tradition of the elders”. There presbuteros refers to an ancestry of spiritual fathers who passed down principles that governed religious practice. They were the teachers who determined Jewish tradition. In that sense, elder is equivalent to rabbi and may or may not signify official status.

There are twelve occurrences of presbuteros in the book of Revelation. All of them refer to the twenty four elders who appear to be unique representatives of the redeemed people of God from all ages.

5.4 ELDERSHIP AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

“The New Testament church was initially Jewish, so it would be natural that the concept of elder rule was adopted for use in the early church. Elder was the only commonly used Jewish term for leadership that was free from any connotation of either the monarchy or the priesthood. That is significant because in the church, each believer is a co regent with Christ, so there could be no earthly king. And unlike national Israel, the church has no specially designated earthly priesthood, for all believers are priests. So of all the Jewish concepts of leadership, the elder best transfers to the kind of leadership ordained for the church” (Mac Arthur 1989:154).

The elders of Israel were mature men. They were heads of families (Ex. 12:21); possessors of strong moral character; God fearing men of truth and integrity (Ex. 18:20-21); full of the Holy Spirit (Num. 11:16-17); capable men of wisdom, discernment, and experience; impartial and courageous men who could be counted on to intercede, teach, and judge righteously and fairly (Deut. 1:13-17). All those characteristics were involved into the Jewish understanding of the term presbuteros. The use of that term to describe church leaders emphasises the maturity of their spiritual experience, as shown in the strength and consistency of their moral character.
Presbuteros is used nearly twenty times in Acts, and the epistles in reference to a unique group of leaders in the church. From the beginning it was clear that a group of mature spiritual leaders was to have responsibility for the church. The church at Antioch, for example, where believers were first called "Christians", sent Barnabas and Saul to the elders at Jerusalem with a fight to be distributed to the needy brethren in Judea (Acts 11:30). That demonstrates that elders existed in the church at that early time, and that the believers at Antioch recognised their authority.

Since the church at Antioch grew out of the ministry at Jerusalem, elders probably existed there as well. In fact, it is likely that Paul himself functioned as an elder at Antioch, before he stepped out in the role of an apostle. He is listed in Acts 13:1 as one of that church’s teachers.

Elders played a dominant role in the Council of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 15 (see vv. 2,4,6,22-23, and 16:4). Obviously they were very influential in the foundational life of the early church.

As Paul and Barnabas began to preach in new areas, and as the church began to extend itself, the process of identifying church leaders became more clearly defined. And throughout the New Testament, as the church developed, the leaders were called elders.

As early in the biblical narrative as Acts 14, we see that one of the key steps in establishing a new church was to identify and appoint elders for church leadership. Verse 23 says, "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed'.

Nearly every church we know of in the New Testament is specifically said to have had elders. For example, Acts 20:17 says, "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church." It is significant that the church at Ephesus had elders
because all the churches of Asia Minor - such as those listed in Revelation 1:11 - were extensions of the ministry at Ephesus. We can assume that those churches also identified their leadership by the same terms that were set as the pattern in Ephesus a plurality of elders.

Peter wrote to the scattered believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, saying "I exhort the elders among you ... shepherd the flock of God: (1 Pet. 5:1-2). Those territories were not cities. This Peter was writing to a number of churches scattered all over Asia. All of them had elders.

5.5 DISTINCTION BETWEEN ELDER BISHOP AND PASTOR

Bishops and pastors are not distinct from elders; the terms are simply different ways of identifying the same people. The Greek word for bishop is episkopos, from which the Episcopal Church gets its name. The Greek word for pastor is poimen.

The textual evidence indicates that all three terms refer to the same office. The qualifications for a bishop, listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and those for an elder, in Titus 1:6-9 are unmistakably parallel. In fact in Titus, Paul uses both terms to refer to the same man (1:5-7).

First Peter 5:1-2 brings all three terms together: "Therefore I exhort the elders (presbuteros) among you, as you fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd (poimaino) the flock of God among you, exercising oversight (episkopeo) not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God.

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Acts 20 also uses all three terms interchangeably. In verse 17 Paul assembles all the elders (presbuteros) of the church to give them his farewell message. In verse 28 he says, "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (episkopos), to shepherd (poimaino) the church of God".

In general usage the term elder is preferred because it seems to be free of the many connotations and nuances of meanings that have been imposed on both bishop and pastor by our culture.

Episkopos, the word for bishop, means "overseer" or "guardian". The New Testament uses episkopos five times. In 1 Peter 2:25 Jesus Christ is called the episkopos of our souls. He is the One who has the clearest overview of us, who understands us best. He is the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls. The other four uses of episkopos have reference to leaders in the church.

Episkopos is the secular Greek cultures equivalent to the historic Hebrew idea of elders. Bishop's were those appointed by the emperors to lead captured or newly founded city states. the bishop was responsible to the emperor, but oversight was delegated to him. He functioned as a commissioner, regulating the affairs of the new colony or acquisition. Thus episkopos suggested two ideas to the first century Greek mind: responsibility to a superior power, and an introduction to a new order of things. Gentile converts would immediately understand those concepts.

It is interesting to trace the biblical uses of episkopos. It appears in the books of Acts only once, near the end (Acts 20:28). Of course at the time there were relatively few Gentiles in the church, and so the term was not commonly used. But apparently as Gentiles were saved and the church began to lose more of its Jewish flavour, the Greek cultures word episkopos was used more frequently to describe those who functions as elders (1 Timothy 3:1).
The New Testament bishop, or overseer, is responsible for teaching (1 Tim. 3:2), feeding, protecting, and generally nurturing the flock (Acts 20:28). Biblically, there is no difference in the role of an elder and that of a bishop; the two terms refer to the same group of leaders. Episkipos emphasises the function; presbuteros the character.

Poimen, the word for pastor or shepherd, is used a number of times in the New Testament, but Ephesians 4:11 is the only place in the King James Version where it is translated “pastor”. Every other time it appears in the Greek texts, it is translated “shepherd” in the English version.

Two of the three times poimen appears in the epistles, it refers to Christ. Hebrews 13:2 is a benediction: “Now the God of preaches, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd (poimen) of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will.” First Peter 2:25 says, “You were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd (poimen) and Guardian (episkopos) of your souls.”

In Ephesians 4:11 pastor (poimen) is used with the word teacher. The Greek construction here indicates that the two terms go together - we might hyphenate them in English (“pastor-teacher”). The emphasis is on the pastor’s ministry of teaching.

Poimen then, emphasises the pastoral role of caring and feeding, although the concept of leadership is also inherent in the picture of a shepherd. The emphasis of the term poimen is on the man’s attitude. To be qualified as a pastor, a man must have a shepherd’s caring heart.

So the term elder emphasises who the man is. Bishop speaks of what he does. And pastor (“shepherd”) deals with how he ministers. All three terms are used of the same church leaders, all three identify those who feed and lead the church, but each has a unique emphasis.
As the apostolic era came to a close, the office of elder emerged as the highest level of local church leadership. Thus it carried a great amount of responsibility. There is no higher court of appeal, and no greater resource to know the mind and heart of God with regard to issues in the church.

First Tim. 3:1 says, "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do". In verse 5, Paul says that the work of an episkopos is to "take care of the church of God". The clear implication is that a bishop's primary responsibility is that of being caretaker for the church.

That involves a number of specific duties. Perhaps the most obvious is the function of overseeing the affairs of the local church. First Tim. 5:17 says, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honour". The Greek word translated "rule" in that verse is proistemi, used to speak of the elders' responsibilities four times in 1 Timothy (3:4-5, 5:12,17), once in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 (where it is translated, "have charge over"), and once in Romans 12:8, where ruling is listed as a spiritual gift. Proistemi literally means "to stand first", and it speaks of the duty of general oversight common to all elders.

As those who rule in the church, elders are not subject to any higher earthly authority outside the local assembly. Their authority over the church is not by force or doctoral power, but by precept and example.

Nor are the elders to operate by majority rule or both. If all the elders are guided by the same Spirit and all have the mind of Christ, there should be unanimity in the decisions they make (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3; Phil. 1:27; 2:2). Of there is division, all the elders should study, pray, and seek the will of God together until consensus is achieved. Unity and harmony in the church at large begin here.
The elders are responsible to preach and teach (Tim. 5:17). They are to determine doctrinal issues for the church and have the responsibility of proclaiming the truth to the congregation. First Tim. 3:2, listing the spiritual qualifications of the overseer, gives only one qualification that relates to a specific function: he must be “able to teach”. All the other qualifications are personal character qualities.

Titus 1:7-9 also emphasize the significance of the elders responsibility as a teacher: “The overseer must ... be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” Already in the church, the threat of false teachers was so great that a key qualification for leadership was an understanding of sound doctrine and the ability to teach it.

“Exhort” in that verse in the Greek word parakaleo, which literally means “to call near”. From its uses in the New Testament, we see that the ministry of exhortation has several elements. It involves persuasion (Acts 2:4; 14:22; Titus 1:9), pleading (2 Cor. 8:17), comfort (1 Thess. 2:11), encouragement (1 Thess 4:1), and patiently reiterating important doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2).

The elders are a resource for those who seek partnership in prayer. James wrote, “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14).

Acts 20-28 says that another function of an elder is shepherding” “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God”. That involves feeding and protecting the flock. Verses 29-30 re-emphasize the act that the protecting ministry of the overseer is essential to counter that threat of false teachers.
The elder acts as a caring and loving shepherd over the flock, but never in scripture is it spoken as “his flock”. It is the “flock of God” (1 Pe. 5:2), and he is merely a steward - a caretaker for the possession of God.

Elders as the spiritual overseers of the flock, are to determine church policy (Acts 15:22); oversee (Acts 20:28); ordain others (1 Tim. 4:4); rule, teach, and preach (1 Tim. 5:17); exhort and refute (Titus 1:9); and act as shepherds, setting an example for all (1 Pet. 5:1-3). Those responsibilities put elders at the core of the New Testament church’s work.

Understandably elders cannot afford to allow themselves to be consumed with business details, public relations, minor financial matters, and other particulars of the day-to-day operation of the church. They are to devote themselves first of all to prayer and to the ministry of the Word, and select others to handle the lesser matters (Acts 6:3-4).

5.7 THE QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ELDER

First Timothy 3 and Titus 1 identify the qualifications of an elder. First Timothy 3:1-7 says.

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?); and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
There the single, over-arching qualification of which the rest are supportive is that he
is to be "above reproach". That is, he must be a leader who cannot be accused of
anything sinful. All the other qualifications, except perhaps teaching and
management skills, only amplify that idea.

An elder must be above reproach in his marital life, his social life, his family life, his
business life, and his spiritual life. "The husband of one wife" (lit. "a one woman
man"). Does not mean simply that he is married to one woman - that would not be a
spiritual qualification. Rather, it means and elder is to be single minded in his
devotion to his wife. If he is not married, he is not to be the flirtatious type.

"Temperate" speaks of a balanced, moderate life. "Prudent" is another word for
"wise". "Respectable" mans he has dignity and the respect of his peers. "Hospitable"
mans that he loves strangers - not necessarily that he has a lot of dinner parties, but
rather that he is not cliquish. "Able to teach" is didaktikos, or "skilled in teaching".
In addition he is "not addicted to wine" (Timothy himself apparently drank none, 1
Tim. 5:23); and not "pugnacious" (not one who picks fights or is physically abusive),
but "gentle", "uncontentious", and "free from the love of money".

All of those must be proven qualities and abilities, and the first place he must
manifest them is in his home. He must manage his own household well, and keep his
children under control with dignity. "Household" in verse 5 probably refers to an
extended household, including servants, lands, possessions, and many in-laws and
other relatives: All those were elements of a household in the first century, and a
great deal of leadership skill and spiritual character were required to manage them
well. If a man could not manage his household, how could he be charged with
managing the church?

The qualifications of an elder, then, go far beyond good moral characteristics. An
er elder must be demonstrably skilled as a teacher and manager. If anything in his life
signifies a weakness in those areas, he is disqualified. If he is in debt, if his children are rebellious, or if his business affairs are not above reproach, he cannot be an elder.

Understandably he cannot be a new convert, for it takes time for him to mature, as well as time to examine his life and evaluate his qualifications. In addition, elevating a new convert to a position of leadership runs the risk of making him become conceited. To wrap all that up, and elder must have an impeccable reputation with those outside the church as well as those inside.

In Titus 1:5-9 Paul lists similar qualifications:

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach a God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick tempered not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refuse those who contradict.

Most of those qualifications echo the ones given in 1 Timothy. Again Paul says that an elder is to be a one woman man, having children whose lives are not characterised by rebellion or disputatation, which is sinful indulgence. In other words his children are not rebelling against him or the values of a righteous home and family, and they are not living lives of profligacy.

The overseer must be ‘above reproach as God’s steward’. That implies again that he is proven in his ministry already. He is “not self-willed”, seeking his own agenda, he is not quick tempered, not addicted to wine, and not pugnacious, or violent. He does
not seek to get money through illicit or questionable means. He is hospitable fond of what is good and sensible or discreet. He is righteous, devoted to God, and self controlled.

And in addition to all that, he must demonstrate skill in handling the Word of God so he can both "exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict it".

Notice the parallels and the differences in the two listings.

5.8 PARALLELS IN BOTH TIMOTHY AND TITUS OF THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS

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5.9 THE OFFICE AND FUNCTION OF A DEACON

The title deacon seems to have as many different connotations as there are churches to bestow it. In some churches, the deacons are the official board, the legally recognised managing body. Other churches appoint almost everyone who is a regular attender as a deacon. Still other churches bestow the title as a badge of honour, like "reverend" but for laymen. The ministry of a deacon is so different from church to church that when a person says he is a deacon, you usually have to ask several questions to find out what, if anything, he actually does.

Scripture itself is vague about the specifics of what deacons are to do. We read a lot about what qualifies a man to be a deacon, but little about how deacons are to minister in the local church. That fact in itself teaches us much about God's view of church leadership: What a man is is the issue, more than what he does.

Unfortunately that point is often overlooked in debates about church government. My conviction is that when a church becomes as concerned about maintaining high standards of purity and integrity in leadership as it is about upholding a specific form of government, it will begin to fall more in line with Scripture in every other area as well.

