

DR DEREK

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE



A
PRACTICAL
GUIDE TO
BECOMING
A WORLD
CHANGER

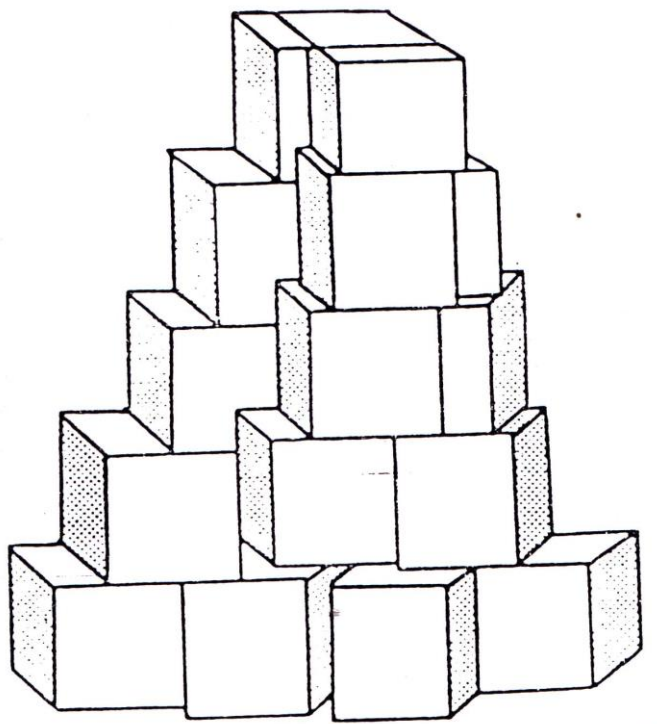
BOOK - 13
LEVEL
MINISTER

ENGLISH

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

Level: **MINISTER**

Study book no: 13



LEVELS:

5. **Minister**
4. Leader / Pastor
3. Group or Cell leader
2. Disciple
1. Beginner

Bible Study Course to grow to spiritual maturity making every believer in Christ a minister and to increase in effective and efficient ministry!!!

Easy to use for self-study as well as to teach others!!!

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

PURPOSE:

- TO KNOW HIM, THE ONLY TRUE GOD

(Growing / Maturing)

- Josh. 1 : 8, "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success."
- II Pet. 3 : 18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."
- II Tim. 1 : 15, "Study to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."
- Col. 1 : 27b - 28, "Christ in you, the hope of glory, Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ."

- AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN TO OTHERS!

(Multiplying / Reproducing)

- II Tim. 2 : 2, "And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
- II Tim. 3 : 16 - 17, "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."
- Eph. 2 : 10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."
- II Pet. 1 : 8, "For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

<u>PRINCIPLE:</u> "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things!" (Rom. 11: 36)

(INCREASING IN KNOWLEDGE; MATURING IN CHARACTER; USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS)

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HOW MINISTRIES CAN MULTIPLY

Chapter One - CHURCH GROWTH AND CHURCH PLANTING

These two subjects are very closely related and occupy a very special place in the heart of God, for both are concerned with bringing people to the saving knowledge of Jesus. Church growth and church planting are both concerned with bringing people to God and adding them to the Body of Christ. It is proven reality that strong, thriving churches are better able to plant new congregations than small struggling ones. They usually have more resources in manpower and finances and providing that they have a vision and desire to extend the Kingdom of God, they are in a stronger position to do so.

So, every pastor and church should have a desire and purpose under God, to see their congregation grow numerically and spiritually, and to use its members and resources to engage in planting new congregations. One of the best indications of congregational maturity is evidenced when that congregation re-produces itself, planting another congregational and caring for it until it also reaches a stage of maturity where it can look after itself.

1. PASTORS AND LEADERS ARE THE KEYS TO GROWTH

I cannot over emphasize this fact. Obviously God is the indispensable factor in revival, church growth and church planting. Without His help and blessing all our efforts would be in vain. “One (man) sows, another (man) waters, but it is God who gives the increase.” (1 Cor.3:6) Nevertheless, in the work of the Gospel, God has chosen to work through human instruments and He depends upon us to work with Him in this important task. As someone has well said, “Without God we cannot and without us God will not.”

Therefore, every church leader has a solemn responsibility to provide the kind of leadership and inspiration that will encourage the churches to be active and effective in their witness and in spreading the Good News. As we consider this truth we realize how high a privilege and how great a responsibility God has given to every pastor and leader. A responsibility that we can only begin to fulfill as we depend wholly on the strength and inspiration that only God can impart to us.

We are living in very critical times which are sorely testing mankind. Days of extremity and intense pressures when men and women around the world are reaching out for answers and solutions beyond themselves. It is also a time of harvest for God’s Kingdom. Many nations are opening up to the Gospel as never before. The Church of Jesus Christ is expanding rapidly in many nations, particularly some of the countries in Asia. God is placing a mantle of ministry on men and women and using them in a powerful manner to reach their generation with the message of Jesus as Saviour, Lord and King.

2. LEADERS MUST INSPIRE THEIR ASSOCIATES

I am personally convinced that the most important and effective thing that any leader can do is to raise up a leadership group around him and prepare them in every possible way to function as a team. No individual can adequately cope with all the responsibilities of a ministry. It requires far more than one person. Therefore a primary task for any leader is to prayerfully gather a team of loyal co-labourers. His most important function is to pastor those leaders. He must recruit them, teach and train them, inspire them and delegate certain responsibilities and functions to them. If he will effectively shepherd this ministry team, they in turn will be shepherds to the congregation. In his way the senior pastor can multiply his own effectiveness thus reaching and ministering to many more people than he personally could ever hope to reach. In addition, those ‘under – shepherds’ are gaining valuable experience in the various aspects of ministry so that when the time comes for them to undertake the responsibilities of ministry themselves, they will be better equipped and experienced.

It is good to begin building such a ministry team as soon as possible. Ideally the process should commence as soon as the congregation is founded. Even when the numbers may still be quite small and possibly one pastor could take care of all the tasks. The leader should aim to start building a team around himself and begin to delegate certain responsibilities to potential leaders. He should concentrate primarily on building a strong and loyal ministry team and believe that they will be able to effectively shepherd the congregation of believers.

The process of delegation and sharing the work load was one that Moses found to be most effective. Jethro, his father-in-law had convinced him of the wisdom of such a strategy in those early days of their wilderness wanderings. When Moses was beginning to learn some of the hard lessons of the ministry. Moses discovered that through wise and effective delegation he could care for more people and have less wear and on his own person.

3. CONSTANTLY EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE OF WITNESSING

It is so easy in the ministry to become taken up with all kinds of emphases and responsibilities to the point where the most important things are neglected. Jesus came into this world to seek and to save those who were lost. This was His Primary mission. It was His ultimate purpose for both living and dying. Everything He did was towards this end. In a similar manner this must also be the most important task of all believers today. The Church exists to tell the world of God's love and His wonderful plan of salvation.

Whatever other tasks we may deem important, the underlying, foundational and most important of all, it is to tell all mankind of God's love and His provision for their eternal future. Unfortunately many churches have become inward looking and introspective. Their church program and activities have become more important to them than the task of sharing Christ with the world. We must never lose this basic vision that Jesus came into this world to save sinners. He also told Peter that if he would truly follow Jesus, he too would become a fisher of men. Luke 5:10.

In order to effectively achieve this purpose, the pastor must not only preach and teach it, he must also demonstrate it. He must become an inspiring model, dedicated to bringing Christ to the world. In emphasizing the importance of this aspect of ministry let me give you something important to remember. "It is more important to bring Christ to the world, than to bring the world to Christ." Initially there may seem to be little difference between these two concepts but there is actually a tremendous difference.

In bringing Christ to the world, our premise begins with Christ. We focus our thoughts and attention on Him. We spend time with Him. We wait upon Him. We emphasise His importance in our lives. We acknowledge our complete dependence upon Him. Anything and everything we attempt begins with and issues forth from him. He is our focal point, our lives revolve around Him. Our hearts and minds, our life and strength, are all focused on Him. He is the starting point of all our endeavours and nothing is attempted that He does not initiate.

The concept of bringing the world to Christ is quite different. This endeavour focuses our attention not upon Jesus, but upon the world. We are initially conscious of the world with all its problems and heartaches. In focusing our initial and immediate attention upon this we concentrate our thoughts on the world and the masses of humanity instead of on Christ. To us an old colloquialism, we are "putting the cart before the horse." We are putting thing back to front. Jesus knows about the world. He came to live and die for mankind. He has purchased salvation for all people. As we abide in Christ, enjoying daily fellowship with Him and drawing on His strength and power, He will direct us to the very ones to whom He wants us to minister. In this way all our efforts and endeavours begin in Him and ultimately bring Him, in us, to the world around us.

4. EMPHASISE SALVATION IN EVERY CHURCH SERVICE

It should be the aim of every church to become a SOUL WINNING CENTRE. Every time we gather we should be aware that this is the real reason for being. Jesus has brought us into His Kingdom that

we in turn might bring others. So, irrespective of what day it is or what the purpose of our gathering is, we should always be alert to the possibility, the claims of Christ to the people and of making opportunity to receive Him as Saviour and Lord. This does not mean that we must laboriously preach a “Gospel message” in every service or gear the whole meeting to the unsaved. It means that whatever the purpose of our gathering we can always spend a short time presenting Christ as Saviour and giving a brief opportunity to some person to respond and make their peace with God through faith in Jesus.

This can happen in a prayer meeting or a communion service. It can happen at a wedding or a funeral. Once we become attuned (acquainted with) to the concept of winning people to Christ, it is amazing how many kinds of opportunities will come our way.

5. EVERY CHURCH MEMBER SHOULD BE A WITNESS

A pastor could never win a community alone. He needs helpers and co-workers to effectively reach that community. Every church member should be made aware of and sensitive to pre-Christians. They must be taught and trained to communicate with those who have not yet trusted Christ. We must encourage them by all means to reach out sensitively and compassionately to unsaved persons. Our witnesses for Christ must be far more than merely preaching at them. We must genuinely believe that God will put His love for sinners into our hearts. Every believer must be taught and encouraged to reach out in love and compassion to all who are still outside of Christ. It is as every joint and every part of the Body works together effectually that the Body is edified and grows to full stature. (Eph. 4:16)

6. MAKE EVERY CHURCH SERVICE AS ATTRACTIVE AS POSSIBLE

The computer world has given us some great phrases, one of which is “user friendly”, which indicates that the computer and its program is easy to get along with. Novices (new people) need not be afraid, it is easy to understand and easy to use. This helpful phrase should be imported into our churches and we should always endeavour to make our church services and activities as easy to get along with as possible. Make them as friendly and inviting as possible for the uninitiated.

We must always be conscious that we have, sometimes sub-consciously, become very “religious” in our life styles. These traits are often carried over into our church activities and we develop a religious type of culture that is strange and foreign to non-Christians. Many churches have the mistaken idea that such cultural trappings are sacred and holy. They have developed the idea that God desires and honours religion and religious routines. However, such things do NOT impress God or unsaved people. These religious activities are often disconcerting to non-Christians. We would relate to and communicate with people much more easily and effectively if we appeared to be more natural.

Our church meetings should be positive, joyful, friendly, and easily understandable. The Church, in its worship and celebration, should be the happiest gathering in town. A place to which people will come when they need comfort, encouragement and confirming. A place where burdens are lifted and downcast hearts filled with rejoicing. A sanctuary to which the broken-hearted may come to find healing and wholeness amongst a company of people who are filled with and demonstrate the compassion of Jesus.

7. TRAIN YOUR MEMBERS IN SOUL-WINNING AND COUNSELLING

Most Christians want to do something for God but are reluctant or afraid because they lack the skills, experience and confidence. Why not plan to have a training class, conducted twice yearly or every quarter, in which you teach the people how to lead people to Christ, how to pray – counsel them and how to follow them up and encourage them in their new found faith?

The more people from your congregation that are trained in these activities, the more likely it is that the church will grow. Do not be afraid of having too many trained workers. The more the better. Once they have undergone training try to involve them in meaningful ministry as often as possible.

8. USE EVANGELISTIC ACTIVITIES BEYOND THE WALLS OF YOUR CHURCH

We have been speaking about the desirability of making our churches and activities as attractive and “user friendly” as possible. However, I must also emphasise the importance of encouraging and organizing evangelistic outreaches beyond the walls of your meeting place and reaching into the local community.

One of the most effective ways to do this is through the establishment of house meetings where your church members in a given area may meet informally in one of their homes. Make sure that these gatherings do not become another “church service.” House meetings can be much more informal than church services tend to be. Many persons who may not attend a church service will attend a house meeting so you need to preserve the atmosphere of informality that distinguishes a house from a “church.” Try to maintain an informal, friendly, family atmosphere. Try to avoid too many “religious” activities and too much formality. Aim to discover ways in which you may all help to meet the real needs of the various people who attend the meeting. Invite neighbours and contacts in the local vicinity to attend. A fellowship meal is usually an event that people enjoy and at which they can more easily relax and enjoy conversation and social contact.

In addition to house meetings, there are numerous other ways in which the Christian witness can be shared. Encourage all the members to be prayerfully creative in their thinking and planning. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you all the various ways in which the Good News can be shared with the local community.

9. EMPHASISE THE VISION OF CHURCH PLANTING

It is never too early, or too late, to begin emphasizing the vision of church planting. Even when a congregation is newly formed and perhaps quite small, it is good to let the people know that your vision for the future includes the planting of more churches. When a congregation grows up with this concept they are being sub-consciously prepared for it. Potential leaders will then seek training and experience that will enable them to participate in the vision and be an integral part of its fulfillment.

Be prayerfully alert to any indications that God is moving you towards commencing a new fellowship. You may find a number of people in your church who live in close proximity to each other in an area some distance from your church. Begin to consider the possibility of launching a new congregation there. Or perhaps there is a population explosion developing in an area close to your church. Start to prayerfully consider ways in which the Gospel can be shared there and of how a new fellowship might be commenced.

10. ORGANISE A LEADERS’ TRAINING CLASS

Teaching, training and developing your potential leaders should always be a high priority for every leader. Regular training classes are the best way to encourage and implement this. You must take the lead in promoting this program and you should personally have consistent involvement in it. This gives you the opportunity to share your vision and passion with your possible leaders. It affords you the chance to pour your life into your leadership. Leadership skills are “caught” as well as “taught”. This class should not be a program of “heavenly theological” studies, but of subjects that are spiritual, Biblical and practical. It should emphasize the basic skills of Christian leadership with particular emphasis on soul winning, church growth and church planting. Find a balanced course that will give you some practical ideas about what to teach and how to prepare your leaders for the challenging task of evangelism and church planting. You may subsequently add to the subject matter, including various other subjects that are helpful for lay ministers and upcoming leaders who are potential

church planters. In the following chapters I will give you many helpful guidelines as to how you can effectively achieve this.

Chapter Two - A BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SMALL GROUPS

The real key to church growth and church planting is the multiplying of ministries by discipling men and women and developing their ministry giftings. No individual, no matter how capable or gifted, can perform all the tasks that are necessary to achieve real growth and expansion. The pastoral, evangelistic and church planting ministries require a considerable variety of giftings for effective accomplishment and no one person has all those giftings. Even if some individual did possess such giftings, they cannot perform the task of more than one person. It is far better to recruit, train, and employ ten men to do a job, than to be able to do the work of ten men oneself.

The kind of training and preparing required for the development of ministry giftings is best effected in the context of a small group. Such a group is more conducive to:

- A selected company of persons
- Better opportunity for developing relationships
- More opportunity for attention to individuals
- More opportunity for participation and inter – action

Discipling men and women and preparing them for ministry involves several basic necessities of which the following are a few:

a: The formation of lives and building of character.

Lives are far more important than “ministries”. The quality of the life and character are much more important than charisma or personality. What a person “is” is much more important than what they can “do”. Character lasts much longer than gifting.

b: The preparation of ministries.

Although the intrinsic for ministry is God given, the ability to discharge and use them effectively can be developed and enhanced. People can be trained in various aspects of ministry e.g. preaching, worship leading, counseling, leadership skills, and team management etc.

c: The motivation of the Spirit.

We must be open to the empowering of the Holy Spirit. No matter how skilful and competent one may become in speaking, teaching, worship leading etc, it is the fresh touch of God upon that ministry that makes all the difference. We frequently call this “the anointing of the Spirit”. It is the Spirit of God, flowing through a ministry that reaches the spirit of man within him. If we minister from our intellect, we will reach the intellects of our listeners. If we minister from the heart, we will reach the hearts. But if we minister by the Holy Spirit, we will reach the spirits of men and women.

We can never achieve this kind of discipling until we first recognize the importance of small group discipling strategies, for it is in small groups that this kind of training is most effectively achieved. Let’s consider briefly the Biblical significance of small groups.

1: GOD HIMSELF IS A “SMALL GROUP”

The concept of “small groups” is introduced in the very first verse of the Bible, viz. “in the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1) This Hebrew name Elohim is used for “God” consistently in the first sixteen chapters of Genesis. Although translated as though it were singular, the word is actually plural, signifying more than one person.

We Christians have ascribed the word “Trinity” to God in an over-simplistic attempt to describe the intrinsic unity of His multiple being. God is actually a “small group” in Himself. But that small group is so bonded together that they are truly one. This unity presents us with the finest possible image of what the Body of Christ is meant to be. “We being many, are one loaf and one body.” (1 Cor. 10:17)

2: GOD INITIATED SMALL GROUPS IN ISRAEL

a: The Nation.

The nation of Israel was forecast in Gen. 12:2 and initiated at Mount Sinai in Exodus 19:5- 6. They are a chosen people, set apart by God from all other nations on earth. Deut. 7:6. They form a special nation known as “The House of Israel”. (Ex. 40:38).

b: The Tribes. Gen. 49

The nation was comprised of twelve tribes, (Gen. 49:28) which were descended from the twelve sons of Jacob. Gen. 35:22-26

c: Clans. Num. 26:21-49

The twelve tribes were further divided into more than 50 clans or sub-tribes that existed in Israel, comprised of the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of the original twelve sons of Jacob.

d: Families

The family structure is the basic factor of society and of a nation. It was ordained by God (Gen. 1:26-28) from the creation of humankind. It formed the basic structure of the nation of Israel. These families were actually extended families composed of mother and father, children and grandchildren, together with servants and dependents.

3: JESUS CONCENTRATED ON SMALL GROUPS.

The first thing that Jesus did, upon commencing His ministry, was to call His twelve disciples to Him. Throughout the three years of His ministry he spent most of His time pouring His life into them. It was in the context and environment of these small groups that He fashioned their lives on His own.

The structure of small groups, or cells, provided the appropriate environment and atmosphere for the forming of lives based upon His own.

Without such small groupings it is extremely difficult if not impossible to see people fashion their lives on Christ's. Jesus is seen at various times, working with:

- The inner three, Peter, James, John (Matt. 17:1)
- The Twelve (Luke 9:1)
- The Seventy (Luke 10:1)

4: HE SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME WITH THE TWELVE.

a: He majored on personal relationship.

The group of disciples that Jesus formed was small enough to remain personal and vital. It was a group of individuals whose lives were blended together to form a united entity.

b: He shared His life with them.

Jesus did not merely preach a sermon to His disciple twice a week from behind a pulpit. He acutely lived among them, sharing His life with them in every aspect. He walked, talked, taught, ate, relaxed, laughed and cried with them. He looked to them to share His burdens and offered to carry their burdens too. He did not keep himself apart aloof from them as many pastors do from their associates today.

c: He modeled His ministry among them.

Jesus began His public ministry in the company of His disciples. “Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.”(John 2:2) It was on this occasion that Jesus performed

His first miracle. (John. 2:11) His disciples were present to observe this and the manner in which we accomplished it.

d: He taught them by teaching and doing.

“The former account I made O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach.” (Acts 1:1) Jesus went about His work and ministry in the presence and sight of His disciples. They personally witnessed all that He did and as they watched He also taught them how to do it. This particular teaching style was consistently used by Jesus and is still the most effective way to teach.

e: He prepared for ministry.

For more than three years Jesus associated with His disciple in this intimate manner and their lives were formed by His presence, teaching and example. At the end of that period they were ready for the launching of the Church and the ministry that God has intended them to fulfill.

5: THE EARLY CHURCH FORMED SMALL GROUPS.

“Breaking bread from house to house.” Acts 2:46.

“And daily in the temple, and in every house they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Messiah.” (Acts. 5:42)

“I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house.” (Acts. 20:20)

It was largely in the settling of these house churches that the Apostles laid the foundations of the early church. Church buildings as we know them, were not evident until some 300 years after the birth of the church and its growth throughout the world.

The Apostolic Emphasis.

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:8)

- a. REPENT. Greek: “*Mentanoia*”, means: Change your thoughts, life style etc.
- b. BE BAPTISED. Bury your old life.
- c. RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT. Your new life.
- d. SURRENDER TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST. Acts. 2:36-38. “Jesus Christ is Lord”

6: THEY THAT WERE BAPTISED CONTINUED STEADFASTLY IN:

(i) Apostle’s Doctrine. – “Life Style”

The word “doctrine” in its New Testament setting, does not convey the same idea that it does in our modern context. Today we usually understand it to mean the principle of our belief. We think of studying doctrine almost as an intellectual pursuit. In the Bible it conveys a much more practical application, meaning a way of life, or life style. The Apostles have imbibed a lifestyle from Jesus. Now they shared this with their disciples who would in turn share it with their disciples. We must maintain close contact with Jesus and out of that contract from the lives of our disciples.

(ii) Apostle’s Fellowship. – Greek: “*Koinonia*” = Relationship and Partnership.

Just as doctrine has assumed a different meaning in recent years, so has the idea of fellowship. It has assumed a very superficial image such as drinking tea together or having a picnic. But in the Bible it meant a solemn partnership, for which marriage or a business partnership may be an ideal model.

Therefore the Apostles had a partnership in which they were all deeply committed one to another. They taught the new converts about this relationship and by their teaching endeavoured to induct them into it.

(iii) Breaking of Bread, covenant relationship and social activity.

The reference to “breaking bread from house to house”, does not only refer to partaking together of Holy Communion or the Lord’s Supper. Nor does it simply mean to share meals and hospitality. Breaking bread and eating together was symbolic of joining in covenant with each other. They entered into a “covenant of strong friendship” together. Within the context of their covenant relationship they also spent quality time together including times of relaxation that helped to enhance and enrich their relationships.

(iv) Prayers, Spiritual life, Reciprocity of communication.

It is significant that prayers came after doctrine, fellowship and covenant. It was only because of these solid relationships they were able to unite in community prayer. They were not only in the same building, they were also “of one accord”.

6. THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN.

As soon as the New Testament church was formed on the Day of Pentecost, We see a pattern established that included the principle of meeting in small groups. “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and house to house, did eat their meal with gladness and singleness of heart.” (Acts. 2:46)

It was evidently in these small groups, meeting daily in their houses, that the foundations of their new Faith were laid. It was here that the discipleship process took place and there New Covenant relationships were formed. It was in this close context of fellowship that the “koinoia” bond were formed and developed that would later enable them to “lay down their lives for the brethren.” (1 John 3:16).

