LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
Companion Guide

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Biblical Leadership in God's House Part 1

What is Leadership?

In this session, we will explore the importance of leadership and how we can move forward in God's design for it.

- Hebrews 13:7-17 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. (8) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (9) Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings…(17) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

- 1Thessalonians 5:12-13 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, (13) and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

Many of the present-day leadership patterns that have been handed down to us contain ideas that deviate from biblical principles. The "clergy-laity/minister-ministry" distinctions in some circles tend to foster an OT mentality of separation between the special class, "priests/ministers," and the rest of the people. These patterns contain unhealthy influences and patterns that work against God's design.

Definition of Biblical Leadership: Caring for, guiding, and governing God's people by Holy Spirit through example, teaching, exhorting, and encouraging to pursue God, His design, and His purposes.

Biblical leadership is the God-ordained role of serving, influencing, equipping, and governing by walking with God, communicating His vision, and helping people fulfill His purposes, through the Word, by the Spirit, and with Christlike character.

The famous North African leader Augustine (354-430) described a leader's job description accurately in his classic sermon (#209), "Disturbers are to be rebuked, the low-spirited to be encouraged, the infirm to be supported, objectors confuted, the treacherous guarded against, the unskilled taught, the lazy aroused, the contentious restrained, the haughty repressed, litigants pacified, the poor relieved, the oppressed liberated, the good approved, the evil borne with, and all are to be loved."

Two extreme errors regarding leadership: The church world tends to fall into two extreme errors regarding leadership: over glamorizing it or undervaluing it. Both extremes are ditches on the side of a road that we need to avoid.

In God's design of leadership, leaders help people follow Jesus and avoid the corruptive nature of sin, which motivates people to move towards selfish ways, rather than God's way.

- Isaiah 53:6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

This is why we are instructed to follow the Spirit and, by Him, overcome the corruption in our flesh (Judges 17:6, Romans 8: "by the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the flesh"). This is why Jesus repeatedly told us that the way to come into His life truly is, first of all, "deny self." Leaders help God's people in this process

Essential traits that help us embrace Biblical leadership

- Do not overvalue or underestimate the importance of leadership.
- God's house and leadership among it are based on God's family design (Psalms 68:7-8, 1 Timothy 3:1-16, Titus 2:1-10, 1 Corinthians 4:14-15, Galatians 4:19, 1 John 1:12, 2:1, 12, 29, 3:7, 18, 4:4, 5:21, etc).
- People will care more about what you know as they experience more of your real care for them.
- Leaders must be close enough to people to really relate with them and close enough to God to guide them in Him and His ways.
- Leaders help protect God's people from false people and ideas that come among to destroy God's people (Acts 20:17-21, 1 Peter 5:1-8, 2 Peter 2:1-22 etc).

Servant Leadership

One of God's foundational designs for leadership and one of our core family leadership values is being servant-leaders. Our family of churches defines our call to servant leadership in this way: "We aim to equip every Christian to be a servant-leader, in the home, church community, and at work. Anointed servant leadership is vital in the body of Christ, helping all to grow to full maturity and fulfill their God-given destiny. Leaders must be servant-leaders!"

Jesus sets forth His design for Servant Leadership in His last preparations with His disciples before His sacrifice. He contrasted His design for servant leadership with the "Gentile" leadership models.

- Luke 22:24-27 And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. (25) And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' (26) "But it is not to be this way with you (don't be like that), but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest and the leader like the servant. (27) "For 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 (Luke 9:46-48).
- John 13:3-14…(14) "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

Robert Greenleaf (1904–1990) is often considered the founder of the modern Servant Leadership movement in business, but the biblical idea of servant leadership originates from Jesus and differs in its core.

- Servant leadership is not just about leaders occasionally taking on some tasks like a servant. It is about having the identity of a servant in God's family from which all tasks of serving flow.

- A Servant Leader is a servant who is not obsessed with "who is in charge" but with how they can serve, care for, and help those who are "in their charge."

Servant leadership has become a popular concept in many secular circles, yet it is only with God's people that it can be approached after His design, and in His life. Why, because it springs from the way He calls us to follow Him, "If you want to find life you will lose it, but if you lose your life for My sake you will find it" (Mark 8:34-35, Matthew 10:39, Luke 9:23-27, Luke 14:25-35, Luke 17:32-33, Luke 18:22, Matthew 10:28-42, Matthew 16:25). It is only "by the Spirit" as we follow Jesus, we can truly live self-sacrificially, and express authentic servant leadership.

Unfortunately, we have promoted a flawed model of leadership that emphasizes positions, titles, anointings, and authority. In contrast, Jesus said it was about serving. The identity of a servant is the only authorized way through which Jesus wants His authority to flow.

A. W. Tozer defines it well in His book, "True Leadership" (Pg 459), "A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead, but is forced into a position of leadership by the inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of the external situation. Such were Moses, David, and the Old Testament prophets. I think there was hardly a great leader from Paul to the present day, but that was drafted by the Holy Spirit for the task, and commissioned by the Lord of the Church to fill a position he had little heart for. I believe it might be accepted as a reliable rule of thumb that the ambitious man to lead is disqualified as a leader. The true leader will have no desire to lord it over God's heritage, but will be humble, gentle, self-sacrificing, and altogether as ready to follow as to lead, when the Spirit makes it clear that a wiser and more gifted man than himself has appeared."

Essential Traits and Practices of Servant Leaders

They have Holy Spirit discerned self-awareness. Servant leaders consistently walk with Holy Spirit to be aware of self-initiated feelings and motivations rather than God-initiated ones. As they do, "by the Spirit, they put to death the deeds of the flesh." (Romans 8:13, Galatians 5:19-25). Servant leaders exemplify God's design for repentance in that they are honest before others and quick to repent when their behavior and motivations tend towards selfishness.

They seek God for empathy towards others. Because servant leaders care about others, they express the heart of the resurrected Jesus, our "high priest who is able to be touched by the feelings of our feeble flesh" (Heb 4:15). This is part of caring.

They draw near and listen to others. Like Jesus, our faithful high priest, and servant leaders want to know and identify with what the people they serve are going through (Hebrews 4:14-16).

They seek to bring healing to people. Like the good shepherds Jesus mentions in His word, servant leaders first seek to support, heal, and lead those they care for on good paths, following God and His word (John 10:7-18).

Seek to build God's people into family relationships, not simply meeting attendees who are spectators of your gift. Why, because this is the nature of God's house and the need of all humanity (Psalms 68:6-7). Paul desired

this and tried to do this for everyone, even those he had not met yet (Col 2:1-3). He knew this was God's design for His people and beneficial for everyone.

They are humble and willing to take a lowly position. They sleep where their people sleep and eat where their people eat.

They take joy in the success of others and consistently shine a spotlight on them. Servant leaders tend to embody the Godhead's attitude towards one another. Their greatest joy is to see others exalted (Matthew 3:16-17, John 8:28, 54, 13:31-32, 14:10, 16:35, 17:5, Philippians 2:3-9, Romans 12:9-10). Paul delighted in the success of others whom he called "my joy and my crown," (1 Thessalonians 2:19, Philippians 4:1). There is no jealousy or envy with them. Servant leaders take the spotlight off themselves and put it on others. You find them doing this in conversations and interactions.

They consistently look out for others' needs to be met ahead of their own. This means being faithful in what you do to help others (Matthew 25:21-23, Luke 19:11). This was the attitude of Jesus and His call for His leaders (Philippians 2, Mark 10:42-45, Matthew 28:10-1-28).

They are not self-promoters with the drive to be admired. Be cautious if you are subtly considering creative ways to promote your life, teachings, ideas, material, or opinions. Have the attitude of John the Baptist, "Jesus must become more important, while I become less important" (John 3:30 CEV). If your emotions rise or fall based on the number of "likes" or "shares," you may have a problem. If you continually check your social media or website to see how many followers or responses you get, it may indicate a drive to be admired rather than to glorify God.

They are not territorial. Servant leaders are not obsessed with "my ministry, my gift, or my area of service."

Resources for continual development:

YouTube Videos and Podcasts on Local Church Government:
https://c2cfamily.org/church-government/

Studies:

"Leadership in the House of God" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Doug-Leadership-in-the-House-of-God-1.pdf**

"Shepherding in God's House" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Shepherding-in-Gods-House.pdf**

"Small Group Leader's Training Manual" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Small-Group-Leaders-Training-Manual-3.pdf**

Books:

"Developing a Servant's Heart: Become Fully Like Christ by Serving Others" Charles Stanley

"Leadership, Greatness, and Servanthood" by Philip Greenslade

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"Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda" by Howard Blackaby

Biblical Leadership in God's House - Part 2

Biblical Revelation of "Ministry"

- 2 Timothy 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.
- Colossians 4:17 Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
- Ephesians 4:11-12 And truly He gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, (12) for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry (NASV service), for the edifying of the body of Christ.

What is "Ministry" and what are "Ministers"? Many of the present-day patterns of leadership that have been handed down to us contain ideas about "Ministry/Ministers" that drift away from Biblical patterns. The common idea of "ministers" is that they are exceptional, spiritually elite individuals with unique callings who stand out above the rest of God's people in carrying out the "ministry" for the church. It has the connotation that they are uniquely called and gifted, and operate in a category separate from "normal" believers.

This has led to the "clergy-laity/minister-ministry" distinctions in some circles, which tend to foster an OT mentality of separation between the special class, "priests/ministers," and the rest of the people. These patterns contain unhealthy influence and patterns that work against God's design.

The Greek word most often translated as ministry is "Diakonia" used 34 times in the New Testament. Instead of being an elusive idea for a select few, it is a common term for serving in everyday life. Consider how many of the classical research works render its definition.

- **Strongs Concordance:** "Attendance (as a servant, etc.), aid, service."
- **Thayer Greek Definitions:** "service, ministering, especially of those who execute the commands of others…the service of those who prepare and present food."
- **Greek English Lexicon by Liddell-Scott-Jones:** "Diakonia appears in Classical Greek as service or attendance, especially service of tables or waiting on someone."

The Greek background of the biblical word for serving refers to active service, often in humble contexts, such as waiting on tables. This is far removed from the current ideas of "Ministry/Minister," which are more about the spectacular, unusual gifts and callings, far removed from the everyday life of an ordinary Christian.

We need to see a reformation of both the Priesthood and Ministry of all believers. When Jesus entered into His hometown synagogue after the temptation in the wilderness He was handed and read a passage from Isaiah 61 indicating what He was now beginning to fulfill (Luke 4:16-20). The result of Him setting people free from the bondages they had lived under, would enable them to become "priest of the Lord" and "ministers of our God."

- Isaiah 61:1-6 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted… (6) But you will be called the priests of the LORD; You will be spoken of as ministers of our God.

Instead of the "priesthood" and "ministry" being only for a few specially selected individuals or classes of people, all of God's people are priests and ministers."