5.10 THE TERM DEACON IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament text uses three primary words to refer to deacons: diakonos, which means "servant", diakonia, which means "service", and diakoneo, which means "to serve". The original use of this group of words seems to have been specific, meaning the service of waiting on tables or serving people food. But it broadened beyond that and came to mean any kind of service.
It is important to understand at the outset that in a biblical context, the group of Greek words from which we get the word deacon have meanings no more specific than the meanings of their English equivalents. In biblical usage, diakonia suggests all kinds of service, just as the English word service does. We might use the word serve to describe anything from the start of a volley in a tennis match to a convicted criminal who "serves" a term in prison. We use it equally to describe a slave who serves his master or a king who serves his people.

The Greek words diakonos, diakoneo, and diakonia have just as wide a variety of meaning, but general they refer to any kind of service that supplies the need of another person. The words are used at least a hundred times in the New Testament, and they are usually translated with variants of the English words serve or minister. In a few places in the King James Version they are translated differently - diakonia is "administration" in 1 Cor. 12:5 and 2 Cor. 9:12, and "relief" in Acts 11:29. But in those verses, and in every usage of the words throughout the New Testament the primary meaning has to do with service and ministry.

5.11 THE GREEK FOR DEACON AND THE KIND OF SERVICES

a. Serving Food The original and most limited meaning of the word diakoneo has to do with serving food. The account of the wedding at Cana is a good illustration of that: "His mother said to the servants (diakonoi), Whatever He says to you do it .... And when the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants [diakonoi] who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom" (John 2:5-9). That is clearly a reference to people who actually served tables. And that is the traditional and original sense of the word deacon.
Luke 4:39 tells us that after Christ healed Peter's mother in law, she “immediately arose and began to wait on them”. The verb form of diakoneo appears there. Peter's mother in law waited on both Christ and Peter, which probably means she served them a meal. Three other texts in the gospel where the word deacon refers to serving a meal are John 12:2, Luke 10:40, and 17:8.

b. **General Service** On some occasions, diakoneo or one of the related words is used without specifying what kind of service is involved. In John 12:26 Christ says, “If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honour him”. The meaning of the word is general there and could refer to a number of forms of service.

Biblically, the use of the word diakonos is not limited to describing believers. Romans 13:3-4 says, “Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil”. There diakonos, translated “minister” is used twice of a policeman or soldier who isn’t necessarily a Christian.

A passage where both the original and the general usage of the word appear is Luke 22:27. There Christ said, “Who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? but I am among you as the one who serves.” In that verse diakoneo is used twice. The first usage clearly refers to the serving of a meal. The second speaks of service in a general sense.
Spiritual Service  Looking more directly at the term, we find it used of the believers role as a servant. In Rom. 15:25 Paul writes, "I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints". He identified himself as a servant (diakonos). From Acts 20:19 we learn that he kept busy "serving diakoneo the Lord with all humility".

In 2 Cor. 8:3-4 Paul says of the churches in Macedonia, "I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favour of participation in the support [diakonia] of the saints". The ministry of providing resources for meeting basic physical needs is a form of spiritual service.

In this spiritual sense of diakonos and the related words, any act of obedience done by a Christian should qualify to be called service to Christ. In the way the words are often used in Acts and the epistles, a believer in any form of ministry could be called the servant, or deacon, of Christ.

First Cor 12:5 tells us that "there are varieties of ministries [diakonia], and the same Lord". All Christians are involved in some form of service. All who serve the Lord are deacons, or ministers, if not in an official sense, at least in the sense of these general usage of the word.

Other verses that use a form of the word deacon to speak of spiritual service are 2 Cor. 4:1; 9:1, and Revelation 2:19. In those and all the verses that we have looked at so far, we have not yet found the word used in reference to the office of deacon in the church.
Because of the variety of meanings attached to diakonos and the related words, with one or two possible exceptions it is difficult to pin down any clear reference in the New Testament to an office of deacon in the early ecclesiastical government. Most occurrences of diakonos and the related words use their general meanings and clearly have nothing to do with a church office. Other passages could be taken one way or the other, but usually the clearest, most natural interpretation calls for the general meanings, not a reference to a special title belonging to a elect group in the church.

For example, some say the Rom. 12 contains a reference to the office of deacon: “Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly ... if service, in his serving” (vv. 6 - 7). But is the gift of serving equivalent to the function or office of a deacon? There is nothing in the text to support that. The other gifts listed in Rom. 12 do not involve offices. Also, offices are not necessarily related to gifts. A person who has the gift of teaching, for example, does not have to be a pastor teacher to exercise his gift. The gifts are related to callings and assignments, not just offices.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul says, “You know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry [diakonia] to the saints” (16:15). Was Paul saying that the household of Stephanas was a family of officially titled deacons? There is no way to affirm that on the basis of the terms used or the context - in fact, the most natural interpretation is to take it the way it is translated.

Some suggest that Ephesians 4:12 talks about deacons in the church. Starting with verse 11, we read, “[The Lord] gave some as apostles, and some as prophet’s, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints
for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ”. The “work of service” (diakonia) is not the work of the deacons, but rather the work of all saints in being servers. Paul was talking about Christians in general being equipped for spiritual service, not about the office of a deacon.

Some believe that Paul was a deacon. They point to Acts 20:24 where Paul says, “I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry [diakonia] which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God”. But Paul was saying that he had a specific ministry given to him by Christ; he was not calling himself a deacon or minister in any official sense. In Romans 11:13 he writes, “I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office [diakonia]” (KJV). The New American Standard uses the word ministry in that verse instead of “office”. The use of “office” in the King James Version was arbitrary; it seems unlikely that Paul was using the word in reference to an official position there. His office was that of apostle, which he called “my ministry”, or “my service”.

In 1 Timothy 1:12 the apostle Paul writes “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service”. The translation is accurate; Paul is not saying that he was put into the office of a deacon. Other passages that talk about Paul as a minister or servant 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6 and 6:4, and Ephesians 3:7. In each of those instances, there is no evidence to indicate that Paul was assigned the office of deacon. he was calling himself a servant of God in a general sense.

Paul was an apostle - he spent much of 2 Cor. 10 - 12 emphasising that point. the apostle's office was the highest of all in the local church, superseding that of the elders and deacons. In an official capacity, Paul would never have claimed to be a deacon; he was an apostle.
Paul said to the Ephesians, “[So] that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister [diakonos] in the Lord, will make everything known to you” (Eph. 6:21). It could be that Paul was calling Tychicus a faithful deacon. But Paul also used diakonos in Ephesians 3:7 and diakonia in Ephesians 4:12 as references to general service, and there is no reason to assume he meant differently here.

In Col. 1:7 Paul calls Epaphras “our beloved fellow bondservant, who is faithful servant [diakonos] of Christ on our behalf”. Then in verses 23 and 25 he writes, “Continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister [diakonos]... Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit”. Paul used diakonos to describe both himself and Ephaphras. Since we feel certain that the apostle Paul was not calling himself a deacon, it seems highly unlikely that he was referring to Epaphras as one. Principals of interpretation suggest that a word finds its meaning within the context of a book, and in the context of Col., there is no indication that diakonos refers to an office of deacons.

Another place that the word deacon appears as Philippians 1:1. The letter to the Philippians begins. “Paul and Timothy, bond servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons”.

Up to now we have not seen the Greek word diakonos translated as ‘deacons’. Why did the Bible translators suddenly introduce the word deacon here in an official sense when in virtually every other usage the word is translated “minister” or “servant”? Granted, the word here could refer to officers in the church, but again, the context does not seem to warrant such an interpretation.

The word in this verse translated “overseers” (episkopos) is not the word normally used to identify elders (presbuteros). The most natural interpretation of this verse is that Paul was addressing his letter to the whole church. He seems to be saying, “I write to
the whole church, including the leadership and those who follow or serve”. To say that Philippians 1:1 refers to the office of deacon might be correct, but it is an obituary choice. There is not enough evidence to be dogmatic about what Paul is saying.

We have already seen many uses of the Greek words diakonos, diakoneo, and diakonia, but none with a clear reference to a specific church office.

The apostles recognised the scope of the problem, yet realised they needed to solve it without sacrificing their own valuable time and priorities. They said to the congregation, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables” (v.2).

The apostles advice to the congregation is found in Acts 6:3: “Select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task”. It was important to select men who had a reputation for honesty because they were going to be entrusted with money. There were no checks or accounting procedures like we have today. The men also had to be “full of the Spirit and of wisdom”. It is very difficult to work out an equitable system of distribution to people who have varying needs. They would have to determine whether or not someone’s need was legitimate.

Seven men were to be chosen so that the apostles could be free to do what God had called them to do. In Acts 6:4 the apostles say, “We will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word”. Verses 5 - 6 tell us that their “statement found approval with the whole congregation, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, and Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.
Were the seven men listed in Acts 6:5 fulfilling an office of deacon? The traditional interpretation of Acts 6 is that those men were the first deacons. Notice that verses 1-2 say, "[The Hellenistic] windows were being overlooked in the daily serving [dialoneo] of food ... It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve [diakonia] tables". Some say that the use of those words in their original sense implies that these men were chose to fill the office of deacon.

Another argument for viewing these men as deacons is that early church history confirms that in the post-apostolic period deacons were assigned charge of administrative affairs - including the distribution of goods to the poor. In addition, the post-apostolic church in Rome limited the number of deacons to seven for many years. They seem to have taken that number from the seven chosen in Acts 6.

Still, there are a number of reasons for rejecting the notion that these seven men were chosen to fill the office of deacon. The use of diakonia and diakoneo is inconclusive, because diakonia is used in Acts 6:4 in reference to the work on the apostles themselves. So there is no reason to conclude that the office of a deacon is meant in verse 5. The New Testament never refers to the men listed in Acts 6:5 as deacons. Only two of the men are mentioned elsewhere in Scripture (Stephen and Philip), but they are nowhere called deacons.

Keep in mind that Acts was written in the earliest years of the church. We have already seen that none of the epistles written to specific churches recognised the office of deacon except the possible indication in Philippians. There is no strong reason from those epistles to believe that the office of deacon was instituted in Acts 6. Elders are mentioned later in the book of Acts is indeed the institution of the deacon's office, it seems strange that deacons are never referred to again in Acts.

Notice the word task used in Acts 6:3. That suggests the seven men were called to help take care of a one time crisis, not necessarily installed into a permanent office.
Their ongoing ministries seem to have been distinct from the immediate task. None of the seven is ever mentioned again in association with any food distribution ministry.

Note that all seven who were chosen had Greek names. If those men were being appointed to the Jerusalem church for an ongoing ministry, it would seem strange that only Greeks would be chosen. A permanent order of deacons in Jerusalem would not likely be made up of Greeks. On the other hand, it seems reasonable to conclude that seven Greeks would be chosen to take care of a short term ministry to the Hellenistic widows who had been neglected. Those men knew the situation and their people.

It is best to see the events described in Acts 6 as an effort by the Jerusalem church to take care of a temporary crisis, and the calling of the seven men as non permanent ministry.

If the deaconate had been maintained as an official function, we would expect it to be mentioned in Acts 11. There was a famine in Judea about six or seven years after the events of Acts 6. The church at Antioch, responding to the needs of the Jerusalem believers, sent relief food to help them: “In the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders” (Acts 11:29-30).

The comparison of Acts 6:1-6 and 11:29-30 suggests that the ongoing ministry of distributing goods in the Jerusalem church was entrusted to elders, not deacons. If there had been an officially constituted deaconate in Acts 6 with a continuing responsibility to distribute goods to the needy, the church at Antioch would have sent their contribution to that group.
Now let's look at the men selected in Acts 6. Verse 8 says that Stephen, "full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people". His function was not typical of the office of deacon as indicated later in 1 Timothy 3. He was articulate in the Word and almost apostolic in his gifts. He performed great wonders and signs.

In Acts 21:8 we read about Philip, who is described as an evangelist. Since Acts 7 shows Stephen preaching and Acts 8 shows Philip evangelising, it appears that the seven men in Acts 6:5 were closer to being elders in function than they were to being deacons. The seven men had administrative responsibilities, they had oversight over a very broad task, some articulated the Word of God, and some evangelised the lost. They were full of the Spirit, faith and wisdom and some even performed signs and wonders (cf. Acts 6:8; 8:6-7).

It is noteworthy that only seven men were selected. How could seven men possibly meet the broad need that the Jerusalem church was faced with? It would take more than seven people to do the job of distribution alone! It is more likely that the seven were a group of highly qualified spiritual leaders, teachers, and honourable men chosen to administrate the situation. By doing what they did, they freed the apostles to devote themselves to the priorities of prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Although we cannot say definitively that Acts 6 talks about the church offices of elder or deacon, we can clearly see there is a need for two areas of ministry: one is teaching and praying (v. 4), which involves spiritual care; the other is administration and oversight of needs (vv. 1-3), which involves both spiritual and physical care.
The seven men in Acts 6:5 did more than just hand people food. We know that Stephen and Philip were dynamic preachers. Some might assume that the other men listed in Acts 6:5 were not. But immediately after the men were chosen, the church “brought [them] before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly” (Acts 6:6-7). That indicates the seven were a part of the early churches growth. It also suggests that they were more like elders in function than deacons.

Nothing indicates the seven continued to serve in their original capacity. Stephen was killed shortly thereafter, and Philip went to Samaria. The persecution of Christians in Jerusalem that soon began may have scattered the whole group. As was noted, by the time of Acts 11:29-30 there is no mention of the group. Rather we read of a group of elders. If any of the original seven did remain, they would probably have been elders or secondary apostles of the church - not deacons.

Having explored several passages that are general or questionable in reference to the office of deacon, it is necessary to turn to the one passage in the New Testament that can definitely be said to refer to that office: 1 Timothy 3. Verse 8 says “Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain”. An interpretative key to that verse is “likewise”. It refers back to verse 1, in church we find the statement, “If any man aspires to the office of overseer”. That indicates deacons occupy a recognised office just as elders do.