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER REQUIRED IN SMALL GROUPS OR CELLS:

The formation and outworking of our relationships with other members of the Body, especially those with whom we are meant to form a ‘joint’, (Eph. 4:16) will help to mature our personal life into that of an effective and responsible minister of God. Our inter-reactions with fellow members in giving, receiving, ministering, and sacrificing will deepen, enrich and enhance our life and ministry.

a: Accept one another. Rom. 15:7

“Therefore, receive one another, just as Christ also received you, to the glory of God”. Christ received us willingly, lovingly, just as we were. Jesus did not receive us because we fulfilled some kind of criteria He demanded, He loved and accepted us just as we were. It is precisely because Christ has received us so freely that we must in turn accept each other in the same manner.

b: Forgive one another. Eph. 4:32

“Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as Christ forgave you”. Paul intimates, (Rom. 14:1) than when we do receive and accept one another it must not be “to doubtful disputations” i.e. we must not accept each other partially or conditionally but wholly and unconditionally.

c: Care for one another. I Cor. 12:25- 26

“The members should have the same care for one another so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” Jesus Christ wants to care for the members of His Body and He wants to accomplish this through the members of His Body. He wants to exercise His care, in His Name to every member of His body. This must begin with the leadership and filter down amongst all the members. The leaders must be seen to love one another, for Jesus said of His disciples, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, because you have love one for another.

d: Edify one another. I Thess. 5:11

Therefore comfort each other and edify (build up) each other, just as you are also doing.” Edify comes from the Latin word, “to build”, hence: build up one another. Its particular application in the Biblical sense is to build people up in their faith, - intellectually, morally

and spiritually. It is the opposite of tearing down. Rather than tearing each other down with strife, criticism and malice, we are to positively bless, strengthen and edify each other.

e: Bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6: 2

"Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ". Gal. 6:2. This Scripture occurs within the context of an exhortation to lovingly restore a brother who has been "taken in a fault". Obviously it refers to helping to bear the kind of burdens occasioned by such events and other grievous experiences. It also refers to helping each other to bear the burdens that life often thrusts upon us. Instead of leaving a brother to struggle alone we are to help and assist each other to meet the demands of life.

f: Be devoted to one another. Rom. 12:10

"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another." When something was given to God, it was said to be "devoted" to Him. Having once devoted some item to Him, it could never be retrieved or taken back. It was now deemed to be "holy unto the Lord." As such, it was His forever.

God wants us to devote ourselves to one another. To give ourselves in covenant relationship to those members of the body to whom God has joined us. In order to develop such relationships we need to relate closely to our brethren with "kindly, affectionate, brotherly love, in honour preferring others before our self."

g: Love one another. 1 John 4:11

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." The Biblical kind of love that is enjoined on us in the scriptures, is a higher, richer, deeper, more meaningful love than any human love. Human love has many varied expressions including mental, emotional, romantic and physical.

The quality of love that Jesus demonstrated and advocated is different and superior to all of these. The "agape" (ar-gaa-pay) love that Jesus introduced was far superior to human, romantic, sentimental, physical love, that may often be shown, yet superficial and unreliable. It is a love that is based on something far deeper than sentiment or emotion. It is a Divinely imparted love that is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This is a love that causes us to sacrifice ourselves for the other. (Rom. 5:5) It is really the love of Christ within us, whereby we may love one another, "with the love of the Lord."

h: Serve one another 1Pet. 4:10

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The ministry of servanthood is a somewhat despised and sadly neglected one today, yet the Biblical implication of: "minister", is "servant". Jesus demonstrated the ministry of servanthood and set forth a pattern for all His disciples. It requires true humility to be an effective servant, a humility that unfortunately, many ministers do not have.

It was this humble attitude of servanthood that is referred to in Phil 2:5, where we are exhorted to "let the same attitude be in you that was also in Christ Jesus." It is impossible to attain any measure of Christ-likeness unless we have this attitude, the reality of which is developed and refined as we humbly choose to serve one another in the Body of Christ.

i: Provoke each other to good works. Heb. 10:24

And let us consider one another, to provoke each other to love and good works." To provoke means to "rouse or incite" and has both a negative or positive implication. The New Testament clearly teaches that we are not to aggravate each other negatively, i.e. to anger or evil, but we are to provoke (stir) each other negatively, i.e. to anger or evil, but we are to provoke (stir) each other to love and good works."

This is the only kind of provocation that we are allowed to indulge in as Christians. The provocation whereby we encourage, inspire and stir up each other to perform good works through which the name of the Lord may be honoured.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS.

I am using the word small, in contrast to large. The early church met in both small or cells and large gathering depending on the occasion and purpose of the meeting. The larger groups met either in the temple or some public location, for the purpose of a united witness. The smaller groups usually met in houses for the purpose of instruction, inter-action, and caring for one another.

From the pattern that Jesus established we may conclude that twelve persons is a good number for the purpose of a discipleship group. However, this is not fixed figure and may be somewhat smaller or larger depending on the circumstances. Some groups may comprise of only two or three persons. Jesus spoke of “two or three being gathered in His Name.” (Matt. 18:20).

However, a small group should not be allowed to become too large least it loses the advantage of small group intimacy and inter-action.

Small groups may function in a variety of ways:

- A house church. Church group small enough to meet in a house.
- Cell group. Part of a larger body, meeting locally in small numbers, usually twelve.
- Special interest group. E.g. music ministry, visitation ministry, missions committee.
- Discipleship group. Preparing leaders.

SMALL GROUPS EXIST FOR:

a: Fellowship. (*Koinonia*)

Developing a deeper awareness of the nature of our relationship as members of the Body of Christ. The church of Jesus Christ is not a club that one may join without having any desire or intention to enrich the other members. It is a body in which every organ and limb is joined by a sympathetic nervous system that ensures that when one member suffers, we all suffer. Just as no part of a body can live unto itself but is only of use when properly joined and related to all other members, so we must be properly related to Christ’s body and its many members.

b: Edification, Building up one another.

Learning to encourage each other and to build up each other in the faith and in the development and use of spiritual gifts. Ephesians 4:12- 16, tells us that the Body of Christ is built up, strengthened, edified, enlarged, by that which “every point” supplies. A joint is the place where one or more members join together in harmonious unity to facilitate some specific function and purpose e.g. the knee joint, without which we cannot walk properly.

In a similar manner the various members of Christ’s Body are intended to be joined together in right relationship in order to jointly edify the church.

c: Developing Christ-likeness.

Jesus is the “express image” of God the Father. (Heb.1:3). He is the human personification of the Heavenly Father, made in the same image and likeness as Him. He is thus a true Son of God. The ultimate desire of the Holy Spirit is to develop and perfect that same likeness in us, the redeemed people of God. This awesome task cannot be accomplished unless the right environment is provided. Part of that environment is found in the relationship that is developed in a functioning “*koinonia*” situation. Jesus is clearly portrayed as a true servant. (Phil 2:1-7) and unless we too have that same attitude we can never attain to genuine Christ – likeness.

d: Instruction.

Teaching and instruction is also a requisite in the proper and full development of our life, character and ministry. This instruction must be much more adequate than the kind that is delivered over a pulpit in a formal setting. The instruction that forms lives and ministries needs to be conveyed and received in the context of covenant commitment and a real-life ministering environment.

e: Participation.

The type of setting that we are advocating is also one in which active participation is inevitably involved. This is achieved initially by conducting workshop sessions that require active participation on the part of the students. It also requires actual participation in ministry events, e.g. worship leading, preaching, ministering to people in counseling and prayer. It is a style of training that we often call “on the job training.” Instruction that is not merely academic or philosophical, but of a practical nature that can only be imparted and imbibed in the context of actually performing the task.

f: Undertaking and Fulfilling Ministries.

There is no authentic substitute for actually performing the real task. In addition to all the teaching and training that the students receive, and their active participation in workshop style activities, they must also be given adequate expression in the function and performance of actual ministry. Opportunities must be provided in which they can actually perform ministry tasks under the eye and supervision of some more experienced person.

We see Jesus employing this style of training as He sent out the twelve and later the seventy. He gave them a clear commission together with a detailed job description.

Chapter Three - HOW JESUS MADE DISCIPLES

In His final words before ascending to heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples:

- # To go into all the world and preach the Gospel. Mark 16:15
- # To go into all the world and make disciples. Matt. 28:19

In doing so He emphasized His (and ours to be) top priorities i.e.:

- A - Preaching the Gospel; winning the lost.
- B - Making disciples. Feeding and forming the lives of believers.

He had challenged Peter on these two lines.

- 1: “Fishers of men” Matt. 4:19
- 2: “Feed my sheep” John 16:17

Most ministers preach the Gospel but relatively few make disciples as Jesus commanded us.

JESUS INITIATED THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

Jesus came into the world to “seek and save those who were lost” Luke 19:10. His first words were “Repent and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom.” Mark 1:15. His supreme mission was to restore fallen mankind. To this end He came, lived, died and rose again. He began this tremendous mission by choosing, calling and training disciples. “And as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon, and Andrew his brother casting a net into sea for they were fishermen. Then said Jesus to them, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.” Mark. 1:16-17.

a: HE CHOSE THEM

Jesus chose, approached, and recruited His disciples. He did not issue an open ended invitation. Please notice some of the principles involved in calling them as found in the passage of John 15:13-17, “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant does not know what his lord does; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”

Please note the following from this passage:

- verse 13a. His choice was motivated by love. Love for His Father. Love for His disciples. Love for the world to whom they would minister.
- verse 13b. He was ready to make sacrifices (lay down His life) in order to disciple them.
- verse 14. He looked upon them as friends, not servants.
- verse 15. He taught them “everything that the Father had shown Him.”
- verse 16. He chose them, they did not choose Him.
- verse 16. He ordained them to be fruitful.
- verse 16. He intended that their “fruit should remain.”

“Jesus found Philip and said to him, follow Me” John. 1:43.

He chose them for their potential rather than their track record.

He chose a wide variety of persons. Fisherman, doctor, tax collector, etc.

b: HE CALLED THEM

He called them by name. e.g. John 1:42, “You are Simon.”

He challenged them to follow Him. Learn, obey, model their lives on His. John 1:43

He demanded a complete, sacrificial response, e.g. “they forsook all and followed Him.”

He formed a relationship with each.

He invested His life into each of them individually.

c MODELED HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY BEFORE THEM

Jesus became a role model for His disciples.

He spent quality time with them.

He demonstrated the finest qualities of leadership.

He modeled character, integrity, humility and obedience.

Demonstrated the constant need for spiritual renewal.

Demonstrated the need for rest and recreation.

d HE TAUGHT THEM

Jesus had a particular style of teaching.

He taught by association, mixing with the disciples.

He taught by example.

He taught by the doing and teaching method. Acts 1:1

He “formed” rather than simply informed.

He “equipped” to do the work of the ministry.

Eph 4:11-13, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Notice that Christ gave ministers (v.11) to the church, that they should “perfect, train, equip the saints to do the work of the ministry that would edify (build up) the body of Christ.”

Here is a simple picture of how He taught:

- I do it, you watch (I model the task)
- I do it, you help (I mentor)
- You do it, I help (I monitor)
- You do it, someone else watches. (You model and mentor someone else)

e: HE INSPIRED THEM. You are...you will be.

“You are Simon, you shall become Cephas.” – “You are a pebble, you will become as a rock.”

Jesus inspired and encouraged Peter to reach his potential and become what God had ordained him to be. He developed personal relationships with each of His disciples and used His contact with them to instruct, train and fashion their lives. He shows us by His Spirit, a vision of what we were meant to become. Then He helps us in every way to achieve that goal.

f: HE ASSIGNED TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THEM

“Give them to eat”. Matt. 14:16. Jesus had been carefully preparing them for this moment when He would assign to them a task they had never attempted or accomplished before. It was an assignment that they were completely incapable of performing without God’s supernatural help. They were completely dependent on Him for His enabling.

g: HE DELEGATED APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY - Luke 10:19

Notice that Jesus assigned responsibility before He delegated authority. Our authority in Christ is given for a particular purpose. Not to satisfy our personal whims and desires, but to fulfill the work that He has given us to do. We cannot go around glibly “exercising authority” in any sphere we wish. That authority is conferred on us to enable us to “finish the work that He had given us to do.”

h: HE COMMISSIONED THEM

“Then Jesus called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils and to heal the sick. And He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” Luke 9:12. “After these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place into which He Himself would come.” Luke 10:1.

Please notice the structure of the word commission.

Co = together with.

Mission, = a task to be accomplished.

He commissioned them to fulfill a task together with Himself.

i: HE REVIEWED AND DE-BRIEFED THEM

“And the Apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done.” Luke 9:10. “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord even the demons are subject to us in your name.” Luke 10:17.

Immediately after the mission that Jesus commissioned them to undertake, the disciples returned to Him to give a full report of all they had experienced. Jesus rejoiced with them about the victories they had experienced but He also corrected and re adjusted them, e.g. “Do not rejoice that the spirits are subject to you but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10: 20).

j: HE MODIFIED THEIR MANDATE

Luke 9:1-6; Luke 10:1-16

There are several changes and minor modifications between the commission of Luke 9 and that Luke 10. We will not endeavour to analyze or discuss those differences but simply refer to them in the sense that our tasks, in performing the Great Commission, sometimes require some modifications and adjustments. Sometimes the methodology and role needs to be adjusted according to the kind of persons who are being sent out, or according to the type of people to whom they are being sent and their environment and situation. We must never be afraid to undertake adjustments and modifications from time to time as the circumstances indicate.

k: HE RE-COMMISSIONED THEM

Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19

In some ways, the issuing of the Great Commission amounts to a re-commissioning of the disciples. Their mandate is changed somewhat from that which they received in Luke 9, and 10. In similar manner our particular commission and role may be adjusted from time to time. A pastor may be changed to the role of a teacher, or an evangelist into that of a missionary. We need to endeavour to function in the specific calling and graces that God brings upon our life.

i: HE WILL REVIEW THEM BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT

“For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body and to receive according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 5: 10). One day we shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give account of our stewardship of the gifts He imparted to us. In order to prepare for that awesome occasion we need to keep in close and vital contact with the Lord so that we can hear his voice. His comments, and sometimes His corrections. We need to keep an open and honest heart before Him so that we can be constantly aware of His appraisal. In this way we can maintain our walk and work before Him in a manner that pleases Him and with which He is well satisfied. It is also a healthy thing for every worker to have a fellow minister to whom he or she is answerable and accountable. This affords a realistic measure of observation in our life and ministry. Each servant of Christ needs at least one peer who can speak honestly and frankly into their life. This affords a good opportunity for the kind of corrections and adjustments that all of us may need to make periodically.

Chapter Four - CHURCH PLANTERS TRAINING CLASSES

We have mentioned the two priorities of the Great Commission.

- 1 - Spreading the Gospel. Being “fishers of men”.
- 2 - Making disciples. Feeding God’s sheep.

The most effective way to “make disciples” is in small groups.

- This is the Biblical method.
- It was the style that Jesus used.
- It was the method employed by the early church.
- It is still effective today. e.g. Full Gospel Church, Seoul, Korea. (750,000 members!)

1: EVERY PASTOR SHOULD HAVE APPRENTICES (DISCIPLES)

Jesus had His disciples. The three, the twelve and the seventy.

The Apostles had their disciples, e.g. Paul and Timothy.

Timothy discipled other “faithful men.”

Those faithful men taught others also, viz:

2 Tim 2:2, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Paul
I
Timothy
I
Faithful men
I
Others also

This style is still needed today!

2: ANY CHURCH PLANTING PROGRAM OR MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE CAN HELP YOU TO DO THIS

It is designed for use in the local CHURCH.

It is designed for use in small groups.

It is intended that the local pastor be the principal.

Its emphasis is meant to be relational (mentoring) rather than academic.

Its emphasis are: soul winning, church growth, church planting.

Each person discipled in this context will become more useful in the local church.

Each graduate will become a pastoral candidate to start cells or house-churches or even new branch churches.

3: CHOOSING YOUR POTENTIAL LEADERS

Usually from amongst your congregation members.

Persons in good standing. Examples to the flock.

Persons who have proven themselves to some degree. Not novices or new believers.

Persons who are teachable, amenable, compatible, available.

Persons who have a good, joyful and faithful, humble, sincere attitude.

4: CHOOSE THEM PRAYERFULLY

Prayerful observation enables you to discern potential, which may not be naturally obvious.

5: CHOOSE THEM CAREFULLY

Even in approaching them you are making some kind of commitment.

Better not make the approach than have to retract it later.

Get alongside them initially. Get to know them.

Prove their worth to some degree before committing yourself to disciple them.

6: MAKE SURE THEY ARE COMPATIBLE

With you, your vision and leadership style.

With the vision and program of your church.

With the group of which they will become part.

You can only disciple them if they appreciate, trust and support you.

7: ENSURE THAT THEY ARE TEACHABLE

Do they want to learn?

Are they willing to learn?

Will they pay the price of such training?

The price being true commitment, sacrifice, discipline and hard work.

8: ARE THEY TRULY “LABOURERS”?

Jesus told us to pray for “labourers”. (Luke 10:2).

God needs persons who are committed to work with Him.

The kind of people that God needs are those who are not afraid of work.

But also those who realize that, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it.”

9: CHOOSE PERSONS OF CHARACTER

Character is more important than personality, but it is possible to have both.

Character is who you are, personality is what you do.

Character is internal, personality is external.

Character is deep within, personality is superficial.

Christian character is the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit and its development and maturity in the life of a believer.

10: THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD ATTITUDE

Attitude is our disposition, temperament, manner. It is the kind of “spirit” we have. Try to choose persons who have a good, healthy, positive outlook. People who are well balanced in temperament and nature. The development of the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22) has a direct effect on the nature of one’s temperament. A poor attitude frequently indicates a character that has not been fully yielded and surrendered to God. There is often an underlying attitude of self will and rebellion.

11: CHOOSE MEN WHOSE HOUSEHOLD IS IN ORDER - (1 Tim. 3:4)

God requires that His servants be at least capable of running their own family and household well and in an admirable fashion. He points out that if a candidate for the ministry cannot even regulate his own family properly, he could not be expected to rule a congregation well. Many interesting and vital aspects of a man's character are revealed by the way in which he treats his wife and family. If a man cannot properly love and care for his wife, how will he love and care for a congregation? If a man cannot organize and administer his own household efficiently, how can he adequately administer the extended family that a fellowship represents? If you want to know what kind of a man you are considering for the ministry, it might be an idea to look carefully at his wife and family, for they are a product of his pastoral skills.

12: TALK WITH EACH INDIVIDUALLY

Share your vision, purpose and plan
Share your heart and its passion for God and His kingdom.
Discern the quality of their response.
Look for a kindredness of spirit.

13: TALK WITH THE GROUP COLLECTIVELY

Explain the proposed plan.
Discuss it thoroughly.
Ascertain the most appropriate arrangements.
When? Where? How often? How long?
Try to make collectively appropriate decisions on these issues.

14: THE MOST SUITABLE VENUE

Some part of the church premises might be best, if available.
This links the program to the local church activities.
Makes appropriate equipment available, like O.H.P. etc.
Any place that affords privacy would be acceptable, like a small rented room.

15: THE MOST APPROPRIATE TIME SPOT

This most depend to a large degree on the employment commitments of your potential students, particularly if they are married, family people. Finding the time that is most suitable and appropriate to the major of your students may be the deciding factor.

16: THE MOST EFFECTIVE TEACHING STYLES

Build relationships.
Demand commitment.
Expect certain sacrifices.
Model your teaching principles.
Involve your students. Workshops. Participation Practice.
Form the company into a team with mutual respect and loyalty.

COMMUNICATION: EFFECTIVENESS AND CLARITY NEEDED

Key Thought: “The lips of the wise spread knowledge; not so the hearts of fools.” (Proverbs 15:7)

Introduction

Communication can be defined as: ‘the use of language and signs; the transmission of ideas / information between persons in a language that is common to both; a means of influencing behaviour; the imparting, conveying or exchanging of ideas, knowledge, etc. (whether by speech, writing, or signs); or common participation’.

The statement: ‘The power to communicate is the power to lead.’ is quite true. However, effective communication is more than just speaking words, telling someone what to do/think, or getting a person to act – it is transmitting and securing understanding from one person to another. Remember though that understanding is far removed from simply knowing something – it is comprehension (or the sharing of the same meaning). For example, if we give another person some instructions, we want that person to do what we intended to be done (i.e. we want the person to understand/comprehend what we want done, the way we understand/comprehend it).

“Even in the case of lifeless things that make sound, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is distinction in the notes? Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligent words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me.” (1 Corinthians 14:7 – 11).

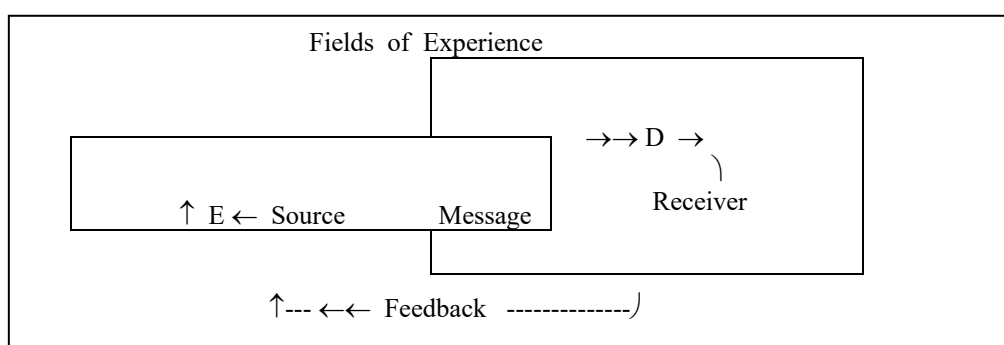
For communication to be really effective, it needs to be heart to heart, spirit to spirit, and mind to mind. People who want to communicate effectively, therefore, need to be objective about and aware of: who they are (and how they present to other people); the context of the communication; and the other person/people. In fact, they need to be open to those with whom they are attempting to communicate.

Good communicators are flexible and responsive. They are always observing those with whom they are communicating and, as a result, are modifying what they say and do. They take into account the different contexts /occasions /ethos /feel /people /mood. They also know that they do not communicate only by words, but by what they are doing and who they are.

A model of Communication

‘There is nothing quite so wonderful as a good idea; there is nothing so tragic as a good idea which cannot be communicated’

The following is a simple but effective model that, if studied, can help you to better understand the process of communication.



Source: i.e. the mind of the communicator. This is where the thought or idea to be communicated originates. (Note, an idea or thought which exists only in the mind of the source is of no value to anyone else!)