- 1 Peter 2:9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

The Priesthood/Ministry of all Believers: As the church descended into Medieval Catholicism, the lives of the priest/clergy became more removed from the life of ordinary life of the everyday Christian. One of the themes of the Protestant Reformation that reformers like Martin Luther attempted to see restored to God's people was "The Priesthood of all Believers." We need a similar reformation today of "The Ministry of all Believers."

Results of holding ministry to an elite status for the specially gifted few.

- **We Distort the Biblical Concept of Ministry away from the life of ordinary people and create a spiritual hierarchy.** In the NT, diakonia embraces all forms of service, from waiting tables (Acts 6) to preaching the Word (Acts 6:4). It does not separate "ordinary" from "spiritual" service; both are sacred acts of serving God and others.
- **It undermines the Ministry of All Believers.** The "specialization" of ministry makes ordinary believers feel like they're not in "real" ministry unless they are gifted in some sort of "platform" way or in full-time vocational roles (pastors, missionaries, etc.). Yet, Ephesians 4:12 says diakonia is for every believer, to equip them for works of service to build up the body. The NT instruction and church was built on the idea that every member has a part whether they're waiting tables or preaching.
- **It Leads to Clericalism and Consumerism.** Clericalism arises when we assume "ministry" belongs only to the elite few, and the rest are just consumers of ministry. This fosters a spectator mindset: people come to church to watch "the gifted" do ministry, rather than seeing themselves as ministers. Paul's 1 Corinthians 12 metaphor (body of Christ) is clear: every part is vital, and no part is superior.
- **It Weakens the Everyday Witness of the Church.** When service is redefined as something only "special" people do in special settings, we undervalue the power of serving in the everyday life, in homes, neighborhoods, workplaces. Church life becomes about meetings and special events rather than everyday life.

  If we glorify "platform ministry" but neglect ordinary service, we lose credibility and fail to embody Christ's example. True Kingdom culture is seen in humble acts: serving food, caring for the sick, visiting the imprisoned (Matthew 25).

- **It Fosters Competition and Burnout.** Elevating "ministry" into an elite status often overburdens people with unrealistic expectations, discourages others from stepping in to help, thinking they're "unqualified," and fuels competition for "positions of ministry" rather than fostering God's design of fellow family members working together in humble service.

Four essentials in restoring God's Biblical design for "ministry"?

- **Reclaim and view the idea of ministry as whole-life service.**
- **Honor ordinary acts of love and service as the "work of the ministry."**
- **Value and model servanthood and servant leadership that reflects Jesus' humble posture of loving and serving others (Luke 22:24-27, John 13, Philippians 2:1-9 etc.).**
- **Practice the "one another" life every day.** The Greek word translated as "one another" in the NT is "Allelon" which means the "mutual, mutually, together." It is used 108 times in 94 verses and 59 of them are direct commands you do in everyday life. Not one of the 59 commands needs a corporate gathering or platform to practice.

Team Leadership in God's House/Family

Scriptures indicate that leadership in the Local Church is set among a group of leaders called Elders, with Deacons functioning closely with them.

- Acts 14:23 NASB 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.
- Acts 20:17-28 NASB From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. (18) And when they had come to him, he said to them… (28) "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 which He purchased with His own blood.
- Titus 1:5-9 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you…(7) For the overseer must be above reproach…(9) holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.
- Acts 15:22-23; Philippians 1: 1 Peter 5:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 3:1-:12; 5:17-19; Hebrews 13:7,17,24; 1 Peter 5:1-2

The biblical design for leadership is patterned after the Godhead (Father, Son, Spirit, a Family/Team). They operate as a family/team in perfect unity. In Jesus' last prayer on earth over his leaders (the 12), He prayed 3 times that they would have the same type of relational leadership life and unity He had with the Godhead, "that they would be one like We are one".

- John 17:11-24...Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are....20..."I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; (21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; (23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity (Gk into a **unit)**, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

Whether Elders, Deacons, Small Group Leaders, or any other area of service/leadership in the House of God, there should be a family/team dynamic with them.

This plural family design for leadership was in His first expression of leadership in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 1:26-27 NASB Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over… (27) God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The only thing listed in the creation account (Genesis 1-3) that "wasn't good" was "aloneness" in leadership. Genesis 2:18 "then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone."

God is a family, and He describes His dwelling place as a home in which His family lives and from which they work.

- Psalms 68:5-6 A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation. (6) God makes a home for the lonely... Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land.
- Ephesians 2:19-22 "no longer strangers and aliens. but fellow citizens with the saints and are of God's household."
- 1 Timothy 3:4-15 NASB He (a leader) must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (5) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) … (15) but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

Biblical statistics reveal that God is building His family/home, and leadership should be in a family team context. God uses family imagery to describe Himself and His people 1655 times. This contrasts with the word "Christian" used only 3 times, and the term saint/saints 61 times in the NT.

Paul acknowledges that the influence of spiritual motherhood and fatherhood is essential for healthy development in the church.

- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-11 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. (8) Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not

only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us… (11) just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children. (Titus 2:1-10, 1 Corinthains 4:14-15, Galatians 4:19, 1 John 1:12, 2:1, 12, 29, 3:7, 18, 4:4, 5:21 etc).

Spiritual fatherhood and motherhood create the optimal spiritual environment for growth and development. They combine:

- Encouragement and provocation
- Care and challenge
- Sensitivity and directness
- Passion and objectivity
- An atmosphere of approval and preparation for God's destiny

Trans-Local Ministry is also designed to function as a relational family/team. You see it with the different teams that worked with the Apostle Paul, as he described his "sons, fellow workers, fellow soldiers," and "fellow bond-servants" (Philippians 4:2-3, 1 Thessalonians 3:2, 2 Corinthians 8:23, Colossians 1:7,4:7-18, Colossians 4:7-11, Romans 16:1-16, 1 Corinthians 16:10-24, Philippiansl 4:1-23, 2 Timothy 4:11-22).

Purposes and Advantages of Family/Team Leadership.

Family/team leadership provides a living demonstration of the plurality and oneness of the Trinity, the church as the family of God, and the church as the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12, 14, Romans 12:1-6, etc.).

Family/team leadership demonstrates the Biblical principle of more than one voice speaking the same thing, making a more pronounced impact. "On the evidence of two or three witnesses every matter shall be confirmed" (Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 18:16, 2 Corinthians 13:1).

Family/team leadership can more effectively find the mind of the Lord for direction. The different giftings have different perspectives, and when combined, they present a much fuller picture of the Lord's mind (Acts 13:1-2 "prophets and teachers, "Acts 15 "apostles and elders looked into this matter."

Family/team leadership is much more effective and will produce greater results (Ecclesiastes 4:19 "Two are better than one," Deuteronomy 32:30 "one can put a thousand to flight, and two put ten thousand to flight").

Family/team leadership puts you in a place of safety and balance in leadership (Proverbs 11:14 "in abundance of counselors there is victory," Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 "two are better than one," Romans 12:5 "we are mutually dependent on one another," Ephesians 4:25 "for we are members one of another).

Family/team leadership will help guard against the immoral traps set by the enemy, which have snared so many individual leaders. You benefit from others who see and help cover blind spots every leader has.

Family/team leadership provides strength and encouragement as we lead with others (Proverbs 27:17, Hebrews 3:1-13, 10:24-25).

There is a natural flow of mentorship and training as more experienced leaders work with less experienced ones, and those more gifted in one area help others who are less proficient (Titus 2:1-6 “older teach the younger”).

The 4 Key Challenges to walking in God’s Design of Family/Team: Jesus faces this with His team, the twelve, during His last week on earth.

1. Importance of continuing to walk in God’s Covenant Love amid Covenant Breaking.

Our carnal nature is prone to covenant-breaking (based on a desire for independence and autonomy); therefore, it is challenging to walk in God’s covenant love. Yet Jesus imparted values of Covenant love during one of the twelve betraying Him, and later all of them betraying Him.

- Matthew 26:19-21 The disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover. (20) Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. (21) As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me."
- John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

2. Entitlement mentality: What is in it for me - What do I deserve?

- Matthew 19:27-20:28 Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?...

3. Rivalry: Who is the greatest among us?

- Matthew 20:18-28 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, (19) and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up." (20) Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him…"Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left."... (24) And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.

This rivalry carried over to the Last supper.

- Luke 22:14-32 When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him…. (21) "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. (22) "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" (23) And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing. (24) And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.

This fleshly tendency towards rivalry is the exact opposite of the oneness nature of the Godhead seen in their desire to glorify each other instead of glorifying themselves (Matthew 3:16-17, John 8:28, 54, 13:31-32, 14:10, 16:13-15, 17:1-5, Hebrews 5:5-6, Romans 12:9-10, Philippians 2:3-9, 1 Thessalonians 5:11).

4. Jealousy and Envy.

Jealousy and envy create division and mistrust in leadership teams, turning teamwork into competition. Instead of unity, they stir strife and hinder the Spirit's work. Even Peter and John showed hints of rivalry. When Jesus told Peter how he would suffer, Peter immediately asked, "What about him?" Jesus' response was clear: "What is that to you? You follow Me" (John 21:19-22). Comparison distracts from calling.

To walk in God's design of family/team leadership, we must resist the pull of the flesh, covenant-breaking, entitlement, rivalry, and jealousy, all of which Jesus confronted within His team. These heart issues fracture family unity, which is God's nature and what He desires for His leaders. Authentic Biblical leadership thrives in covenant love, humility, mutual honor, and a shared pursuit of Christ above self. Jesus' example calls us to follow Him, not compare, compete, or demand, but to lay our lives down in love to walk in His design.

Resources for continual development:

YouTube Videos and Podcasts on Local Church Government:

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Studies:

"Leadership in the House of God" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Doug-Leadership-in-the-House-of-God-1.pdf**

"Shepherding in God's House" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Shepherding-in-Gods-House.pdf**

"Small Group Leader's Training Manual" **https://c2cfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Small-Group-Leaders-Training-Manual-3.pdf**

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Handling God's Word

The Importance of God's Word

Kris Palmer

Introduction: Tony and I are honored to present this month's topic, which is the Importance of Accurately Handling God's Word. Our plan is to explore four key areas that, as leaders, we all need to understand about this vital subject. The first two will be covered tonight, and the remaining two will be discussed on the 18th.

- The Importance of God's Word
- Practical Ways to Study God's Word.
- Tools of the Trade
- Pitfalls to Watch Out For

However, before we begin discussing how and what it takes to accurately handle God's Word, we first need to remember why God's Word is so important and, therefore, why, as leaders, we must know how to diligently and accurately study, live out, teach, and preach the Word of God. The most essential aspect of leadership is hearing and obeying the voice of God. We cannot recognize His voice or understand what He is saying without being able to accurately study, comprehend, live by, and proclaim His Word.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

I. Of First Importance by Way of a Reminder

A. God has personally revealed the Truth about Himself and His creation through supernatural verbal revelation.
   1. This revelation was written down in what is known as His Written Word, or the Bible.
   2. The Scriptures are the primary authoritative source by which one can know and understand the reality of the truth of God and His creation.