So in the church there is to be a plurality of godly men - elders - who oversee the Lords work in the church. They are assisted in their work by deacons. The basic offices of a church do not need to be more sophisticated than that.
By the AD 60’s, when this epistle was probably written, the church had developed to the point where the spiritual qualifications for church leaders were specific, yet the instructions for organisation were still quite limited. That is by divine design. There is great flexibility in individual church organisation because God knew that situations and needs would differ over time and in different cultures. The biblical emphasis is not on the organisation, but on the leaders purity and spiritual depth” (MacArthur 1988 : 182)

5.12 QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON

The qualifications for deacons can be divided into two categories: personal character and spiritual character.

a. Personal Character  Paul listed four personal qualifications. First, deacons must be men of dignity (1 Tim. 3 : 8). This means that they must be worthy of respect and serious minded, not treating serious things lightly. The Greek word for “dignity” is semnos, which means “venerable, honourable, reputable, grave, serious, and stately”. The same Greek word appears in Titus 2 : 2, which says that older men “are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance”.

First Timothy 3 : 8 also says a deacon must not be double tongued, or one who says one thing to one person and something else to another - a malicious gossip. They are always consistent and righteous in what they say. Next, deacons are not addicted to much wine. Rather they are noted for their clear thinking and self control. Finally Paul said that deacons should not be fond of gain. That would be important because deacons are sometimes responsible for handling funds. Therefore their goals in life must not be monetary. First Timothy 6 : 9 says that a pervasive desire for financial gain corrupts a man.
b.  **Spiritual Character**  Paul also listed four spiritual qualifications. First a deacon must hold “to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience”. (I Tim. 3 : 9).

In other words, he must have convictions based on the knowledge of true biblical doctrine. his clear conscience implies that he lives out his convictions. he must hold to the faith and apply the truth in his life. A second spiritual qualification for deacons is given in verse 10; “Let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach”. before a man is officially appointed as a deacon, he must have proved himself faithful in serving the Lord. If he has proved himself to be beyond reproach, then let him serve.

Third a deacon must be morally pure in every way, just as an elder is to be. Literally verse 10 says, “Let them serve as deacons if they are in the process of being irreproachable”. Those who are not above reproach are disqualified from serving as deacons. Verse 12, which says, “Let deacons be husbands of only one wife”, also implies that deacons are to be morally pure. But that does not necessarily mean a deacon is to be someone who has never been divorced, although that would be a disqualification if his sin contributed to the divorce, or if the circumstances of the divorce bring reproach on him. The main point is that a deacon must be totally consecrated and devoted to his wife. The Greek text actually reads, “Let deacons be one woman men”. Having one wife does not necessarily reflect one's character, but being single-mindedly devoted to one's wife does.

The fourth characteristic of a deacons spiritual life is that he leads his family well. Deacons are to be “good managers of their children and their own households” (v. 12). A deacon must demonstrate some kind of management ability. The proving ground for leadership is how a man manages his children and household.

Although specific personal and spiritual qualifications must be met by those in the offices of elder and deacon, that does not mean that the standard is lower for anyone
else in the congregation. Everyone should seek to be in the role of a deacon - whether he is a recognised, office holding deacon, or simply a servant to the Body. The qualifications specified in 1 Timothy 3 should be a goal and a guideline for every believer.

5.13 DEACONESSES

First Timothy 3:11 begins, “Women must likewise be dignified”. Again, “likewise” relates back to an office of the church. Contrary to the King James Versions translation of that verse, we know Paul was not talking about the wives of deacons because he used no pronoun to refer to them. He didn’t say their wives or their women. Also, since there are no comments about the wives of elders, why would there be any comments about the wives of deacons?

In Roman 16:11 we read, “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a sister [diakonos] of the church which is at Cenchrea”. Phoebe was recognised by the church for her service. It is possible that she served in an official capacity as a deaconess at the church in Cenchrea.

“It is evident from Church History that there were also certain women chosen to be Deaconess’s to the Churches. Some expositors suggest that the qualifications laid down in 1 Timothy 3:11 could also be speaking of an order of Deaconess’s in the Church. “The women” could mean ‘the wives’ or just ‘the women’ who are Deaconess’s. Either way the truth is consistent with Scripture and Church History. (Conner 1989:130).

“Female assistants to the deacons, usually called Deaconess’s existed in the primitive Church. They were ladies of approved character and piety; and their duty required
them to minister to females, under circumstances in which it would have been manifestly improper that the other sex should have employed. Their services were regarded as of very great importance, if not entirely indispensable. Ecclesiastical historians, the early Fathers, and other writers refer to them frequently and familiarly” (Conner 1989 : 131).

Mosheim, for example, in his “History of the First Century”, introduces them thus: “The Eastern Churches elected deaconess, and chose for that purpose, matrons, or widows, of eminent sanctity, who also ministered to the necessities of the poor, and performed several other offices, that tended to order and decency in that Church”.

Early Church Fathers confirm the fact that Deacons played a certain role in the Church of the first few centuries.

Kevin Conner in his book THE CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT wrote the following (1989 : 133).

Ignatius, a contemporary of the Apostle John speaks of Deacons being more than just servers of meat and drink.

Irenaeus also saw a pattern in Acts 6 and believed that the church should be under the direction of not more than seven men.

Clemens of Alexandria of the second century confirms the same, using Paul as authority on the matter. In A.D. 315, the Council of Neo-Caesarea set seven as the number of men to administer in the affairs of the church.

Jerome of the fourth century also speaks of them.
"Deaconesses were to assist women in baptism. Deaconesses were especially used in the 'art of anointing and to go into the houses of the heathen where there are believing women, and to visit those who are sick and to minister to them in that of which they need and to bathe those who have begun to recover from sickness". (Conner 1989:133)

So expositors also suggest that 1 Timothy 5:9-10, when speaking of 'widows being taken into the number' refers to the Order of Deaconess's and the necessary qualifications for them to be supported by the church.

Their age, of course, prohibits the idea of havey service, so it is suggested that they, being of great age, should be supported by the church because of the many years they have ministered to the saints, washed feet, and given hospitality or, in other words, served as deaconess's.

A second passage which some expositors use is that in Philippians 4:3. Here Paul speaks of 'those women who laboured with me in the Gospel'. Perhaps these women also were deaconess's and helped the ministry.

They were recognised as 'these women' by Paul.

A third passage, which we have already referred to, is that of 1 Timothy 3:11 where some expositors say that 'Even so must their 'wives' can be more especially referring to 'the women', i.e. the deaconess's qualifications, not to the wives of deacons! deaconess's must be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. However, both could be accepted as true.
We note a list of women who served or ministered to the people of God, and can be recognised as deaconess’s.

* Dorcas ministered to the necessity of the poor (Acts 9:36-40).
* Phebe (Rom. 16:1-2) was a deaconess, a servant of the church at Cenchrea. Paul asks the local church at Rome to assist her in whatever business she needed and to act like saints in doing so.

It is evident that there are certain services that are best handled by women who would be deaconess’s. Other areas of Deaconship in the local church could be:

a. Deacon over ‘house church meetings’ or home fellowship groups.
b. Deacons who are ushers at the church gatherings and meetings.
c. Deacons over the nursery and care for the young of the flock.
d. Deacons over the welfare and care of the widows (Harvest Festival Seasons).
e. Deacons over the Commissary, or Saints Relief Fund.
f. Deacons over the Janitorial work of church buildings.
g. Deacons over the maintenance of church property.
h. Deacons over errands for the local eldership.
i. Deacons to serve and host visiting ministry.
j. Deacons over the orphan’s in the church.
k. Deacons over the communion Table and Service.
l. Deacons over baptismal services (men for men, women for women).
m. Deacons for visitation of sick in home or hospital
n. Deacons for women’s need
o. Deacons for secretarial work, or deaconess’s
p. Deacons over wedding preparations
q. Deacons over hospitality.
If there are husbands and wives who qualify, then there can be husband/wife team in the deaconship, according to abilities and areas they excel.

5.14 CONCLUSION

It is noticed in this chapter that as the apostolic era came to a close, the office of an elder emerged as the highest level of local church leadership. Thus it carried a great amount of responsibility. It is observed that there was no higher appeal and no greater resource to know the mind and heart of God with regard to issues in the local church. Paul says that the work of an episkopos is to take care of the church of God. The clear implication is that a bishop's primary responsibility is that of being caretaker for the church. It is our belief that elders are according to Pauline writings responsible to preach and teach 1 Tim. 5:17, they are also to determine doctrinal issues for the church and have the responsibility of proclaiming the truth to the congregation. First Timothy 3:2 lists the spiritual qualifications of the overseer giving only one qualification that relates to a specific function: "he must be able to teach". All the other qualifications are personal character qualities.
CHAPTER 6

QUALIFICATION FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6 the spotlight is on the character of the leader. The chapter is an eye-opener to everybody wishing to be a leader. In this chapter we highlight some marks and qualities that seem most appropriate for use in the church. The investigator clarifies the leadership roles and responsibilities of pastors and elected lay leaders.

By the A.D. 60’s the church had developed to the point where the spiritual qualifications for church leaders were specific, yet the instructions for organisation where quite limited. Thee is great flexibility in individual church organisation because we knew the situations and needs would differ over time and in different cultures.

6.2 QUALIFICATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

The character and effectiveness of any church is directly related to the quality of its leadership. That’s why the Bible stresses the importance of qualified church leadership and delineates specific standards for evaluating those who would serve in that sacred position. Failure to adhere to those standards has caused many of the problems that churches throughout the world currently face.

It is significant that in his description of the qualifications for overseers, Paul focused on the character rather than the function of an elder. A man is qualified because of
what he is, not because of what he does. If he sins and thereby soils his character, he is subject to discipline in front of the whole congregation (1 Tim. 5:20). The church must carefully guard that sacred office.

The spiritual qualifications for leadership are non negotiable. I am convinced they are part of what determines whether a man is indeed called by God to the ministry. Bible schools and seminaries can help equip a man for ministry; church boards and pulpit committees can extend opportunities for him to serve, but on God can call a man and make him fit for the ministry. The call to the ministry is not a matter of analysing ones talents and then selecting the best career option. Its a spirit generated compulsion to be a man of God and serve Him in the church. Those whom God calls will meet the qualifications.

Why are the standards set so high? Because whatever the leaders are, the people become as Hosea said, “Like people, like priests” (4:9). Jesus said, “Everyone after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40, NASB). Biblical history demonstrates that people will seldom rise above the spiritual level of their leadership.

First Timothy 3 carefully outlines the spiritual qualifications for men in leadership. Paul is speaking specifically of elders qualifications in the verses we will examine (vv. 1 - 7), but note that the only significant difference between an elders qualifications and those of a deacon is that an elder must be skilled as a teacher (cf. vv. 1 - 7 and 8 - 13).

Paul begins by asserting that the man who desires the office desires a good work (v. 1). But no one should ever be placed into church leadership on desire alone. It is the responsibility of the church to affirm a mans qualifications for ministry by measuring him against God’s standard for leadership as delineated in verses 2 - 7.
"Blameless" - He Is a Man of Unquestionable Character

Paul began "A bishop ... must be blameless" (v.2). The Greek word translated "must" emphasises an absolute necessity: blamelessness is absolutely necessary for an overseer. It is a fundamental, universal requirement. In fact, the other qualifications listed by Paul in verses 2 - 7 define and illustrate what he meant by "blameless".

The Greek text indicates this is referring to a present state of blamelessness. it doesn’t refer to sins that the man committed before he matured as a Christian - unless such sins remain as a blight on his life. No one is blameless in that sense. the idea is that he has sustained a reputation for blamelessness.

"Blameless" (v.2) means "not able to be held". A blameless man cannot be taken hold of as if he were a criminal in need of detention for his actions. There is nothing to accuse him of. he is irreproachable.

A church leaders life must not be marred by sin or vice - be it an attitude, habit, or incident. That is not to say he must be perfect, but there must not be any obvious defect in his character. He must be a model of godliness so he can legitimately call his congregation to follow his example (Phil. 3:17). The people need to be confident that he won't lead them into sin.

Spiritual leaders must be blameless because they set the example for the congregation to follow. That is a high standard, but it isn't a double standard. since you are responsible to follow the example of your godly leaders., God requires blamelessness of you as well. The difference is that certain sins can disqualify church leaders for life, where as that is not necessarily true for less prominent role s in the church. Nevertheless, God requires blamelessness of all believers (cf. Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Phil. 1:10; 2:15; Col. 1:22).
A church leader becomes disqualified when there is a blight on his life that communicates to others that one can live in sin and still be a spiritual leader. There are always malicious people looking for ways to discredit the reputation of Christ and His church. A sinful leader plays right into their hands, giving them an unparalleled opportunity to justify their lack of belief.

It is not coincidental that many pastors fall into sin and disqualify themselves from ministry. Satan works very hard to undermine the integrity of spiritual leaders because in so doing, he destroys their ministries and brings reproach upon Christ. Therefore spiritual leaders must guard their thoughts and actions carefully, and congregations must pray earnestly for the strength of its leadership.

I believe the devil attacks spiritual leaders with more severe temptations than most Christians will ever experience. It stands to reason that those who lead the forces of truth and light against the kingdom of darkness will experience the strongest opposition from the enemy.

Prayer acknowledges our dependency on God for spiritual strength and victory. It is an admission that we need help. Fellowship is just as important. In my spiritual battles I draw great strength and encouragement from those around me who are engaged in the same struggles.

By saying overseers must be blameless, of course the apostle Paul was not saying a man must be perfect, or everyone would be disqualified. Clearly, however, he meant that there must be no blight of any kind of sin that taints a man's reputation or puts his character in question. As he delineates the other qualifications for overseers, he simply expands on the particulars of what it means to be blameless.
"The Husband of One Wife" - He Is Sexually Pure

"The husband of one wife" is not the best rendering according to my studies of the Greek text. I believe the words translated "wife" (gunaikos) and "husband" (aner) are better translated "women" and "man". The Greek construction places emphasis on the word "one," thereby communicating the idea of a one-woman man.

It is appropriate that sexual fidelity is first on Paul's list of moral qualifications because that seems to be the area that most often disqualifies a man from ministry. It is therefore a matter of grave concern.

There have been many proposed interpretations of this qualification. The view that an elder can't have more than one wife at a time has been the traditional understanding of the English phrase "the husband of one wife", but the religious and cultural climate of Paul's day make it unlikely that he was referring to polygamy. Neither the Jews nor the Romans tended to engage in that practice.