E = Encoding: this is the process whereby the message decided upon by the source is verbalized or symbolized so that it can be communicated to someone else. (Dangers here include jargon; slogans; ambiguity; inadequate expression; and not saying what we mean or meaning what we say.)

Receiver: i.e. the person for whom the message is intended.

D = Decoding: this is the process whereby the receiver acquires and understands the message. (Note, communication must occur in a form that can be understood by the receiver.)

Feedback: this helps the source to know whether or not the message was received and understood by the receiver (e.g. a perceptive question arising from the message, or a person getting up and walking out!). Communicators should encourage feedback to assess how well they are achieving their purpose. How many people do you know who do not know what affect they are having on other people, i.e. by what they say and how they live? Remember, any feedback received should be used by the communicator to enable them to better encode any future message (especially any messages given to the person /people providing the feedback).

Fields of Experience: this is the context/environment in which any message is given and/or received. When you are communicating with someone, you are taking a whole field of experience and inter-locating it with another person's field of experience. This needs to be taken into account in both the encoding and decoding stages of communication. A mature, spiritually wise Christian will always take into consideration both their and the other person's field of experience when communicating with them. Some of the factors that need to be considered in this area include: who a person is (because this will affect what they are going to listen to); timing; mood; capability to receive/understand; and atmosphere.

Personal communication is lifting something from inside yourself and putting it into someone else. It is not just words. In fact, words are only part of the electric wire which carries all this. To communicate effectively, there needs to be an encoding of the message that takes place at the source. This then needs to be transmitted to the other person and decoded by the receiver. The measure to which the receiver clearly decodes the encoded intention, is the measure to which effective communication is going to take place. So often different factors like circumstances, moods, emotions etc., interfere with the encoding or decoding process and prevent/hinder effective communication.

Effective communication is often difficult to achieve. Any person to person message starts with what the source intends to say. This is then usually modified (to some degree) by what the source actually says (i.e. the words or symbol they use to communicate to the other person). The message can then be further distorted by the receiver as they either fail to hear what was said: or they understand something different to what the source intended (perhaps because they want to hear something else, or because they think a word in the communication means something different from what the source thinks it means, etc.). The secret of effective communication is to minimize these distortions, so that the receiver understands/comprehends what the source intends to say.

The Effect of Communication

Communication is a two – way process, i.e. transmission and reaction, which is designed to promote attitude, action, and understanding. The following is a list of what communication can do:

inform	providing	answers /taking away hiddenness
inspire	providing	motivation /vision
defuse	providing	relief (e.g. from hurts, etc.)
direct	providing	guidance
instruct	providing	help
correct	providing	discipline

clarify	providing	explanation /direction
expound	providing	insight
unite	providing	common ground
connect	providing	relationship
satisfy	providing	participation
confront	providing	challenge /resolution
involve	providing	fellowship

The Means of Communication

There are two basic ways of communication – formal and informal

(i) Formal communication

This is when words or letters are used to seek to convey our thoughts/ideas/feelings to another person. This is the drafting of memos, the writing of letters, the words we use when preaching/teaching, or some mechanization of the process by which we are sending messages, thoughts and ideas from one person to another. This form of communication could be summed up as verbalization.

(ii) Informal (non-verbal) communication

This is a very important form of communication which could be summed up as visualization. Although words are the main means by which we communicate, there are also a whole range of non-verbal communication elements which must be considered. Everything about us communicates (we, therefore, need to consider everything that we are communicating)! In fact, even the words we use convey many personal elements like our mood, our emotions, and our context. Communication is much more than simply what we say.

A famous scientist writes, ‘some psychologists say body language is so important that the emotional impact of any message is 55% facial and body, 38% vocal intonation, and only 7% verbal, or pure word usage (i.e. 93% presentation and only 7% words). This means that our bodies often talk louder than our mouths. It also means that if our bodies are contradicting our words, those with whom we are trying to communicate are going to find it difficult to understand or believe our words.’ Some of the factors involved in informal (non-verbal) communication include:

- How we say something e.g. hard/soft/hasty/slow/pause/omit.
- Our posture, i.e. how we present bodily gives a positive/negative impressions.
- Our facial expressions, e.g. grins and grimaces.
- What we do with our hands and feet, e.g. drumming fingers, tapping toes, agitated movement.
- The way we walk /carry ourselves and our posture, e.g. confidently, timidly, etc.
- Touching e.g. hugging, shaking hands, patting.
- The way we dress.
- Our actions and the way we live (because these usually speak louder than our words).
- Eye contact.
- Our interest /disinterest.
- The amount of space we need around us.
- Our presence /absence.

Person to Person Communication

“The purposes of a man’s heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.” (Proverbs 20:5)

So many people would like to be able to explain to other people (or put into words) what they feel like inside or the ideas in their head, etc. There is a living book inside of every human being that wants to be written, What prevents most of us from doing this is that we do not have the courage,

clarity or capacity to express these thoughts. Great thinkers are usually only people who have the gift to be able to say what is within them. There are two aspects involved in person to person communication: intra-personal and interpersonal relations.

Intra-personal relationship: this describes what is going on inside of us as thinking, feeling, expressing people. We need to get to grips with what is going on inside of us, if we are ever going to be free to get to grips with what is going on inside of anybody else.

Interpersonal relationships: this describes what is going on between us and the other people as we interact with them. This can be split into two parts; ourselves and the other person.

(i) Ourselves

“In the realm of Christina ministry, a proper vertical relationship with Christ as the head of the churchis essential before satisfying and profitable horizontal relationships can be developed and maintained.’

We need to know that we are free in our own heart before we can be free with other people. We have to be in this place, because it does so much to ensure the right pre-conditions in our inner being before we seek to communicate with anybody else. Some important factors involved in effective communication include:

- be known and we will know.
- unresolved tensions inside of us severely effect good communication, e.g. worry, fear, anger, false comparisons, unforgiveness, wrong attitudes, hiddenness, misunderstanding, confusion, frustration, misrepresentation, etc.
- tiredness can affect effective communication, mainly by disabling our ability to listen to the other person sufficiently.
- personality problems like embarrassment. We need to become aware of our strengths and weaknesses and, if necessary, get help
- preconceptions/misconceptions.
- attitude towards the other person/situation. We should know our bias.
- confusing the medium with the process. Just because you have used words, preached a sermon, written a letter, etc. does not mean that you have achieved effective communication. In fact, you may achieve something quite contrary to what you hoped/desired.

Some of the basic principles which involve ourselves when we are attempting to communicate effectively include the need for us to be:

- Open (unless we open ourselves up, there can be no effective communication).
- Honest (we should never exaggerate or be hidden.)
- Clear (it is not what we say, it is what they hear).
- Aware (of ourselves and other people).
- Vulnerable (at times, we need to admit that we are wrong/ignorant/in need/etc).
- Receptive (we should listen at least as much as we talk)

(ii) Personal factors which affect our communication

While we need to say that for the Christian the medium is not the message, nevertheless, there are times when the medium distorts or affects the message in an adverse way. On the other hand, there are also times when our personal appearance/etc. can aid or enable good communications. Ministry and public communication call for life discipline and personal training; and these things usually start not in public, but within the deeply personal and private areas of our lives. The following are some of the more personal factors which can hinder/aid good interpersonal communications:

- Appearance: with such a diverse range of taste and style today, it is impossible to give precise guidelines in these areas. In the main, however, neatness, cleanliness, and a general good level of personal presentation are demanded of those Christians who deal with people. It is difficult to legislate on factors such as style of dress, but it is

helpful to wear clothes which are universally acceptable (i.e. of good taste and modesty) and which would be suitable in a wide range of contexts of course, at times, you will have to dress according to the context into which you are going. Remember, what you wear is going to make a statement of some kind! Some factors to consider when choosing what to wear include:

- What affect will what you have chosen to wear have on your mood and the mood of those with whom you are attempting to communicate?
 - What is the dress code of the context in which you are communicating (remember, society uses clothes to help enforce its social rules and to help control behaviour?)
 - How will what you are wearing influence your posture and movement?
 - Is what you wear glorifying to God, and does it hinder or enable your service for Him (i.e. is it a witness/reflective of your relationship with Christ)?
 - For women, modesty and balances are important in terms of dress and make-up.
- Personal hygiene: ministry and public communication often involve encounters of the close kind! Bad breath, tooth decay, body odour, smelly clothes, greasy or untidy hair, drifty collars, unkept or dirty fingernails, etc. are all put-offs to other people and can severely restrict communication effectiveness. It is in this area that some of your habits will watch you up. Smoking is the outstanding example. The smell of stale cigarettes on the breath can be a killer to successful interpersonal communication. It is equally important not to go to the other extreme with regard to personal hygiene (it can be quite difficult to successfully communicate with a walking perfumery or chemist shop).
 - Personality traits: we all have these! The important thing is to recognize them in yourself and attempt (with God's help) to make these a helpful factor in your communications, rather than a hindrance. Note, it is often very difficult to deal with or eradicate basic character flaws or traits. The best thing to do is to recognize and discipline them by channeling them productively within ministry communications.
 - Habitat: a person's habitat usually reflects the person. Look at their home, office, desk or room and you will see a microcosm of the person's life. Untidiness or dirtiness in the habitat usually has something to say about that person's presentation within the context of communication/ministry. One important habit for the full-time Christian leader is their office. Every person who comes into it will be communicated to before any words are spoken (i.e. is it informal, relaxing, untidy, severe, authoritarian, functional, etc.?). Christian leaders need to learn how to arrange their offices so that they can quickly provide the right atmosphere to get the desired result from any communication carried out therein (e.g. be able to sit behind a desk, which indicates that this is a business meeting where time is limited; or be able to sit with your visitor in chairs away from the desk which suggests that this is an informal chat or that you are available to listen for a more extended period of time.)

(iii) The other person

We always need to remember that we do not communicate into a vacuum – we are communicating with another person who is essentially just like us. What we say is received through a grid of the other person's experience, capability, circumstances, mood, prejudices and preconceptions. We should, therefore, encourage feedback in order to get to know the other person and the affect our communications has on them. In person to person communication, we need to consider the other person's:

- personal equilibrium (i.e. what we sense is their inner state at the time of the communication).

- prejudice grid (i.e. what they believe emotionally, socially, doctrinally, philosophically, etc.).
- capacity of understanding (i.e. does the other person understand the same as we do when we use certain words, images, language, etc.)
- preconceived ideas (i.e. will the other person really hear what we are saying).
- contextual atmosphere (i.e. are there factors which will affect reception e.g. it being too hot or noisy children).
- attitude to us as the source/sender (e.g. what they think of us and how they are reacting to us at the time of the communication).
- name (because most people want to hear other people use their name).

(iv) The way in

“Communication is not telling. Communication is asking, telling, listening and then creating understanding.”

There is direct relationship between what we want to communicate and what we need to know about the other person. The more complex the issue, the more depth of understanding is required between the two parties. For example, ‘Shut the door, please!’, does not require too much personal knowledge about the other person, whereas asking a question in a counseling situation may do.

Even when a leader is lecturing or preaching, it should never be regarded as a monologue. Those in the audience/congregation/class-room should all be participating with you. In fact, it is only those who do, who will get the full benefit of what you are saying. Good communicators are always looking for a response in their hearers. They are always looking to see if what they are saying is connecting with their hearers (by watching their body language, etc.) and, therefore, they are often asking questions both of themselves and of those with whom they are attempting to communicate (e.g. Are these people trusting me or do they sense any manipulation/unfairness?)

In person to person communication, question asking is very important. A communicator needs to know the other person’s mind to some degree before any successful communication is going to be possible. The reason for this is that the communicator needs to know what the other person will understand by the words they use in the communication process. Remember though that the other person’s understanding will be affected by where they were born, how they were brought up, their situation, education type and level, job etc.

There are various types of questions a communicator can use in the communication process:

- informational (these ask for statistics/facts/etc. and are generally unobjectionable).
- conceptual (these ask for ideas/thoughts/suggestions etc. and these also are generally inoffensive).
- evaluation (these ask for subjective value judgments/assessment/etc. and may cause guardedness or alienation if not asked wisely).
- open (these invite the person to express free opinion: e.g. “What would you do in this situation?”).
- closed (these attempt to force the other person to accept a point of view which is not their own; e.g.: ‘This action is going to harm your promotion prospects, so you do not really want to go any further with this, do you?’)
- leading (these direct the reply, but do not restrict the answer: e.g. ‘How did you come to this decision?’)
- loaded (these breed defensiveness, because there is usually only one way to answer the question which is in line with what the asker wants to hear; e.g. ‘What on earth made you think that you had made the right decision?’)

- cool (these tend to appeal to the reason and involve the emotions as little as possible: e.g. ‘What should our next move be?’)
- hot (these betray our feelings and tend to incite a negative emotional) response in the hearers; e.g. ‘I have told you what I think about this decision, so what do you think we should do?’)

“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” (Proverbs 18:21)

(v) The process of communication

There are three steps to the effective delivery to person communication. The first step is to get the person’s attention (i.e. get them ready to listen to you). The second step is to build a bridge from what you want to say to what that person wants to listen to. To do this, you have to understand where you are at and where the other person is in relation to you (i.e. socially, educationally, intellectually, etc.); and you have to choose words for your communication which will be in line with this (i.e. which will get that particular person to understand what you want them to understand). Remember, do not obstruct the communication with unnecessary words. Finally, you need to ask for appropriate action (which is the whole point of the first place)

(vi) The place of listening in communication

‘The development of a listening ear is of the utmost importance to a leader because 45% of his communication each day is spent in listening (with speaking being 30%, writing 9% and reading 16% on average). About 80% of each day is spent in some form of communication, and, therefore, it is of the utmost significance to make this communication quality time.

Listening can be defined as: ‘making a conscious effort to hear; hearing with attention; attempting to attach meaning to oral symbols; decoding the encoded message of the speaker; or receiving, evaluating and comprehending sounds’. Listening is a vital part of the process of communication, because to be successful, communicators generally have to determine what the hearers/receivers actually understood from what has been communicated. In fact, many people do not communicate effectively, because they assume they are understood and they do not listen to find out. Listening is part of the process of feedback, and it enables the communicator to adjust/correct/affirm (when necessary) and therefore enable accurate understanding in the hearer. Listening is also important at the beginning of the communication process (as we have already seen), because communicators have to know what the person with whom they are going to communicate is like (and, therefore, what words to use etc). Remember, when listening, carefully and diligently watch out for any hidden meaning, and attempt to hear correctly. Christian leaders also need to consider carefully what they hear and how they hear it (Mark. 4:24; Luke 8:18).

Good leaders listen both to those to whom and those for whom they are responsible (Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 13:18). This means that they will have to listen to counsel/advice, at times, and to correction or admonition at other times. Unfortunately, too many leaders stop listening, because they become arrogant and believe that they have all the right answers. God is a good listener and He want His leaders to be examples of how good a listener He really is (i.e. by listening first to Him and also to their people; James 1:19).

The following are some practical hints that should help God’s leaders to become better listeners to their people.

1.	Tune out subjects that they find uninteresting.	1.	Search for information in every way possible, to enable them to best help other people.
2.	Judge those who are speaking by their outward appearance or manner	2.	Judge the content of what is said, rather than who said it or how it was said externally.
3.	Get over-stimulated by one thought of the speaker, so that they cannot concentrate on the rest of what is said.	3.	Withhold their emotional reactions until they comprehend the whole idea of what the speaker is saying.
4.	Stick to only one style of note taking, no matter who the speaker is.	4.	Stay flexible in their style of note taking and adapt differently to each speaker.
5.	Expend little or no energy or concentration upon the person who is speaking.	5.	Expend a considerable amount of energy and work hard at listening.
6.	Are easily influenced by distractions or actually create them themselves.	6.	Minimise and totally ignore possible distractions whenever possible.
7.	Avoid new challenges and do not develop an appreciation of different areas that the speaker is relating.	7.	Listen to all of the material in its variety and attempt to see some significance in it all.
8.	Operate with a closed mind and allow emotional words to interfere with a careful evaluation of the situation.	8.	Operate with an open mind and carefully consider the content, context, and over all meaning of what is being said.
9.	Listen in order to disagree or find points of contention.	9.	Listen attentively even when what they are hearing is distasteful or disagreeable.
10.	Listen only for what they want to hear.	10.	Listen in order to understand and communicate more effectively with the other person.

A good listening communication will:

- pay complete attention to the speaker, because otherwise a large proportion of the communication will be lost.
- respond appropriately when listening (i.e.. nod, look them in the eye, verbally encourage, ask leading questions etc.), because an unresponsive hearer will cut short any attempted communication by the speaker.
- listen for the real message/meaning (i.e. behind the words /gestures /emotions /pauses /etc., what is the person really trying to tell us?)

- stop a person saying too much, because this may cause our working relationship with the person to be greatly damaged tomorrow (i.e. ask yourself whether what the speaker is saying is within your realm of authority/competence/responsibility; and if it is not, then supportively refer the person to someone who can/should help them).
- let the speaker have their say and only interrupt when appropriate.
- use the time they are listening to learn as much as they can about the speaker, about themselves (by the way they react to the speaker and to certain things in the communication), and about their relationship with the speaker (so that they can communicate in the most effective way possible with that person).

(vii) Six key questions

The below given questions can be an invaluable aid to effective communication. The first three questions apply to us:

- What do we intend to say or write?
- What do we in reality say or write, sometimes in spite of our good intentions?
- What will be the emotional impact upon the recipient of what we say or write?

The other three questions apply to the person/s with whom we desire to communicate:

- What does the person expect to hear or read?
- What will the person actually read or hear, at times, despite what is actually spoken or written?
- How will the person feel about what is read or heard?

The aim of communication is to get other people to understand what we want them to understand what we want them to understand.

Communicators, therefore, need to translate what is:

- significant to them, so that it will be acceptable to the receiver (because if it is not acceptable, the message could well be rejected).
- important to them, so that it is meaningful to the receiver (on the receiver's terms, rather than on those of the communicator.)
- meaningful to the communicator into terms that will have the impact they seek on the receiver.

If these three conditions are not met, then the communication will at best be limited. Remember, it is the hearer/receiver who dictates the kind of communication to which they will respond positively.

(viii) Three aims in communicating person to person

When communicating publicly as a Christian, you should always keep three broad aims in view:

- to illuminate their minds. Satan's objective is to blind the minds of unbelievers (and believers, when possible!) so that the light of Christ does not shine into them (2 Corinthians 4:4). Christians should communicate the truth, because truth brings light and light brings freedom.
- to stir their emotions. There is a great fear of emotion among people, especially Christians. The truth is that God created our emotions and He wants Christian communicators to arouse properly the deep inward feelings of those with whom they are communicating in order to draw those people to Himself. In fact, appeals to the emotions are communicated more readily than appeal to reason, because the former grips people and makes them hear. Note though, that Christian communicators should

not manipulate people by using emotionalism (i.e. controlling people by emotions), because this is wrong in Christ.

- to activate their wills. The first step towards faith is an act of the will. People need to decide. God has given them this capacity as a part of His process of creation. He appeals to the will so that the person will turn away (repent) from their old life and begin to walk in newness of life in Him.

Reasons for the Failure of Christian Communications.

- The communicator fails to speak clearly, simply and understandably. There is no point using words or terms which the listener does not understand (e.g. calling a spade an agricultural instrument). It is therefore best to plan for any communication (when possible), i.e. to define sharply and organize logically your ideas/thoughts (after you have got all the facts/information that you need in order to do this successfully). We wisely advise the communicator to use: 'a familiar word in place of the unfamiliar; a concrete word in place of the abstract; a short word in place of the long; and a single word in place of many.' The communicator should try to use the right word in the situation to achieve the result they desire. They should therefore attempt to use the listener's language, when possible; and avoid using expressions which only a restricted group of people would understand (unless of course the person is attempting to communicate with that restricted group). Remember, words take their meaning not from dictionary definitions, but from what the speaker and hearer understand when those words are used (and this may differ vastly).
- The communicator wants their words to sound elegant and thereby makes the communication woolly. It is alright to use words which convey a vivid picture (in fact, the best communication is achieved when this is done), but it is wrong to so cloud the issue with flowery language that the hearer can no longer see the intended meaning.
- The Christian communicator attempts to communicate in the same way someone in show business would use, forgetting that they are vessels through whom God desires to lead/speak to His people. Remember, God's leaders should rely on the Holy Spirit and what He enables them to do for God; and not on effective communication, personal magnetism, drive, manipulation or management, etc.
- The communicator fails to consider emotional blocks. Many people are too pre-occupied/distracted to hear what a person has to say, e.g. they may be sick, in pain, distressed about their family situation, or hurt by something someone did/said. When attempting to communicate effectively, we need to take into account that we are dealing with emotional beings and we need to be sympathetic/empathetic/courteous. We should try and put ourselves in the other person's shoes and look out for signs of trouble or inability of the other person to concentrate/listen.
- The communication style is over-bearing or seeking to dominate/manipulate. Other people, in the end, get fed up with this and increasingly fail to respond appropriately to any communication the communicator transmits (thus nullifying that person's leadership).
- The lives of the Christian communicator contradict their words (i.e. their preaching/counseling/etc.). Therefore, what they say is of minimal worth and does not touch their people's hearts, no matter how much time they spend preparing. After all, our greatest message is our life-style!
- The Christian communicators mistake the vehicle they use to communicate with the communication itself, e.g. they think that saying something is communicating.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION: THE DRIVING FORCE

"Where there is no vision (revelation), the people perish (cast off restraint); but he that keeps the law, happy (blessed) is he." (Proverbs 29:18)

Introduction

“Vision is essential for survival. It is spawned by faith, sustained by hope, sparked by imagination and strengthened by enthusiasm. It is greater than sight, deeper than a dream, broader than an idea. Vision encompasses vast vistas outside the realm of the predictable, the safe, the expected. No wonder we perish without it!”

No significant life can be lived for God, nor can any significant work be done for God, unless it is grounded firmly on the reality of spiritual vision. God-given vision is what lifts the Christian from the level of the ordinary and enables them to achieve great thing for God. Vision from God changed the direction of most of the Bible’s major characters, e.g. Moses, Abraham, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, etc. These Bible characters had an encounter with God which was more involved than personal revelation, they had a word from God that so took root in their lives that it issued in a lifetime of service and direction for God. All people who are sued mighty by God have a life-changing encounter with Him. It is almost as if God is getting these people’s attention so that they will listen to Him and obey Him wholeheartedly for the rest of their lives. It could be said that the spiritual vision these people get from God take hold of them and sets them up for life – all they can do is serve the vision God has given to them.

There are two levels of spiritual vision that we will look at in this study. The first is personal vision, i.e. spiritual vision that God gives to us personally. The second is corporate vision, i.e. spiritual vision that may be sourced in an individual, but which affects more than just that person’s life. Of course, these two types of spiritual vision overlap. In fact, it is usually necessary to have a personal vision which fits into a corporate vision, because God rarely calls His servants to work for Him on their own.