B. The Holy Bible is God's revelation to humanity.
   1. The Scriptures are the fully inspired written Word of God. Inspiration is the act of God by which He conveyed to men both the content He wanted written and the exact words expressing that content.
   2. Under the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit on the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit enabled the writers to produce an accurate record of God's revelation, making what they wrote truly the Word of God.

C. As God reveals Himself by the Holy Spirit, through the written Word, we can learn who God is, what He has done for us, and how we should respond to Him. It shows us how to live in fellowship with Him and with one another.

II. The Importance of God's Word in the Leader's Life.

A. To hear God, we need to know God, and to know God, we need to love His written Word. His Word needs to be central in our lives.
   1. **Psalm 119:97** (ESV) Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.
   2. To live a genuine salvation relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior, we must know Him and be known by Him.
   3. For this genuine ongoing relationship to grow and develop, we need the Word of God to be actively working in our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit.
   4. It's a spiritual book that requires spiritual understanding and discernment.

B. If the Word of God is important, then we should work to carefully understand how to handle the Word of Truth accurately.
   1. We must remember that everything in our lives completely depends on the Holy Spirit for it to happen or be effective. But you and I also have a very important role to play.
   2. **2 Timothy 2:15** (NASB1995) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.
   3. A diligent workman – what we are discussing takes effort and work.
   4. Properly handling the Word of Truth.
      a. What the Word states is not based on our thoughts or opinions.
      b. You and I are not the ultimate authority on interpreting Scripture.
   5. The Word of God is its own authority. Therefore, it is vital that we know how to study it accurately.

C. If the Word of God is important, it must be believed and obeyed in our lives.
   1. Accurately handling the Word isn't just an academic or intellectual pursuit.
   2. It is a spiritual pursuit, where the Holy Spirit uses our brains to help us understand, know, and then obey the Word.
   3. We must then faithfully live it out in our lives. When speaking to leaders, I cannot emphasize this enough.

D. If the Word of God is important, we need to regularly and consistently feed ourselves with the Scriptures.
   1. This is not only about studying His Word, but also about being diligent in reading it regularly.
   2. Read, Read, Read.
   3. I am talking about the spiritual discipline of daily being in God's Word.
   4. Read the Word thoroughly and completely. My "suggestion" is to read the Bible from cover to cover, repeatedly. You can easily finish reading the Bible in a year by reading 3-5 chapters six days a week. I would also suggest that you use a bible with a readable format, that doesn't have study helps.

III. The Importance of God's Word in the Lives of Those We are to Feed and Disciple

A. The Word of God is very practical; it is useful, beneficial, and profitable for everyone who receives it.
   1. Through it, every man or woman of God can be thoroughly and fully equipped for every good work.
   2. Therefore, it is necessary that those we lead know, understand, and obediently live out His Word.

B. For that to happen, we are commanded by God to teach and train those we are called to lead.
   1. **Matthew 28:19-20** (ESV) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
   2. Accurately handling the Word means that we know how to speak it, teach it, and preach it to others.

IV. The Importance of God's Word in Every Aspect of the Church

A. It is one thing for us to understand the importance of Scripture; it is quite another to make the Bible the actual functioning authority for life, faith, and conduct in our lives and in our churches.
   1. Functional means that it is working or operating in a practical or useful way.
   2. It doesn't just possess theoretical authority; the Bible's authority should be practically implemented in our activities and ministries within the church.
   3. What this means is that we do what we do because the Bible commands us to do it that way, implies that we do it that way, or at least gives us permission to do it that way.

B. It is one thing to let this simply happen in the background; it is another to deliberately examine the biblical authority regarding each ministry practice within the church (to scrutinize what we are doing under the lens of Scripture).
   1. To accomplish this, we need to know how to handle the Word accurately.
   2. There is a detailed step-by-step outline and process for finding God's will in all areas of the church in Robertson McQuilkin's book, "The Five Smooth Stones: Essential Principles for Biblical Ministry."

Conclusion:

It's an understatement to say that God's Word is important. We need His Word in our lives, in those we lead, and in our churches. Therefore, we must all understand and continually improve our ability to accurately handle the Word of God.

Bibliography:

Lloyd-Jones, D. M. (2012). Preaching and Preachers (40th anniversary ed.). Zondervan.

McQuilkin, R. (1995). The Five Smooth Stones. Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Richards, L. O., & Bredfeldt, G. (1998). Creative Bible Teaching. NavPress.

Practical Ways to Study God's Word

Tony Fajkus

Kris covered the Why it is important to study God's Word. I will start a discussion on some practical ways to Study the Bible. (The How)

I want to emphasize through all our sessions that we are dependent on the Holy Spirit to open the scriptures to us so that we can see and understand what they are saying. We must also approach the scriptures with an attitude of obedience.

[12] Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. [13] And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (1 Co 2:12–13). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (James 1:22)

But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28)

I want to cover some of the basic types of Bible study methods in the time I have. Kris will cover some of the basic tools you will need to do effective Bible study at the next class.

Remember that the goal of all Bible studies is to know Jesus and become more like him in our attitudes, our thoughts, our speech, our actions and our values through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Rick Warren covers 12 different types of Bible studies. All 12 are listed in my notes. I want to challenge you to buy the book and work through the different study types. Because of time, we will only cover three.

1. The Topical method

Used to trace a topic through scripture. Could be limited to searching a single book, a series of books or the whole Bible.

Can be used to study a doctrine (e.g. Healing in the NT), an idea (e.g. can women be deacons), a phrase (e.g. what was Jesus' method of making disciples) or about any subject mentioned in the Bible.

It enables us to study the scriptures systematically and in an orderly manner. Looking at all the scriptures on a particular subject. Good for exegesis and eliminating eisegesis.

Gives us a proper perspective and balance on the topic. Looks at all the context from various places in the Bible.

Enables us to study all the great doctrines of the Bible for ourselves.

Tools: A Study Bible, Concordance and Topical Bible.

The Word study method

Takes a microscopic look at the origin, definition, occurrences and uses of a particular word in its context.

The purpose is to learn as precisely and comprehensively as possible what the biblical writer meant by the word he used.

Difficulty: Sometimes several Greek words are translated by just one English word (e.g. love).

Difficulty: Sometimes one Greek or Hebrew word is translated several ways in English. Context is key here. We don't get to pick and choose what we like.

Difficulty: Sometimes an original word is translated by a whole phrase in English. This is more work to understand. (e.g. "beholding as in a mirror" - 2 Cor. 3:18 NASB)

Tools: A Study Bible, Several recent Bible translations (NASB, NIV, NLT CSB, AMP, etc.), Concordance, Bible Dictionary, Set of word studies (Vincents, Wuest, etc.), a good English dictionary and a lexicon.

The Verse-by-Verse Method

This method involves selecting a passage of Scripture and examining it in detail by asking questions, finding cross-references, and paraphrasing it. This is similar to what a paraphrase version does (e.g. The Message).

Upon studying a passage this way we might arrive at a personal application. What was the point of the passage?

Some questions to ask (similar to Inductive Bible Study method):

- What is the overall theme of the passage?
- Are there terms/words I should explore further?
- Are there any doctrines being taught?
- Do I understand the context of the passage (what came before and what comes after this passage)?
- Do I understand the genre of the passage?
- Are there cross-references in this passage?
- What did this passage mean to those who first heard it?
- What is the application of this passage for today (if it has one)?

Tools: A study Bible, Concordance, Bible Dictionary and set of word studies.

Resources:

Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods, Rick Warren, Zondervan

Grasping God's Word and Workbook, J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays

Rick Warren's 12 Bible Study Methods:

1. The Devotional Method of Bible Study
2. The Chapter Summary Method of Bible Study
3. The Character Quality Method of Bible Study
4. The Thematic Method of Bible Study
5. The Biographical Method of Bible Study
6. The Topical Method of Bible Study
7. The Word Study Method of Bible Study
8. The Book Background Method of Bible Study
9. The Book Survey Method of Bible Study
10. The Chapter Analysis Method of Bible Study
11. The Book Synthesis Method of Bible Study
12. The Verse-by-Verse Analysis Method of Bible Study

Warren, R. (2006). Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods: Twelve Ways You Can Unlock God's Word (p. 9). Zondervan.

The Tools of the Trade

Kris Palmer

Introduction: In our previous sessions, we discussed the importance of God's Word and practical ways to study it. This morning, the goal is to further develop the practical aspects of handling God's Word accurately by examining the tools of the trade, and to conclude by identifying the pitfalls to watch out for in our studies.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NASB1995) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

The Need to Properly Understand and Use Study Tools

First things first

1. Tools are simply tools. They are not the Bible, nor are they the Holy Spirit.
2. Tools should not be a substitute for a diligent personal study of the text.
3. Remember, the Bible is a spiritual book that is spiritually discerned.
4. However, there's no need to "reinvent the wheel." Tools are useful.
5. By the way, you are not as smart as you might think. Throughout history, great thinkers and theologians have been much more intelligent than you or me. Make good use of what God has provided the church through their lives.

Your most important tools.

Your Bible! (have several different versions and types)

1. This probably goes without saying, but use your Bible to study the Bible.
2. The Bible carries its own authority and is sufficient for every area of life, including an accurate handling of the text.

Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is your friend. The Bible itself tells us that He will guide us in the Truth.
2. And most importantly, God wants us to understand and accurately handle His Word. He wants to help us!

Prayer

1. I cannot say enough about prayer.
2. Prayer is essential before, during, and after we study.

3. To understand what the Word is saying, you have to continually speak with the Author.
4. Prayer is a privilege we have been given as believers.

Your Brian

1. God gave each of us a brain; use it. Holy Spirit-informed and directed reason is very spiritual. Don't shut your brain off when you read and study.
2. At the same time, studying the Bible is not a scientific task. Don't examine the text with a microscope or telescope. Immerse yourself in the text through the Holy Spirit.
3. "The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled." Plutarch (AD 40-120)

Your church relationships are an essential resource for understanding God's word – engage with others in your studies.

Tools of the Trade.

Where to start.

1. The use of Bible study and research tools doesn't have to break the bank.
2. However, good tools are an investment.
3. Doesn't do much good to have a bunch of tools that you never use or don't know how to use.
4. Whatever tools you have or want to have, one thing to remember is to be a good note-taker. Taking notes is often helpful in processing our thoughts. Ask the text questions…
5. And remember, God gave you a brain and a church family, use both.

Suggested Tools.