Some people say that "the husband of one wife" means a man can not be an elder if he has remarried for any reason. But Paul can not be referring to remarriage, because God permits remarriage after the death of one's spouse (1 Tim. 5:9-15; Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39).

Others say that Paul was prohibiting divorced men from serving as elders. But if Paul were referring to divorce, he could have clarified the issue by saying, "An elder must be a man who has never been divorced". But even that statement would pose problems because the Bible teaches that remarriage after a divorce is within God's will under two circumstances.

First, divorce is justified when one partner commits continuos sexual sin. Jesus said to the religious leaders, "It hath been said[by your rabbinical tradition], Whosoever shall [divorce] his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement" (Matt. 5:31). Many
Jewish men were divorcing their wives for insignificant reasons, and the only requirement was to complete the necessary paperwork.

But Jesus said, “Whoever shall [divorce] his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery [when she remarry]; and whosoever shall marry that is divorced committeth adultery” (Matt. 5:32). Implied in that statement is that those who have divorced for reasons other that fornication are themselves adulterers, and their new wives are adulteresses.

I believe that the “fornication” mentioned in that context refers to extreme situations of unrelenting and unrepentant sexual sin. God graciously permits the innocent party to be free from bondage to such an evil partner. With that comes the freedom to remarry a believer.

Under Old Testament law, if a marriage partner committed adultery, he or she could be stoned to death. That would release the other partner from that marriage and free him or her to remarry. Although God no longer demands the death of an unfaithful spouse, the sin of adultery is no less severe. Should God’s grace in sparing the life of the adulterer penalise the innocent party by demanding lifelong singleness? I do not think so. The grace that spares the adulterer’s life also frees the innocent party to remarry.

Second, divorce is justified when an unbelieving partner leaves. In 1 Cor. 7:15 Paul says, “If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace”. If an unbelieving partner wants out of the marriage, the believer is free to let him or her go. God does not require you to live in a state of war with such a partner.

Some people say 1 Tim. 3:2 prohibits single men from serving as elders. But that position is refuted by the fact that Paul, who was an elder (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6), was himself single (1 Cor. 7:7-9).
The phrase “one woman man” does not refer to marital status at all. Paul is giving moral qualifications for spiritual leadership, not outlining what an elder’s social status or external condition is to be. “One - woman man” speaks of the man’s character, the state of his heart. If he is married, he is to be devoted solely to his wife. Whether or not he is married, he is not to be a ladies man.

Unfortunately, it is possible to be married to one woman yet not be a one - woman man. Jesus said, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5 : 28). What Paul is telling Timothy is that a married or unmarried man who lusts after many women is unfit for ministry. An elder must love, desire, and think only of the wife that God has given him.

Sexual purity is a major issue in the ministry. That’s why Paul placed it at the top of his list.

“Temperate” - He Is Not Given to Excess

The Greek word translated “temperate” (nephalios) means “without wine” or “not mixed with wine”. It speaks of sobriety the opposite of intoxication. Wine was a common drink in biblical times. Because Palestine was so hot and dry, it was often necessary to consume a large volume of wine to replenish body fluids lost in the heat. To help avoid drunkenness, wine was normally mixed with large amounts of water. Even so the lack of refrigeration and the fermentative properties of wine made intoxication a problem.

Even though wine can cheer a person’s heart (Judg. 9 : 13) and was beneficial for medicinal purposes such as stomach ailments (1 Tim. 5 : 23) and relieving pain for those near death (Prov. 31 : 6), its abuse was common. That is why Proverbs 20 : 1 says
"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise".

Proverbs 23:29-35 says “Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, it stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange things, thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not. When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again”.

Genesis 9 records an example of the mocking affect of wine. Noah planned a vineyard, made wine, and became drunk. While he was drunk “he was uncovered within his tent” (v. 21). The Hebrew text implies some kind of sexual evil. Ham, one of his sons, saw him in that state and mocked him. His two other sons entered the tent backwards to cover him up because they were ashamed of his sinfulness.

Because of their position, example, and influence, certain Jewish leaders abstained from wine. Priests could not enter God’s house while under its influence (Lev. 10:9). Kings were also advised not to consume wine because it might hinder their judgement (Prov. 31:4-5). The Nazarite vow, the highest vow of spiritual commitment in the Old Testament, forbade its participants from drinking wine (Num. 6:3). In the same way, spiritual leaders today must avoid intoxication so they might exercise responsible judgement and set an example of Spirit-controlled behaviour.

It’s likely that Paul’s usage of nephalios went beyond the literal sense of avoiding intoxication to the figurative sense of being alert and watchful.
An elder must deny any excess in life that diminishes clear thinking and sound judgement.

Commentator William Hendriksen said, “Such a person lives deeply. His pleasures are not primarily those of the senses, like the pleasures of a drunkard for instance, but those of the soul. He is filled with spiritual and moral earnestness. He is not given to excess (in the use of wine, etc.) but moderate, well balanced, calm, careful, steady, and sane. This pertains to his physical, moral, and mental tastes and habits” (Baker 1981: 122).

Drinking is only one area in which excess can occur. Overeating has been called the preacher’s sin, and often that is just criticism. But spiritual leaders are to be moderate and balanced in every area of life.

“Sober Minded” - He Is Self Disciplined

The Greek word translated “sober minded” (sophron) speaks of discipline or self control. It is the result of being temperate (v.2). The temperate man avoids excess so that he can see things clearly, and that clarity of thought leads to an orderly, disciplined life. He knows how to order his priorities.

Sophron indicates a person who is serious about spiritual things. Such a man does not have the reputation of a clown. That does not mean he avoids humour any good leader will be able to use and enjoy humour. but he is to have an appreciation for what really matters in life.

Some young men have a frivolous mentality, but the longer they serve Christ and observe life, the more they see things through God’s perspective. As time passes, their frivolity is tempered by their increased understanding of man’s lostness and the inevitability of hell.
That is part of being a sober minded person.

I received a letter from a lady who thanked me because our radio program helped her bread a ten year addiction to soap operas. She has learned to study and meditate on God's Word rather than pursuing her five hour a day viewing habit. She expressed her praise to God for His grace in her life. I rejoice with her because she is learning to set her mind on what is worthy of thought.

Paul said, "Whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). That is the focus of an ordered and well disciplined mind.

"Good Behaviour" - He Is Well Organised

The Greek word translated "good behaviour" is kosmios. It comes from the root word kosmos, which in its general sense refers to the interplay between human, divine, and satanic values. A man of "good behaviour" approaches all the aspects of his life in a systematic, orderly manner.

This kind of person diligently fulfils his many duties and responsibilities. His disciplined mind produces disciplined actions - "good behaviour"

The opposite of kosmios is chaos. Elders must not have a chaotic life style. That is because their work involves administration, oversight, scheduling, and establishing priorities.

The ministry is no place for a man whose life is a continual confusion of unaccomplished plans and unorganised activities. Over the years I have seen many
men who had difficulty ministering effectively because they could not get their lives into meaningful order. they could not concentrate on a task or systematically set and accomplish goals. Such disorder is a disqualification.

“Given to Hospitality” - He Is Hospitable

The Greek word translated “given to hospitality” is composed of the words xenos (stranger) and phileo (to love or show affection). It means to love strangers.

Quite often I hear it said that so and so has the gift of hospitality because she is a great cook or because she likes to have friends over for a visit. As gracious and important as those virtues are, they are not examples of biblical hospitality.

Biblical hospitality is a showing kindness to strangers, not friends. In Luke 14:12-14 Jesus says, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return, and repayment come to you. But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (NASB).

I realise that showing love toward strangers requires vulnerability, and can even be dangerous because some may take advantage of your kindness. While God does not ask us to discard wisdom and discernment in dealing with strangers. He does require us to love them by being hospitable.

When I consider my responsibility to love strangers, I am reminded that God received into His family we who were “aliens from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). Since those of us who are gentiles have been welcomes by God, how can we fail to welcome strangers into our homes? After all, everything we have belongs to God. We are simply His stewards.
"Apt to Teach" - He Is Skilled In Teaching

The Greek word translated "apt to teach" [didaktikon] is used only two times in the New Testament (here and in 2 Tim. 2:24). It means 'skilled in teaching'. It is the only qualification listed here that relates to the function of an elder and sets the elder apart from the deacon.

Paul repeatedly reminded Timothy of the priority of teaching (1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15). Elders must be skilled in teaching. They must have the ability to communicate God’s Word, and the integrity to make their teaching believable.

The most powerful impetus to effective teaching is credibility. A skilled teacher will practice what he preaches. If you teach one thing and live another, you are contradicting and undermining your teaching.

Paul said to Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou as example [to] the believers” (1 Tim. 4:14). He wanted Timothy to be a model others could follow a prototype of his own teaching. Paul went on to list the areas of life in which Timothy should be an example: "in word [what you say], in conduct [what you do], in love [what you feel], in spirit [what you think], in faith [what you believe], in purity [what motivates you]" (v. 12). That is exemplary behaviour in every dimension of life, and is the first and foremost factor in skilled teaching.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul says, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”. You are not a skilled teacher unless you can call on people to follow your example.

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of teaching to those called to teach the church (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). It is not a natural ability but a Spiritual endowment that enables one to teach the Word of God effectively.
First Timothy 4: 6 describes a good minister as being 'nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine'. Even though Timothy was that kind of minister, Paul encouraged him to guard carefully the sound doctrine he had been taught. In 1 Tim. 6: 20 Paul says, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust". In 2 Tim. 1: 13 - 14 he says, "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me... Guard, through the Holy Spirit,... the treasure which has been entrusted to you" (NASB).

Generally speaking, the more doctrinal knowledge a teacher has the more skilled his teaching will be. That does not mean a new Christian can not be a skilled teacher, but he will have to work hard to make up for his lack of knowledge.

A teacher's attitude is as important as what he knows. If you teach God's truth with arrogance, you will undermine what you say. That is why humility is so essential to skilled teaching. Paul said, "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose him" (2 Tim. 2: 24 - 25).

"Not Given to Wine" - He Is Not a Drinker

The Greek word translated "given to wine" [paroinos] means 'one who drinks'. It does not refer to a drunkard - that is an obvious disqualification. The issue here is the man's reputation: Is he known as a drinker.

We saw that the Greek word translated "temperate" (v.3) refers in its literal sense to one who is not intoxicated. Paroinos, on the other hand, refers to one's associations: Such a person does not frequent bars, taverns, and inns. He is not at home in the noisy scenes associated with drinking. His lifestyle is not that of a drinker.

"Not Violent" - He Is Not a Fighter

You can not be an elder if you settle disputes with your fists or in other violent ways. The Greek word translated "violent" [plektes] means "a giver of blows" or "striker".
An elder is not quick tempered and does not resort to unnecessary physical violence. That qualification is closely related to “not given to wine” because such violence is usually connected with people who drink excessively.

A spiritual leader must be able to handle things with a cool mind and a gentle spirit. Paul said, “The servant of the Lord must not strive’. (2 Tim. 2 : 24).

“Patient’ - He Easily Pardons Human Failure

We skipped “not greedy of filthy lucre,” which appears in the King James Version but does not appear in the better Greek manuscripts. The qualification is identical in meaning to “not covetous” (v.3) which we will soon cover.

The Greek word translated ‘patient’ [epieikes] means ‘to be considerate, genial, forbearing, gracious, or gentle”. “The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men apt to teach, patient”. II Tim. 2 : 23.

In a practical sense, patience is the ability to remember good and forget evil. You do not keep a record of wrongs people have committed against you (cf. Cor.13 :5). That is an important virtue for a spiritual leader. I know people who have left the ministry because they could not get over some one’s criticising or upsetting them. They carry a list of grievances that eventually robs them of the joy of serving others.

Discipline yourself not to talk or even think about wrongs done against you because it serves no productive purpose. It simply rehearse the hurts and clouds you mind with anger.
"Not a Brawler" - He Is Not Quarrelsome

The Greek word translated 'not a brawler' [amachos] is similar in meaning to me plektes [not violent]. The difference is that the latter refers to not being physically violent, whereas the former refers to not being quarrelsome.

When you have a plurality of church leaders attempting to make decisions, you can't get very far if any of them are quarrelsome. That's why Paul said, "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men ... patient" (2 Tim. 2:24). He must be a peacemaker.

"Not Covetous" - He Is Free from the Love of Money

The Greek word translated "not covetous" (aphilarguros) is a negation of the Greek words of 'love' and 'silver'. It speaks of someone who does not love money.

Love of money can corrupt a man's ministry because it tempts him to vie people as a means by which he can get more money. Paul said "Godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing in to this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

How do we keep from loving money? Here is a simple principle I have used: Do not place a price on your ministry. Sometimes people ask me how much I charge to teach or preach. I do not charge anything. If I am paid, that is fine; if not, that is fine too. I leave that up to the Lord and those I minister to. I will accept whatever He supplies, but I do not want my ministry to be influenced, distorted, or corrupted in any way by financial expectations.
If someone gives you a financial gift you did not seek, you can accept it from the Lord and be thankful for it. But if you pursue money, you will never know if it came from Him or from your own efforts. That robs you of the joy of recognising God’s provision for your needs.

“One That Ruleth Well” - he Maintains a Godly Family

First Tim. 3:4 - 5 says that an overseer must be ‘one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity [for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God]. An elders home life is an essential consideration. Before he can lead in the church he must demonstrate his spiritual leadership within the context of his family.

The Greek word translated ‘ruleth” means to preside, have authority over, stand before, or manage. He is the manger of his home. That affirms the consistent biblical teaching on male headship in the home. Obviously there are shared responsibilities between husband and wife, and many tasks that the wife manages within the home, but the husband must be the leader.

The same Greek word is used in 1 Tim. 5:17: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour.” An elders ability to rule the church is affirmed in his home. Therefore he must be a strong spiritual leader in the home before he is qualified to lead in the church.

He must rule his home “well”. There are many men who rule their home but they do not rule very well they do not get the desired results.

By implication a mans home includes his resources. A man may love the Lord and be spiritually and morally qualified to be an elder. He may even be skilled in teaching and have a believing wife and children who follow his leadership in the home, but...
has mismanaged his funds and is in bankruptcy. Somehow he can not seem to pull his finances into proper order. Since in the area of finances he does not rule his household well, he is disqualified from spiritual leadership. Stewardship of possessions is a critical test of a man's leadership. His home is a proving ground where his administrative capabilities can be clearly demonstrated.