Personal Vision

Personal vision is not the mystical experience many seem to have had through the ages of an apparition of Jesus or some similar thing. It is the movement of God’s Spirit within a person’s life which comes within moment of human/divine encounter, e.g. at conversion or when we are called by God to ministry, etc. Personal vision carries with it, not only the life-giving power of God’s Spirit, but the seed of God’s intention for that person’s life from that moment onwards. Personal vision, therefore, carries with it its own imperative. There is something directive about it, even though the individual concerned may not see the details clearly for some time to come.

The idea of vision from God is something which many discount from their Christian experience. They are happy enough to have just become a Christian and, therefore, they have trivialized the work of God in their lives. They have reduced Christianity to the level of a small personal conversion experience, rather than the incursion of the living God of revelation into their hearts and minds.

Salvation contains the seed of the vision God has for our lives, i.e. God’s vision for our lives is implicit in our experience of the saving power of Christ. He saves us from darkness by bringing us into the light of the Kingdom of His dear Son. He saves us from purposeless living by bringing us into the ‘good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.’ (Ephesians 2:10). At salvation, we become vessels through whom God’s divine purpose can flow. It is God’s intention that we should read and understand the plan that He has for our lives, and through obedience and faith see that plan coming true in our daily experience. This is not an automatic process, because so many other factors after the maturing of this seed as the years go by. Yes the seed is there, and it is God’s intention that it should flourish and grow into something useful and beautiful to Him.

Corporate Vision

All Christian mission organizations, churches, team ministries – in fact, every work of God –should be founded on a corporate vision or revelation from God. Corporate spiritual vision can be received by an individual, but it is not limited to that person alone. It is given by God to enable His will to be carried out by a group of people (remember, most of God’s work is carried out by teams of people and not by individuals working on their own). Here, God releases His vision to one person and then catches other people up into it so that the vision can be fulfilled.

God may originally source a vision in one person, but generally He calls a team of people together to enable that person's vision to be fulfilled. This is not always the case, because some vision requires only one or a few people to fulfill it. However, when a large group of people are involved in fulfilling a vision, God will raise up a team of leaders to oversee His vision. God usually then only reveals the whole extent of His vision to this team of leaders.

Within any church or organization, there are usually a variety of different works/visions going on for God at the same time, i.e. God has envisioned individuals to do certain works for Him. These individually envisioned people are also called by God to be part of the wider vision of the church or organization, i.e. God has called them to out-work their vision within a wider church/organisation's vision. When this happens, the leaders of the wider vision rarely have the whole vision for their church/organization given to them as individuals. Instead, the team of leaders are constantly trying to piece together the jigsaw puzzle which when complete would reveal God's total vision for that group of people. While they are doing this, they need to keep things moving in the way God has already shown them is right for the overall visions.

The elders (or whoever are overseeing the wider vision) need to be constantly meeting together to seek the Lord and discover His direction, so that the whole work for which they are responsible can be kept on track and together. In fact, the whole group of leaders/overseers should be in unity about the direction the vision should go. After all, God should have called them all to the role of leadership and He has only one direction for the group to go as a whole; so it should be possible to find God's way and be in complete unity about it. Remember though, the unity only needs to be as broad as the group having the authority in God. Unity then becomes a gift from God given when everyone who needs to, finds His mind together.

Dangers in One Man Vision

There are leaders who seek to be the only source of input and spiritual oversight for a corporate vision. However, there are many dangers in one-man vision. These include: the lack of checks for authenticity in God; the tendency to over-balance in certain areas which may go unnoticed or the opposition to which is squashed/removed; perspective is limited; and the vision may only be partial, because other people with parts of the whole vision are not listened to. Of course, there are times when vision which involves many people is only sourced in one person, e.g. Moses; but this is not often the case.

Usually, personal vision gives us our part to play with in a corporate vision, but it is rarely something we should run with totally on our own. Corporate vision is often inspired and originally sourced by one man, but usually it outgrows his input alone. Corporate vision needs to have a corporate authority in order to keep authentically, balance and to discover God's whole purpose. However, even when a team of leaders are raised by God to oversee a vision, there is usually one person in this group who brings the majority of inspiration, input and direction. This person is usually the person who sourced the vision or the person who has since inherited their role in God. Remember, if the vision is going to be shared by many people, it cannot be something we as leaders talk people into. People will only want to share a vision with us, if they see clear evidence that God is in what the leadership are doing, i.e. He is fleshing out what the leadership are saying He wants to do through the church/team/organization

Team Vision

In any Christian organization/church/team, there needs to be God-given vision. In fact, all team members need to be co-operating and bound together to achieve the common purpose that corporate vision from God brings, because His vision is something bigger than the individual. It is the vision from God that team members need to submit to and follow and not some 'guru' or strong leader. Once they have submitted to God's vision, all who commonly participate in it need to obey the same commonly accepted rules of life. In fact, they need to find their proper place of ministry for God

and with each other; and also live in proper relationship with God and each other, so that His vision can be fulfilled.

It is important for the leaders in a team/church vision to re-articulate God's vision for the team/church every time a new member (or new convert) joins the team church. New members need to know to what they are committing themselves in God. Leaders of team or church vision also need to regularly re-evaluate the vision (i.e. at least a couple of times a year). Here, they need to discuss things like team needs; where the cracks are and what has been slipping through them; and what the Lord might be saying to them about various concerns.

How Do We Receive God's Vision?

God-given vision is the product of God working in us. He creates the vision and we simply receive it into ourselves. It then becomes a rallying point, or a goal, which we move towards as His people. Vision is not a projection of what we perceive needs to be done or what we want to accomplish, but rather it is a divinely sourced directive which draws a response from us and calls us forth into action. Vision from God summon us!

Vision from God can be seen, heard, experienced, personal, and prophetic. God's leaders need to be confident of the fact that God does intend to communicate His mind and will to His servants. They, therefore, need to spend time meeting with God and opening up their lives (and spiritual ears) to Him. Once they have heard from Him, they need to obey what He has told them to do (otherwise God's Word to them will tend to dry up). God will show everyone of His servants the part He has for them to play in His time, if the person diligently seeks after Him. The truth is that this is the only way that we as Christians can live the fruitful, abundant, fulfilled lives that God promises as (Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Ephesians 1:4-5; Ephesians 2:10; John 10:10).

Jesus is the head of His body, the Christian church, and it is the function of the head to direct the body and tell it what to do. So if Jesus is directing/leading, and we as members of His church are listening, is it likely that God will lead 20 people one way and 5 another? No! If we are called to work as part of the same team/organization/church, then God will lead us together. Of course there will be minor differences, but discovering and obeying the mind of Christ enables unity in the Spirit. In fact, unity becomes something which just happens as we function under the headship of Christ. 'Thou art the way, the truth and the life. Without the way, there is no going. Without the truth, there is no knowing. Without the life, there is no living.'

If the heart of the leaders who are overseeing a corporate vision is to find the mind of Christ, those who would oppose or obstruct God's vision from going on will not do so indefinitely. Leaders should never ignore or over-ride one of their number just because that person disagrees with the majority. It has been pointed out that if God can speak through Balaam's ass, then He can speak through anyone of His designated leaders. Perhaps the person who is supposedly obstructing the vision, actually has the mind of the Lord in this case.

Remember, God's vision for our lives will be revealed in His time, not ours. We simply need to get on with life obeying Him and living in a way that pleases Him. It was not until Moses was 80 years old that he received his corporate vision from God. Many years before this Moses seemed to have had an idea of what God wanted him to do, but this was personal vision which had not yet reached its time in God to be put into action. God made Moses wait until His appointed time (He knew when Moses and the people would be ready). God's revelation has an appointed time for each one of us (Habakkuk 2:3). Our job is to persevere until we are mature and complete, not lacking anything (James 1:4), and to be constantly open to God so that He can reveal His will to us.

"Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you." (Joshua 3:5).

Four Effects of God-given Vision:

- (i) **It is quickening (I am called)**

It brings life, because it provides a life-changing thrust that brings new direction and purpose to our lives. Our life may have been heading one way, but once we have received God's vision, it grips us and we can do nothing but serve it. For example

- Saul / Paul (Acts 9:1-31)
- Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-8)
- Moses (Exodus 3 + 4)
- Jerubbaal / Gideon (Judges 6 + 7)
- Abram / Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27).

(ii) It is motivating (I will /can)

Vision from God makes us progress towards the goals that are implicit within it. If we have no vision from God, we will stagnate and perish! In fact, vision carries the seed of God's purpose for our lives (and for the lives of all those who are bound to us in the vision). The revelation Moses received at the burning bush contained more than merely a personal word of Moses, it carried within it the seed of God's purpose for His people. Another example of a man motivated by God's vision was the apostle Paul (Acts 26:12-23). It was not only the light on the road or the appearance of Jesus that changed Saul's life, it was also the directive that God gave him and that he obeyed. The experience opened Saul up to what God wanted to ask of him. It was when Saul saw Jesus that he was able to receive the directive, 'I have appointed you to go and to bring light to the gentiles', into his heart. In the experience of meeting with God, Saul received the direction for the rest of his life and it motivated everything he did from then on. Later, the apostle Paul speaks of possessing on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus had taken hold of him (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:12-14). Paul did not have some cool little conversion experience which made little change within his life. Paul was aware of the radical life-changing dimensions of his salvation experience.

Remember, with God's vision goes the knowledge that we are able to fulfill our part of it, because God will provide us with everything we need! (Philippians 4:13, 19; 2 Peter 1:3). We will also know that God would not have called us to go this way, if we did not have what it takes in Him to fulfill our part of His vision.

'Vision means: that one sees a need in such a way that the possibilities of doing something about that need are far greater in one's heart than the need itself.'

(iii) It is constraining (I must only)

People who have truly received God's vision into their hearts from then on can only do things that are in line with that vision. From then on their life is moulded and shaped by that vision. These people cut themselves off from their old life, and only want to do things which please God and enable the vision they have received from Him. For example, the vision which Moses received from God was specific. It had outline and content, and he was not free to go beyond that outline or to alter the constant. Moses was told by God, 'See that you make them according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.' (Exodus 25:40).

"Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained." (Proverbs 29:18)

When God gives a vision by His Spirit through His Word of what He wants, and your mind and soul thrill to it, if you do not walk in the light of the vision, you will sink into servitude to a point of view which our Lord never had... You can never be the same after the unveiling of a truth. That moment marks you for going on as a more true disciple of Jesus Christ, or for going back as a deserter.'

(iv) It is sanctifying (I will not)

People who get a vision from God get their act together. They begin to discipline their life in order to serve the God who has revealed so much of Himself to them. They no longer want to please themselves, but now want to set their lives apart for God and His service. Moses was told by God, 'Put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on

which you are standing is holy ground.’ (Exodus 3:5). The thing that God did in Moses’ experience was to cut him off, not only from his old life, but from any other plans or ideas he might have had. He could not live for anything else ever again.

Visionaries, Enablers and Sustainers

How then does corporate vision flow from God and become reality in practical, functional terms here on earth? How is this vision organized and how is it worked out in the lives of other Christians? The following is a template that we can apply to our life and ministry situations which seeks to answer these questions.

The way God has moved throughout history is by finding a person who could/would be a creative source of His vision. This is why some churches became suddenly alive after 200 years and why some Christian organizations /churches can be a huge success after only a few years – God has found and planted a person through whom He could source His vision. Here, we have called this man a visionary. If you take away a visionary from a church/organization and fail to replace him, then that church/ organisation may run for a while, but it will eventually stagnate, and become traditional and ineffective.

It is very unlikely that one person alone will source and be the fulfillment of God-given vision. Normally, God calls other people to work alongside the person with creative source vision. Some of these people will be gifted by God to be able to take up the stands of the vision and enable it to be organized and fulfilled. Here, we call these people: “enablers”. This does not mean that the visionary will not also do something in this area, because at one level he is also an enabler.

Finally, a vision needs people to maintain it. God calls people to actually lift up His vision on a daily basis by doing the work the vision creates. Without these people, the vision could not be successfully outworked. These people do what is necessary to ground the vision practically and to keep it going. The enablers get the vision organized and take on the more difficult leadership tasks; then it is up to the people we here called sustainers to carry out most of the work of the vision.

Moses was the source of creative vision (i.e. the visionary) for the people of Israel. He also had a number of enablers, e.g. Aaron (spokesman); Joshua (director, army captain, and Moses’ aide since youth); Bezalel (craftsman, builder); Hur (uplifter); Caleb (encourager); and Jethro (advisor). The Exodus 3 experience did not belong to these men, only to Moses. These men were simply called by God to enable the vision that was sourced in Moses to become practical reality. In Moses’ case, his sustainers were the Levites, the sons of Aaron, the judges, the leaders of the 12 tribes, the master craftsmen/designers, and the seventy elders, etc. These men were responsible for particular areas of activity in relation to the vision. The need for sustainers arose out of the areas of activity of the enablers.

All these three levels of ministry are necessary to enable God’s vision to become reality. Of course, the areas overlap somewhat, but they give us an idea of how any God – sourced vision should be tackled and outworked. The secret is that level of ministry has to take God’s vision as it has been revealed by the visionary and make it their own. They have then got to get on and do the part God has called them to do to enable His vision to be fulfilled.

Few people are called by God to initiate vision (i.e. be visionaries) compared to the many who are called to serve the vision. The fact that there are fewer visionaries than enablers, and fewer enablers than sustainers is by no means a value judgment placed on the person or their ministry. The truth is that God calls all His people to do different things for Him and He is only asking them to fulfill that thing for Him. To try and do anything else is folly and usually will end up in failure and disaster. God knows best, and we need to stick to what He has called and equipped us to do for Him. Remember, God’s vision is the common property of all who participate in it (e.g. the Israelites in Moses’ day), because this vision was God’s and not man’s. All the people called by God to work/participate within a vision have a share in it. It is not owned by the visionary. Enablers and sustainers build part of a vision and, therefore, they need to see that they are indispensable parts of the whole that God will use for His glory. They should never see themselves as an individual doing

their own thing in isolation. They should also never be ‘yes’ men to the visionary, because they share with the visionary in the vision. Its success is their success! With the visionary, they all form a band of people who should move and flow in God’s vision and fulfill the ministry/activity that the vision creates for them as individuals to do.

The Characteristics of a VISIONARY:

There are a number of characteristics required by people who are called by God to source His vision here on earth. Visionaries need to be people of:

(i) Inspiration

Visionaries need to be inspired people and they need to inspire other people (inspired people tend to inspire other people anyway). If the visionary is not inspired by God, they will not be able to pay the cost of participating in and fulfilling their part of the vision, and neither will any other person. Visionaries need to meet ‘face to face’ with God and gain His prophetic insight/vision and then transfer this to the rest of the people called by God to work within the vision. There is something magnetic about divine inspiration. A visionary needs to be able to inspire other people to take on the vision and make it their own.... When the visionary does this, he also needs to make room for the enablers and sustainers of that vision to be established and begin to function, i.e. they need to let God’s vision operate/run freely through the lives of other people.

Visionaries need to be people of optimism and hope, because no pessimist ever made a great leader or inspired other people to take great action. The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, whereas the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. In fact, it is usually the pessimists who hold back the visionary who is always wanting to push ahead. Of course, cautious/careful/prudent people do have a part to play in helping the visionary to be realistic, but they must never clip the wings of a person God has called to soar. Cautious people learn valuable lessons from history, but they are in danger of being chained to the past. The person who cannot see beyond their difficulties to discern the possibilities will never be able to inspire followers.

(ii) Clarity

The visionary needs to be able to communicate the vision wisely and successfully, i.e. what the vision is, the strategy, details, etc. To do this, they have to know and understand the vision. The vision has got to have definition to them, more than to any other person. Just as Moses received the pattern for certain parts of the vision God called him to work within (Exodus 26:30; Exodus 24:34), so the visionary will need to spend time with God defining and bringing clarity to the vision God has given him. The visionary can then tell the enablers and any other people who are called to be part of the vision what they are to do (i.e. what God’s pattern is). Remember, people who have made the visionary’s vision theirs now want to be told details of that vision by the visionary.

(iii) Understanding

Just like Moses, the visionary needs to understand the vision and its implications. They need consistently to know in their heart what the reality of the vision is and be able to judge/discern every situation that confronts them accordingly. They, therefore, need to be able to see any kind of action/attitude/deflection that is deviating from what God wants for His vision and be able to bring people (and the vision) back to where they/it should be. In fact, the visionary should be able to keep the enablers and sustainers in tune to the vision, and also understand and bring any adjustment that is necessary for the vision to be carried out effectively. Moses inspected the Tabernacle, because he understood what the vision needed to look like (Exodus 39:32-43). He made sure that everything that was done was according to God’s vision given to him, because otherwise the glory of God would not come.

Visionaries need to be careful to remain as people of faith, and never to become idle dreamers who consider the affairs of the present beneath them or too mundane to bother with (i.e. become so high-minded that they become of no earthly use). Visionaries also need to be people of foresight, i.e. have the capacity in God to see what lies ahead and make provision for it. They must be able to envision the end result of the activities in which they are engaged, and know what effect their policies, methods and goals will have on the future.

(iv) Authority

A visionary's authority comes because of the anointing they have from God. They do not have to strive for this, but rather simply stand up on it. Other people will recognize it (especially those who are called by God's to work within the same vision). When a visionary loses their anointing, they will also lose their authority and the right to run/source the vision. This is why a person with vision always has to keep humble before the Lord.

(v) Responsibility

Visionaries are ultimately responsible for the fulfillment of a God-given vision (no matter how many enablers and sustainers they have). This means that they have to depend on the Lord and have faith sufficient to see the vision fulfilled. In fact, they need to be willing to take fresh steps of faith when there is only a seeming void beneath them. Visionaries cannot pass the buck. They need to count the cost of responsibility and pay it, in order to have the right to continue to lead the vision. It was Moses who had to continually put himself in a position between God and the people. Moses knew the tremendous responsibility of the visions and he knew the boundaries (and he nearly always worked within them). Visionaries also have a responsibility to point people to God and to His vision, and not to themselves.

The Characteristics of an ENABLER:

Just as God gave Moses able men to enable his vision, so God will give every true visionary every person they need to enable their vision. The enablers take the visions one stage from the source and start to put it into action. They, therefore, need to be very responsible bunch of people who can understand, organize, and clearly communicate the vision. They also need to be very close in essence to the heart of the vision. In fact, they should echo what the visionary is saying. Enablers need to be people of:

(i) Perception

Enablers need to be able to share in the vision and make it their own. They, therefore, need to be people to whom the visionary does not have to keep explaining the vision. In fact, enablers need to be people who can be trusted to interpret the vision to other people, to themselves and back to visionary. They also need to see the issues involved in fulfilling the vision and be able to do something about them, i.e. make it work.

(ii) Decisiveness

Enablers need to be people who are able to make decisions which are in line with the vision and which enable it to be fulfilled. Aaron had the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart (Exodus 28:30). Enablers today need to know God and the vision in their heart and, therefore, be able to make the right decision and enable the vision to be achieved (and never to deviate from it).

(iii) Single –mindedness

Enablers need to be so committed to the vision that they keep to it (Joshua 24:15). In fact, they need to follow it until the end or goal is reached, whatever the cost to themselves. It was the two men who committed themselves to Moses' vision (and kept to it) that ended up carrying it on after Moses had died (i.e. Caleb and Joshua).

Enablers can be dangerous, because they are powerful people within a vision. For example, Aaron allowed disobedience and grumbling to deflect him from the vision when he created the golden calf (Exodus 32). Later, he deviated from Moses' vision by allowing grumbling against leadership (Numbers 12), and losing sight of the distinction between the holy/clean and the profane/unclean (Leviticus 10). Every time Aaron deviated from the vision, he caused much distress. The same is true for the enablers of most visions. They, therefore, need to be very careful to stay true to the vision.

(iv) Motivation

Enablers need to be able to sow what they have got from the vision (at least in part) into the lives of other people, so that those people can and will get effectively into the action. They also need to have the ability to teach and motivate other people, so that those people can be useful to the vision (Exodus 35:30-35); and they need to be able to empathise with other people, so that they can enable them in the right way.

(v) Leadership

They need to be leaders who can not only lead other people, but who also can lead and enable to other leaders (Deuteronomy 34:9)

The Characteristics of a SUSTAINER:

There are the grass-roots and the front-line people who put the vision into action and maintain it in practical and detailed ways. Sustainers need to be people of:

(i) Submission

Sustainers need to be people who take the wider vision to heart, but who concentrate on working at their part of the vision. They, therefore, need to be in submission to the vision and to the leadership who are directing their effort to enable the vision to be fulfilled. These people do not need to have a cringing, groveling spirit which says, 'I am no good, I have no gift /abilities and I must carry out every syllable that some divine prophet tells me!' They need to do the work just as the Lord commands them, and they need a true, a godly sense of value and self-worth.

(ii) Dedication

Sustainers need to be dedicated to finishing the task they have been called by God to do and they need to do this task to the best of their God-given ability. They also need to be people who will do the job even when they are left on their own.

(iii) Willingness

Sustainers should have a willing heart to do the work that needs to be done (Exodus 35:20-21), because they want to serve the Lord and the vision He has given to His people. They should also be willing to try and apply the vision to the context in which they are working.

(iv) Perseverance

Sustainers should want to see their work completed, and be willing to give of themselves and their time to enable this. They should also be willing to be stretched in faith and to pay the cost of this, so that they can carry out their part of the vision successfully (even if this means being stretched well beyond where they have been before). Jesus said, 'My food is it to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish his work' (John 4:34). All who follow Jesus should follow His example in this area.

(v) Gift

Sustainers will discover that they have the right gift in God to do the particular task they have been assigned by God to do (Exodus 36:1). In fact, a God-given vision will only be successfully fulfilled when each person God has called to work within that vision operates effectively in their God-given gifting. Visionaries and enablers need to be able to discern and release people into their God-given gifts/potential, so that the vision will be able to

be fulfilled. Remember, when a person is released into their gifting, they are seen by other people in a different light. All people who are part of a vision need to humble/submit themselves before the gifting God has given to other people within the vision.

The Areas of Over-lap

Many of these characteristics can be applied to all levels of participation in the vision. For example, just as there should be submission from the sustainers, so the visionary also needs to submit both to God and to the vision; just as the enablers should have perception, so sustainers need to see their place within the vision and know the value of that place just as the sustainers need to be dedicated, so the visionary needs to be dedicated (in fact, he needs to be more dedicated, because he is the one who in the end will have to bear the greatest cost). In fact, all the characteristics are counter-related, but it is the measure to which they need to be manifested that makes the difference.

Visionaries, enablers and sustainers all need to be servants of the vision; they need to have unity of heart and purpose; they need to have confidence/contentedness in their own place within the vision; and they need to be continually open in spirit to each other and to the Lord. Everyone called to be apart of the vision should also feel that they are personally related to it and to the visionary; they should know that they are personally accountable for what they do and, therefore, know a sense of worth and responsibility because of their work; and they should be personally involved in the message the vision is seeking to communicate, because everybody working within the vision should speak with one voice.