1. Good Study Bible
    a. There are literally study bibles for everything.
    b. The best all-round are those with multiple reputable editors and/or contributors.
2. Concordance
    a. Good to have as they are more than just for looking up passages.
    b. Great caution when using Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries.
    c. A concordance isn't the same as a lexicon. If you don't have at least a basic understanding of the language tools or are a language scholar, this can get you in trouble.
    d. Strong's numbering system is good, but the dictionary is only a very basic idea of the root word behind an English term.
3. Bible Dictionary

4. English Dictionary. A suggestion would be Webster's 1828 dictionary, or at least one from the 1950s or earlier.
5. Bible Handbooks are good overviews of the chapters and verses.
6. Word Study Books
    a. Topical Guides
    b. Interlinear Bibles
    c. Lexicons
7. Systematic Theologies
    a. I suggest owning a reputable theology in printed form.
    b. It's important to understand the perspective of the editor or author.
8. Commentaries.
    a. There are many different types, from devotional to highly technical. It's important to know which one you are using.
    b. Like most other resources, it is important to know the perspective of the editors and authors.

Online Resources.

BibleGateway

- www.biblegateway.com
- There is a free version, but an even better paid version costs only $49.99 per year or $4.99 per month.
- Provides several great resources, including a number of Study Bibles and several commentaries

Logos Bible Software

- www.logos.com
- Logos Basic is a free app.
- You can also buy whatever resources you want.
- To get the most out of Logos, I would suggest using one of their subscription plans.
- Premium – $9.99 per month, Pro – $14.99, and Max – $19.99. I believe these are charged on a yearly basis. However, they do have good academic discounts if you are faculty, staff, or a student of a recognized learning institute.

Studylight.org

- Great for word studies
- Provides a good Interlinear and some basic language tools.

Others like blueletterbible.org, Accordance, and Olive Tree Bible Software

What about Google Search and/or AI programs? How can they be used properly?

- These tools are not always correct. Verify before you lend any level of trust.
- Do not use these types of tools to think for you.
- They are best used as a timesaver for quick searches or to help you organize your thoughts and your notes.
- Logos has an excellent internal AI setup within its subscription plans.

Conclusion:

Tools are invaluable when studying the Word of God. But always remember that tools are just tools. We are not scientists, and most of us are not researchers or formal theologians. We are leaders and teachers, responsible for accurately handling the Word of God in everything we do.

Bibliography:

See Resource List Handout

Lloyd-Jones, D. M. (2012). Preaching and preachers (40th anniversary ed.). Zondervan.

McQuilkin, R. (1995). The five smooth stones. Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Richards, L. O., & Bredfeldt, G. (1998). Creative Bible teaching. NavPress.

Pitfalls to Watch Out for When Studying the Scriptures

Tony Fajkus

Kris covered some of the great tools that are useful and necessary for doing effective and accurate Bible studies. I want to point out that interpreting the Bible is difficult, demanding and spiritually dangerous.

The Bible is the most wonderful book in the world. But sadly, it has often been misused and misquoted.

I want to emphasize through all our sessions that we are dependent on the Holy Spirit to open the scriptures to us so that we can see and understand what they are saying. We must also approach the scriptures with an attitude of obedience.

I want to use this session to point out the most common ditches people fall into while studying the Bible.

Several reasons this may happen:

- **Some scriptures are just hard to understand (e.g dark passages)**
    - *1 Cor. 15:29 Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them? (NASB)*

      Peter says some of Paul's writings are hard to understand.
    - *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 2 Pet. 3:14-16 (NASB)*

- **Poor training in Bible Study habits.**
- **Don't want to offend people. Some passages are challenging.**
- **Out to build up biblical support for my pet project. Exegesis vs. eisegesis.**
- **Don't want to be obedient to the Bible commands.**

What are some of the wrong ways to interpret scriptures:

- Taking verses out of context or ignoring context. May involve "prooftexting" - which usually refers to the arbitrary use of isolated Bible verses to support anything a person wants to defend or promote. Been used recently by politicians to support "Open Borders", government handouts and environmental crises.
- Misunderstanding the historical-cultural context. Should we not eat pork, should women have their heads covered, do the promises of God to Israel apply to nations today? Prophetic words that God gave to His covenant people Israel don't just apply to everyone else.
- Misunderstanding the challenges of language. Every translator must choose between multiple options of what a particular word can mean in a certain context and situation. (e.g. the Hebrew word for worship is also translated work).
- Not understanding that the Bible is made up of different genres. (e.g. Interpreting a poetic image in a literal way - Psm. 93:1 says the world cannot be moved. Used to support the sun going around the earth)
- Misquoting a verse. Using 1 Tim. 6:10 to mean that money itself is evil.
- Overloading the meaning of a word. Taking a word with a wide range of meanings in the Bible and read several of them into one text. (e.g. the Greek word soteria. This word can be used in the New Testament to designate a number of beneficial actions, including not only salvation through the forgiveness of sins (Luke 1:77), but also sustaining life through eating food (Acts 27:34), deliverance from prison (Phil. 1:19), and preservation from drowning (Heb. 11:7)).

Being confused regarding synonyms. Sometimes translators use similar words to make things clear, but not all synonyms mean the same thing as the word they are similar to. (e.g. the words iniquity, wickedness, transgression, and sin are not different stages or degrees of evil committed.)

Final thought.

We come from a Western mindset, and the Bible comes from people with an Eastern mindset. What those people meant when they wrote, and understood when they heard can be hard for us to comprehend. But we must try.

Psm. 199:103 *How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (NASB)*

It is why the Bible writers usually tell a story, they don't give an outline with bullet points. They wanted to affect the hearer's heart and emotions, not just their heads.

Resources:

Out of Context: How to Avoid Misinterpreting the Bible, R. L. Schultz

Bible Study Made Easy, M. Water

Sample Bible Study of Colossians 3:1-4

Colossians 3:1-4 *(ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.* ***2*** *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.* ***3*** *For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.* ***4*** *When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

I. ***Read the passage in several versions (normally would also want to read the immediate context and possibly the book as a whole)****.*

A. ***(NLT)*** *Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. [2] Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. [3] For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. [4] And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.*

B. ***(JBP)*** *If you are then "risen" with Christ, reach out for the highest gifts of Heaven, where your master reigns in power. Give your heart to the heavenly things, not to the passing things of earth. For, as far as this world is concerned, you are already dead, and your true life is a hidden one in Christ. One day, Christ, the secret centre of our lives, will show himself openly, and you will all share in that magnificent dénouement.*

C. ***(WNT)*** *So if you have been raised to life in Fellowship with Christ, keep on seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. [2] Practice occupying your minds with the things above, not with the things on earth; [3] for you have died, and your life is now hidden in God through your fellowship with Christ. [4] When Christ, who is you r live, appears, you too will appear to be glorified in fellowship with Him.*

II. ***External Context***

A. Authorship

1. *This letter claims to be written by Paul as stated in Colossians 1:1, 1:23, and 4:18.*
2. *Besides its own internal claim, one of the strongest arguments for Pauline authorship is its connection to the Book of Philemon. This book appears to have been written to the same town, was conveyed by the same messenger, and contains many common names.*
3. *Letters from Prison*
    a. *These letters include Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, and Colossians. It is generally considered that all four letters were written around the same time frame, from the same prison.*
    b. *The fact that Paul is speaking from a more mature thought pattern, the situation surrounding Onesimus and Philemon, and statements by Paul about his age in the Book of Philemon (Phil. 1:9), all seem to point to a Roman imprisonment.*
    c. *If that were the case, then it would put the date of the letter in the early 60s (Probably 61 A.D.)*
    d. *With the majority of Paul's books, the date of authorship is significant in that Paul's understanding grew, impacting what he said and how he carried out his*

ministry.

B. *The Church at Colossae*
    1. *Colossae was an important city in western Asia Minor and was close to Laodicea.*
    2. *Paul apparently was not the one who started this church. It appears to be the work of Epaphras (Col. 1:7-8), a co-laborer of Paul and part of the cause for the letter being written. The only real information that we have about this church is from what is written in Colossians, Philemon, and in Revelations 3:14-23 about Laodicea.*
    3. *It was a relatively young church, and it appears that there was a significant Jewish population in the area (thus impacting why the letter was written).*
    4. *With regard to the external content, one of the most significant issues in connection with the Colossians was what is known as the "Colossae Heresy." There was false teaching that had arisen, which posed a serious threat to the health of this young church.*
        a. *There are various opinions on the nature of the heresy.*
        b. *The most likely issue was some form of Jewish mysticism that had similar traits to later Gnosticism.*

III. Internal Context

A. *Purpose of the Book*
    1. *Paul wrote this letter both to praise the life and conduct of this congregation and to issue a strong warning about how to deal with false teachers, which had arisen.*
    2. *This book is an Epistle or letter to the church regarding these issues.*
    3. *The main theme of this book is the centrality and sufficiency of Christ.*

B. *Immediate Context*
    1. *The passage is a pivotal part of the argument Paul presents in this book.*
    2. *It concludes Paul's argument regarding the centrality of Christ (refuting the false teachers) and serves as a bridge to his appeals for the Church to live in a manner that pleases God.*
    3. *It is good somewhere at this point to break the passage up into its grammatical sections. This is not just a matter of sentences; it is more importantly the word clauses, as these are more significant due to the fact that the original text was written in Greek.*

C. *Word Studies*
    1. *There are several significant words in this passage.*
    2. *The word study can be simple or detailed, as you want it to be. However, because words convey meaning, what they mean is very important.*
    3. *The Greek words are often translated as a phrase, not just literally word for word.*
    4. *Examples*
        a. *The verb meaning "to be co-raised" is usually written as "to be raised up with"*
        b. *The imperative or command translated "set you mind"*
        c. *The word which is translated "you (plural) have died"*

IV. Interpretation (Exegesis)

A. *The goal of studying the Bible should be for you to put its words into practice.*
    1. *However, to have a correct practice, you need to understand what is being said.*
    2. *This is the goal of exegesis: to make an informed interpretation of the Scripture.*

B. *Paul has just spent most of two chapters arguing against the heresy that was threatening the church at Colossae by emphasizing the preeminence of Christ. If Christ truly is supreme and the*

only answer to this heresy, then it makes sense for Paul to remind the Colossians of their current position in Christ and the importance of keeping their focus on this truth.