The Greek word translated "subjection" is a military term that speaks of lining up in rank under those in authority. His children are to be lined up under his authority: respectful, controlled, and disciplined. The qualification applies only if a man has children. He is not disqualified if he does not have children. But if God has given him children, they must be under control and respectful to their parents.

Titus 1:5 - 6 says an elder must have 'children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion' (NASB). The Greek word translated "believe" (pistos) refers in that context to believing the gospel. An elder's children must believe the message he is preaching and teaching. If they are unbelievers, they rob his ministry of credibility.

The Greek word translated "gravity" refers to dignity and respect. It blends the concepts of dignity, courtesy, humility, and competence. It is been described as stateliness or refinement. His children bring honour to their parents.

It is possible that a man who is otherwise qualified for spiritual leadership could be disqualified on the family level. Perhaps his personal life is right before the Lord but he became a Christian after his wife or children had already established sinful patterns of behaviour, so his family is in chaos. In that case he is not qualified in the church.

He may have children who are not favoured with the sovereign electing grace of Christ. In that case he does not qualify to be an elder, but God has other plans for him. He has in no way been relegated to an inferior ministry. The key thing is for him to faithfully pursue the ministry opportunities God brings his way, and not feel that his task is in any sense inferior to another.
In the Old Testament there were certain physical disqualification's for a priest. Leviticus 21:16-20 says, "The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to Aaron, saying, "No man of your offspring throughout their generations who has defect shall approach to offer the bread of his God. God no one who has a defect shall approach a blind man or a lame man or he who has a disfigured face, or any formed limb, or a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, or a hunchback or a dwarf or one who has a defect in his eye or eczema or scabs or crushed testicles" (NASB).

Anyone with a physical deformity could not perform priestly duties. That was not a commentary on the character or spiritual life of a deformed man, but simply a matter of God's selecting a certain kind of man to serve as priest. He wanted unblemished men as models of spiritual service. It is the same with church leadership. god wants elders to have an unblemished and exemplary home life.

It is essential that a father exercise enough authority to make it advisable for his children to obey him. Where there is disobedience, there must be immediate and negative consequences. Because of the Fall, all human beings start out spiritually depraved. the only way you can train a depraved person to do what is right is to associate pain with disobedience (Prov. 12:24).

A father must also have enough wisdom to make it natural and reasonable for his children to obey him. Invariably a child will question his authority" "Why cant I do that?" - "Why should I do this?" Whether you like it or not, during the entire time of raising your children you are the local neighbourhood philosopher and theologian to them. That requires your being reasonable in what you expect of them.

In addition a father must have enough love to make it easy for his children to obey him. Your children ought to long to obey you because they would never want to do anything that would hinder their relationship with you.
I believe there is no better place to see a man’s commitment to meeting the needs of others than in his own home. Does he care about his family? Is he committed to each member? Does he work hard to meet their needs? If he does not how could he ever care for the church?

“Not a Novice” - He Is a Mature Christian

Humility is a very important spiritual characteristic that has not yet been mentioned in our consideration of leadership qualifications. Although Paul did not specifically mention humility in this passage, it is the obvious point of contrast in his caution against spiritual pride.

“The Greek word translated ‘novice’ [neophutos] means ‘newly planted’. The ideal is that an elder should not be a new convert or newly baptised. This is the only occurrence of neophutos in the New Testament. It is used in its literal sense outside the New Testament to speak of planting trees in the ground” [Rienecker 1982: 623].

The opposite of a new believer is a mature Christian. An elder must be mature in the faith. Of course maturity is relative, so the standard of maturity will vary from congregation to congregation. The point is that an elder must be more spiritually mature than the people he leads.

The Greek word translated “lifted up” [tuphoo] means “to wrap in smoke” or “puff up”. In its figurative sense it speaks of being clouded with pride. We don’t want new Christians to get puffed up with a false sense of spirituality. We don’t want their thinking to become clouded with prideful thoughts.

The issue in restricting a new convert from spiritual leadership is not his ability to teach. He may be a fine bible teacher. It is not that he is not a good leader - he may have
strong leadership characteristics. It is not that he has inadequate knowledge of God's Word - he may be a diligent Bible student. But if you elevate him to spiritual leadership alongside mature godly men, he is going to have a battle with pride.

He may fulfil the qualifications of 1 Tim. 2:3 by having a blameless life and a marvellous family. But if he's a relatively new Christian, the tendency will be for him to feel proud about having been elevated to the level of leadership occupied by older more mature men who have been in the church for many years.

We made a relatively new Christian an elder, he would struggle with the temptation to see himself as having arrived at the high level of spiritual leadership rather rapidly and could easily fall into the sin of pride.

On the other hand, suppose you are a missionary who had led people to Christ in a primitive part of the world, established a church, ministered there for six months, and then had to return home. Before leaving you would have to select someone to be its pastor. That person would be a new Christian, but you would look for someone who is mature in comparison to the rest of the congregation. It might take that same man ten years to become an elder but he is rightfully pastoring a church because of the relative nature of what spiritual maturity means in any given congregation.

You might expect Paul to say the prideful leaders will become ineffective or fall into sin, but instead he says they will fall into the “condemnation of the devil”. That is a very serious situation.

What is the condemnation of the devil? Some people think that means a prideful leader will be condemned by the devil, but Scripture never portrays the devil as a judge who condemns people. Since Scripture presents God as judge, it is best to understand the condemnation of the devil as a reference to the judgement God pronounced on the devil. A prideful leader will incur that same type of condemnation. That conclusion is
supported by the context, which deals with the issue of pride, and scripture teaches that God opposes a proud man (James 4:6).

The condemnation of the devil was a demotion from high position on account of pride. God will do the same to any man whose thinking is clouded with pride and whose perception of his own spirituality is distorted because of a premature rise to spiritual leadership.

Lucifer's sin was pride, for which God cast him out of heaven. We see his prideful character on display in Isaiah 14:21-14: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, whodidst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High'.

He wanted to usurp God's authority. Five times he said "I will" but God said in effect, "no you won't": "Yet thou shalt be brought down to sheol, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man who made the earth to tremble?" (vv. 15 - 16).

Satan was humiliated rather than exalted. To avoid exposing a man to that kind of condemnation, we must avoid placing him into spiritual leadership too quickly. It is not that a leader who becomes prideful will lose his salvation, for that is impossible, but he will lose his esteemed position.

The Greek word translated "good" [kalos] embraces the ideas of internal and external goodness. An elder must have a good internal character and a good external reputation or testimony.

The Greek word translated "report" [martureo] is the word from which we get martyr, but its basic meaning is a certifying testimony. An elders character must be certified by the testimony of other people.

"Outside" has reference to those who are not in the church. An elder must have a reputation for integrity, love, kindness, generosity, and goodness among those in the community who know him. That doesn't mean people will agree with this theology. In fact there might even be some antagonism toward his Christian convictions, but he is seen as a man of character. That is an important qualification because an elder can not have a godly influence on his community if it has no respect for him. That would bring reproach on Christ.

The Greek word translated "reproach" means "disgrace". It is sad to consider how many men have disgraced the Lord and His church because of their sins. That is why an elder must be blameless in his repetition.

Incidentally, that qualification isn't limited to sins committed as an elder. it also includes any sins in the past that have given him a bad reputation. A mans ongoing reputation in the community must be considered before he is placed into spiritual leadership.
The importance of a good reputation in the community is illustrated throughout the New Testament. Romans 2:24 says of Israel, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you”. Israel’s sin brought reproach upon their God, and it is no different for the church.

Every Christian has to deal with some level of visibility. And people need to see a blameless life. They may not agree with your beliefs, but they must see your godly character.

Paul wanted the Philippians to be “blameless and harmless, children of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation ... [shining] as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life” (2:15). The quality of their lives would bear witness to the reality of their God. That is a high calling and a sacred responsibility. In Col. 4:5 Paul says, “Walk in wisdom toward them that are outside [unbelievers] ... Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how ye ought to answer every man”. A good reputation includes wise words as well as godly deeds.

Elders need a good reputation with those outside the church so they don’t fall into “the snare of the devil”. Satan tries hard to entrap spiritual leaders so he might destroy their credibility and integrity. He is like a roaring lion seeking to devour (1Pet. 5:8), and spiritual leaders are a primary target.

Like all Christians, elders have areas of weakness and vulnerability, and they will sometimes fall into one of Satan’s traps. Only a perfect man does not stumble (James 3:2). Elders must be particularly discerning and cautious to avoid the snares of the enemy rather than becoming victimised by them. Then they can be effective in leading others away from his trap.

The Ephesian church needed to examine its leaders, and its the same for us. The future of the church depends on the quality of today’s leaders. God is building men to lead His flock. As a church we must identify them, place them into leadership, pray for them, and follow their example. In so doing we will bring glory to God.
In concluding this chapter one would refer to five words in 1 Tim. 3:2,3 which suggest the manner in which leaders should relate towards people. They are: hospitable, role to teach, gentle, not pugnalistis and uncontentious. Our culture is filled with temptation, enticement, sexual innuendoes and allurements. Our advertising and marketing styles have promoted sensuality as a great motive for financial investment and purchase. In chapter 6 the qualifications for spiritual leadership standout as the standard for Christian living. Sometimes it seems to futile to oppose what society is now tolerating. Because of our own weakness and vulnerability, one can become hesitant to confront sinful behaviour, knowing full well that the danger of moral lapse lies with in our own hearts.

In chapter 6 we conclude that we do not have to go along! We can say no to sinful behaviour. It is concluded that the strongest test of a spiritual leaders credibility and integrity is the ability to say no to that which is wrong and destructive. The biblical emphasis is not on the organisation but on the leaders purity and spiritual depth.
CHAPTER 7

PAULINE WRITINGS AND THE PURPOSE OF GIFTS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH AS AN ENABLEMENT FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The key to emphasis which serves as a focal point is that biblically speaking it is clear that a natural personality, however colourful and impressive, is not the source of true charisma. The charisma of God's leaders does not come from ecclesiastical training, clerical ordination, ritual or role playing but God's leaders receive the charisma from a direct gift of the Holy Spirit. The seventh chapter of this dissertation shows that the fullness of the Spirit is the common factor to be looked for in church leaders, the one credential that could not be done without.

It is at this point that a worthwhile distinction can be made between the ministries in the body and the gifts in the body I Cor. 11:28 and Eph. 4:11, with 1 Cor. 12:7 ff and Rom. 12.

In recent years Eph. 4:4-16 has become the basis for many discussions, lectures, sermons, articles, and even books particularly as it relates to church leadership.

In the Ephesian passage we read that God gave certain gifts to some (not all), to equip all members of the body for service and ministry. A corollary passage is found in 1 Cor. 12:28-31. Significantly, the passage in Ephesians refers primarily to the universal church, whereas the Corinthian passage also refers to the universal church with a more specific application to the local church. Notice the similarities:

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7.2 EPHESIANS

4:11 Above He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers

4:12 for the equipping of saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ;

1 CORINTHIANS

12:28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

12:29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?

12:30 All do not have gifts of healings do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.
When you compare these two passages several things become clear:

a. Paul in the Corinthian passage classified apostles, prophets, and teachers as the "greater gifts" and instructed the church - as a group - to desire that the greater gifts be active in the local body (1 Cor. 12:31).

b. The Ephesian passage lists only the greater gifts, where as the Corinthian passage lists the lesser gifts as well.

c. There is a similarity but yet a lack of conformity in the listing of the greater gifts in the two passages. The sequence is basically the same, but evangelists are added in the Ephesian passage and the pastor gift is combined with the teaching gift.

The term "apostolos" almost without exception is used in the New Testament in a very distinct sense. The word refers primarily to the twelve men Jesus Christ selected out of the larger group of disciples and "named as apostles":

The Greek word apostolos means literally, "a delegate, a messenger or one sent forth with orders". When Judas turned his back on the Lord and later took his own life, he was replaced by Matthias, who was "numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26). Paul also classifies himself as an apostle who was "untimely born". He describes himself as one who was called to be an apostle, but who was "not fit to be called an apostle" because he "persecuted the church of God" (1 Cor. 15:8-9). Luke's record in the Book of Acts verifies Paul's claim and testimony without question. He is presented as the great apostle to the Gentiles, who in a special way left the ranks of Judaism and penetrated the pagan world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is a secondary sense, however, in which the word apostle is used in the New Testament. Luke called Barnabas an apostle when referring to his "ministry" with Paul (Acts 14:4-14). Also Paul seemingly classified Silas and Timothy as fellow apostles
(1 Thes. 2:6 - 7), and it is also possible that he may have used the same description of Andronicus and Junias, who he said were "outstanding among the apostles" (Rom. 16:7). But it is quite clear from the Scriptures that these descriptions are used in a secondary sense. On the one hand they were messengers and delegates sent forth by Jesus Christ as any missionary or Christian leader involved in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. But in a primary sense, apostles were those men who were eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ and who were taught by Him personally and particularly selected for an initial ministry in bringing into being the body of Christ - His church.

Dr George Peters in his own study of the role of these men recognised and has written about their unique calling. He states: "The unique position of the apostles in the beginning ministries of the church is recognised throughout the New Testament - only they are known as the apostles of Jesus Christ, while others are known simply as apostles or as apostles of the church" (Gertz 1984:124).

Luke verified this particular apostolic role in the Book of Acts when he recorded their work. The apostles of Jesus Christ "solemnly testified" and "exhorted" (Acts 2:40); they taught (2:42); worked signs and miracles (2:43; 5:12), and gave witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ (4:33).

The apostles also helped organise the rapidly developing church in Jerusalem but did not allow themselves to get bogged down with administrative detail. Rather, they devoted themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (6:1 - 7). "A majority of the apostles spent most of their time in Jerusalem in the early days of the church. Even when persecution drove many disciples out of Jerusalem, the apostles stayed (8:1), perhaps because they felt it was their duty. The persecution at that time may not have been so much directed at them but at the Hellenists in the church" (Gertz 1984:125).