Organisational Structure and God-sourced Vision

It is not the structure that creates spiritual vision or which makes a ministry successful. Any church/team's structure should only be a servant of God's vision. In fact, the structure of a church/organization only becomes dynamically relevant when it is put together to serve God's vision. However, a church/team's structure is important, because it enables a spiritual vision to become a practical reality, i.e. it is the structure that enables vision to be out-worked (and vision has to be worked out in reality with a strategy for its fulfillment or it will become mythology or mysticism.)

Visionaries need other people and organization/structure to enable the vision they are sourcing in God to become a practical reality. If they do not make room for other people, the vision will stay locked up inside of them. They also need to release parts of the vision to these people. This will free both the visionary and everybody else called by God to work within the vision, to get on and do their part. This is the only way a vision can ever be realized. For example, a visionary can usually launch an organization into initial action, but it takes leaders with administrative skill and judgment to sustain the momentum that vision creates. Also, wherever there are groups of people, there needs to be organization/structure to enable co-ordinated effort, because otherwise nothing of value will be achieved and maintained.

Vision Will be Tested

God's leaders will often find that their spiritual insight into the purposes of God and their vision from God are questioned, challenged or opposed. They, therefore, need to make sure that they have heard from the Lord, so that they can see the situation with spiritual eyes of faith. In fact, God will often allow His leader's vision and insight to be tested by allowing opposition to come, so that the leader can know just how deep their faith in what God has shown them really is. God wants His leaders to depend constantly on Him and His Holy Spirit, and not on their abilities /capacity /position, other people, or circumstances.

Another reason why God allows the vision He has placed in His leader's hearts to be tested is that He wants to receive all the glory for anything accomplished by the vision. God often tests the leader by causing the vision to hit a dead-end, i.e. after a vision is birthed, it will seem to die. There is nothing the leader can do in this sort of situation except go to God. God allows such a situation, because He wants His leaders to give the spiritual vision back to Him. After all, none of God's leaders should feel or believe that they own the vision they are imparting or working within. God

wants all the glory; and a leader will find it far more easy to give God all the glory, if the vision of which he is a part at some point seems to die and is only resurrected by God. A leader who has had such an experience (or a number of similar experiences) will give the glory to God when the vision is fulfilled. He will realize that the vision can only be fulfilled by God in His way and in His time, and all who work within the vision are tools whom God is using.

Loss of Vision

Loss of vision is not usually a problem for young, inexperienced Christian leaders, because they see themselves in a place where everything is ahead of them. However, older, more established leaders can find loss of vision a very serious problem, especially if they have completed their part of a spiritual vision. Here, the problem is that the leader has fulfilled one vision (or part of one) and failed to go to God (or be part of) another one. The main case of this problem is that these leaders have been doing a certain type of work for so long that it becomes part of them. Then, when this work is finished, they are at a loss, because their work was giving them meaning and a sense of purpose. Serving God, somewhere along the line had become secondary to doing their job. These leaders, who once were busy, are now at a loss as to what to do. If this condition continues for too long, the leaders often end up as lethargic, frustrated, cynical, disillusioned people. The answer, of course, is to wait upon God for fresh vision or for God to reveal in which vision He wants the person to serve Him.

Vision will soon become tradition and legalism, if the source/originator of the vision is not replaced by another visionary. Too often new leaders of a vision, while seeking faithfully to preserve their predecessor's position and achievement, only manage to perpetuate dead tradition (or start a new one). No organization/team/church should let the enablers or sustainers be alone in the driving seat. Every work of God needs visionaries who are in senior leadership. They may not be the chief leader, but they need to be at the very center of the decision-making and goal-setting process of any church/team/organisation. Trying to do God's work in any other way is like trying to do it blindfolded.

God's leaders need to have spiritual vision from the Lord that will not collapse, waver or be lost under the pressure of negative people, or adverse/difficult circumstances. They must not allow any opposition to discourage them from pressing on to complete their part of the vision God has given to them. In fact, people of vision should go to God in prayer whenever opposition arises and take the situation to Him. They should then press on until they have done all they can in God.

How Do You See Yourself and God's Plans?

- Do you see yourself and your work as God sees them?
- Where are you now with God and your work for Him?
- Is the place you have attained, your limit?
- How limited is it?
- Are you doing all you could possibly ever do for God now?

We need to be able to see ourselves and our work as God sees them. When we do this, we will be able to believe according to God's size and ability instead of being limited by our own size and ability. After all, it is not what we can do for God that counts, it is what He can do through us! We each need to see ourselves as a person who is growing and developing in Christ and who is filled with the power of God. We need to have faith in ourselves in God (2 Corinthians 3:4-6; 2 Corinthians 4:7). It is only then that we will be able to achieve fully all that the Lord would have us do for Him. Remember, we need to have or be part of a big, God-given vision in order to achieve big things for God.

In the book of Exodus, we read of the craftsmen who worked with onyx stone. These men could probably do this job far better than Bezalel (although Bezalel probably knew the techniques). However, he as the enabler, got them with their gifting to be organized and he gave them a tremendous setting into which they could place their work. The craftsmen and Bezalel needed each other to enable both of their jobs to be achieved. Can you imagine the day that they came to erect

the Tabernacle? It would have been all in bits like a jigsaw on the ground. The onyx craftsmen and all the other workers would have stood there and watched as their piece went into the whole. Slowly the whole thing would have come together and the people I am sure, were amazed. Their little bit made up a part of the whole and was enabling vision to be completed. They could have stayed as an individual doing their own thing, but alone they could not have even gone close to what they were seeing unfold before them. Their work was a part of the whole in which the glory of God chose to dwell! We need to do our part for whatever vision God has called us to work within. That is the place where God's glory is going to dwell. In fact, it is a tremendous experience to begin to see your place in God's plans and how you fit into those plans in relation to other people God.

God's people need to be content to do their part in the fulfillment of God's eternal plans. These plans, it must be remembered, go well beyond our lifetime. Much of what we envisage in God may not be work that we can achieve. This should not frustrate us or cause us to be disillusioned or cynical. We are only called by God to do our part in His plan and we need to be content in this. Even Moses never got to walk in the promised land.

Some more wise advise: 'Get a vision of the great thing you want to accomplish. Get a plan of the way in which you will achieve it. Be prepared to battle for it. Pray earnestly to God to give you the victory.'

Conclusion

Provision 29:18 could be paraphrased. 'Where there are no plans and goals based on God's Word to a group of people, those people will drift into a meaningless, pointless, ineffective existence.' If we are simply living for today with no thought for the future, then our life will just drift by with little achieved. We need to receive a vision from God which may be sourced in another person or it may be sourced in us. We then need to feed, nurture, and protect that vision, and anticipate its fulfillment by planning for it, i.e. we need to live out our lives seeking to fulfill that vision. We should also expect the vision to unfold just as God has shown us it will (i.e. directly or through leadership). This is what faith is all about. Once we have or are part of a vision from God, we need to work at our part of it with all our might, along with the other people God has called, to out-work the same vision. This means setting goals and aims and enthusing those who work with us so that God's vision can be fulfilled.

Vision can be received individually. We can get a burden from God to carry out a work for Him and be the visionary who draws enablers and sustainers to work us (because they also catch our vision in God and are called by Him to outwork that vision in us). However, vision in an organization/church which has a variety of functions, rarely has one individual who receives the whole vision for that organization/church. Here, there many people who receive parts of the vision and it is the job of the oversight of that organization/church to make sure that all that happens fits into God's overall plan for that organization /church. The spiritual authority will need to seek the mind of God together to be able to be able to do this.

Many leaders have seen too many rash and exaggerated claims to relation to corporate spiritual vision. This does not alter the fact that there is real spiritual vision which is something that is authentic in God, and which comes with His power and issues in His purposes being fulfilled. Some of us will be called by God to source a corporate vision, others will be called to organize and enable it, and still others will be called to staff it and keep it running. But all of us who have been called to be sons/children of God have a place in God's vision. If we want to be a success in God, then we need to be living in God's vision for our lives and we need to be playing our part within that vision.

Personal Exercise

Have you settled down to the expected life-style of the believers in your denomination or tradition? What vision has God given you for your life (both in terms of doing and being)?

Someone once said, 'Most churches and organizations fail for a single major reason – lack of vision!' Is this true? What can and should you do about it in your situation?

‘A motor car has an accelerator, break pedal and a gear stick. A team is the same. The accelerator is the visionary who is ready to reach ninety miles per hour in 6.2 seconds, leaving a cloud of dust behind him. On his own he would be dangerous – his pace and innovations would split the church. He needs the people who are brakes, to slow him down. Yet without the accelerator, the brakes would prevent real progress. The great-changers are the wise men and women who can discern just when the church or group should move into higher gear, or drop down again because the venture has proved too risky.’ Is this statement true? Can we learn any lessons from it? What should you do in your church/team/organization?

Do you ask God to reveal His strategy and will for you on a daily basis? Should you?

Perhaps you have heard the story of the man who came across three craftsmen working. He asked the first man what he was doing and got the reply, ‘I am laying bricks!’ He asked the next what he was doing and got the reply, ‘I am building a wall!’ Finally, he asked the third man what he was doing and he got an entirely different response. This man replied, ‘I am building a cathedral!’ The third man had caught the vision. He was doing his particular job, but he was doing it within the context of something far greater. Imagine his satisfaction. When he saw the whole with his part in it!

How do you view your work and ministry for God? How should you view it? Do you need to go to God and allow Him to change your view and to re-envision you? Do it now, if you need to!

‘Overall vision has to be big enough to be worth giving your life to it. Size is not as crucial as importance. A vision is important because the will of God stands behind it. Whether the world would call it large is beside the point. But within our lives, as we answer the call to obedience and discipleship, it is a big thing!’ Is the size of a vision important? Have you given your life to the spiritual vision you are working within at present? Why not? Should you?

Does God vary vision from one church to the next or is there a common vision? Does God want all churches to be loving fellowships, worshipping bodies, places where people are nurtured in Christ and equipped to move out and serve God, etc. Are there different functions that churches fulfill within the whole body of Christ? Is every church called to do everything or is God’s vision tailor – made for that church?

TIME MANAGEMENT IN ORDER TO BE EFFICIENT

Remember, God’s work is the most important thing that we can do. After all, the work we do for God will last long after everything else. We therefore, need to learn how to determine the difference between what needs to be done in God and what we would like to do. Remember also, there will always be enough time to do God’s will. After all, He has created time and He has planned our good works in advance (Ephesians 2:10). We will never be short of time, as long as we do not waste this precious, non-repeatable resource, and we fit in with God’s plans and purposes for our life. “Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity (redeeming the time; make the best use of your time), because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:15-16)

Time Wasters

- Indecision: Decision will have to be made by any form of leadership and often these will involve an element of risk. Leaders, therefore, need to accept the risks and get on and make the decisions required of them in the best way they can. Procrastination (or the putting off or delaying of action) is one of the chief thieves of time and, unfortunately, it is a common fault of many of us. In fact, many of the items which have become bugbears in our lives are those things which are put off until another day. If the job is too difficult or big, split it up into smaller, more manageable pieces. Also, set for yourself deadlines which you should try to work within. There is an urgency with God. He works in the divine today (2 Corinthians 6:2). This does not mean that we should run ahead of God, but it is a matter of expediting or assisting the progress of the Word of God when it is given, instead of shelving it in the hope that it will happen when we feel more like it.
- Lack of planning: Many of God's leaders are never quite sure what they should be doing. It is helpful to write a list of the things that have to be done and to rank them in order of importance. Then plan your day/week/month/year making sure that the things that are priorities for that day/week/month/year are done during times when we can give them our best.
- Lack of organization: Can you never find what you want, when you want it? Is your desk or even your whole office such a mess that you cannot concentrate on what you are doing (for example, because you are always noticing something else which needs to be done or that grabs your attention)? Get organized and get a good filing system. The time invested in getting one together may save you many hours later. Also, make sure your desk is tidy and you can only see that which you are working on at the time.
- Indiscipline: Time can be so easily wasted simply because we do not get on and do the things that need to be done. Instead, we dream, have yet another cup of coffee or tea, push the paper on our desk around, talk to yet another person about how their holidays or weekend went, make another phone call, etc. Undisciplined time tends to be: used up doing the things we are not very good at (delegation is often the answer here); controlled by loud, strong, domineering people (we need to have God's priorities for our time-use); governed by the tyranny of the immediate or urgent (not everything that cries the loudest is the most urgent time priority); given to things that appeal to our flesh; and invested in things that bring public acclaim and immediate reward (we, therefore, need to see ourselves as God's humble servants). Christian workers have a task to do for God. They, therefore, need to so discipline their lives that this task is carried out successfully and their time is used profitably. In fact, like our finances, our time should be budgeted. Remember, the most important things should be given prime time and immediate priority, whereas the less important things should be scheduled into our time plan at other times.
- Doing too much: This will often cause us to achieve less and to do the things that we are doing less well. If your workload is too great, lessen it by giving out the jobs that can be delegated. Remember also to say 'No' when you need to, and to put off the routine and trivial until times when you are less sharp/active in the day.
- Being busy doing nothing: Too often leaders do things because they have always been done or because they like the appearance of being busy, when in reality they are achieving very little of value. God's leaders should ask Him what He wants them to do. They should also find out what He wants them to be and do in the future and gear their activities towards the achievement of this. Activities should never be there for their own sake, but rather for the sake of getting God's work done in His way and time.
- Laziness: Our flesh often likes to take it easy. In fact, it likes to be pandered to and given in to. We need to make sure that we do not do this. The work of God is too important for us to be lazy in our attitude to it. God has entrusted us with His will and it is our responsibility in

Him to carry this out faithfully and to the best of our ability (Matthew 25:24-30; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15)

- Lack of stickability: God's leaders need stickability. They need to emulate or copy the attitude of Jesus with regard to the work of God. He said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work." (John 4:34). Many people get swamped by the things they have half-done or shelved. In fact, they often get so weighed down with these things that they give up and end up doing nothing. God wants us to go and to complete that which we have been given by Him to do (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:12-14).
- Panic: This can happen when our difficulties and problems get too much for us and they overwhelm us. The problem here is often simply that we hyperventilate (i.e. breath too quickly and so become light headed). What we should do in this case is stop, relax and take slow deep breaths (i.e. get the oxygen out of our system). Once we have begun to calm down, we should pray and bring the situation to God and realize that in Him we can do all things (Philippians 4:13). Trying to do anything when we are panicking is a waste of time. It would be far better to stop work until we regain our composure in God.
- Interruptions: Have you noticed how often the telephone or front door bell rings when you are doing something that is important or which needs to be done urgently? It is helpful to set aside times in a day in which you can work undisturbed. This may mean putting the answer-phone on or even taking the phone off the hook. Visitors should also be screened. When possible, and given appointment times that are convenient to you. Another person's emergency may not be as important as they think, so do not readily make exceptions even for emergencies. It is also helpful to see people over lunch or at times during the day in which you do not function as efficiently (e.g. early afternoon). Remember though, even unexpected interruptions may be caused by God. Jesus never seemed to be worried or agitated by them probably because they were not really interruptions, but part of His Father's plan. When interruptions come your way, ask the question, 'Why is God allowing this person/situation to come my way at this time?' i.e. bring God into it and look for His divine plan (Ephesians 2:10).
- Meetings: Too many of God's leaders today waste vast amounts of time going to meetings that they do not need to attend. Church leaders do not usually have to be at every church meeting, attend every conference, or go to all the local fraternal meetings. God's leaders need to work out their priorities and only go to the meeting that they need to in Him.
- Afternoon lethargy: Staring into space or letting our mind wander as we enjoy the pleasant feeling of a full stomach after a particularly good lunch does not get the work done. Some simple helps to avoiding afternoon lethargy include: eating a light lunch; not having the office too hot; and saving the jobs that excite us until after lunch (in order to help get us re-motivated for work). Note, just sitting at a desk all day can cause us to breath shallowly. This will cause us to have a lack of oxygen in our blood leading to drowsiness, sluggishness and an inability to concentrate. The best thing to do when we feel drowsy is to oxygenate our system by doing moderate exercise that does not lead to sweating (e.g. going for a quick walk or walking up and down a few stairs).
- TV/radio/reading/telephone: These can be useful tools which we can use in order to relax and even to edify our minds, but we need to be careful. Too many people waste much of their life because of these things. We need to do God's work first and fit these things in around what He wants us to do for Him.

There are possibly many other time wasters that you could think of, which cause you as an individual to waste time. Do not put up with these, but rather try and do something about them. We only have one life to live for God, so let's make the best use of it we can!

Assessing Our Performance

“Time can be lost, but it can never be retrieved, it cannot be hoarded, it must be spent. Nor can it be postponed. If it is not used productively, it is irretrievably lost.”

Professionals have devised three diagnostic questions to assess the effectiveness of time management in an organization. These are:

- What am I doing that really does not need to be done by me or anyone else?
- Which of the activities on my time log could be handled by someone else as well if not better?
- What do I do that wastes the time of other people?

Although these questions are primarily aimed at business management, there is some value in answering them ourselves. For example, God’s leaders need to make sure that they are only doing the things that need to be done by them; and they need to make sure that they do not burden other people unnecessarily. As Christian leaders, we need prayerfully to assess the way we use our time. You may not want to use the above professionals questions to do this, but do not live in blissful ignorance where time is concerned, because you can never go and get it back. It is a good idea to sit down and work out how every half hour of your waking day is used. Ask questions like: ‘Is this activity productive in my service for God?’; or ‘Does this activity contribute anything meaningful to my life/family/church?’; or ‘Do I need to be doing this?’; etc. Most of us will find that we do not use our time at all well and that there are simple things we could do to improve in this area.

Every person would also benefit from finding out when they function at their peak during a day. This will vary from person to person and will also vary in an individual’s life according to circumstances. The easiest way to do this is to assess at the end of the day when you did your most productive work during that day (only you will know this!). This needs to be assessed during more normal periods of life and over an extended period of time, i.e. for at least a few weeks. Our most effective/productive times could be after a nap, in the morning, after lunch, after a stimulating conversation, etc. Once you have worked out when you function best in a day and week, you should timetable into these times the really important tasks, i.e. those which require you to be functioning at a top level in mind and body in order for them to be completed quickly, efficiently and successfully. It is also important to determine when in a day you are least motivated, and timetable into these times either things that will get you re-motivated or things which do not require you to be functioning at your best. Note, such a survey needs to be carried out regularly, because your situation will change.

Ways of Disciplining Our Time

- Knowing ourselves, i.e. when (and why) we work at our best, so that we can choose the best times and conditions in which to do our God-given tasks. We then need to develop our life/work program around this. We must also re-evaluate this with God regularly, because things do change and we should continually want to use our time fruitfully and stay on course with God.
- Ranking jobs in order of priority/importance and doing the most important ones first (when possible). This will save us a lot of emotional energy (because we will not have to worry about doing the job for as long) and it will usually save us some time. People cannot afford to concentrate their efforts and invest their time in things of secondary importance, when the primary things are shouting for attention. Every Christian should plan their days carefully and choose to release their time to the things which are the most important time use priorities.
- Organising our time into blocks can be a help to enable us to manage our time more efficiently. For example, we can split the day into morning, afternoon and evening and decide what we will do in each. To do this effectively, we will need a watch, a diary, a notebook, and a pen which we carry around with us always.
- Keep a regular routine (again, where possible). Set aside a certain block of time on the same day each week for a certain job, e.g. sermon preparation, visitation, group study, and even time given to the family, etc.

- Plan well in advance. This will enable us to have the space in our busy schedules to fit in the really important priorities of our time (like our time with the Lord and time with our family). We can then let all the other demands on our time flow around our priorities. A well organized personal diary will be essential to do this. A wise person will also know how to look ahead and see the places which are going to be the most personally challenging, i.e. where tiredness and loss of motivation are likely to occur, and know why. That person will then plan how to gather the necessary energy and motivation ahead of the time it is needed, and know how to parcel it out in order to see them through these times. To do this requires the person: firstly, to know themselves (i.e. what affects them, what their weaknesses and strengths are, and what things will restore their motivation when it starts to wear thin); secondly, to know and understand what is going on around them (both spiritually and naturally) and know how they will react to those things; and finally, to know God (especially His love, care, and faithfulness towards them as individuals) and what He would have them do in the situation (i.e. His guidance). Every life has its trouble/difficult spots and these will be different for every person, e.g. one person may find one-to-one counseling difficult, whereas another may have trouble preparing sermons or meeting deadlines, etc. To assume we will be able to cope, and not to look ahead, is a recipe for disaster. It is okay to trust in God, but He wants us to look ahead in Him and to draw on Him for the difficulties He shows us are to come. He also wants us to stay prepared in Him for anything that may come our way (Hebrews 12:1-3; Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 5:8-9). We, therefore, need to make sure that we are meeting with Him and drawing from Him on a daily basis.
- Be an early starter. Much can be achieved first thing in a day, because our personal efficiency is highest during the first few hours after a night's sleep, and there tend to be less interruptions. Also, do not take 20 minutes to get out of bed, but rather wake yourself up quickly by getting washed, dressed and going. Someone once said, 'If we sleep less, we live more.' In fact, if we sleep for one hour less per day, we add well over 2 years of waking time to our life.
- We should concentrate on what we are doing (Colossians 3:23). Even a short time of doing this is worth many hours of half-hearted attention!
- Do it now! We should never let the things that we have to do mount up so high that we get swamped by them.
- Delegate tasks, so that we can get on with what we know we should be doing in God. We should never be doing what other people should or even could be doing.
- Having God's criteria for the best use of our time. Remember, make sure your family does not get neglected, because they also are your responsibility.

THREE STYLES OF LEADERSHIP EVALUATED: Where do YOU fit?

There are many different styles of leadership in our society as indeed there are in the church. I would like to briefly discuss three styles that are commonly evident in churches today. The first is bad. The second good. The third, the best! For the sake of this study I will call them:

1: THE CORK IN THE BOTTLES STYLE

This is a style in which the individual leader is very much to the forefront. The church or organization of which he is the leader is like a bottle in which he is a cork. Nothing enters or leaves that vessel with his personal approval and permission. He is personally involved at every level of decision making and nothing transpires that he does not instigate.

I often call this kind of leader a “one man band”. A leader who tries to do everything himself. On several occasions I have seen such a person trying to play several instruments at once. One fellow that I clearly recall was performing in a show where he was blowing a mouth organ, playing an accordion, banging a drum, clanging a cymbal. His head, mouth, hands and feet were all working overtime as he endeavoured to do the work of a whole orchestra. It was certainly an amusing and entertaining sight. However, it is not so amusing when we see a Christian leader attempting to do a

similar thing. Such a leader rarely delegates except for menial tasks that she does not want to do. He rarely spends time training and preparing his potential leaders. He selfishly and jealously holds all the leadership roles to himself. He sees himself as the big shot whose job no one else can do nearly as effectively. I see him as a “cork in the bottle”. Nothing can happen in the church without his permission. He may have a board of elders but this is frequently composed of “yes men”, especially selected because they always agree with him.