C. *He is imploring them to "set their minds on things above."*
D. *The issue here is that how we think significantly affects what we do.*
E. *It has often been said that to be 'heavenly minded is to be of no earthly good." Paul had a very different perspective, which can be clearly seen in Col. 3:1-4. To Paul, truly having an eternal perspective actually enables a Christian to have a real life and to accomplish much that is good.*
F. *From Col. 3:1-4, Paul is then able to spend most of chapters three and four explaining to the Colossians how they are to live, based on how he has commanded them to think.*

V. Application

A. *The last and most important part of studying the Bible is to put what you have learned into practice. Remember, the Bible is to be read and studied so that it can be obeyed.*
B. *Here is the application of this passage:*
C. *In the daily walk of life, it is a natural tendency to think only about the moment or the day that is being lived. Life can be very busy and at times even somewhat overwhelming.*
D. *In the midst of the work of living life and not just existing from moment to moment, having an eternal perspective, as Paul speaks about in this passage, can have a significant impact.*
E. *To have an eternal perspective, one must first remember regularly that this physical here-and-now life is just a vapor when placed in the context of forever.*
F. *The other issue that needs to occupy one's thoughts is being heavenly minded so as to live life through Christ and to have Him guide and direct the way.*
    1. *This requires a daily death to self and to the world's way of thinking and a daily submission to Christ as the one in charge.*
    2. *The practical steps required to get this done is to specifically say it and ask it of Christ daily during morning prayer time.*
G. *Then, as each issue passes throughout the day, one will need to step back and practice occupying the mind with thoughts that have been filtered through this daily death and submission.*
H. *In other words, to get anything done in life, you need to be about the practice of occupying your mind with a heavenly perspective.*

Resources for Bible Study

The following list is intended to provide suggestions but is far from exhaustive. The resources have been selected to help students of the Word establish a solid foundation for accurately studying God's Word. Many of these materials are listed in Grasping God's Word (2012) by Duvall and Hays; consult that work for a more comprehensive guide.

Study Bibles

The ESV Study Bible (2008). Wheaton: Crossway.

The Apologetics Study Bible (CSB). (2017). Nashville: Holman Bible Publisher.

NIV Zondervan Study Bible, Carson, D.A. General Ed. (2015). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Concordances
Strong, James (2001). The New Strongest Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. Revised by John R. Kohlenberger III and James A. Swanson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Thomas, Robert. (2000). NAS Exhaustive Concordance, Revised. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Bible Handbooks

Anderson, Pat and David Alexander, eds. (1999). Zondervan Handbook to the Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Halley, Henry. (1965). Halley's Bible Handbook. New Revised Ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Old Testament Surveys and Introductions

Dillard, Raymond B. and Tremper Longman III (1994). An Introduction to the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

New Testament Surveys and Introductions

Carson, D. A., Douglas J. Moo and Leon Morris (2005). An Introduction to the New Testament. 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Tenney, Merrill C. (1985) New Testament Survey. Revised by Walter M. Dunnett. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Bible Atlases

Beitzel, Barry J. (2009). The New Moody Atlas of the Bible Lands. Chicago: Moody Press.

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Leading God's people with a Shepherd's Heart

Roger Moore

Biblical Shepherding is rooted in a deep love for God and His people, emphazing the importance of caring for them and helping them to mature into their calling as a disciple. From the cradle to the grave

Psalm 23:1-3 The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still water. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake

Shepherds in the Bible were responsible for the physical well-being of their flocks, guiding them to pasture, protecting them from harm, and ensuring they had food and water.

They were humble, dedicated, and hardworking individuals, with a close relationship with their sheep.

Jesus himself uses the image of the "good shepherd" who lays down his life for his sheep, highlighting his sacrificial love and care for his followers.

There are four post-resurrection commissions, and shepherding is an essential element in two of them.

- *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (16) "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved, but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. (Evangelism)*
- *Luke 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Evangelism)*
- *Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Evangelism, Teaching, and Shepherding)*
- *John 21:15-17 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus *said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "Tend My lambs.(feed, hay, straw, promote in every way the welfare of)" (16) He *said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "Shepherd My sheep.(to tend a flock, rule govern)" (17) He *said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus *said to him, "Tend My sheep. (Shepherding, Teaching)*

Shepherding is both caring and calling (on to maturity through the process of discipleship)

Both are processes and not events.

You can see this process in the early church, Beginning on Day of Pentecost.

Jerusalem - Acts 2:40-46 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" (the "many other words" probably had something to with how they responded) (41) So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (42) They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.. (44) And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;..(46) Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart. They immediately began to live an ongoing way of life as a flock of spiritual sheep in Jerusalem under the loving oversight of shepherds.

Shepherding is at the heart of the calling of local church leaders.

The two most prevalent descriptions of the nature of God's people are family and sheep.

The New Testament uses family terms (Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Children) 1377 times. The Bible uses the analogy of shepherds and sheep 352 times. These words show us the nature of God, His relationship with His people, and our relationships among His house. These words are in contrast to the term "Christian," used only 3 times, and "Saint or Saints" used 61 times

Two sides of the Shepherding coin are care and calling.

Today, we will be looking mostly at calling.

CALLING: Making Disciples Who Put His Word into Practice

Discipleship - The call to follow Him and be transformed (25 times in the Gospels, Jesus calls to "follow Me" only 4 times "believe in Me"). Jesus' clear emphasis was on following Him (Matthew 10:39, Mark 8:34-35, Luke 9:23-24, Luke 17:32-33, Matthew 16:24-25, Mar 10:21, Luk 14:33, 18:22 etc.).

Helping people grow and progress as disciples usually include five things.

1. Receiving God's word (teaching both conversationally and other means) applying it to both

belief and living. The aim of discipleship is to put His word into practice.

God's freedom and blessing come to authentic disciples following Jesus and obeying His word:

- *Luke 11:27-28 While Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd shouted, "How blessed is the mother who gave birth to you and the breasts that nursed you." (28) Jesus replied, "Rather, how blessed are those who hear and obey God's word."*
- *John 8:31-36 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; (32) and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."... 36 "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*
- *Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*
- *Romans 1:5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, Hard to separate belief and obedience John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*

Discipleship isn't information based but relationally following and obeying Jesus.

- *James 1:21-25 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. (22) But prove Shepherding God's House 15 yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.*
- *John 13:17 "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Any time the word is shared, we need to think of steps to put it into practice. This is what Mt 28 is about, not just information but obedience-based discipleship.*
- *3 John 1:4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*

2. Personally encountering Jesus through private Spiritual disciplines (prayer, worship, and Word).

3. Engaging in personal ministry (serving and mission).

4. Encountering and walking in Godly relationships that put the 59 one another's into Practice

- *Heb 10:24-25 NASB and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*
- *Heb 3:12-14 NASB Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,*

5. Walking through Defining Moments that shape our faith.

Defining moments involve pain and disappointment, the death of a friend, family member, divorce, prolonged illness, job transfer, or betrayal of a friend. Adverse circumstances can damage an individual's faith or deepen it.

Calling, Caring, and Consistent Reminding

"It is not what you say to them that they will remember, but it is what you continually say to them that they will remember." Doug Kreighbaum

Bible scholars believe that the Sermon on the Mount was not just a one-time teaching

but was a compilation of Jesus' teachings that He taught repeatedly. It wasn't just what He said

on one occasion, but it was what He continued to say. Throughout the Bible it says a lot about

remembering. Paul and Peter both write in the Epistles about reminding. The word "remind"

means to cause one to remember, bring to remembrance, recall to mind: to another, to put one

in remembrance, admonish, of something to be reminded, to remember. Consider the following

Scriptures.

- *Romans 15:15 But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God.*
- *1 Cor 4:17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.*
- *2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*
- *2 Timothy 2:14 Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, and leads to the ruin of the hearers.*
- *Titus 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,*
- *2 Peter 1:12 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed.*

Any involved in caring for God's people understand that they must patiently impart over and over.

Four things all disciples need

2Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

- "Rightly dividing"
- to proceed on straight paths, hold a straight course, equiv. to doing right

NAS 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

1. **Teaching – shows the disciple which path to walk on**
    - *NAS John 14:6 Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.*
    - *NAS Isaiah 30:21 And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.*
    - *NAS John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*
    - *NAS Isaiah 42:16 "And I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, In paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them And rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, And I will not leave them undone."*
    - *NAS Proverbs 9:6 "Forsake your folly and live, And proceed in the way of understanding."*

2. **Reproof – shows the disciple where they got off the path**

- *NAS Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life,*
- *NAS Proverbs 15:10 Stern discipline is for him who forsakes the way; He who hates reproof will die.*
- *NAS Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
- *NAS Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- *NAS Galatians 5:19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*
- *NAS James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*

3. Correction – shows the disciple how to get back on the path

- *NAS 2 Timothy 2:25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,*
- *NAS James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded..*
- *NAS Acts 3:19 "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;*
- *NAS 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- *NAS Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;*
- *NAS Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.*

4. **Instruction – shows the disciple how they can stay on the path**

- *NAS Isaiah 58:11 "And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.*
- *NAS Psalm 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD; Therefore He instructs sinners in the way. 9 He leads the humble in justice, And He teaches the humble His way.*
- *NAS Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.*
- *NAS Psalm 27:11 Teach me Thy way, O LORD, And lead me in a level path, Because of my foes.*
- *NAS Psalm 119:105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.*
- *NAS 2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.*
- *NAS John 15:4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*
- *NAS James 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
- *NAS Proverbs 4:23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.*
- *NAS Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this*

darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, 15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. 17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

A shepherd is one:

1. Who has been given a grace by the Lord to assume long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare for a person or a group of people.
2. Who nurture, care for, and guide towards on-going spiritual maturity
3. Who disciple, protect, support, restore, develop a relational friendship.
4. A person who himself is follows Jesus on His path of righteousness for His name sake.

Books

"They smell like sheep" by Dr. Lynn Anderson
"A shepherd looks at Psalm 23" Philip Keller

Studies:

"Shepherding in God's house" Doug Kreighbaum
"Small group leader's training Manual" Doug Kreighbaum
"Leadership in the house of God" Doug Kreighbaum

Leading God's people with a Shepherd's Heart Par 2

Shepherding God's people John 21:16

Biblical shepherding flows from a love for God and his people. God wants his people cared for and cared for well.
Loving care from the cradle to the grave.
Jesus is a great shepherd, and He gives us insights from his word on how to shepherd his people.

Roger & Debbie have laid a good biblical framework on one side of the shepherding coin as they looked at the biblical call to shepherd God's people.

Brenda and I want to look at the other side of the coin. (Two sides of the Shepherd's coin, Calling & Caring.)
The caring side of the shepherding God's people with a shepherd's heart.

- John 21:15-17 NLT
- Exodus 18:13=22
- 2 Corthinians 11:28
- Jeremiah 3:14-15
- Matthew 9:36-38
- 1 Peter 5: 1-7
- Hebrews 4:14-16

Caring or care forms the foundation of watching, guarding and overseeing in the context of biblical shepherding.

Jesus, as our example to follow, the good shepherd, taught us by his life actions how to care for people. Care in the Old Testament means to keep, to guard, to protect, and to preserve. (God will take care of you) He does this by people taking care of people. We must never forget that we who care for people receive this calling and gift from our Father God. He is the one who causes us to notice people who need care!

Noticing is caring!

Care or caring in the New Testament means to be of interest to, concern, to care about, to be concerned with, and especially paying attention (giving thought to), taking an interest in, or regard for.