An exception to their staying on location in Jerusalem is noted by Luke when Peter and John left Jerusalem to go to Samaria to help establish the new believers there, and to
use their apostolic authority and power to lay hands on these new believers so that they might receive the Holy Spirit (8:14-17).

It is clear, however, that God had a divine purpose in planning that the apostles stay in Jerusalem. It was here that they, with the elders, hammered out the theological and practical problems of the new and growing church. Luke devoted a lengthy section in his narrative to describe the leadership of the apostles and elders in resolving the Jewish-Gentile problems, particularly as they related to the teachings of law and grace. After much debate and discussion (15:7), the apostles and elders composed and sent a letter to Antioch, clarifying some of these issues (15:22-29).

After Acts 15, the apostles are mentioned only once, and in this instance Luke recorded the ministry of Paul and Timothy as they travelled from city to city “delivering the decrees, which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem” (16:4).

Hereafter, the ministry of the Apostle Paul received primary attention in the Lukean account. Clearly, Paul had a unique apostolic ministry compared with the other apostles who remained in Jerusalem. He was called in a special way to be a church planter. He was a multigifted man. He “was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher” (2 Tim. 1:11; see also 1 Tim. 2:7). He demonstrated “the sign of the true apostle ... signs, and wonders, and miracles” (2 Cor. 12:12). And to him, above all the apostles, was revealed in a most detailed manner the mystery of the church (Eph. 3:1-12; Col. 1:24-28).

### 7.3 CHARISMATA

Another important fact in the visible form of the Pauline churches was the exercise of spiritual gifts of charismata. The table below provides a survey of the several lists of spiritual gifts as proposed by Ladd in his book “A Theology of the New Testament”.

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<table>
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<th>Role/Grace</th>
<th>1 Cor.</th>
<th>Rom.</th>
<th>Eph.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apostle</td>
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<td>Prophet</td>
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<td>Discernment of Spirits</td>
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<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Word of Wisdom &amp; knowledge</td>
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<td>Evangelists</td>
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<td>Faith</td>
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<td>Miracles</td>
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<td>Tongues</td>
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<td>Interpretation</td>
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<td>Ministry</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
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<td>Mercy</td>
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<td>Giving</td>
<td>18</td>
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Some scholars have argued that the leadership of the Pauline churches was altogether charismatic and not official. However, a careful study of these several gifts makes it clear that while some of them are truly charismatic, others are obviously natural gifts used by the Holy Spirit. Such functions as ministry, administration, ruling, helping, showing mercy, and giving employ the natural talents of men, while prophecy, miracles, healings and tongues are supernatural endowments beyond the control of the individual. The noncharismatic functions were probably those exercised by elder bishops, teachers, and deaconos. However, Paul is discussing functions and not formal positions in the church. He writes 1 Cor. not out of an interest in correct organisation but proper ordering of the entire Christian fellowship. He conceives of every Christian as an active member of the body of Christ - “to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:8). The charisma granted to each is not so much a supernatural gift as the call of the Spirit to serve the church, so when Paul enumerates the charisma, he refers partly to offices and partly to functions (Ladd 1991:535).

It is obvious that, apart from the priority of apostles and prophets, Paul attaches no special order of importance to the several gifts. Apostles and prophets were of primary importance because they were the vehicles of revelation (Eph. 3:5) and thereby provided the foundation for the church (Eph. 2:20). All apostles were prophets but not all prophets were apostles. Apostles were commissioned with an authority in the churches that the prophets did not possess. Prophets spoke by direct illumination of the Spirit (the Word of God). “We must remember that the early churches did not possess the New Testament Scriptures that preserve for successive generations the prophetic witness of the meaning of the person and work of Christ. We do not know, although we can assume, that they possessed a fixed body of catechetical tradition” (Ladd 1991:536). In any case, it is clear from 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 that prophets were men inspired by the Spirit to speak in intelligible language a revelation from God. Their purpose was to edify the church (1 Cor. 14:3). Prophecy was not an office but a gift that the Spirit could bestow on any member of the congregation. Christian prophets were
concerned about future events so far as they involved the consummation of redemptive history, as the Revelation of John indicates (Rev. 1:3); but this element is not emphasised in the Pauline writings. Prophecy is the medium for disclosing the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 13:2).

The gift of the Spirit most coveted in Corinth was the gift of tongues or glossolalia. The person experiencing this gift would utter praises to God in language that was intelligible neither to him nor to his hearers. The person speaking experienced great exaltation of spirit but had no rational communication of the will of God (1 Cor. 14:14) as did the prophets. The experience was altogether meaningless to the hearers unless a gift of interpretation was given either to the speaker himself (1 Cor. 14:13) or to another, who would then translate the unintelligible jargon into rational speech. Then the hearers would understand what was said and join in saying “Amen” (1 Cor. 14:16). However, the Corinthians felt that tongues was the superlative evidence of the Spirit, and excesses in the exercise of this gift had introduced disorder and strife in the church. Paul declares the proper order. The goal is not personal ecstasy but the edifying of the church (1 Cor. 14:26). No more than two or three may speak in a tongue in a single meeting, and only then in turn, and only if someone is present to interpret. Tongues are to be subordinate to prophecy, but prophetic utterance must also be conducted in an orderly manner (1 Cor. 14:29).

It is important to note that some of the charisma are distinctly supernatural and can be exercised only by the sovereign activity of the Spirit, while others, such as helping, showing mercy, and giving are gifts that should be exercised by all Christians. The question as to whether all the charisma should be normative for the life of the entire church receives different answers. Since the gifts of apostleship and prophecy were given for the founding of the church (Eph. 2:20), it is possible that the distinctly supernatural gifts belong primarily to the apostolic period. In any case, Paul makes it clear that the highest manifestation of the Spirit is love. It is not always noted that 1
Cor. 13 is a part of Paul's discussion of the charisma. Other gifts such as prophecy and tongues will cease, but love abides as the highest evidence of a Spirit endowed believer.

Ephesians 4 gives us a suggestive insight into the role of leaders in the body. Although we cannot identify apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor teachers (4:11) with the leaders of local congregations today, we can note that even these special persons have as their mission not "to minister" but to "prepare God's people" for ministry.

The word translated "prepare" is katartizo, which means to "put in order, restore, or put to rights". Specifically, the mission with which leaders are charged is to put the members of the body into proper condition for their works of service. In Ephesians 4:12 a related form of the word (katartismos) was used of the setting of a bone. Implied is the idea of setting the body in order, connecting parts appropriately so they will function as designed. It is fascinating to note in Hebrew 13:21 that it is through Christ as the Great Shepherd that God equips (prepares) His people "with everything good for doing his will". This same word is used in 1 Cor. 1:10 where Paul exhorts the church to correct the dissension in the body and be put into proper condition by being "perfectly united in mind and thought". Part of the task of the leaders, in keeping with Christ own commitment, is to see the body put into proper condition, with parts appropriately connected and unified, so that each part can actively engage in its ministry and thus build up the body of Christ toward maturity.

Whenever we deal with ministry, we are challenged to ask the source of the ability of one person to build another toward maturity. This question is answered in Scripture in the affirmation that God, through His Holy Spirit, has given each believer a "spiritual gift". The Greek word translated "spiritual gift" is charisma and means literally a "gracious gift", or "donation". The basic teaching is that God had, as a gracious act, given each believer a "special, spiritual endowment for service for the life of the community".
What is striking as we look at passages that deal with spiritual gifts is to note the following:

i) Teaching on spiritual gifts is always associated in Scripture with teaching about the body.

ii) In each context where the body and spiritual gifts are discussed, there is extensive teaching on the importance of love in the Christian community.

iii) In each case, believers who have been given these special spiritual endowments are expected to use them in the context of the body.

While most commentators suggest that gifts listed in such passages as Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 have both an inward and an outward expression, it is at least worth considering whether perhaps spiritual gifts may be in fact the endowment given believers for the building up of the body, and not primarily enablement for ministries in the world. At any rate, looking over the two basic New Testament gift / body passages, we can see a striking number of common elements that seem to suggest this view.

Even in a passage in which gifts are merely mentioned in passing, we see many of the same themes repeated. Note how many common themes occur in the epistle of Peter.

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever spiritual gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:8–11).
These observations about the New Testament's association of gifts, love and the body's function are suggestive. We may not have explicit evidence that "gifts" are basically for the internal ministry and the upbuilding of the body. But the evidence is at least implicit. We may consider spiritual gifts as operating primarily in the context of loving relationships within the body and not primarily as equipment for "offices" or roles in institutional structures. The Scriptures seem to suggest that where there is love and unity, and the body is thus knit together, each member of the body will express his own unique spiritual endowment by serving others, and growth will take place as a consequence.

Yet whether or not "spiritual gifts" are related primarily to the ministry of members to the body, we can say several things with certitude.

7.4 PURPOSE OF GIFTS IN THE BODY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>1 Corinthians 12:14</th>
<th>Romans 12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each believer given gifts</td>
<td>&quot;To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given&quot; (12:7). &quot;All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each man&quot; (12:11)</td>
<td>&quot;We have different gifts, according to the grace given us&quot; (12:6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>1 Corinthians 12:14</th>
<th>Romans 12</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gifts differ</td>
<td>“There are different kinds of gifts but the same spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men” (12:4-6).</td>
<td>“We have different gifts” (12:6).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The body is viewed as “many parts”</td>
<td>“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ” (12:12).</td>
<td>“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body “ (12:4-5).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifts are given for the common good of the body</td>
<td>“To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good (12:7); (sympheron means to help, confer a benefit”).</td>
<td>“Each member belongs to all the others” (12:5; implies ministry to the body).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God has combined the members as He designed</td>
<td>“God has combined the members of the body ... so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other” (12:24-25).</td>
<td>“Think of yourself..... in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you” (12:3), for “we have different gifts, according to the grace given us” (12:6).</td>
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<td>Concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unity is essential for the body to function</td>
<td>“There should be no division in the body” (12:25).</td>
<td>“Love must be sincere ... Live in harmony with one another (12:9;16).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love vital in the function of body and in the use of gifts</td>
<td>The love chapter (13:1-13).</td>
<td>“Love must be sincere ... Be devoted to each other in brotherly love ... share ... practice hospitality ... live in harmony with one another” (12:9­-10; 13:16).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry carried out</td>
<td>I Cor. 14:5-19 states three times in its description of gifts the location of their exercise: “so that the church may be edified” (14:5), “gifts that build up the church” (14:12), and “in the church” (14:19)</td>
<td>Roman 12 suggests that member “belongs to all the others” and then describes the exercise of various gift The clear implication is that the gifts are used for the benefit of those to whom we “belong” (12:5-8).</td>
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* In the human body, every member is active, operative, and each contributes towards the welfare of the body. Every member and cell has a function to carry out, also to live on out, as God gives them.
Kevin Conner in his book *The Church in the New Testament* proposed the following:

a. Every member is set in the Body as it pleases God.
b. Every member recognises the other member.
c. Every member works with and for the other, not unsurping authority over another.
d. Every member is subject to the head, or the nerve centre. None rebel.
e. Every member is connected to the other by the blood life stream (1 John 1:7).
f. Every member is connected by the breath of life. (James 2:26; Genesis 2:7).
g. Every member functions at the direction of the head (1 Cor. 12:27).
h. Every member is interdependent on the other (1 Cor. 10:17).
i. Every member functions in their God given place.
j. Every member has a unique God given place.
k. Every member knows it is not the whole body.
l. Every member has a gift within it to make it a functioning member. i.e. The ear is a member, having the "gift" of hearing, otherwise it is deaf. The eye is a member but has the "gift" of sight, otherwise there is blindness. It is the "gift" in the member that makes it a useful and functioning member.

* Every member works in the unity of the body also, to make it a harmonious body.

"The human body is God's masterpiece in creation (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7; Psalms 139:13-17). With its untold millions [perhaps 30 - 50 million] cells, etc. its marvellous nervous system of communication, the blood, the skin, the arms and hands, the legs and feet, the heart, liver, kidneys, lungs, brains, head, eyes, ears, the protective structure of the bones (at least 246 bones in the body, 63 in the head, 24 in the sides, 16 in the wrist, 14 in the joints, 108 in the hands and feet), etc ... and the wonder of all these working together in marvellous harmony and unity in the one body of man - all is indeed the marvel of the Divine creation" (Conner 1987:78)
If God did this in the old creation man, what shall He do in the new creation Man - The Body of Christ? He desires to relive His life in the church which is His body. There are millions of unseen members in the natural body, as well as the seen. Yet all work together in harmony for a whole and healthy body. The unseen and invisible members and cells maintain the seen and visible in active health and life.

There are no “independent” members in the body. Every joint supplies (Eph. 4:16).

7.5 THE ASCENSION - GIFT MINISTRIES

The Epistle of the Ephesians, called “The Epistle of the Church, the Body of Christ” speaks of five ministries that are given to the Body of Christ for a specific time and a specific purpose.

“When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ... And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ...” (Eph. 4:8; 11-13).

7.6 THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is God’s gift through Christ to believers individually and corporately to the Church. He works with the Father and with the Son. He also is a giver of gifts. He gives the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:4-7.
"Thus we have "diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" - The Holy Spirit

"And we have "differences of operations, but the same God" - The Father

"And we have "differences of ministries, but the same Lord" - The Son

The burden of the Holy Spirit is the individual believer, and also the whole Body of Christ, the Church, seeking that all flow in their place and function in the Body.

"Those who do well as deacons will be well rewarded both by respect from others and also by developing their own confidence and bold trust in the Lord" (1 Timothy 3:13 Living Bible).

7.7 GIFTS OF GRACE TO LOCAL EXPRESSIONS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

As we have studied previously, the Holy Spirit gives gifts to members of the body of Christ for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7-11). These are given as the Holy Spirit determines at the appropriate time and place. God has also appointed some members of His church to carry out certain functions within it. These are written about in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Cor. 12:27-31 and they enable people to serve the Lord in particular ways, mainly in a local church context.

7.7.1 Prophecy

This is the Greek word "propheteia" which signifies the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God. People with this gift have the ability to bring prophecy to a local church (of which they are usually a member) on a regular basis. The magnitude and frequency of the prophecy brought will depend on the persons faith (Romans 12:6).
7.7.2 Serving (or ministry)

The Greek word used here is the word “diakonia” which means “a servant, attendant, minister, or deacon”. These people have a special ability to give assistance or aid in any way that is necessary to enable the functioning of the body of Christ, i.e. these people are gifted by God to serve the local body of Christ (Roman 12:7).