This style can sometimes work in a small church where the members are content to be largely inactive and uninvolved. However, it is a negative style that rarely if ever leads to growth and expansion. The cork may remain in place if there is only water or milk in the bottle, but if there is the life and wine of the Spirit this may cause an agitation that will inevitably do one of two things. It will either burst the bottle and cause a “church split”, or the internal pressure will build up until it eventually fires the cork out of the bottle.

2: THE PYRAMID OR EXECUTIVE STYLE

This style is a big improvement over the first. It was recommended to Moses by his father-in-law Jethro. (Ex. 18:13-27). Moses had been trying to function as a one man “band”. He was becoming exhausted through the long hours he was working. The people also were exhausted waiting in long lines for a chance to consult with him.

On Jethro’s advice, Moses changed his leadership style to the pyramid model in which he assumed his place at the top of the pyramid. Moses was instructed to “teach the people the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.” (Ex. 18:20). Moses related directly to men who were “leaders of thousands”, who then related to “leaders or hundreds”, who in turn related to “leaders of fifties”, then “leaders of tens”. Thus the authority structure flowed down from the top to the bottom.

This a very clear and effective model that is used by most business corporations. Through this model the authority structure is clearly established. The chain of command is clearly defined. Every has a clear understanding of their authority level in the organization.

Many contemporary churches have adopted some variation of this style and it can work very effectively in the setting of a church or Christian organisation. However, it is the ideal. It is not the Jesus style of leadership.

3: THE JESUS STYLE OF LEADERSHIP

This is by far the most desirable model for church leadership. I sometimes define it as the “hub principle”, in which Jesus is the hub (center) and the disciples are the spokes which flow out to the perimeter of the wheel.

This too is a model in which the authority structure is clearly defined. Jesus is the center. He is the hub around which everything else revolves. Every spoke is joined to Him, but is also joined to the rim of the wheel. The hub is the factor around which the wheel constantly revolves. Each spoke is only useful and valid inasmuch as it relates properly to the hub, and is also attached to the rim.

Unfortunately, for many Christian leaders, their leadership style is often dictated by their denomination and the style of leadership that this body espouses. This is all too often based upon a clergy/laity concept rather than that of a body ministry. This makes it very difficult for pastors to adopt a New Testament pattern based on the priesthood of all believers. It can also make it more difficult to truly disciple believers. However, this in no way excuses one from following the Biblical injunction to make disciples. One way or another, a way must be found to provide an environment for effective discipling.

Unless a pastor is “making disciples”, he is not wholly fulfilling his ministry. As integral an essential aspect of the pastoral and teaching ministry is that of training and preparing potential leaders in the skills and disciplines of leadership.

Eph. 4:11- 12 tells us that: “Christ Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” This clearly teaches that the primary task of the five-fold ministry gifts is not to do the work of the ministry but to equip (train, prepare, adjust, from) the saints (the believers), in order that they may fulfill the work of the ministry, i.e. building up the body of Christ.

A truly effective pastor does not perform all the work of the ministry himself. His foremost task is to select, call, train and generally prepare the saints to do this. Only in this way can the local body of believers be genuinely matured and built up. No individual can adequately fulfill a pastoral ministry alone. It requires numerous giftings and numbers of qualified persons to properly fulfill the task of shepherding the people of God.

The first essential requirement to achieve this is a disciple training program in every local church. Ideally these disciples, (apprentices or trainees) should be co-opted into a ministry team. By this means they cannot only receive training, they can also be given genuine opportunity to express their ministries in real life situations within the ministry orbit of the church. As the candidates develop in experience and skills, they are gradually made capable of undertaking the various tasks comprise the ministry of a shepherd.

PRINCIPLES OF MOTIVATION

Thought: Nothing gets done without motivation.

Why is it that on some days we would climb the highest mountains and swim the widest oceans for the Lord, and yet on other days we can hardly manage to lift a finger for Him? What induces us to serve the Lord anyway? How on earth do we serve the Lord wholeheartedly as we know we should? How do we get other people to serve the Lord wholeheartedly?

Motivation Defined

Motivation can be defined as: that which initiates motion or that which induces a person to act. It is human energy, which is probably the most plentiful and powerful resource on earth. We can never run out of it, and yet it always seems to be lacking or worse still, badly directed. The list of things that can motivate us is endless. This list will vary from person to person and will even vary from day to day.

Negative	Neutral	Positive
Compulsion	Happiness	Godliness
Anger	Honour	Holiness
Jealously	Euphoria	Righteousness

Hurts	Satisfaction	Peace
Fear	Compromise	Joy
Pride	Disagreement	Kindness
Laziness	Pressure	Goodness
Hatred	Cleanliness	Faithfulness
Envy	Desire	Mercy
Loneliness	Circumstances	Hope
Evil	Good Will	Love
Despair	Morality	Selflessness
Insecurity	Security	Fear of God
Complacency	Competition	Patience
Worry	Excitement	Gentleness
Guilt	Pleasure	Self-control
Discouragement	Conscience	Vision from God
Deceit	Success	Grace
Disappointment	Physical fitness	God-consciousness

This list is in no particular order, and an entry in one column could, in certain circumstances, be placed in another. The list is given only to give you an idea of the quantity and variety of the sources of motivation (and there are many others that we add to it).

Our understanding of motivation can make the difference between having a ministry which is effective, and one which does not seem able to get off the ground. This important topic needs to be looked at in some detail.

Three Basic Sources of Human Motivation

Probable the most powerful, and yet the most basic source of human motivation we all have is for survival. This needs to be realized, because if we are trying to do anything to help a person whose survival is threatened (e.g. by hunger, disease, even old age, etc.), we will have to take into account that this probable dominating their thinking and motivating most of their actions.

Another basic source of human motivation needs to be understand is that all people want to make sense of life, have a purpose, and make their lives count for something. This is because God created all human beings with an inbuilt need to know Him and do His will. This source of motivation may be largely an unconscious drive in some, but it is the source of motivation behind all religions, including atheism.

The third basic source of human motivation which operates within all of us, including Christians, is the powerful drive to only do things which are good for us. This selfish or self-centered source of motivation pushes us to put ourselves as the priority in our lives and so it must be taken.

As Christians, we need to put God first in everything. This will mean that we have to deny ourselves, something which does not come naturally to a human being. However, in Christ such a life is possible. We need to give God the Lordship of all of our life and, therefore, seek to live obedient, selfless lives in which God and His will takes precedence over ourselves and our will (Luke 9: 23). Outside of God, people gain meaning from: accomplishing worth-while tasks; achieving goals and completing jobs that they have started; meeting self-imposed standards; developing satisfying relationships with other people; exercising power and manipulating other people, and so to some extent being instrumental in changing those people and the world; and making enough money to get the things they need and want in life. Christians also have these sources of motivation operating to some extent in their lives, but God wants us to different. As Christians, we need to understand what motivates us and, further, we need to know how to stay motivated 100% of the time by the right things, so that we can serve our Lord how to stay motivated purpose and meaning and, therefore, our life should resolve around God and our relationship with Him. Everything we do should be because He wants it and because we love Him.

What Are Motivated People Like?

Motivated people are first and foremost, willing people. A good example of willing group of people can be seen when the children of Israel brought their offerings for the building of the tabernacle of the Lord (Exodus 35:4 – 36:7). Here the people had to be refrained from bringing more, because they were so willing to give. Many leaders would probably want such a problem in their church! Why is it that these people were so willing? The answer is simple that God and His work had captivated the hearts of these people, and so they stopped grumbling and instead became willing, motivated people.

Motivated people also want to get the job done. Their motivation encourages them into action. The stronger the motivation, the more sacrificial of time, money and energy, they will be. In fact, highly motivated people will be determined to get the job done, even in the face of strong opposition. They are, therefore, usually people who achieve much in life.

There are many characteristics that we could associate with a highly motivated person. In the list below, we have sought to select some of the most commonly characteristics in high achieving, highly motivated Christians. These are characteristics which any Christian who wants to serve the Lord more effectively, should develop:

- They have got themselves in hand and live a disciplined, godly life which seeks to put God and His will first. They set goals for their life and plan strategies to achieve them that they stick to (when possible) until the job gets done. In fact, they seek to excel in everything they do for God. They do not wear themselves out and they are not lazy, because they have achieved a balance in life which enables them to live purposefully and productively. They also make sure that they do not neglect any area of their life. They, therefore, allow time for their physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual needs to be met. They also know how to be angry and sin not (Ephesians 4:26). Like Jesus, they have a righteous anger towards sin, hypocrisy and injustice, but they know how to control their temper. In fact, they do not let the sun go down on their anger towards another person without first forgiving them, because they know that the bitterness and grudge-bearing which would result outside of forgiveness would destroy their motivation and their effectiveness for God (Ephesians 4:26-27; James 1:19-20).
- They have an optimistic approach to life, believing that all problems are solvable in God. They may be discouraged at times, but generally they are not depressed or down. Whereas the pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity, the optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty. They are therefore willing to tackle the tough jobs. They also live a happy, fulfilling life, because they are willing to work at this and can be creative (use their imagination) in what they sow with their time and effort. They are also open/alert/receptive, and interested in people, new ideas and knowledge.
- They may or may not be visionaries, but they have a sense of direction for their lives, and can catch a hold of the vision of God and run with it. They are often persuasive people who can sell their ideas to others. They are always looking ahead to see results and, therefore, they have the insight/discernment to make good decisions. They are also practical, in that they know vision has to be translated into reality.
- They are willing to stretch themselves to their limit in mind and body as they seek to fulfill the will of the God; they are willing to step out in faith and take risks when necessary; and they are capable of change and being versatile when they need to be.
- They are full of confidence in God and what He can do through them. They know that if they cannot believe in themselves, no one else will believe in them either. Their confidence enables them to laugh at themselves when they get it wrong or when things go wrong. Their confidence in God also gives them courage. They are determined, enthusiastic, persistent, and they do not give up unless they realize they have got it wrong in God. They know that God is

with them, and so even when they are afraid, they push on and refuse to let their fear overcome and defeat them (Joshua 1:1-9).

- They are humble, knowing that it is God who deserves the credit and the glory for their success. They do not need to boast about their achievements and success, because these speak for themselves.
- They are patient, knowing that God always proves faithful, but that He has a time for everything (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8). They are also good listeners and good communicators, and they only make important decisions after they have gathered enough relevant information.
- They are trustworthy, because they live a life of integrity/honesty and they understand responsibility. Their word means something and they can be counted on, especially when the going gets tough. Above all, they refuse to cheat in any area of their life, because they know that this may make things easier in the short-term, but they will not be able to live with themselves.

Our World Today

The world around us is becoming increasingly competitive and less predictable with each day that passes. The human race has entered the atomic age, the space age and the computer age in the last 50 years. It has been calculated that people entering the workforce, on average, will have to understand over 20 times as much information as they would just one generation ago.

Christians are not exempted from these phenomena. We have to live in the world and to some extent be a part of it. Most of us have to work for a living in the market place, and we can so easily be caught up in the whirl-wind of activity around us at the cost of our walk with God. Church leaders today have to make a huge number of choices, e.g. what to read (out of the mountain of books available); what teaching to believe and make their own, and what to teach their people (out of the increase in variety and amount of teaching which is competing for our time and money); what seminars to attend; how many meetings to have in our Church and which ones to attend, etc. Church members today are also becoming far more demanding of their leaders and what they expect from them. The instant, high-pressure, result-oriented world in which we live is encroaching into the church and bringing with it all the problems and sometimes also the enabling of success that this entails.

Church leaders need to negotiate this mine-field and stay motivated in their service for God as they do. Today's western-world society is not an easy environment in which to live a good, effective Christian life which brings glory to God, but it is possible to do so. In order to do this, we need to learn about ourselves and who we are in God. We also need to know how we react to different situations and circumstances, and why. Most importantly, we need to make ourselves totally available to God so that He can change and equip us where necessary. Only then will we be truly ready and able to carry out His will in His way. God wants His leaders to be highly motivated and, therefore, fruitful and effective for Him wherever they live and whatever they are doing.

The Three Ways People React to Pressure

The change in the pace of the world today, the growth of readily available information, and the demand for better performance, even in Christian circles, all cause us to have to cope with vastly increased amounts of pressure. It is therefore helpful to understand how we as people react to pressure. We have looked at this to some extent in an early chapter, i.e. 'The value of Problems and Pressures', but here we will concentrate on the effect pressure can have on our motivation. It has been found that there are basically three ways people respond to pressure. The following categories describe people who exhibit these three types of response to pressure.

(i) The Tail-chaser

These people take on more and speed up in response to pressure. As a result, they are often driven, hyperactive and aggressive people. We have labeled this group 'tail-chasers', because they behave like a dog chasing its tail, i.e. they rush frantically around circles trying to reach their goal. If they

do manage to achieve what they set out to do, they often do not know what to do with themselves, until they find the next thing they can madly chase after i.e. that see that tail again and want it at all costs.

Such a person usually rushes around and tries to do much, too quickly and as a result, accomplishes very little of quality. They tend to take on too many responsibilities and they over-commit and over-challenge themselves. Time is the enemy if these people and they have a sense of urgency and hurriedness about everything they do. They tend to try hard and take unrealistically high risks in an attempt to get a job done faster. They also often expect a great deal more than is realistic of those who work for them, and even get angry when these people do not live up to their expectations. If things are not done yesterday, they are not happy. These people are also prone to try and take shortcuts to success, and so they cut down on planning time and they do not allow enough time for skill development and mastery. Panic is often the main source of their energy and, because of this, these people tend to be unable to concentrate for any length of time, i.e. they find their minds darting from one thing to another.

The cost of such behavior is great. Not only are they ineffective, but these people carry with them a huge amount of stress and tension. This encourages frustration, nervousness, anger, physical illness (such as heart disease and cancer), alcoholism, excessive smoking, drug dependence, mental breakdown, and even suicide. To feel out of control of your own life, to feel that you are in way over your head, and to be dictated to and controlled by what is happening around you, is a frightening state to be in.

People who react to pressure by increasing their work-load and speeding up, often spiral onwards, i.e. the more they try to get done and the harder and faster they work, the less they tend to achieve; and the less they achieve, the harder they feel they have to work and the more they will take on. Even if these people do meet with success, all this seems to do is reinforce and encourage their wrong behaviour, i.e. they believe that taking on more work and doing it faster is the only way for them to accomplish anything and be the success that they so desperately want to be the vicious cycle in which these people are trapped is a never-ending exercise in futility which often results in tragedy.

(ii) The ostrich

These people ignore, slow down or run from pressure. This response to pressure tends to result in demotivated, care-free, careless people, who are more concerned with themselves than they are with getting the job done. These people would rather have the pressure disappear, and so they either bury their head in the sand and refuse to admit that the pressure exists; or they turn their backs on the cause or source of the pressure and run away from it, even if it is something that urgently needs to be done. Although these people may not have as high blood pressure as those in the first group, they tend to live lives that lack excitement and enthusiasm. They generally are not high achievers, because they do not have the motivation and drive needed to take the necessary risks and overcome the inevitable challenges involved. Their lethargic, safety-at-all-cost attitude causes them to be safe, but sorry. When these people reluctantly take on pressure, they do so half-heartedly, expecting and, therefore, insuring poor performance. This then reinforces the person's situations with more tenacity next time.

The greatest cost of such behaviour is that these people feel their life is going no-where. They are often bored, and have a dislike for or little interest in their job. These people are usually at least competent at what they do, but they do not want to go beyond their area of competence and step out into new areas, i.e. do things they have never done before, or go beyond where they have been before. To step out into some new area of endeavour is seen by them as too risky, mainly because of the fear of failure. Life, therefore, is rather too predictable and routine for these people and so they readily lose interest in what they are doing, preferring to 'jog' along and do enough to keep everybody happy. These people often risk the depression-based illness due to their frustration, depression, lack of fulfillment, disillusionment and disappointment.

(iii) The ideal

This group responds to pressure in the ideal way, i.e. they allow it to motivate them to perform at

their peak and so get the necessary jobs done. We have looked at this in an earlier chapter, so we will not look at this response to pressure in much detail. Suffice to say here that these people do not allow their circumstances to dictate to or control them. They take on stress, but they also know how to channel it, instead of absorbing it into themselves and therefore suffering from it. They tend to be committed to their work and confidently take the risks involved necessary to do their job, without being unrealistic and therefore overwhelmed by what they are doing. Basically, they are in control of themselves and their situation, and they either have (or are in the process of being trained in order to have), the necessary skills to do their job in the most effective way possible. Of course, this is an ideal situation. Sometimes, it is not possible to have further training and we simply have to make do. At other times, we have to take on things which leave us feeling we are way out of our depth, and yet, as Christians, we can know God's enabling to offset our weakness.

Of course, we all react differently to the different tasks and challenges that come our way throughout life. These three descriptions are given simply to help- each one of us know how we are reacting to the pressure is the response for which we should all be aiming as Christians, so that we can maximize our effectiveness and achieve the best possible results for God.

The Balance Between Skill, God-given Gifting and Attitude

Performing at our best as a Christian is a combination of skill, God-given gifting and attitude. Skill can be defined as: having the knowledge and the ability to do something. As a rule, this is necessary before we can tackle any activity successfully. God has also promised that He will provide us with everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), as long as we submit our lives to His will. To know God's gifting is essential, if we want to serve Him effectively as Christians. However, although these two things are obviously very important, it is attitude that sets apart those who are going to be really successful from those who will simply be adequate. Skills, and even the gifting of God, are possessed by many, but only a few Christians are really successful for God. This is partly due to the different call which God places on our lives, i.e. some, are called to greatness and to achieve much and some are called to simply keep things going. However, it is also true that many Christians have the potential to do much for God, and yet fail to get their act together and so are only partially successful. The thing that makes the difference is usually their attitude.

Attitude may be defined as: thinking, outlook or perspective, which motivates or disposes us to act in a certain way. Our attitude is controlled or harnessed effectively by only a few of us. It is our attitude that determines how well we use our skills and God-given gifting and it even determines how well we express or use what we know intellectually. Our attitude influences our perception of any situation, i.e. it determines how we are going to view it; and it also determines how well we are going to perform in that situation.

It is very easy for an attitude problem to reap havoc in our life. This is because it can cause us, not only to do badly in one situation, but do badly in every situation we encounter. For example, a common attitude problem is an expectation of failure. This usually arises because of a past failure that causes us to feel badly about ourselves. This attitude is then carried into other things that we do and it causes us to fail there also. To be caught in such a cycle will cause us to continually perform poorly. Christians trapped in a vicious cycle like this (in which they are going from bad to worse), need to break out, if they are ever going to be effective and successful for God. To do this they will need to get help from God and other people. Simply to think positively is not the answer. The root cause of the problem needs to be dealt with. i.e. their attitude problem needs to be rectified.

What we need to do as Christians is to go from good to better. If we are successful in what we do, because we see ourselves as God sees us and, therefore, have a good self-image; if we are skilled and competent enough to be realistically confident (in both God and our gifting) in any situation; if we are committed to what we are doing because we know it is God's will for us at that time; and if we (with God) are in control of the situation, then it should be possible to be continually highly motivated and successful in nearly everything we do. Being successful will reinforce our right attitude and behaviour and enable us to continue it.

The following are some helpful thoughts to enable us to keep the right attitude in our service for God.

- ❑ We need to assess our results and learn any lessons possible from these. There are many questions we could ask ourselves. What we learn from answering these can be applied to the next situation we encounter and enable us to go from good to better in our service for God. Some questions we could ask ourselves include:
 - Were my skills adequate for the task?
 - How could I improve my performance?
 - What things prevented me from doing any better?
 - What would I have done if given the task again?
 - Did I bring God into the situation?
 - Did I know God with me as I did my job?
 - How accurately did I perceive the situation?
 - Did I believe I would be successful?
 - How did I feel about myself and my ability to cope?
- ❑ Our attitude toward life will determine how we get on in life. We need to accept ourselves as Christians, knowing that God loves us and has chosen us. He knows what attitudes we harbour in our hearts (Hebrews 4:12-13). He knew what we would be like physically, emotionally and intellectually, and He has gifted us in a unique way so that we have the potential to do something for Him that no one else could do quite as well. God is able to use us as we are, but He wants us to progress and grow in maturity in Him so that He can use us even more in His service. We need to put off our old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; and allow God to make us new in the attitude of our minds; and we need to put on our new self in Christ, which is created to be like God like truth righteously and holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24).
- ❑ We need to think act and talk in ways characteristic of who we ultimately wish to become i.e. as Christians, we need to think act and talk like Jesus (Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 4:1-2).
- ❑ Our attitude toward other people will determine their attitude toward us e.g. if we always make other people feel needed, important and appreciated they will return this attitude to us. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you; and treat everyone with respect, dignity and courtesy where possible. It is also not a good idea to talk about your health (unless it is good) or your personal problems (as it probably will not help) you and certainly will not help other people).
- ❑ Our attitude at the beginning of a task will effect our performance during and the outcome of that task.
- ❑ We need to be creative, look for new ideas everywhere, and find the best in them.
- ❑ We must not be embarrassed to share vision, desires and goals.
- ❑ When we really want to do God's will and we are committed to seeing it through, our attitude will be right.
- ❑ We should radiate an attitude of well-being and courage. We should be positive optimistic and think only about what is true, noble, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praise-worthy (Philippians 4:8).
- ❑ We need to rid ourselves of our bad habits, deal with our fears and learn the necessary skills, so that these things no longer block our effectiveness for God.

Commitment and What Captivates Our Heart

Our heart is the seed-bed of our thoughts, attitudes, motives and decisions. The things that captivate our hearts tend to dominate our thoughts and emotions, and influence the decisions of our will (Proverbs 27:9; Proverbs 4:23; Luke 6:43-45). The more our heart is captivated by something, the

more we will want or desire it; the more we desire something, the greater our commitment to it will be; and the greater our commitment the greater our motivation to achieve our desire will be. A captivated heart and the commitment this creates will motivate us to overcome even the greatest of obstacles, and to press on, even when this involves great cost to ourselves. In fact, the more we are committed to something, the less difficult it appears to be. Anything seems possible and nothing is too much trouble. Obstacles are seen as hurdles, which must be overcome, and setbacks are seen as opportunities to learn (i.e. how not to do it and how to do it better next time). A captivated heart refuses to accept failure and it never gives up. Like the apostle Paul it presses on towards the goal to win the prize (Philippians 3:12-14; Colossians 3:23-24).

As Christians, we need to allow God and His work to captivate our heart, so that He and the accomplishment of His will become what we want or desire more than anything else (1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 119:1-3) for this to be possible, we need to meet with God and get to know Him and His desires. Then, our heart will begin to beat in tune with His and we will start to become like Him. His will, will become our will. If we allow Him, He will envision us and captivate our heart with some task. He may have to do a work of preparation in our lives before hand, but if we continue to look to Him, He will show us what He wants us to do for Him. A heart captivated by God and His will, will give us the commitment, motivation, energy, and drive to do God's will, whatever the cost. This is what happened to the great characters of the Bible, like Moses and David, and it can also happen to us. People may be able to get us moving temporarily by inspirational speeches or by dangling rewards before us, but nothing can motivate a Christian more than truly meeting with understanding His will, and obeying it.