Do we notice the people we attend church with?
Do we notice the people we work with at our job?
Do we notice the people in our family?
Do we notice the people in our home care groups?
Do we notice the people who enter our lives every day?

Watching, observing, or noticing the people who are in our presence is the key to starting our shepherding/caring ministry to others.

The start of caring/shepherding is noticing people. Please pay attention to their verbal and non-verbal responses by watching them. Every day, people enter our world who need care of some kind. Do we notice them?

To the pastors, elders, deacons, and the five-fold ministry people, do we notice people?
Or do we just do our ministry thing? Whatever job we might be doing in our churches, do we notice people?

Noticing people is how relationships work. We have to open our eyes and see the people in our sphere!

Roger Moore has a story about his elderly neighbor who fell in his backyard, and Roger noticed.

Precious people enter our lives with a cry in their heart of "Do you see me?"

Ask the Holy Spirit as we notice people if He has something for them that we are to share?

Qualities of a Servant Leader

A servant leader often has the following qualities:

They listen.
They have empathy for others.
They seek to heal, not wound.
They are aware of those around them.
They can persuade, rather than force others to their side.
They are good stewards of what has been given to them.
They are committed to the growth of other people.
They can build a community around them.

What are the key points in servant leadership?
A successful servant leader listens to other people, empathizes with the hardships and challenges of others, is committed to win-win-win situations, and builds true friendships wherever he or she goes. Perhaps, the greatest summary of servant leadership is found in Jesus's so-called Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Matthew 7:12

The Shepherd-Watchman

The requirements for a natural shepherd apply directly to the spiritual shepherds of God's people. Natural shepherds, as watchmen over their flock, build observation towers to scan the countryside for advance warning of dangers to the flock. Flash floods can sweep through the hills

and destroy everything in their path. Predators may raid the flock; lions, bears, jackals, or wolves could sneak in and claim a straying lamb or wounded sheep. These predators, in fact, are a threat to the shepherd himself. Vultures or eagles might swoop down to wound the young of the flock, and return later for the kill. The shepherd must be a far-seeing watchman, constantly alert to potential dangers around him and the flock. He dare not be a lazy or unseeing watchman.

Paul exhorted the Ephesian elders, in his farewell address, to watch over the flock in just this way (Acts 20:28-31). Paul's letter to the Corinthians exhorts them to watch and stand fast (1 Corinthians 16:13). Other examples of the call to shepherdly watchfulness:

- "Watch ye and stand fast" (I Corinthians 16:13)
- "Continue in prayer and watch" (Colossians 4:2)
- "Let us not sleep, but let us watch" (I Thessalonians 5:6)
- "But watch thou in all things" (II Timothy 4:5)
- "Obey them who have rule over you ... for they watch for your souls" (Hebrews 13:17).

A leader over the flock must be a most diligent watchman. The Church has many enemies that would attack the house of the Lord in these last days. Lazy shepherds leave the Church open to attack. And false shepherds have inflicted some of the Church's worst wounds. Not only do they steal from God's people, but they often bring forth a response of misguided over-regulation from government. 'liue and watchful shepherds of spiritual Israel are the Church's hope of protection from spiritual destruction in these perilous times.

The Shepherd-Protector

Closely related to the role of watchman is the shepherd's role as guard, protector and defender of the flock. Sheep are among the most defenseless of animals. They have no natural weapaons for attack. Their docile disposition leaves them very unlikely to bite, kick or scratch. They are one of the oiily animals that depend almost completely on a human protector. The shepherd is the flock's main (if not the only) guard and protector against hazards and enemies. At times, the shepherd must risk his own life for the life of the sheep.

Sheep are also very ignorant about personal survival in the wilderness. The shepherd must exercise constant watch over the sheep in the wilderness, where they invariably wander into trouble. In the wilderness, shepherds used to build a sheepfold with walls that could repel the strongest predators. Shepherds slept by the door to provide complete security for the flock. If an enemy came first, he would have to step over the shepherd to get to the sheep. In meeting the sheep's enemies first, the shepherd was willing to lay down his life for the sheep.

The Lord, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, gives us His standard and His example of how to defend the flock. In Psalms 121:3, we are assured that "He that keepeth thee will not slumber." Other verses that give us the Lord's standard and example for His under-shepherds in being a true defender of the flock:

- Psalm 7:10 "My defense is of God."
- Psalm 59:16 "Thou hast been my defense and my refuge."
- Psalm 62:6 "He is my defense I shall not be moved."
- Zechariah 9:15 "The Lord of Hosts shall defend them."
- Psalm 21:3 He that keepeth thee shall not slumber."
- Psalm 12:7 "Thou shalt keep them, 0 Lord."
- Psalm 31:20 "The Lord shall keep them safely in his pavilion.:

- Psalm 27:7 "Except the Lord keep the city."
- l John 17:11 "Holy Father, keep them through thy own word."

The Lord Jesus is the Great Shepherd who shall keep His people from all trouble. In the same way, each of His shepherd-leaders must do all he can to protect the sheep from their enemies.

The Shepherd-Guide

A shepherd must perform another important role for the sheep, that of a guide. To say the least, sheep are not independent travelers. They have no sense of direction. Astray from the flock, they wander in circles until taken by predators. When grazing, they keep their noses to the ground as long as there is grass, but never look up to see where their grazing takes them.

Conditions in the wilderness are not kind to sheep. Good pasture is often in spots and small strips, and is hard to find. Streams may be few in number and hidden in some areas, making the land parched and unyielding. Without a shepherd, sheep would wander aimlessly until they died of starvation or thirst. The shepherd must wisely select grazing range for the sheep, out of personal, first-hand knowledge. The lives of the sheep depend on his guidance.

Sheep are sensitive animals that cannot endure hard driving. They are meant to be led gently, and the wise shepherd does so. Some weak, sickly, or injured sheep would die if the shepherd drove them too far or too fast. The wisdom of the shepherd can save the lives of many sheep. The patriarch Jacob illustrates this truth. In Genesis 33:9-15, we have the account of Jacob guiding his flock as he went back to his home country. He demonstrated many important attitudes as a shepherd over his flock.

- *TENDERNESS Genesis 33:13 'The children are tender."*
- *SENSITIVITY Genesis 33:13 "The flocks and the herds have young with them."*
- *GENTLENESS Genesis 33:13 "The flock will die if men overdrive them in one day."*
- *OBSERVATION Genesis 33:14 "The flock must be led softly."*
- *PATIENCE Genesis 33:14 "The flock must only be led as much as the youngest can endure."*

These verses in Genesis 33 clearly show the heart of a true shepherd. Jacob was willing to go slowly in order to save the young and the tender of the flock. He did not drive the flock, though he had the power to do so, and it would have had its benefits. Similarly, the Church of the Lord Jesus has many young and tender sheep. These cannot be driven hard by forceful men. True shepherds must gently guide them.

God has promised to help His shepherds guide the flock effectively. He will be their Great Shepherd, the One whose example and guidance the under-shepherd can follow.

Promises for the shepherd:

- *Psalm 23:2 "He leadeth me beside the still waters."*

- *Psalm 77:20 "Thou leadest thy people like a flock."*
- *Psalm 78:52-54 "He led forth his own sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock."*

Picture of a Shepherd

By Dave Richards

"God wants His people cared for and cared for well"

1 Peter 5 2 *shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness: nor yet as lording it over those appointed to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GiVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.*

1. honest
2. sensitive
3. radiates Christ
4. they love people
5. works hard
6. humbly
7. keeps his word
8. not self-centered
9. makes you feel comfortable
10. can be recommended
11. doesn't let you down
12. will not take advantage of you
13. not an opportunist
14. plans ahead
15. thoughtful
16. fair
17. good steward
18. doesn't lose their cool
19. consistent
20. recognizes and respects authority
21. hangs in there and perseveres
22. admits when wrong
23. teachable

In developing the Heart of a Shepherd, you must continually ask yourself these questions

1. Do I stay in close communion with the H.S.?
2. Do I accept the Bible as the Word of God?
3. Do I love God's people?
4. Do I identify with God's people in a specific local church?
5. Do I willingly submit to authority?
6. Do I love the backslider?
7. Do I truly worship God with all my heart?
8. Do I have a strong prayer life?
9. Do I have a mature attitude in pressure situations?
10. Am I a good listener?
11. Do I listen to and receive criticism?
12. Do I accept it when someone else is assigned a job that I am better qualified for?
13. Do I gloat in self-righteousness when someone else makes a mistake?
14. Do I allow other people's opinions, or do I have to argue for my point of view?

15. Do I have inner peace during times of turmoil?
16. Do I forgive someone who deliberately ignores me?
17. Do I control my anger?
18. Do I sacrifice?
19. Do I finish the projects that I begin?
20. Do I put others before myself?
21. Do I face unpleasant disappointments without any bitterness?
22. Do I freely admit when I am wrong?
23. Do I keep promises and complete my assignments?
24. Can I hold my tongue when it is best to do so?
25. Do I accept and live in peace with the things that I cannot change?

The five things he wants us to know are these:

1. *Everybody wants to be somebody.* No matter how old or young people are, everybody wants to be somebody.
2. *Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care.* People won't be interested in what you believe until they know the answer to this question: "Does that person really love me?"
3. *Everybody who belongs to the body of Christ belongs to everybody that belongs to the body of Christ.* Too many Christians try to go it alone in life. We were designed to live in and support each other in community.
4. *Anybody who helps somebody influences a lot of bodies.* It's amazing how much we can encourage and influence other people if we are wiliing to invest ourselves in them.
5. *God loves everybody.* The most important thing on earth is people because that's who Jesus died for.

https://jimdaly.focusonthefamily.com/john-maxwell-wants-know-five-things-people/

Caring For Others - Scriptures

Philippians 2:4 ESV *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, bu also to the interests of others.*

Ephesians 4:32 ESV *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

John 13:34-35 ESV *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another:just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

1 John 3:17-18 ESV *But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

1 Timothy: 5:8 ESV *But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Proverbs 21:13 ESV *Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.*

Galatians 6:9-1:0 ESV *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

Matthew 25:40 ESV *And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'*

1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV *Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

Galatians 6:2 ESV *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

Proverbs 28:27 ESV *Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.*

Matthew 25:31-46 ESV *"When the Son of Man·comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ...*

Proverbs 19:17 ESV Whoev*er is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.*

James 1:27 ESV *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

Galatians 5:22 ESV *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

1 Peter 5:7 ESV *Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

James 2:14-17 ESV *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for· the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

1 John 3:17 ESV *But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?*

Resources

"Shepherding in God's House" by Doug Kreighbaum

https://c2cfamily.org/wp-/content/uploads/2024/06/Shepherding-in-Gods-House.pdf

"John Maxwell Wants You to Know These Five Things About People" by Jon Daly "John Maxwell's Daily Guide to Becoming a Better Servant Leader"

https://share.google/spEOux6i1ZdZQ8zEa

"Picture of a Shepherd" by Dave Richards England Salt & Light.