7.7.3 Teaching

The Greek word used here is “didaskalia” which means “to instruct”. A person with this gift has the ability to analyse, interpret and communicate clearly and systematically God’s truth to His people usually in the local church of which they are a member (Romans 12:7).

7.7.4 Encouraging (or exhortation)

The Greek word used here is “paraklesis” which primarily means “a calling to one’s side, and so to one’s aid”. It also means to urge another person to pursue some course of conduct; or to encourage, comfort or exhort. People with this gift have the ability to strengthen people for fresh faith, obedience and victory in their Christian lives and motivate them into action for God, usually by using the authority of God’s Word (Romans 12:8). The word is also used in Acts 4:36; 1 Cor. 8:4; and in Romans 15:4.

7.7.5 Contributing to the needs of others (or giving)

The Greek word used here is “metadidomai” which means “to impart or share with”. These people have the ability to accumulate and distribute money and other things that other member of the body of Christ of which they are a member need, and they should
do this generously (Romans 12 : 8). This word is also used in Luke 3 : 11; Romans 1 : 11; Ephesians 4 : 28; and in 1 Thessalonians 2 : 8.

7.7.6 Leadership (or rulership or aid giving)

The Greek word used here is “Proistemi” which literally means “to stand before and hence to lead”. It can mean the one taking the lead; to preside, govern, direct or rule, one who is over others, to attend to, or one who maintains. A person with this gift has the ability to lead others and mange the affairs of the church. This should be done diligently or with zeal (Romans 12 : 8). It is used in 1 Timothy 5 : 7 of elders as they direct the affairs of the church, and of elders and deacons managing their own family as well as a qualification for the office (1 Timothy 3 : 4, 5, 12). It is also used in 1 Thessalonians 4 : 12; and in Titus 3 : 8, 14 (AV).

7.7.7 Showing Mercy

The Greek word used here is “eleeo” which means “an outward manifestation of pity; to feel sympathy with the misery of another and especially sympathy manifested in act”. These people have the ability to get alongside and comfort those who are suffering and where possible give them help. They have a God given ability to empathise with and help other people and they should do this cheerfully (Romans 12 : 8). This word is also used in Matthew 15 : 22; Matthew 18 : 33; and in Philippians 2 : 27.

7.7.8 Those able to help others

The Greek word used here is “antilepsis or antilempsis” which properly signifies “a laying hold of, an exchange; a help; rendering assistance, especially of help given to the weak and needy”. These people have the ability to debate themselves to helping those associated with a local church who need it (1 Cor. 12 : 28).
7.7.9 Those with gifts of administration (or governments)

The Greek word used here is 'kubernesis' which means "to guide", steer or pilot'. Note that there are gifts (plural) of administration indicating different types of gifting in this area of governing or administratively guiding a local church (1 Cor. 12: 28). The Greek word "Kubernetes" means "a pilot" and is used in Acts 27: 11 and Revelation 18: 17.

7.7.10 Other local Church ministries

There are a number of other gifts of grace to the body of Christ mentioned in 1 Cor. 12: 28 - 31. These include: those who work miracles, those who have gifts of healings, and those who speak in different kinds of tongues. This passage suggests that not all will operate with these gifts and that some members of the local church will be especially gifted in one or more of these areas. The passage also suggests that we would eagerly desire the greater gifts, probably because these are more useful to the church.

7.8 CONCLUSION

In the church today, there are other callings in which members of the body of Christ serve and which enable the functioning of a local church. These include; secretaries, housegroup leaders, youth group leaders, Sunday School teachers and treasurers, etc. It may be possible to place people with these more modern titles into one of the biblical types mentioned above. However, it must be said that although God will give a variety of gifting to His church, He is not limited to titles - He is more concerned with the local church achieving the purpose He has planned for it. In fact, any gift which is necessary for God's will to be done, will be made available to His church.
“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:10-11).
CHAPTER 8

PAUL AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter 8 emerges with one of the most challenging issues in church leadership namely Women in leadership. Today's society is filled with scores of incidents and illustrations that prove and demonstrate a woman's role in leadership. Our research has shown that more women today are in politics and executive positions in major corporations than ever before. Our study shows that in churches of our culture, there is a growing awareness of women in leadership roles. It should be stated that the ordination of women continues as a controversial and divisive matter in many denomination. Hundreds of churches, especially in rural areas, are now pastored by women.

The research has found out that major passages that cause confusion and controversy are found in 1 Corinthians 11:1-6; 14:32-39 and 1 Timothy 2:8-13. In addition to these passages there are several related issues in Romans 16:1-2; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-25; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 3:1-7. The problems dealing with women in leadership in the church fall into the following categories:

a. A wife's submission to her husband
b. A restriction on preaching and teaching
c. A requirement to be silent in public service
d. The qualifications for elders/bishop and deacon
“Since women constitute considerable more than one half of the membership of the universal Church, an understanding of Paul’s view of the role of women in the Church is of vital importance. With the rise of the women’s liberation movement whose basis is cultural rather than biblical, attitudes have become more strongly polarised than ever. In our increasingly egalitarian society it is not easy to view all that the Scriptures have to say on the subject in an objective and unprejudiced manner, for our views have been shaped by long tradition. Probably only in eternity will there be a true consensus” (Sanders 1983:149).

The problem is the more sensitive because teachers of unquestioned godliness and of comparable scholarship sincerely espouse opposing views. For this reason, undue dogmatism would be out of place, and the researcher presents his view with due respect for the sincerely held views of those who differ.

This dissertation takes no extreme position, nor does it contends for a dominant position for women either in the realm of leadership or of theology. We do not believe that because there is neither male nor female in Christ, therefore scripture recognises no difference in the roles of men and women in the Church, or that Paul advocated the unisex ideas of our own day. We do believe, however, that there are valid scriptural grounds for women being accorded a much wider and more influential place in the life and ministry of the Church than has traditionally been the case. The subject is too wide for full treatment in the space available but it will be our objective to support this view from Scripture.

In this day of strident contention for women’s rights, Paul is often in the firing line, and receives much flak because of his alleged denigration of the role and status of women. Maligned on the one hand, exonerated on the other, Paul himself is lost behind a barrage of claim and counterclaim. Frequently he is dismissed as a frustrated male chauvinist, venting his spleen on women in general. But those who level these charges against him have either never read the relevant scripture passages carefully and objectively, or have read them with jaundiced eyes, for they will not carry and such interpretation.
It would be difficult to fault Paul in his general attitude to women, marriage and the family. In his contacts with his hostesses, audiences and female members of his team, he is uniformly chivalrous and brotherly. He never hints or asserts any superiority of men over women. In his letters he expresses the highest regard and esteem for his female colleagues, and commends them as his fellow-workers in the gospel without any discrimination between them and male members of the team.

He went for beyond the traditional position accorded to Jewish women, who were segregated and silent in synagogue worship, and upholds their right to pray and prophesy in the church provided their heads were covered. Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head - it is just as though her head were shaved (1 Cor. 11:5). If the relevant texts are read in the context of the times in which they were written, it will be discovered that in his day, far from being a male chauvinist, Paul was a foremost champion of women’s rights. He would have been regarded by his contemporaries as distinctly more relevant to our day.

In appraising his attitude and teaching, the cultural climate of his times must be kept in view. One need only compare his outlook and practice with those of the leaders and founders of the other great religions to see the great superiority of his conception of the status of women as compared with that of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. Instead of denouncing Paul, Christian women should be lauding his championship, for it has paved the way for so many blessings and privileges they now enjoy.

The case has been well stated by George Matheson: ‘One of the most distinctive elements in Paul’s Christian experience was the recognition of the claims of women; in nothing is he more sharply distinguished from his Jewish countrymen. Even those passages in which he seems to depreciate are dictated by a precisely opposite motive - the desire to conserve for women that distinctive ad peculiar sphere of which Jewish politics deprived her’ (Sanders 1983: 151).
In interpreting Paul's teaching on this subject, it should be borne in mind that:

a. he was answering specific questions addressed to him by the local church at Corinth, relating to special local problems that were troubling them;

b. he wrote at a time when prevailing conditions were both perilous and precarious. This fact emerges from his answer in 1 Cor. 7:25-26: Now, concerning the unmarried, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. I think that in view of the impending distress, it is well for a man to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free ... etc.

c. in the Gentile cities where the Christians lived, immorality was rife, and it was most important that Christian women should deport themselves in church in a manner that was above criticism.

It would seem that here he is not legislating for all times and in world terms, but is giving specific advice for the troubled days immediately ahead: in view of present conditions, men would be wise not to change their present state. If this interpretation is correct, and I believe it is, then improved conditions would admit elasticity in implementing his advice.

The principle of interpretation throws light on three important passages concerning which there is a strong polarisation of views concerning the role of women in leadership:

"Now I want you to realise that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head - it is just as though her head were shaved. If a
woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she could cover her head (1 Cor. 11:3 - 6).

“For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. if they want to enquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church” (1 Cor. 14:33 - 35).

“I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner” (1 Tim. 2:8 - 14).

Interpreters opposing these texts maintain that these passages impose an absolute prohibition on any teaching or leadership role for women in the Church, some even going so far as to prohibit their praying at gatherings where men are present. However, the spiritual barrenness and frustration that often result from such an extreme position is a plain matter of fact in past and present church history. Those on the extreme left interpret the passages as solely reflecting contemporary cultural situations which have no parallel today and are only marginally relevant. They therefore accord to women an unlimited teaching and leadership role in the church. But are these two extremes the only possible interpretations? May there not be a reasonable alternative position?

Is not possible that neither is the wholly correct interpretation and that there is an acceptable middle road? Since both Scripture and Paul have so much to say about women, the family and marriage, is it likely that the problem can be resolved by
quoting two or three passages, while largely ignoring a much greater body of Scripture? For it is true to say that there has been a rather ill-balanced emphasis on the negative passages quoted above, and inadequate attention paid to many other passages that make a somewhat more liberal interpretation possible.

Paul's lofty conception of the sanctity of the marriage bond is reflected in the parallel he draws between the relation of man and wife to Christ and the Church. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ..." (Eph. 5:25). This is in striking contrast to the teaching of the Koran or the Confucian classics in which the emphasis is invariably on the duty of the wife to the husband. But it was not so with Paul. "Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself" (Eph. 5:28-29). It should be noted, too, that the subjection of the woman to the man is 'to her own husband', not to all men.

The question inevitably arises, "How much should the existing cultural situation in Paul's day be taken into account and influence our contemporary interpretation? In this connection F.F. Bruce makes a pertinent comment: "Cultural relativity is certainly to be reckoned with when the permanent message of the New Testament receives our practical attention today. The local and temporary situation in which that message was first delivered must be appreciated if we are to discern what the permanent essence really is, and learn to apply it in the local and temporary circumstances of our own culture". (Sanders 1983:154).

In 1 Cor. 11:1-15 Paul is concerned with a question of church order - the advisability of women veiling their heads in public worship services at Corinth, and he is not volunteering teaching for all time. It should be pointed out that the sentence, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" appears timeless in English - i.e. "I never ever allow a woman to teach ..." however, in the Greek, it is a present active verb which can be translated, "I am not presently permitting a woman to teach or to have authority over men." Paul is apparently prohibiting those who are not properly
instructed from teaching. The teacher must first be taught. But the verb tense cannot be made of necessity into a general principle for all time.

What were the cultural conditions prevalent at the time of Paul that should be taken into account in our interpretation?

* Almost half the people in the Roman Empire were slaves.
* The status of women was very low. They were mostly uneducated and were regarded as chattels.
* In their prayers Jewish men thanked God they were not women.
* Men were not supposed to speak to women in public places.
* An Eastern woman did not go out with her uncovered. To do so, or to have her head shaved, marked her as immoral.
* In worship in the synagogues they were segregated from the men, and often interrupted by asking their husbands questions which would better be answered at home.

It will be seen that practically none of these cultural conditions find a parallel in the culture of our day. The cross of Christ has effected a vast change in the status of women.

When existing conditions are taken into consideration, the restrictions Paul made were reasonable and necessary. But are they equally applicable in the cultural climate of our own times? What were guiding lines for worshippers in one church and cultural situation should not be turned into binding laws for all time and all situations.

Paul’s restrictions were aimed at correcting improprieties, and to bring order in every disturbed church gatherings (1 Cor. 14:33), not to place a blanket ban on women praying, prophesying, evangelising or teaching. His emphasis is upon women conducting themselves so blamelessly that their behaviour will neither disrupt the worship nor shame their husbands. He is discouraging public questioning or arguing, where wives were usurping authority over their husbands and thus disgracing them.
While admitting the undoubtedly difficult problems of interpretation of these passages, there are other considerations that make it doubtful whether the traditionally negative attitude is the true and only possible explanation.

The Holy Spirit sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts on each believer without reference to gender (1 Cor. 12:11). These gifts are stated to be used for the upbuilding of the Church. Had He withheld these gifts of teaching or leadership from women, we would accept that a clear indication of His will. But He has not done so. If men only are appointed to positions where these gifts may be exercised, is not the purpose of the Spirit's gift being frustrated and the Church impoverished?

The Spirit of God has expressly endowed some women in both the Old and New Testaments with powers of leadership, as though to show that He reserves this right, even though the vast majority of leaders have been men. Both Old and New Testaments and church history past and present provide examples of godly women exercising a fruitful ministry in prophecy, administration, evangelism and teaching. It is true that the New Testament does not depict women in a dominant role in theology or leadership, but there is a great deal short of those roles that they did in the early church and may still often ten better than men.

In view of this remarkable achievement, one cannot but ask, 'Does the Holy Spirit speak with two voices - bidding women not to teach or lead, and then richly blessing them when they disobey?' If it is objected, "But we must go by Scripture and not by experience", the objection is valid; but it must be Scripture rightly interpreted, and in this case the presumption surely is that this is not the correct interpretation. More than 60% of missionaries today are women, most of whom exercise functions which the extreme position would deny them. Without their contribution in teaching and often in leadership the missionary cause would be immeasurably impoverished.
Paul apparently saw no discrepancy between the instructions he gave, and the fact that in his times women did pray, prophesy, teach and evangelise. He numbered many women among his friends and fellow-workers and was warm in his praise and appreciation of their sacrificial service. In Romans 16 he gives special mention to almost as many women as men friends, and the expressions he uses throw some light on their role and ministry in those early days of the Church.