Our heart will be captivated by what we allow ourselves to participate in and by what we input into our lives. Therefore, we must be careful, because even as Christians our hearts can be stolen, if we let down our defense and let the enemy in. If we allow this to happen, it can be devastating our motivation to serve the Lord. We will begin to commit ourselves to something other than God and His will and once this happens, our hearts will encourage us to continue in our wrong behaviour (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 1:21). Some wrong things that can captivate our heart as Christians include: sin (Hebrews 3:12); ourselves (Proverbs 14:10); doubt (and eventually unbelief); fear and worry (Deuteronomy 20:8); other people (Psalm 69:20); depression, rebellion, disillusionment, disappointment, bitterness and hurt.

As God's sons, we must never allow our hearts to become closed to Him, especially during times when we are down or emotionally hurt. God expects us to keep our eyes on Him and to forgive, thus stopping our hearts from becoming like stone to Him. As Christians, God wants us to be totally available to Him at all times. We must, therefore, never allow our hearts to become closed or numb to God, thus prevent Him from captivating them by Himself and the things He wants us to do for Him (1 Samuel 16:7). If our hearts are hardened, and we know that we are not right with God, then we need to go to Him, tell Him about it, and yield our lives afresh into His hand. He will create in us a clean heart that is totally open and available for Him to use (Psalm 139:23-24; Ezekiel 18:31-32; Psalm 51:10-12).

To maintain a God-captivated heart, we need to: let His peace guard and rule our heart (Philippians 4:7; Colossians 3:15); spend time each day in God's presence and with His word (1 John 3:19-21; Hebrews 4-12); store up our treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21); to maintain a thankful heart and a humble, Christ-like attitude (Psalm 10:17; Ephesians 5:19-20); fear the Lord (Deuteronomy 5:29; Proverbs 28:14); consecrate our hearts to God and allow Him always to reign as Lord in them (Mark 12:19-31); discipline ourselves so that we always chose to do God's will (Galatians 6:9; Proverbs 23:19).

A God-captivated heart, and the commitment to God and His will that this creates, is a very important key to living a fruitful, God-glorifying life. As Christians, we need to decide what we are going to allow to captivate our hearts. We then need to act upon our decision and live a life into which only those things which God wants are input. This may necessitate us giving up some of the things we are currently doing or feeding into ourselves. It may even cause us to become distant from some of

our friends. God asks us to live selfless, righteous, holy lives which are totally given over to Him. We should do everything that we do, only because it is what He wants. This will mean making some very costly sacrifices, but none more costly than the sacrifice God made for us in Jesus.

Determination

Someone once wrote, 'Consider the postage stamp, my son. Its usefulness consists in its ability to stick to one thing until it gets there.' People who are successful in any field are usually those people who do not give up. When the difficulties come, and they inevitably will, these people simply move into a higher, more determined gear until they see their way through. They work in order to see results and to achieve. It is not wrong for a Christian to view God's work in this way. Too many of us achieve little, if anything, for our God. Christians should hear from God and then be determined to carry out His will. Nothing should stop us!

Someone said, 'Great people are ordinary people with extra-ordinary amounts of determination.' The trouble with many Christians is that they either do not start anything or they are put off by the first sign of difficulty. We will achieve nothing for God, if this is our attitude. God has chosen us to be His ambassadors and to do His work on this earth. We need to be totally committed to whatever He has planned for us to do and be thoroughly determined to see this work through to the end (until everything we can do is complete), whatever the cost to ourselves. In fact, we should give our life to it (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Timothy 4:16). This may necessitate taking on some very large difficulties, overcoming some of our deficiencies, or paying a huge cost in terms of our money, time and effort; but it is worth it, if we are committed to the right things. We will not get anywhere or achieve anything unless we commit ourselves to something, act this, and keep going until we have totally outworked our commitment.

Jesus said. "No one, who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.." (Luke 9:62)

Confidence in Ourselves and in God

The major key to success is us and our relationship with God: not our boss, salary, position or anything else. We need to be confident in ourselves and in what God can do through us, in order to be really fruitful and effective for Him. We need to be confident that we can do the job to which we are called by God and we need to see ourselves as He sees us in that job. God has promised to equip us adequately for any task He asks us to do for Him. Our confidence in God and ourselves should not waver when we fail or when other people are not doing what they should be doing. We need to see ourselves and our circumstances, no matter how bad they seem, as God sees them. We can then relax, do our best for God, and commit ourselves fully into any task He asks us to do for Him, knowing that this is all God expects of us. If we have such an attitude, we will feel free to try new things, when appropriate, and be free to change the way we have always done it, if necessary. The confidence we can have in God and ourselves (when we are doing His will!) can be very liberating and a tremendous stimulant to our motivation to serve Him.

If we work purely with human confidence, our actions will be confined within its boundaries. As Christians, we need to work from a confidence based on our position in God and on the knowledge that God can produce divine results through us, if we make ourselves available to Him. Confidence based on these things will not cause us to fall into pride, arrogance or fear, but will enable us to step out in faith and give all the glory and credit to God for any work He does through us (2 Corinthians 3:4-6; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 4:1-5). We do not carry our destiny on our own shoulders alone, God is with us! Our abilities may not be sufficient to do all that we know needs doing, but His are! This should be the source of a Christian's security and confidence.

Fear is the great enemy of confidence, even for many Christians. It can drive us into a panic; cause us to be hasty in our actions; and even stop us working altogether. Christians have been set free from fear (2 Timothy 1: 7; John 8:32,36; Hebrews 2:15), but many still live with it and are made ineffective in their service for God because of it.

Every human being has built into them the capacity to know fear and anxiety. We usually cannot

stop fear from happening, but we can learn how to handle it in God. We need to handle fear, because it distorts our perception, making the situation that aroused the fear look more dangerous and difficult than it really is, and our ability to handle the situation appear diminished. Our imagination runs wild when we are in a state of fear. 'What might happen if? Remote improbabilities seem more like realistic probabilities. We also tend only to notice the things that reinforce or increase our fear, thus making the situation appear to be getting worse all the time. Fear also magnifies the consequences of failing to horrible, catastrophic dimensions. Another disconcerting aspect of fear is that often you cannot quite put your finger on the exact reason for being afraid.

The two most common reactions to fear are to be immobilised by it or to try and fight our way through it, i.e. we over-react! The best way for a Christian to handle fear is to recognise that this is what is happening, and then to stop and confront the fear. To do this, we need to calm down and take the situation to the Lord. Too many Christians simply try to bury their fears and they find that they return at the most inconvenient moments to plague them. Some of the warning signs we can look for to detect a fear response starting include: talking to ourselves in a negative way, (e.g. 'I cannot really do this!' or 'I am going to let them down this time and they are going to be so angry with me!'); or body reactions like shortness of breath, dry' mouth, shaky knees, sweaty palms, feeling rising panic, etc. When we recognise some of these fear-warning signs, we should stop, and relax by taking a few deep breaths. Calming down and stopping what we are doing (when possible) gives us the chance to distance ourselves from our fear and it creates a space in which we can evaluate the situation we are in. We can use this space to try and determine what is causing the fear response in us. As Christians we can also use this space to bring God into the situation, ask Him what is really happening and why we are reacting as we are. This will enable, us to see what is really there and the situation as it really is (we will again be able to distinguish between a molehill and a mountain). Usually a more accurate calm appraisal of the situation and seeing things as God sees them, will diminish our fear and help us to get back in control of ourselves (2 Kings 6:8-23)

There are some other helpful things we can do in a fear-causing situation. Firstly, we can write a list of everything we need to do on a board or a piece of paper. We should ask God to help us to do this. Many of us distort the amount of work we have to do by keeping this list in our head only. Physically looking at this list will help us to see more clearly what is really there to be done and help us to evaluate it better. Secondly we can try to measure the actual difficulty of the situation confronting us. When our mind is asked to rate something, (e.g. giving it a score out of ten), the mind becomes analytical and objective. This often breaks through the distorted picture the fear has caused us to see. Thirdly, we can assess ourselves. We can ask if we really did hear from the Lord. If so, there is no need to fear, because God will provide for us and enable us to succeed in the situation. If not, we may need to get out of the situation in the best way we can, e.g. if the mountain really is a mountain. We also need to ask if we have been in a similar situation before (even if only part is similar) and make a comparison. If we have coped well in a similar situation, this will encourage us. If we have not coped well we may need to make tactical retreat, or seek God for the courage and determination to succeed this time. We should also go to God and make sure we are not stepping out of our depth in Him without His say so; and find out from Him if we are still on the right course or whether we need to adjust what we are doing The final thing to do is to imagine the worst if we fail. When we realistically decide what the worst possible consequence of failure is in our situation, we can decide whether we can live with this or not. If we can, we can go ahead. Rating the likelihood of this worst consequence happening can also help us, because our mind has often exaggerated this and made it seem far more likely to happen than is realistically possible. Unassessed prospects of disaster keeps us from working well.

Never start a job without first assessing it with God's help. Once we have seen things realistically and from God's perspective, we can more easily decide what our next move should be in our situation. Going into a job with false confidence, based on a positive confession, a vague hope, an over-estimation of our ability, or an under-estimation of the difficulty of the situation, could end in disaster. God tells us to be sober in our judgment of ourselves (Romans 12:3). To judge or discern

incorrectly can cause us to go into a situation under-prepared, or cause us to be less careful or diligent than we should be. We also need to assess with God whether we need further training and/or more help, in order to carry out a job successfully. To know that we are adequately trained (or competent) to do a job is a tremendous help to going into that job with a confident attitude; and, as we have discovered, having the right attitude at the beginning of a job will vastly increase our likelihood of success.

Tips to Help Us Keep Motivated as Leaders

- ✓ Being recognised and appreciated for what we do. This gives all of us encouragement to continue doing whatever caused someone to affirm us. We all need to have someone tell us" that we are getting somewhere when we have put a lot of effort into doing just that. We also need to be accepted by other people; and to accept/respect ourselves and our own worth in God, if we are going to stay motivated.
- ✓ Knowing that God calls us to the task of leadership, because then we will know that He is in it with us. This will give us the security and the peace of God that we need in order to maintain our motivation to serve the Lord as one of His leaders.
- ✓ Seeking to be a model for those we lead. This will help motivate us to do the right thing and to continue to live a righteous, holy life; and it will inspire those we lead to do the same.
- ✓ Not focusing our attention on things, which are outside our control and worrying about these things. This simply tends to waste our time and energy, and sap our motivation, for example, we cannot control another person's needs, attitudes or responses to any great degree. We may be able to influence their actions (especially by prayer), but influence is a long way from control. We are ultimately only really responsible before God for ourselves and what we do.
- ✓ Giving to or sharing with other people. God often pours back into our life more than we give out, so that we can give again (Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6). Of course, giving involves more than finances. It covers areas like love, happiness, encouragement, time, friendship, and practical help. We can wish and dream all we want, but in the end, we reap what we sow. If you do not like what you see in your life, check what you are sowing in it.
- ✓ Knowing that we are working together with other people to achieve commonly held goals and objectives. This can give us a tremendous boost to our motivation. It helps us to feel involved, important, needed and purposeful. Achievement also seems to mean more when other people can share in it.
- ✓ Knowing that we are accountable before God for our life and our talent. This encourages us to be productive and fruitful for God. We can also help ourselves in this area by being accountable to the right group of friends with whom we share our lives, i.e. the victories, as well as the failures
- ✓ Never putting off what we know we should do, Successful, highly motivated people know that the time, which goes by, can never be recaptured and that they, therefore need to make the best use they can of this precious resource.
- ✓ Making the right choices in life. We need to find out what God wants us to do and then, with His help, set for ourselves realistically achievable goals and work towards these. The expectation and inspiration that the process of goal setting can bring can be very motivating. Setting achievable goals also helps us to chip away at the impossible until it becomes something we can handle, and it gives room for us to be able to express ourselves creatively (instead of being just lazy bystanders in life). Reaching goals is also very motivating, because it shows us that we are fruitful and successful in a measurable way-we do make a difference,

and our life does count for something.

- ✓ Wanting to improve ourselves, even in areas in which we excel. Seeing ourselves get better at doing something will reinforce our motivation to keep going. The motivation that comes from trying to break records and be successful is also great. This helps us to overcome obstacles and adversity, and to achieve great things in every conceivable area of human endeavour. To place imaginary limitations on ourselves is going to limit our performance because in the long run these become real limitations. This is because our mind has convinced our body and our will that it cannot be done. As Christians, we need to remember that nothing is impossible to God and that we can do all things through Him who gives us strength (Philippians 4:13). If it is God's will, then it can be done, even by us. We simply need to go to Him in prayer and find out how to do it.
- ✓ Considering the consequences of inaction. We can only really do this if we plan and set practical goals for our life and ministry. Once we have done this, we can ask ourselves what the result (or consequence) will be if we fail to achieve them. Will we have depression, financial loss, frustration, loss of motivation, etc? Is it worth it?
- ✓ Scheduling the most important tasks to those times when our body and mind are functioning at their peak. If you do not know when these times are, you can do a daily assessment for a month or two to find out. At the end of each day, assess when you did your most (and least) productive work, was it during the morning, after a stimulating conversation, after a nap, after lunch, etc. This personal assessment should be done regularly, and if done, will help us to stay self-motivated throughout life.

Getting Into Shape

"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promises for both the present life and the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:8) This verse is often used as an excuse for avoiding physical exercise, but the truth is that Paul said physical exercise does have some value. The Bible often mentions the need for us to look after our body because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1). If our lack of physical fitness is hampered our service for the Lord, then we need to do something about it!

Personal Exercise Questions

1. Would you classify yourself as a willing, motivated person? In what areas are you motivated? Why these areas? Are these the areas in which God wants you to be motivated? What can/should you do about your motivation to serve the Lord?
2. The difference between a successful person and one who fails or is average is on slight. What sort of person are you? Can you do anything to improve yourself?
3. Do you enjoy the approval of God in what you are doing? Are you always struggling to do God's will or do you relish tackling the tasks that your calling brings? Have you the assurance and the confidence in yourself and God that enables you to serve without striving.
4. Are you, or those you lead, experiencing commitment problems? What has captivated your heart and theirs? Is this what God wants? How could you encourage commitment? Remember commitment cannot be forced!
5. It took Mr. Thomas Edison over 700 attempts before he succeeded to make a viable lightbulb. How many setbacks does it take for you to give up? If at first you don't succeed, try and try again! Is this true in your life?
6. In our fast-paced world with its instant solutions, perseverance can be thought off as old-fashioned. As a Christian leader should you persevere? Do you? Have you ever achieved anything of note over the years? If not, why not? Is there anything you can/should do about this?

7. If we refuse to take on any challenge, we will never achieve anything! Do you ever take on challenging tasks? How successful are you as a leader? Should you be more successful? What can you do to improve?
8. Is your physical state hindering or helping your work for God? Does looking after your body take up too much of your time and money? Is your shape as God-glorifying as it could/should be?

Godly Motivation Needed to Accomplish Progress and Success

God is just as concerned with why we do His work as He is with the work being done. God does want us, as believers, to be motivated in our service for Him, because He wants His will to be obeyed and His work completed. If motivation enables us to get that job done, the question then arises, 'Does God care what motivates us as long as the work is done?' The answer of course is 'Yes'. In this study we will be looking at the need periodically to examine ourselves prayerfully, so that we can assess where we are heading and what is driving us there. We will also look at a few of the key sources of motivation that God has provided for us as His servants in order to help us carry out His work. Finally, we will look at the positive effect the right people can have on us as we seek to serve the Lord

The Need to Examine Ourselves Periodically

Self-examination should not become a life-style, or an end in itself for the Christian. This is because, when it is practiced too often, it tends to cause people to become too introspective. When this happens, people take their eyes off the Lord and focus instead on their problems and difficulties. We are to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and to have God and His will as our life's priority. People who continually look into themselves tend to have selfish, self-centered life priorities, simply because they devote most of their time to trying to find out who they are, why they do what they do, or wallowing in self-pity, etc. In fact, looking into ourselves too often can be very dangerous and lead us into great fear, bondage and inaction; especially, if we do nothing but worry about what we discover.

However, there is a place for healthy self-examination. This always looks forward with hope to what could be and only behind so that it can learn from any mistakes made. It also helps us to know who we are and what motivates us to do what we do. God does care about why we serve Him. He does care when the wrong things motivate us. He wants us to prayerfully consider ourselves, at times, so that we can know how well our walk with Him is going; and so that we can discover what is really going on inside of us. The difference between this, and what we have just warned against, is that God is in control and not us. We are simply giving Him the time and space to point out the things that are

not quite right in our lives. Once He has done this, we should ask for His forgiveness and yield these areas of our life into His hand. Some of the things that God may show us as His leaders during times of prayerful self-examination include:

- ❖ What our strengths and weaknesses are.
- ❖ Whether we have unrealistic expectations of ourselves.
- ❖ What God's call on our life is.
- ❖ What God expects of us.
- ❖ Whether we are doing something which God never intended us to do (here it is not right to keep pressing on).
- ❖ Whether we have a persecution complex, which causes us to read threats to ourselves into many situations (whether they are there or not).
- ❖ Whether we are insecure in our leadership, because we are afraid of people or because we feel, we are not competent enough.
- ❖ Whether we need further training, because of a lack of a skill in a certain important area necessary to our effective functioning as a leader.
- ❖ Whether we are jealous of someone else.
- ❖ Whether we are dissatisfied with our position and we want someone else's.
- ❖ Whether we hold a grudge against someone who has hurt us (which we know, need to let go of and allow ourselves to forgive and trust).

An unwillingness to examine ourselves prayerfully tends to make our spiritual growth very difficult, if not impossible, and our ministry effectiveness tends to remain static. We need self-awareness to evaluate our ministry and to get our goals and priorities right in God. The Holy Spirit has been given to be our Counselor, to guide us into all truth (John 14: 26; 16:13 - 14). He can show us where we need to change and He can help us to change. We simply need to give God room in our lives. We also need to think of ourselves with sober judgment (Romans 12:3), and examine and judge ourselves so that we do not come under the judgment of God (1 Corinthians 11:27-32; 2 Corinthians 10:12-13; 2 Corinthians 13:5- 6).

All Christians need to change their thinking to see both themselves and their work, as God sees them. We do need to be sober in our thinking, but we also need to be willing for God to enlarge our capacity so that we can do more for Him. He has promised to do this, if we faithfully carry out the little things He asks us to do for Him (Luke 19:11-27). This means that we need to keep right with God and make sure we are motivated by the right things. It is true that sometimes God allows His work to be carried out in the most unusual of ways and for the strangest of motives: but, as far as we are concerned, we should be building carefully, because we can only have lasting reward, if we build on the right foundations and with the right materials (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

It is hard to enter into self-examination when things are bad, but we need to in order to get both ourselves and our situation sorted out. We also need to examine ourselves when we fail, because often failure can be remedied. We even need to assess ourselves when things are good, so that we can learn why it worked and do it even better next time. Remember though, our self-worth should not be based on our achievements, our acceptability to other people or even on our friendships: it should only be based on what God thinks of us.

Some leaders have a great deal of difficulty assessing themselves (most of us are a little paranoid!). It is therefore helpful, at times, for all of us to ask people we trust what they think of us. This question can be asked generally about all of our life or applied to specific areas. It is often true that other people can see us better than we can ourselves. They have not got all the hurts, pride and insecurities (and the internal barriers we have put around these things to protect ourselves from them and the hurt they cause us), that we have inside ourselves which tend to colour the way we view ourselves. We, as leaders, often have to cut ourselves off, to some extent, from self-consciousness to enable us to minister more effectively to other people. This also can cloud our view of ourselves. The best people to go to are people who know us well, like our wives, or friends who are trustworthy and who know how to hear from God. Leaders can also help each other in this area. One way to do this, is to take

key church members aside for a retreat (for two or more days, if possible), and look at each other's lives and ministry effectiveness. The pastor, vicar or senior leader will usually have to get things going by modeling the open sharing necessary.

God's Great Motivators

A de-motivated Christian leader is not only possible, it is common! As God's leaders, we need to be God-motivated people ("enthusiastic" meaning: full of God), and make sure that we have that right sources of motivation for serving Him Too many Christian leaders are either too worldly, compromising or vague in their attitude and, therefore, their motivation to serve the Lord is poor. God wants us as His leaders to model the right type of motivation to those we lead and so, be good examples to them. He also wants us to be careful, because we can be motivated by negative forces which will eventually destroy us.

God is concerned about our motives. The end does not justify the means in God's economy! According to God's Word, He understands our motives (1 Chronicles 28:9); He weighs our motives (Proverbs 16:2); He will expose, judge and test our motives (1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Thes. 2: 4); and He will not answer our prayers if they are prayed with the wrong motivation (James 4:3). Of course, God is not a 'big brother' figure who is watching over us with a big stick waiting to belt us with it every time we get it wrong. God does love us and He wants only the best for us, but He knows that some things that motivate us can be very damaging to us. He would rather us be motivated by the tools He has provided, and so bring glory to Him and bring our eternal best. The following are some of God's most important sources of motivation to enable effective, fruitful Christian service.

Important sources of motivation:

(i) The love of God

God's love is unconditional, sacrificial and selfless. It is the Greek word 'agape'. This type of love seeks the welfare of all and the harm of none, as Jesus showed was possible when He came into the world to suffer and die for all mankind. It seeks to bless and to give: and it only wants the best for all to whom it is directed.

'Agape': expresses the deep and constant love and interest of a perfect being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential love in them towards the Giver, and a practical love towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others seek the Giver.

The unlimited depth of God's love was revealed to mankind in His Son Jesus. We can trust and rely on the love God has for us, nothing will separate us from this love (Romans 8:38- 39); and, if we reciprocate it, God will in all things work for our good (Romans 8:28). Once a person establishes a personal relationship with the Lord through faith, 'agape' love can exist, and that love will grow because of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit within us (Romans 5:5).

God can only release us to be His under-shepherds, when we can truly say we love Him first, above our secular work and above ourselves (John 21:15-17). There is no doubt from Scripture that God loves us dearly (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4- 5; Ephesians 5:1-2). God commands us to love Him and other people, and show it by our deeds (Matthew 6:1-4; Luke 10:27- 28; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:14; Galatians 5:6, 13-14; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; 2 Timothy 2:22-26; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 3:14-18; 1 John 4:7-21). In fact, as Christians, we are to live a life of love, especially within the community of believers. It is in the context of this loving family of God that believers are to grow in their experience of God's love and reach Christian maturity (Ephesians 3:17-19). Love also establishes relationships and maintains unity in the body of Christ (Philippians 2:1-4; Colossians 2:2- 3). Love is the opposite of selfishness. In fact, those who love are only fulfilled when they bless those to whom their love is directed. Selfishness, on the other hand, is never fulfilled-it always wants more.