"The Makings of a Leader" by Frank Damazio ISBN 0-914946-84-0

"Shepherding God's People in His Path of Righteousness" by Doug Kreighbaum ISBN-13-979-8319214126

"They Smell Like Sheep" Volume 1 by Dr. Lynn Anderson ISBN: 1-58229-297

Our Greater Family Leadership DNA for Translocal Work Pt 1

What is Translocal/Apostolic Work?

God's covenant and commissions entail "filling the earth" with His people created and walking in "His image and likeness." This causes us always to be thinking "beyond."

- *Genesis 1:26-28 "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image and likeness… and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over...."*
- *Matthew 28:18-20 "All authority has been given me ...go therefore and make disciples of all the nations…"*
- *Mark 16:15-18 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation…"*
- *Luke 24:46-48… that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."*
- *John 17:18-19 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*
- *John 20:21-23 Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you…"*

Why do we refer to translocal work as apostolic work?

The noun and verb forms of the words translated as "Apostle or Apostles, Send, and Sent" are the same root.

- Noun form apostolos (G652) "Apostle, Apostles." Thayer, Strongs "a *delegate*, an *ambassador, one sent forth with orders*; officially a *commissioner* of Christ, apostle, messenger." It is found 81 times in the New Testament.
- Verb form of apostellō (G649) "Sent, Send." Thayer, Strongs "set apart, sent away, to order one to go to a place." It is used 148 times in the New Testament.

In Greek Culture, the word "Apostolos, Apostello" originated from the role of a leader and a colony or fleet sent from the motherland to establish colonies in other places. "The New International Dictionary of N.T. Theology" (pg. 64-65) defines it as, "The word Apostolos...first meant a cargo ship or fleet sent out. Later, it denoted a commander of a naval expedition or a band of colonists sent overseas. In the papyri, it could mean an invoice or even a passport. Josephus uses the word for a group sent on a mission. All of its uses have two ideas in common: a commission and being sent. It is used about 700 times in the LXX."

"A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature" by Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich, defines it as "Messenger, delegate, envoy, one commissioned and sent with full authority of the sender…Specially of God's messenger, with focus on the authority of the risen Lord" (Pg 120—122).

A Greek-English Lexicon (9th ed.)" by Liddell, Scott, Jones, and McKenzie, defines it as "A naval expedition, a fleet that has been sent out…One who is sent, envoy, ambassador" (Pg 220-223). Even the secular Greek writer Demosthenes, who frequently uses the word, it is entirely confined to the meaning of a "warlike expedition, fitted out and sent by sea to a distant contest." From the fleet itself, the term was finally transferred

to the naval commander sent out with it, so that in this connection it became equivalent to the modern title of "Admiral." (Stephens's Thesaurus, on the word.)

The cultural background and idea entailed a leader/admiral and the colony or fleet that is sent from the motherland to establish colonies in other places. This is translocal apostolic work. People are being sent to see churches (colonies of heaven) established, built on Christ, and built together and growing as the Temple of the Lord. The apostolic desire is to see the "Administration/outworking of the Mystery of God" (Ephesians 3:10-11), through Jesus expanding, building, and raising His church (the colony of heaven) throughout the earth.

Translocal work must be rooted in the Storyline of the Bible.

- *Genesis 1:26-28 "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image and likeness… and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over...."*

The Bible begins with this mandate in Genesis 1, continues through His body, the church, and the mandate is fulfilled at the final family event, "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

- *Ephesians 3:8-11 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, (9) and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery ("how the mystery works out") which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; (10) so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. (11) This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- *Revelation 19:7-9 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."… (9) Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'"*
- *Revelation 21:9-23 Then one of the seven angels…spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." (10) And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, (11) having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly.*

The Storyline of the Bible entails God filling the earth with His "glory, image and likeness" through His people, (the church, the body of Christ, His eternal family), who are being birthed by the Spirit through the gospel, built together, and built up to demonstrate and exercise His government (Kingdom of God) on earth. One way to express this is with the phrase, "God's Spirit-filled family together on God's mission." Translocal work is not about expanding "Networks" or "Brands" built after business models, but God's family, birthed by the Gospel of Jesus and the power of the Spirit, seeking to express and expand His life and nature throughout the earth.

In the New Testament, in light of God's purpose, most of the instructions guide us to build His family "image and likeness" on three levels.

- ***Eph 3:14-15*** *MKJV For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named (our identity).*

1. Natural Family - Husbands, wives, and children - *1 Cor 14:35, Eph 5:22-28, Col 3:18-19, 1 Tim 3:12, Titus 2:1-5, 1 Pet 3:1-7*

2. Local Church Family – The local church is identified as the "household of God, the pillar and support of God's truth" (1 Timothy 3:2-15). In the New Testament, family terms (Father, Mother, Brother, Sister) are used 1655 times to describe God and His people, the church. Most of the New Testament writings were letters to local churches or leaders of them, instructing them in how Jesus was building them together as God's family to engage in His mission. The New Testament uses the phrase "One Another" (Gk "Allelon" which means together or mutual life) 108 times. It has 59 direct "one another" commands.

3. Translocal family or a family sphere of service - All through Paul's writings you see him mentioning people who were joined in family with him and working in and among local churches to see them become everything God desires (Rom 16:1-16, 1Corinthains 16:10-24, 2 Corinthians 10:10-16, Colossians 1:7, 4:7-18, 1 Timothy 4:11-22, Philippians 4:1-23, 1 Thessalonians 3:1-6, Titus 3:12-13). Most of his letters were written together with others (Paul and Sosthenes 1Co 1:1, Paul and Timothy 2Co 1, Paul and Timothy Col 1:1, Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy 1 Th 1:1, 2Th 1:1, Paul and Timothy Phm 1:1).

This was Paul's goal, even with those he had not personally met.

- *Colossians 2:1-2 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, (2) that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself. (Prophetic picture of this is in Zechariah 8:3-16, Philippians 2:1-5, Romans 12:1-16, Ephesians 4:1-25,*

What are Translocal Spheres of Service, Ephesians 4 Gifts, and Apostolic Teams?

Paul used the term "sphere of service" to define the translocal work with those joined by God in it.

- *2 Corinthians 10:13-16 NASB 13 But we (Paul Sosthenes and Timothy) will not boast beyond our measure, but within the* ***measure of the sphere*** *which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you. 14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach to you, for we were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ; 15 not boasting beyond our* ***measure****, that is, in other men's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows, we will be, within our* ***sphere****, enlarged even more by you, 16 so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, and not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another. (See 1 Cor 16:10-24 below)*

A "Sphere" was and is a relationally defined measurement of responsibility, work, and influence. Throughout his writings, Paul identifies the "spheres" of people and churches he was joined with in the work of God (1

Corinthians 16:19, Romans 16:3-15, 2 Timothy 4:19-20, Colossians 4:15, Philemon 1:2, etc.). There seemed to be a mutual recognition among those joined in the work in a committed way in which Paul uses the phrase "to die and to live together" and to "Make room in your hearts for each other" and "to impart our lives to each other" (2 Corinthains 3:1-6, 7:1-16, 1 Thessalonians 2:8).

Five-Fold Ministries of Ephesians 4?

- *Ephesians 4:10-13 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) (11) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; (13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Pastors, and Teachers are gifts Jesus gives in and through people for the "Equipping of the saints for the works of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." The primary purpose of these gifts is "Equipping." The Greek word for "Equipping" is Katartismos (G2677), which means complete furnishing, equipping." It is closely related to the word Katartizo (G2675), which means to complete thoroughly, to repair, adjust, and to make perfect." An overall meaning is to adjust, fit, or put in good working order to fully function as designed.

We find the idea of equipping in 13 passages in the New Testament (Matthew 4:20-21, Matthew 21:16, Mark 1:19, Luke 6:39-40, Romans 9:21-22, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, 1 Peter 5:10-11, Hebrews 10:5, Hebrews 11:3, Hebrews 13:20-21). In the book, "Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary," Harold Hoehner, sums up the three primary ways in which the word "equip/equipping" (katartizō/katartismos) is used in these passages. It means "to mend/restore, establish/lay foundations, and to prepare/train/equip" in these five areas.

Jesus has all five of these areas/desires working inside of Him all the time as God's word indicates (Hebrews 3:1, Matthew 19:16, Luke 19:10, Mark 6:1-6, John 10:11-14 etc.) One way to express the idea of equipping is that each of these five areas expresses an aspect of the heart of Jesus all the time. He always has an apostolic desire to see God's glory and His Kingdom revealed and expanded throughout the earth as He builds His church/temple/house of God. A prophetic desire to see people hear and respond to what God is saying at any moment. An evangelistic desire to see God's good news consistently proclaimed and for people to come into Christ. A pastoral desire to see people cared for and guided into what God has for them, and a teacher's desire to see people know and obey what God has said through His word.

In translocal work, we aim to see all five of these gifts functioning to equip all the saints in the churches that are being planted and built, so that the full heart of Jesus is experienced and expressed through His people. Many churches do not always have these gifts on site. One aspect of translocal work involves seeing those possessing these gifts move among the churches to do the work of equipping.

What is an Apostolic Team?

We are part of a worldwide family of leaders and churches called "Salt & Light. We use the phrase "Apostolic Team" that some refer to as a "translocal team, regional team, or fivefold team." Whatever title is used, such a team is usually led by an apostle or their designee, includes other E4 gifts, includes men and women, mature and younger leaders, who work to serve an "Sphere' (2 Corinthians 10:13) of churches, church plants, and new territory. Some of our greater international family uses terms which refer to spheres such as "region, zone, or cluster."

What are Essential elements to walking and working together in a Translocal Family Sphere.

- Must recognize and commit to those God joins you with to walk and work together.
- You must see yourselves as fellow family members, Spiritual Fathers, Mothers, Brothers, and Sisters, not "professional ministers." With that identity, you always want to bring others into greater family relationships.
- You must cooperate instead of compete, recognizing that your calling is part of a greater calling.
- You must learn the value of yielding, recognizing that you are designed to be better together with those God joins you with.
- You must continually realize that "ministry" means serving. The greatest aim is to serve others, not promote self.

Resources for continual development:

Free Books Online:

"The Journey: How our Salt & Light family came into being" https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/the-journey.pdf

"Training and Releasing Leaders" by Dave Richards
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/training-and-releasing-leaders.pdf

"Loving God, Living Church" by Mark Norridge. How to live in the missional nature and call upon His church.
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/loving-god-living-church-2.3-final.pdf

"A Guide to Practical Pastoring" by the founding father of our Salt & Light family, Barney Coombs.
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/a-guide-to-practical-pastoring.pdf

Studies:

"How our wider family works" ***https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/pdf/e-2.pdf***

"Adopting churches into the family." *While this is not a procedure manual, it does reveal our DNA as existing churches and leaders inquire about becoming part of our family.*
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/pdf/e-4.pdf

Our Greater Family Leadership DNA for Translocal Work Pt 2

Who and What is our Greater Salt & Light Family?