Phoebe (vv. 1,2) is described as “deacon”. In the Greek the word “deacon” is the same whether in masculine or feminine gender. It is the same word as Paul used of himself and Apollos (1 Cor. 3:5), and there are no linguistic or theological grounds for differentiating between her function and that of other male deacons. The word is used as often of women as of men. It seems that women were doing as much of the work of a deacon as men, whether they were given the title or not.

In verse 2 the word translated ‘helper’ further elucidates her function. Cognate terms from the same root are applied to those who exercised leadership in the churches, e.g. ‘those who are over you in the Lord’ (1 Thess. 5:12). In Romans 12:8 it is rendered ‘leader’ and in 1 Timothy 5:17 it is applied to ‘the elders who direct the affairs of the church’. So the term Paul uses could indicate that Phoebe not only filled the function of a deacon, but also had some administrative role.

Priscilla (v.3) appears to have been more dynamic than her husband Acquila, but together they functioned as a husband-wife pastoral team who conducted a church in their home in Corinth and Rome. That she exercised a teaching ministry is explicit in Scripture (Acts 18:26), where she and her husband are stated to have taken the eloquent Apollos to their home and explained the way of God more adequately. There is no suggestion that in doing so she was acting contrary to Paul’s teaching. She shared with Aquila the title and task of a ‘fellow-worker’. Paul asserts the indebtedness of ‘all the churches of the Gentiles’ to their joint ministry.
Junias or Junia (v. 7) was stated to be a woman by both Chrysostom and Theophylact. Ancient commentators regarded Andronicus and Junias as a married couple. Junias is not found elsewhere as a man's name. Of Junia Chrysostom wrote: "And indeed to be apostles at all is a great thing. But to be even among these of note just consider what a great encomium this is. But they were of note owing to their works, to their achievements. Oh! how great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle." (Sanders 1983: 159).

Instead of the rendering 'men of note among the apostles' (v. 7 RSV), in the NIV it is rendered, 'they were outstanding among the apostles', using that word, of course, in its secondary sense, as of Barnabas. So while there is no absolute certainty, there are reasonable grounds for regarding Junia as an apostle in the limited sense.

Philip's daughters (Acts 21:9) were referred to by Eusebius as 'mighty luminaries'. They exercised the prophetic gift. In 1 Corinthians 11:5 Paul gave instructions concerning women's attire when praying or prophesying, and in that context there is no distinction made between the praying and prophesying of the men (v.4) and the women (v.5). In each place where Paul lists spiritual gifts, prophecy is given the prime position as the most important gift, and 1 Corinthians 14:3 he specifies its nature and function: "Everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort". Would it not be strange if Paul permitted women to exercise the higher gift of prophecy, yet forbade the less important gift of teaching?

Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:2,3) apparently held positions of leadership in the church so influential that their disagreement endangered its unity. While not condoning their disagreement endangered its unity. While not condoning their estrangement, Paul commends them most warmly. "They contended at my side in the cause of the gospel", sharing the common task and ministry. He identifies them with Clement and the other fellow-workers in the proclamation of the gospel.
From these instances there is a good case for maintaining that even in the early Church, the command to keep silence was not absolute, nor were women precluded from exercising a fruitful and fulfilling ministry.

In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul wrote “The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” In point of fact ‘men here is a generic term and could be equally rendered ‘faithful persons’, a term that could include women.

8.2 CONCLUSION

That some women today have a gift for teaching and applying the Bible can hardly be denied. This would seem to be one measure of the difference between our situation and Paul’s when there was no New Testament to teach! But the giving of the gift is itself an indication that God meant the gift to be used in the Church for edification. God intends some women to teach and preach.

In the light of what has been written, Paul appears to accord to women a satisfying if not dominant role in the realms of prayer, teaching, evangelising and administration. As stated earlier, there is no scriptural precedent for women holding a dominant role in leadership or in theology, but in His administration of the Church and the execution of the Great Commission the Holy Spirit has given a much wider scope of ministry to women than is usually accorded to them in our churches. Is there a valid reason for our being more selective that the Holy Spirit?
CHAPTER 9

ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

9.1 INTRODUCTION

"Organisation, such as the army, government, and big business, follow one set of rules. Organisms, such as living things, families, and closely knit small groups, follow another. The church falls somewhere between the two and attracts criticism from both sides. Organisationally people accuse the church of poor management, sloppy personnel procedures, and general inefficiency. As an Organism people complain when the church begins to function as just another institution and thus lose its personal, "family feel" (Lee 1989: 65)

In the Bible leaders are of many different types and exhibit many different skills. But behind the various skills and types are identifiable leadership qualities.

From the writings of the apostle Paul we learn that leaders in the church are to be above reproach and of good reputation. Leaders are to be prudent and of sound mind, living well ordered and respectable lives. They are to be gentle and hospitable. Covetousness and a love of money are to be shunned. Paul's statement to Timothy about overseers in the church sums up his position on the qualifications of church leaders in general: "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity ... and not a new convert lest he become conceited. ... And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church" (1 Tim. 3:2-7, NASV)
In the words of Paul to the church at Corinth, “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Cor. 12: 27). To the church at Ephesus Paul wrote, “We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love” (Eph. 4: 15 - 16). This image is a reminder that the church is always more than a human organisation, it is still unique; it is Christ’s body owing its life and existence to the Spirit of God.

“The church is not merely an association of outward ties and rites like other civic governments. ... It is mainly an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men’s hearts.

We are not dreaming about some Platonic republic, as has been slanderously alleged, but we teach that these church actually exists, made up of true believers and righteous men scattered throughout the world” (Lee 1989 : 65).

The church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit ... and, on the other, that it carries out its work through “congregations, ministries, organisations, institutions, and agencies; in other words, through human means.

The church is both “people of God” and “body of Christ,” both human and divine. While this paradox often results in tension over the church’s goals, structure, and use of resources, it is a tension that cannot be avoided.

And an honest appraisal can reveal our weaknesses so that we can come to terms with them and begin to develop them into strengths.

Since we have already scrutinised the particulars of 1 Timothy, there is no need for us to dwell on them in our review. So for the sake of evaluating our ministries, let’s draw our criteria from the general teaching of each of the six chapters in 1 Timothy.
9.2 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST MAINTAIN THEOLOGICAL BALANCE (Chapter 1).

The Christian life is one of balance; the same is true for ministries. Certain essential functions of ministry require great care in maintaining balance. These include the exposure of error with the demonstration of love (vv. 3 - 5), the maintenance of strong convictions with an attitude of notable humility (vv. 11 - 16), the instruction of great theology (v. 17) with everyday practicality, and the necessity to fight for the faith while keeping "faith and a good conscience" (vv. 18 - 19a).

9.3 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST EMPHASISE PRAYER (Chapter 2).

In order for a ministry to be spiritually effective, it must be a ministry on its knees. As Paul said, the first priority of ministry is prayer (v. 1). This raises some tough evaluative questions. Do I pray regularly? Is prayer primary in my life? In the continuation of my ministry, if prayer stopped, would anything else? Are any of my ministry's committee meetings over interrupted for prayer?

9.4 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST HAVE SPIRITUALLY QUALIFIED LEADERS (Chapter 3).

This is true for both the pastoral team and the lay leadership of a local church. Neither leadership group can effectively carry on all the tasks of ministry without the qualified support of the other. As with the other ministries, this one demands answers to some hard hitting questions.
My ministry should be chosen according to the Scriptural standards. The home and family relationship should be considered valuable in the selection of my ministry’s leaders? The spiritual qualifications of potential leaders should be given prominence over their organisational and financial skills?

9.5 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST REFLECT EXCELLENCE (Chapter 4)

An it should do so in the following areas: discipline, godliness, urgency, evangelism, missions, preaching, teaching, the maintenance of proper priorities, commitment, worship, the home, and the family.

9.6 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST MEET PEOPLES NEEDS (Chapter 5).

Paul gave Timothy excellent instructionS on how to minister effectively to people of different ages, with various needs and problems. He even dealt with the financial care of leaders and the manner in which accusations brought against him should be handled.

9.7 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST MAINTAIN PERSONAL HOLINESS (Chapter 6).

There must be personal purity in the personal lives of those in the congregation including the leadership. There must also exist purity in doctrine and financial dealings.
9.8 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH THAT SQUARES WITH SCRIPTURE REQUIRES CONSISTENT SCRIPTURAL INPUT (Chapter 1 - 2).

If you cannot profess in all honesty that you adhere to the biblical standard in your ministry, then you need to allow God's Word to establish your ministerial agenda.

9.9 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH THAT REMAINS ON TARGET REQUIRES STRONG, INTERNAL INTEGRITY (Chapter 3 - 4).

If your ministry lacks this level of integrity, then you need to make a real commitment to excellence in quality rather than in mere quantity.

9.10 THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH THAT EARNs THE RESPECT OF THEIRS REQUIRES GREAT PERSONAL ATTENTION (Chapter 5 - 6)

If your ministry is falling short of this standard, then you need to get really serious about caring for people in a genuinely compassionate way.

Some of the unique barriers to church leadership health that our research uncovered were that most of the local churches suffer from the following

9.10.1 Divisive internal politics
9.10.2 Inadequate Christian education and training
9.10.3 Dilapidated facilities
9.10.4 Frequent changes in leadership positions
9.10.5 Pastor centred ministry
9.10.6 Emotional discouragement among the congregation
9.10.7 Unreconciled theological disagreement
9.10.8 Absence of ministry opportunities for people
9.10.9 Financial decline
9.10.10 Loss of key laypeople
9.10.11 Loss of critical staff members
9.10.12 Lowering of ministry standards
9.10.13 Denominational meddling
9.10.14 A shift from Bible centred teaching
9.10.15 Absence of an assimilation programme

9.11 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Even though the aspiration to leadership is described as "an honourable ambition" by the great leader, Paul, you must also be made aware of the hazards and dangers of leadership. Paul, who was also aware of these perils wrote a reminder to himself in the words, ..."so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified ..." (1 Cor. 9:27). We will discuss briefly, a few of the more common dangers to maintaining authentic and effective leadership.

Leadership, by its conspicuous nature, lends itself to the development of the "cult of personality". One of the greatest dangers to a leader is to encourage and embrace the over estimation of themselves by their followers, to the point where they themselves become the focus of attention. A true leader will constantly protect himself from this temptation by focusing the affection of his followers on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the vision to which He has called them.

The practice of undue deference to leaders was warned against by Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth when he wrote, "For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe - as the Lord has assigned to each his task ... For we are God's fellow workers" (1 Cor. 3:4-9).
Any measure of success exposes a man to the pressure of people and therefore, tempts him to compromise his values, convictions and integrity to maintain this popularity. This has been the downfall of many great leaders and was, in fact, a manifestation of the presence or development of insecurity. **A leader who knows who he is, does not depend on others to validate his sense of self-worth.** He also understands that any measure of popularity is simply a temporary reaction of people to his gifts and position, and not the maintenance of his person. **True leaders do not confuse applause with affirmation.**

Leadership naturally raises an individual to a position of prominence and significance in the eyes of many, and therefore, tends to encourage a secret self-congratulation and over estimation of himself. This is the foundation of pride. It comes from believing the praise of men as the true measure of your worth.

Pride is very deceptive and difficult to detect by the one who possesses it, yet must be abhorred. The Scriptures have strong words to say about this dangerous culprit, “The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this “They will not go unpunished” (Proverbs 16:5). Pride is usually evidence of a poor self-concept and low self-esteem.

It is the need to elevate one’s self by the devaluation of others. It is the attempt to secure a sense of superiority by the maintenance of the feeling of inferiority in others. True leaders are constantly aware that they are privileged to serve and owe any measure of success or accomplishment to God and the cooperation of others. **True leaders never forget from whence they came, and live to bring others to where they are.** Paul reminds us all, never to think of ourselves more highly that we ought (Romans 12:3). Be yourself and nothing else.

“One of the greatest dangers to leaders is the temptation to measure all others by oneself. This is the practice of magnifying and elevating oneself and one’s attainment. It’s the sense of exaggerated self-importance. He considers everything in relation to himself.
Egotism is a manifestation of pride and insecurity. This leads to the second and related temptation, the belief that one is indispensable. This is the temptation to think that you are irreplaceable and that the success of everything depends on you”.

(Munroe 1993 : 168).

This is a great danger to those who have been magnified by the followers and believes that he is the only one with a monopoly on success. **True leaders are always aware that they are only a link in a long, historical chain.** They are given the privilege and brief opportunity to serve their generation with the gifts they have received, and they are obligated to prepare others to replace themselves. They esteem others above themselves and seek their good. These two perils must be avoided at all costs.

It is natural to measure the success of leadership by the accomplishment of its objectives. However there is a temptation to measure one’s success by comparison to the accomplishments of others. This is dangerous and is the birth of a jealous spirit. The jealous person is apprehensive and suspicious of rivals. The true leader does not measure his success by comparing himself with others, but with his own purpose and vision.

If a leader is sure of his own assignment in life, then he is are free from competition, comparison and thus jealousy. The leader should guard his heart and mind against this vile spirit of deceit and envy, because there is only one who can do what one is born to do, and God will not reward one for competition, but for obedience to one’s own vision.

The greatest and most common peril of leadership is that of disqualifying oneself from the position of leadership. It is the responsibility of the leader to secure the trust, confidence and commitment of his followers by adhering to the moral, ethical and spiritual principles.
It is essential that the true leader be vigilant in guarding his heart, mind and life from any compromise that would render him untrustworthy and unrespectable in the sight of all.

He must adhere to the highest principles of honour, integrity, morality and self respect. He must commit to impose spiritual standards and discipline on himself, so that there would be no need for imposition of external discipline.

Today, we need leaders who will provide the quality of character, the standards of grace and the image of holiness, righteousness and faithfulness to God’s principles and precepts, that would inspire others to desire to become leaders of exceptional quality.
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