We are part of a worldwide family of leaders and churches called "Salt & Light. We define ourselves as "an international family of translocal/apostolic teams and churches, planting and equipping churches for God's mission." We use the phrase "family of leaders and churches" because family is the nature and image of God. Anything connected to the Godhead should bear His family image.

Core Family values

We have four essential values from God's word that we pursue together. These are not simply concepts that make up a vision, but they are passionate pursuits God has revealed to us that we cannot live without.

FAMILY: Family is the nature of God. This relational life is therefore expressed in both natural and spiritual family, in local church and across a wider family of churches. Fatherhood and motherhood is key to fostering family, with an atmosphere of belonging, love, fun, security, vision, encouragement, care and training. A key practice for us is to recognize the spiritual headship of men in the family, so while men and women must lead together, most of our church families appoint men to be elders.

DISCIPLES: Discipleship is about growing all of God's people into maturity, so that each one can both enjoy relationship with God and play their full part in his mission. Therefore, everyone is called to be both making disciples and discipled in an accountable relationship. This includes church senior leaders, who should relate to someone for input, accountability and care ("every Pastor needs a pastor").

SERVANT-LEADERS: We aim to equip every Christian to be a servant-leader, in the home, church community, and at work. Anointed servant leadership is vital in the body of Christ, and helps all to grow to full maturity and fulfill their God-given destiny. Leaders must be servant-leaders! A key practice for us is to understand and receive the spiritual authority of anointed servant-leaders, allowing us to live under their blessing.

APOSTOLIC: We are all called to be part of God's apostolic purposes for his world. So, receiving apostolic teams (i.e. apostles and other gifted leaders) into local churches brings vision, spiritual impact, and draws churches into these bigger purposes of God. We value the diversity of our international family. It helps us understand and enjoy the richness of the body of Christ, as we respect, honor, and relate to Christians in other nations. A key practice for us is to see that every local leadership team needs an active and healthy relationship with apostolic teams, to flourish and be part of the Salt & Light family.

Relationships are essential

Jesus identified that a real relationship of love with God and those He joins you with is the essence of His Kingdom (Mark 12:28-34, Luke 10:27, Romans 14:13-20, 1 Corinthians 13:1-6, 1 John 3:10, 4:7-13).

While some would label us a network, our core vision is to be 'a family on mission'. Networks can tend to function on a more organizational level, while we desire and pursue relationships and 'family,' because we see that everything in the Body of Christ is relational. Paul had a constant desire to build people together in family relationships because he understood God's design for his people (Col. 2:1-4; Eph. 1:9, 2:19-22, 3:3-9).

Apostolic Teams and Churches Must Live in the Relational Joinings of God

The NT provides insight into the relationship between apostolic teams and local churches. A key issue is a strong sense of divine relational connection ('joining') that allows the various teams to interact in a healthy way, even over sometimes challenging issues.

The phrase "the apostles and the elders" occurs several times in the NT, perhaps most importantly in Acts 15, where apostles and elders met to consider difficult theological and practical issues arising from the unexpected extension of their mission.

As churches are established, translocal teams continue to work together with churches and leaders to solve problems, understand God's agenda for each church and pursue the wider mission. The local church views the apostolic team not as ministry partners or special guests, but as fathers and mothers from whom they receive God's authority and care. The apostolic team cares deeply for the churches, as fathers and mothers, with a posture of 'your good at my expense'. The apostolic team does not 'lord it over' or dictate to the local church, while the local church seeks to submit to the godly leadership being offered.

It is sometimes asked who is really the final authority in the local church – the elders or the apostolic team? In the NT, some strong statements from apostles and their teams reveal a direct authority in the local church (3Jn 9-10; 1Cor. 4:14-21; 2Cor. 11:28, 13:10), which the apostles sometimes exercised by addressing letters, not just to local church leaders, but directly to the whole local church. However, this apostolic authority prefers to appeal rather than to command (2Cor. 4:2), because the goal is really a family partnership in ministry. If we ask who is really in charge, it's rather like asking whether a child needs a mother or a father! Rather, we value both and keep working relationally to arrive at a point of unity.

How are apostolic teams appointed in local churches? Where the team is involved in planting or adopting the church, the relationship will be strong, and the question will be straightforwardly answered. When circumstances require that a new team get involved with a church, or there are significant changes of personnel in either team, it is important that there is a fresh agreement to walk together.

The goal of teams and churches is always maturity.

In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul speaks of his work as a fathering ministry, and in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12, he speaks of it as both a fathering and mothering work, alongside the church leadership to bring maturity in the church. His goal was to bring the 'child' to maturity. Paul's relationship with Timothy continued even as Timothy went to lead Ephesus, a significant apostolic base.

Those from the apostolic teams are not a 'super-elder' or episcopal 'bishop', but an equipping ministry that comes in and impacts churches, then leaves them to work it out.

Apostolic teams are formed to serve local churches, either for an occasion, for a specific task or over an extended period. We are not looking for a one-size-fits-all model, but to find the mind of God for a particular church or mission.

The needs of churches from Apostolic teams vary according to the life-stage of that church.

- A new plant needs much more regular and on-the-ground investment and foundation-laying.
- A developing church needs elders to be appointed and trained to take proper responsibility.
- A mature church needs ongoing provocation to 'think big' and to release resources to others.
- A church in transition needs more support, training of new leaders, fresh attention to foundations.
- A church in difficulty needs careful and practical help to find a way through its problems.

Multigenerational Leaders and Teams.

The Bible reveals the multigenerational nature of God. He revealed Himself to Moses generationally, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus 3:1-6) and throughout the Bible we are called to think generationally, and realize that there is generational design and dependency (Hebrews 11:39-40).

In NT teams, we see emerging leaders (e.g., Timothy, Titus, Mark) working alongside more established leaders (e.g., Paul, Barnabas). This inter-generational working is vital for training, for multiplication, and for succession. We always want to see sons and daughters growing up to become mothers and fathers. Several attitudes will enable us to walk

- As in natural families, older leaders must be eager to train and release sons and daughters, entrusting to them what God has given. They want their children to grow and develop.
- Younger leaders must understand stewardship. Leaders are stewards, but God is the owner (Mt. 20:8; Lk. 12:42, 16:1-8; Tit. 1:7). Every generation continues the stewardship God has given the previous generations, and has a dual purpose: to serve God's calling for their own generation (Acts 13:36), and to pass on the stewardship to the next generation (Ps. 145:4; Eph. 3:21).
- We must continually talk together, asking what should be changed, and what must not. God's mission does not change. While methods, functions, and leaders may change, each generation is responsible for moving God's mission forward.

Goals and Priorities of Apostolic Teams?

As we read the NT descriptions of apostolic teams, and how they worked in and with local churches, we see they fulfil several key functions.

Extension

- Continually stimulating the call to mission
- Leading in breakthrough and preaching the Gospel in new settings
- Supporting churches in evangelism, church planting, and missional initiatives

Supernatural impartation

- Ensuring local churches continue to pursue and experience Spirit-filled supernatural life
- Imparting and helping others experience the power of God

Foundation-laying

- Helping Christians become mature (baptising, filling with the Spirit, deliverance, etc.)
- Establishing people together in Christ as church communities
- Helping laying doctrinal, relational and vision foundations, through teaching and envisioning
- Reviewing what is in place and what is missing, and attending to lacks and weaknesses
- Advice at key points of development

Leadership training and appointment

- Helping identify and then appointing elders
- Helping identify and train future leaders

Problem-solving

- Supporting churches through problems, e.g. relational, sin or vision
- Guarding against false teaching and helping with doctrinal disagreement
- Regular engagement with the leader, local team and church, not just crisis management \

Promoting unity

Intervening in relational difficulties that are unable to be resolved locally

Concern for relationships with the wider church and its leaders

Balancing the local development and the call beyond

We must strike a balance between developing local churches and responding to the call beyond. At one extreme, we could simply be caring for existing churches; at the other, we could become merely a missionary movement, with no care for existing leaders and churches. We have a concern of caring for local churches and their leaders, while also maintaining a constant concern for 'regions beyond' (Romans 15). We see this in the ministry of Paul, who was always thinking about the call beyond, as well as providing ongoing support for the churches that had already been established.

In many of the missional church/microchurch movements today, the goal is metrics. The desire to multiply churches so they can become a "movement" can bear a similar resemblance to the church growth movements' metrics of success, numbers. Always planting and expanding with little thought of ongoing building is not the New Testament way. We need to pursue both building and expanding.

We need both inspired and coordinated activity.

We see Paul sending others into churches, as well as asking churches to receive certain people to come and labor among them. There was a continuous flow of people ministering in and through churches, not in a disorganized way but with coordinated efforts of the team. He was strategic, yet open to the Holy Spirit at times,

disturbing and redirecting his plans. Liaising with local elders, apostolic teams may coordinate activities, including helping determine what is needed and then sending various ministries and teams into churches; coordinating mission and extension activities to stimulate and train leaders; travelling with emerging leaders, like Timothy and Titus, for further training.

Essential attitudes that enable us to walk together in God's design.

- We want to be more than just friends – we want to foster family relationships that do each other good.
- We want to relate honestly and openly, in order to create a culture of care, challenge and change.
- We are determined to be accountable, receiving each other such that 'iron sharpens iron'.
- We believe that "every Pastor needs a pastor" (i.e. every senior leader also needs to receive personal oversight and care).
- We believe that every church needs to relate well to an apostolic team.
- We value diversity but also want a measure of common purpose, practices and priorities.
- We operate under the leadership of the IAT, a council of national and sphere leaders who walk together in interdependence. Their authority is the authority of agreement, and they agree to talk together before making any changes in their own sphere that would affect international relationships.
- We have minimal central financing. Rather we encourage a culture in which churches financially honour the apostolic team and other ministry they receive, as well as releasing those ministries to expansion and mission.

Resources for continual development:

Free Books Online:

"The Journey: How our Salt & Light family came into being" https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/the-journey.pdf

"Training and Releasing Leaders" by Dave Richards
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/training-and-releasing-leaders.pdf

"Loving God, Living Church" by Mark Norridge. How to live in the missional nature and call upon His church.
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/loving-god-living-church-2.3-final.pdf

"A Guide to Practical Pastoring" by the founding father of our Salt & Light family, Barney Coombs.
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/resources-pdf/a-guide-to-practical-pastoring.pdf

Studies:

"How our wider family works" ***https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/pdf/e-2.pdf***

"Adopting churches into the family." *While this is not a procedure manual, it does reveal our DNA as existing churches and leaders inquire about becoming part of our family.*
https://www.saltlight.org/assets/img/pdf/e-4.pdf