As Christians, love should be the chief source of motivation for all that we do (1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 2 Corinthians 5:14). Ministering using the gifts of the Holy Spirit; giving all we have to the poor,

having faith sufficient to move mountains, and even martyrdom are all-tremendous concepts which every Christian would like to do (to some extent!), but they are nothing compared with the love of God according to the Scriptures. In fact, these things are nothing, unless they are done out of a motivation of love. Therefore, if we base our whole life and ministry on these things, we will have done nothing that will be of eternal value to us, unless we had as the driving force behind our actions, the love of God. Love is the most important aspect of Christianity, not healing, prophesy or even evangelism. All our service for God and all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are only meant to be expressions of God's love. Too often, we concentrate our attention on the gifts and not the Giver (we forget why the gifts were given in the first place, i.e. to point people to God and to reveal to them the love of God); or we concentrate on our service, and we fail to remember why we are serving.

God's love needs to be at the very center of our lives and be the motivation for everything we do. The more this is true in our lives, the more it will encourage our commitment to God, prompt our obedience to Him, and enable our labour for Him (John 14:21-24; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 John 5:3). It will also enable us to break free from our self-centered motivational drives, and live instead for God and other people. If Christians did love God with all their heart, strength, mind and soul, there would be no need for any other motivation to serve and obey God (Matthew 22:37-39). As it is, the other motivation sources do help until we reach the perfection for which we should all be aiming.

Seven ways to receive God's love:

- a) Directly from God, i.e. letting God build it into our lives (1 Thessalonians 3:12; 2 Peter 1:3).
- b) By knowing God in increasing measure. We do this by praying seeking God and worshipping Him, etc. (John 17:26); 1 John 4:8). God is love: and so spending time in His presence allows us to partake of His love and, therefore, have some of it built into our lives.
- c) By understanding God's commands and then obeying them (John 14:21). As we put God first in everything we do, it creates a framework for God to work His love into our lives. Not obeying God when He asks us to do something for Him is putting ourselves and our desires above God in that area, i.e. it is in effect, making ourselves lord of that area. God is then unable to build His love into this part of our life. God only goes where He is wanted and where He is invited to be Lord.
- d) By yielding our lives into the Holy Spirit's control so that He can pour His love into our hearts and produce in us the fruit of love (Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22).
- e) By making a conscious choice to actually put on love and put aside everything that is not of God. The love of God is freely available to us; we can either put it on or reject it, work towards it or ignore it (Colossians 3:12-14). II Peter 1:5-9 explains, that there is a series of stepping stones which finish in love. We are asked to add these to our lives in increasing measure in order to be effective and productive for God.
- f) By having a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:3-7). This passage teaches that Paul's ultimate aim was love. He saw that love wanted to express commitment. Therefore, all the things that need to be done will be done, in a church in which the people have love as their ultimate aim and their chief source of motivation. Love is the most important thing in God's Kingdom. It is the cement that binds the church together and the church to God.
- g) By spurring one another on towards love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:16-19)

(ii) The fear of God

The fear of God should be a controlling motive in the life of a Christian. This reverential awe or fear of God influences us to choose to go His way and do His will, instead of doing what we would selfishly

choose to do (Psalm 36:1-4; Romans 3:10-18; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). The fear of God is described as the beginning of wisdom and knowledge (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; 1 Peter 1:17), because it enables us to have a healthy respect for God and shun evil, desiring instead to live obedient godly lives which please our loving heavenly Father. It also helps us to keep our lives in the right perspective, with our will always subservient to the will of the Almighty Creator of all. Taking God into account in this way is the best foundation we can build in order to live disciplined, obedient, righteous, holy lives and to reject anything which may compete with this (Deuteronomy 6:13-19; Deuteronomy 10:12-22). In fact, the Lord promises to bless those who fear Him (Psalm 128:1-4).

The fear of the Lord releases us from most of the normal fears which plague mankind and that keep us in bondage or slavery, e.g. the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14- 15); fear of others and what they can do to us (Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4-5; Hebrews 13:6; 1 Peter 3:13-16); fear of the enemy (Deuteronomy 20:3-4); fear of bad news; fear of the unknown; and anxiety, which is the indefinable feeling that something is going to go wrong (Psalms 112:7- 8). This is because we know that no matter what is happening to us or around us, God is for us and He is in control. In fact, God has promised never to leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5); and He has promised that nothing will separate us from His love (Roman 8:38- 39). When we are truly aware of God's power and His loving concern about even the details of our life (Matthew 10:29-31; Luke 12:6- 7), we are released from those lesser fears which may tempt us to compromise or disobey God.

The fear and love of God work together, i.e. we only, need to fear God when we step out of His will and, therefore, out of His love. The fear of God can then be a tremendous source of motivation, encouraging us to get back into God's will and therefore, into His love. Remember, God does not remove His love; we are just stepping out of it in some area if we step into sin. The fear of God can be looked upon as a barrier outside of which are the things that are not of God and inside of which is God's love. Inside there can be no fear, because perfect love drives out all fear (1 John 4:18). When we love and fear God, we need not fear His judgment or punishment, because we will stay right with Him. In fact, we do not even need to fear coming personally and confidently to Him because of our position in Jesus (Ephesians 3:10-12; Hebrews 10:19-22; Psalm 103:17). As Christians, we have not received a spirit that makes a slave again to fear, but we received the Spirit of sonship that enables us to love God and can call Him our Father (Romans 8:15).

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7) Living in the fear of the Lord was the normal practice for early church members (Acts 9:31). God even acted to encourage His people to hold Him in reverent awe as can be seen by the account of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). The fear of God helps us to submit to one another, because we realize that we are not competitors as fellow believers, but rather we are serving the same Lord (Ephesians 5:21). Remember God would prefer us to be motivated in our service for Him by love and not by fear of any punishment He may meet out to us. Nevertheless, the Scriptures urge us not to take God lightly, but to serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:28- 29). "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." (Philippians 2:12-13). "Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear." (1 Peter 1:17)

(iii) Vision from God

This has changed the lives of most of the Bible's major characters, e.g. Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Paul, etc. It can be seen, heard, experienced, personal or prophetically given by God to us; and it is one of the most powerful motivating forces in God's Kingdom. Vision is quickening, because it gets us moving into effective service for God; and it is constraining, because it sets up the boundaries within which we should operate in order to stay in God's will. In fact, Proverbs 29:18 says that without vision people will perish, cast off restraint, or run wild.

(iv) The peace of God

Peace is defined in the dictionary as: 'freedom from war or civil disorder; quiet, tranquility; mental calm; in a state of friendliness; or not at strife'. The peace of God is more difficult to define or understand. In fact, the Word of God says that it transcends all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

The Hebrew word for peace is 'shalom' and it communicates the meaning of wholeness, completeness, rest, order, harmony /unity and even health, contentment, prosperity and fulfillment, as well as the more usual meaning of absence of strife. It was (and is) used as a blessing and a wish for the recipient's welfare; but more importantly, it speaks of the inner and outer blessing and harmony that comes to a person or people when they live in a close relationship with God and His will. In fact, the peace of God is part of the very nature of God (Judges 6:24; Romans 15:33; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 13:20) and He alone is the source of real human peace. The Greek word for peace '*eirene*' traditionally referred to: the orderly prosperous way of life possible in the absence of war. However, New Testament writers modified its meaning to be more like the Hebrew word for peace, 'shalom'. The New Testament also links peace directly to Jesus, after all, He alone is humanity's way to the God of peace.

The peace of God should be clearly evident in the life of believers and outflow in quality relationships between members of the body of Christ, the church. In fact, the peace of God should guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7). If you have it, it keeps you going; and if you lose it, you want it back. It can, therefore, govern us (Isaiah 60:17) and be a very useful tool to motivate us to stay right with God. The peace of God should always rule in our heart since as members of one body we were called to peace (Colossians 3:15). This should be true no matter what is happening to us or around us. The Word of God also tells us that the peace of God can give us a future, because there is a future for the man of peace (Psalms 37:37). It brings life to the body, because a heart at peace brings life to the body (Proverbs 14:30). It brings joy (Proverbs 12:20), beauty (Isaiah 52:7) and a harvest of righteousness (James 3:18); and proclaiming or sharing the peace we have been given by God, brings us a greater measure of peace due to the principal of sowing and reaping (Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6).

There are a number of ways that we can lose our peace, including:

- + Un-repentant sin (Isaiah 48:22).
- + Disobedience to God.
- + Not allowing the peace of God to rule in our hearts, because we are told to 'let' it rule (Colossians 3:15).
- + A disorganized inner spiritual life.
- + Living an unjust life (Isaiah 59:8).

There are also a number of ways to establish the peace of God in our heart. For the believer, all of these revolve around availing ourselves of the finished work of Jesus at Calvary; and knowing the forgiveness, salvation and peace with God available through repentance from sin and accepting Jesus as our Lord and Saviour (Isaiah 53:5; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14-18). Other ways to keep the peace of Christ firmly ruling in our hearts are:

= Giving the Holy Spirit room in our lives to produce peace, which is one of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

= By letting the peace of Christ rule in our hearts (Colossians 3:15). This involves setting our will to do the will God.

= As we have seen, God is peace by nature; and so if we spend time with Him and His Word, some of His peace will 'rub off' on us,

= Philippians 4:4-9 gives us a number of things that we can do to establish the peace of God in our hearts. These are: rejoicing in the Lord (vs. 4); letting our gentleness be evident to all (vs. 5); not being anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanks giving presenting our requests to God (vs. 6); thinking about what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy, because we become what we input (vs. 8); and putting into practice what we have learned from God and godly men (vs. 9).

- = By seeking and pursuing peace (Psalm 34:14; Romans 14:19),
- = By loving God's law, because great peace have those who love God's law (Psalm 119:165).
- = By finding wisdom, because all her paths are peace (Proverbs 3:13,17).
- = By disciplining our children (Proverbs 29:17).
- = By keeping our minds steadfast, because we trust in God (Isaiah 26:3; Romans 15:13)
- = By pursuing righteousness, because the fruit of righteousness is peace (Isaiah 32:17; Isaiah 57:2)
- = By paying attention to God's commands (Isaiah 48:18).
- = By being a son of God who is taught by the Lord (Isaiah 54:13).
- = By doing good, because God gives glory, honour and peace to those who do good (Romans 2:10). This explains why many who do not know God seem to be enjoying a life of peace i.e. they do good to other people and therefore, they reap the benefit of this promise from God. In Christ, however, we have available to us a far greater depth of peace, because it includes peace with God which all humanity was created to know and, without which, it is impossible to know a real depth of peace.
- = By having a mind controlled by the Spirit, because this is life and peace (Romans 8:6).
- = By trusting in the God of hope, because then we will be filled with peace (Romans 15:13).

(v) A good conscience

The reason we have included this subject in this section is that we cannot serve the Lord wholeheartedly without having a clear conscience. The Greek word for conscience is '*suneidesis*' which literally means: 'a knowing within', i.e. knowledge within oneself. The Dictionary defines it as: 'the internal recognition'; the moral quality of one's motives and actions; the faculty or principle, which pronounce, upon the moral quality of one's actions or motives, approving the right and condemning the wrong. Our conscience bears witness to our behavior and either accuses or excuses us (Romans 2:15). Our conscience is not reasonable, it just prompts what it knows is right. We cannot appease it, buy it off or deny it, without building a tremendous tension into our lives. It may be possible to bury this tension for a time, but eventually it will surface often as an illness or in bitterness. God has given everyone a conscience as an important tool to aid our obedience and service for Him (Romans 9:1; Romans 13:5; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:11; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 3:16-22).

In the ideal situation, our conscience would be programmed always to show us when we are doing (or even thinking of doing) something contrary to the will of God for our lives. Unfortunately, the fall of man into sin has added many extra or different things into our inner man and, therefore, our conscience is not always programmed in the way God ideally wants it to be (Titus 1:15-16). Conscience alone has never succeeded in producing a truly moral person. As believers, God needs to do a work in us to renew our minds and thereby re-train or re-program our conscience so that it is again activated only by the stimuli that God intended. This takes time; and involves us reading God's Word, obeying His will and yielding our minds to the Holy Spirit, until we begin to react and think in the way God wants us to. Until we reach this place of perfection, we cannot fully trust our conscience. As the apostle Paul said, "I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court: indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time, and until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God." [1 Corinthians 4:3-5]

Believers with a weak conscience have not matured sufficiently to distinguish clearly between what is truly good or godly and what is evil or ungodly, or to discern what is morally indifferent. These people often manifest a 'legalistic mentality', because they need rules to live by in order to stop them doing the wrong thing. They often put up boundaries that are not particularly of God, but which are,

nevertheless, restraints that help them. Their consciences are programmed to keep them within these boundaries. Paul warns us not to cross even these self-imposed boundaries (and so step on our conscience), especially due to pressure from other people. To do so would be not to act from faith, which is sin (Romans 14:1-23, especially vs. 23; Hebrews 11:6).

People with a strong conscience that is based on God's Word, do not need legalistic restraints as much. They have God's boundaries in their heart and this enables them to live the way God wants them to. The strong however, should not cause their brothers to stumble by what they do (1 Corinthians 8:7-13; 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1). Where the will of God is not clear, each person must act in accordance with their own conscience and be careful not to influence others against their convictions. Each individual in this case must be free to respond, as they believe God would desire them to. However, when the word of God is clear on a subject, we must obey it, whatever our conscience is saying.

Remember, although gifts and sacrifice were unable to cleanse from sin, the blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse us from all sin (Hebrews 9:9-14; Hebrews 10:19-22). Therefore, when we ask God to forgive us for our sin or for stepping on our conscience, we should expect to be totally free from guilt. Our consciences should be clear, if we have truly repented. Any guilt remaining is usually sourced in the enemy and therefore, can be resisted and rebuked, because such condemnation is not from God (Romans 8:1-2).

We should look to see if our conscience is pointing anything out to us. God often uses our conscience to point out something that we need to bring to Him. If we ignore our conscience, we do so at our own peril, because tension will be built into our lives and our conscience will be numbed or dulled and so less of a safe-guard for us (1 Timothy 1:19; 1 Timothy 4:2). Our motivation to serve the Lord will also suffer because we will know a nagging sense inside of us that something is wrong. We need a totally clear conscience before we will be able to fully receive and accept God's love into our lives and character (1 Timothy 1:5). Like the apostle Paul, we should always strike to keep our consciences clear before God and man (Acts 24:16).

Friends Who Motivate Us

Every leader needs friends in order to get him through the difficulties that will inevitably face him. These friendships need to be worked at and cultivated by having time invested in them, even time we had set aside for other seemingly important activities. To neglect them can lead to one of the greatest problems of leadership, namely loneliness (or isolation). Friendship is a vehicle by which we can receive life and motivation, and through which we can supply life and motivation to others. Friends can also be exhausting, at times, but the cost is generally worth it. They affirm and encourage us; they are willing to point out our weaknesses and bring the right discipline at the right time; they rejoice when we succeed, and weep when we fail; and they do not envy when we win, or gloat when we fail. Friends support us and stand with us even in our most difficult times. What would we do without them. The tragedy is that many Christian leaders have many acquaintances, but few, if any, real friends!

Talking about friends and friendships, **we can distinguish nine types of friends** that all of us need to have or be to other people at least at some point in our lives. These are:

(i) The Discipler

These are friends who give us recognition and who pour into our lives strength, inspiration, passion and vision, enabling us to serve the Lord more effectively. They are available when we need them for courage, approval, guidance and assurance, and they help us to establish develop our potential in God. Sometimes, they even launch our ministry. They shape our lives and ignite our motivation to serve the Lord. These disciplers are not necessarily our close friends. They tend to come into our lives for a time and for a specific purpose; and they nearly always only make positive contributions to our lives. Unfortunately we cannot live in the protective shadow of these friends all of the time. We need to learn how to stand on our own two feet and to mature into our

own calling in God. Our disciples simply help us along the way. They are the kind of people we can imitate because of their maturity in God. Biblical examples of this type of friendship would include: Jesus and His disciples; Barnabas and Paul; and Timothy.

(ii) The Encourager

These friends take note of what we are doing and what we are becoming and attach value to it i.e. they let us know we are getting somewhere in God. This encouragement or affirmation is not a vague compliment or an impulsive statement and it certainly is not something for which the person requires reciprocation; but rather it is one person's recognition and positive evaluation of the life and call of God in another person. Without this type of friend, we may never be sure if what we are doing is actually good enough in God. Without them, we will always be wondering whether we contribute anything meaningful and whether or not we make a difference for God. Satan is always accusing us and seeding negative thoughts into our minds, trying to get us to feel insecure and entertain feelings of being a failure. We need our encouragers to enable us to see perspective and to keep us on the right road. Without these friends, there would be many more disheartened. People who act as this type of friend must be very careful to encourage or affirm only what is of God in the other person and not just be a 'yes man' to them.

(iii) The exhorter

These friends tell us the truth, even if it sometimes hurts. They are willing to speak to our faces what other people are probably speaking behind our back. Many people in leadership find these people hard to take because they are so used to being the person with all the right answers. If we are honest, at times, we need to receive what our rebukers say (and change our lives accordingly), in order to keep ourselves right before God. Obviously it is not right to modify our behavior so that we come into line with every negative word that comes our way, but it is right to weigh any words of rebuke we receive to see what they contain. If there is any kernel of truth in the words (and there often is), then we will be a better servant of God, if we accept it and modify our life accordingly. A good practice is to take words of rebuke to God in prayer, and ask Him whether they are true and what we should do with them.

In Christian circles, we are often too nice to each other and we tolerate some of the most appalling behavior. We tend to live like this because we confuse love with sloppy sentimentality and therefore, we are unwilling to hurt each other's feelings or say a negative word about another believer. Positive criticism can be one of the most valuable resources available to us. God wants us to live in reality; and truth spoken in God's way and in God's time in love, can help us do this and be a life-changing thing. Rebukes are often the most effective moments of learning we can experience. They often set us free from things that before hand were hindering our ministry or quenching our motivation to serve the Lord (Proverbs 27:5- 6; Proverbs 28:23). We need to be corrected when we are wrong; we need to be pushed when we are lazy we need to be envisioned when we become complacent; and we need to be redirected when we are straying from God's path.

When we receive a rebuke, our self-image is threatened. God, however, has not asked us to defend this, but to humble ourselves under His mighty hand that in due time He may exalt or lift us up (1 Peter 5:6). If you feel that the Lord would have you play the role of a rebuker, then remember that all things need to be done with a motivation of love. Only rebuke if it is for the other person's good and it is something that they will be able to do something about. We need to watch out for those who use a rebuke to try and put us down so that they can get one over us or so that they can feel bigger. If love is really our motivation for rebuking, then it follows that it will cost us and hurt us to do it, because when you love someone, you will not want to hurt them (2 Corinthians 2:2-4).

(iv) The Intercessor

These are friends who hold us before the Lord in prayer. They are friends who tend to seek us out and ask us how things are going. We should share intelligently what is on our heart with these

people. God can tell them the right things to pray for us, but it is also helpful, when possible, to let them know where we are at with God, what we are doing for God, and what our needs are in God. It is also important to encourage these friends by letting them know how God has provided for us. We should never neglect those who pray for us, because our life in God and our motivation to serve Him depends on prayer. We need those who will pray for us, whatever our level of maturity in God. Those with leadership responsibilities, however, need prayer as a matter of urgency.

(v) The Partner

We share our workload and our lives with these friends. They are teammates! They keep us motivated, because they are aiming for the same things we are and they are heading in the same direction that we are heading, at least for a season. They, therefore, encourage us and prod us into action, so that the partnership we form with them will achieve its goals. It is like carrying of a heavy load that will stay where it is. Partners have picked up part of the same load that we are carrying and they have accepted responsibility for it. These people are usually there when we need them and can empathize with us, because when we are hurting because of the work, they often are; and they share our joys and successes. Partnerships are usually synergistic. This means the amount of work that can be achieved by the partners as a team is greater (usually much greater) than that which could be achieved by the partnership members working independently of each other, i.e. the whole is more effective than the sum of the parts. Partnerships enable us to reach our full potential in God, and they give us courage, motivation and strength. Working as part of a team is also very encouraging, especially when the team sees results. If you are married, your most important partner should be your spouse!

(vi) The Shepherd

These are the understanding friends who lead, feed, shield and shepherd us. They come alongside of us and pull us up when we are down; they encourage us when we are weak; they come and help us get back on our feet when our motivation to serve the Lord is suffering; they care for us when we are hurting; and they bring order from confusion. These friends sense where we are at with God and in ourselves, and they approach us and give to us at our point of need. They are trustworthy people to whom we can run when we are at the end of ourselves and know that there we will find the encouragement, help and ministry we need.

(vii) The Servant

These are friends who will willingly do practical things for us. They tend to be friends who are always available whenever we need them. Nothing is too menial or outrageous for these faithful people, because they have enjoined themselves to us to enable the work we do for the Lord. They help our motivation, because they take some of our workload from us and therefore, give us more time to get on with the things we know we should be doing for God. We need to take care to recognize and honour this form of friendship that all too often is taken granted or goes unnoticed. Not to do so, may cause the person to feel used and for them to lose their motivation to serve us. We must also not be too proud to accept the help these people offer to us. Remember though, not to force people to serve you in this way. Such service is a calling in God, which should not be forced.

(viii) The Disciple

These are friends for whom God has made us responsible for a time. It is our job to train and help these people who want to receive and learn from us. Although we may be giving much of our time and energy to these friends, we are more than happy to do so, because we see the potential in them for God. Jesus calls us to be His disciples and, at times, part of this calling is to train other people to work alongside of us in the Kingdom of God. There is little more stimulating to our motivation to serve the Lord than seeing men and women who have been helped or encouraged by what we have been able to build into their lives. Again, it is must be remembered that we should never force anyone to become our disciple.

(ix) The Social Friend

These are friends with whom we can relax and have a good time. Even Christian leaders need to do this from time to time, because God created us as social beings. These friends are often people with whom we share common hobbies, interests or sports. Sharing these activities with these people helps us to unwind and occasionally get our mind off our work. All Christians need to do this, and to have a friend to share it with makes it more worthwhile and therapeutic. These are also people we can have a cup of coffee with and know that we will not get preached at or discuss work unless we want to. The only thing to watch with this type of friendship is that we keep it in perspective. We will enjoy the activities we engage in while carrying out this type of friendship, but we must not let these activities take up too much of our time or let them captivate our heart, instead of the Lord and His work.

It must be noted that the same person may be a different type of friend to us at various times. We need to cultivate friendships in God and look for the people to whom God wants us to be such a friend. It is important however, that we do not model our lives blindly on just one or two people, because this tends to cause us to idolize or hero-worship them. We should only model ourselves on Jesus and the aspects of His character that we see in other people.

Many churches will not survive unless the practice of friendship making improves in them. New church members want to feel welcome in a church and find an atmosphere of love in it. Church growth strategists have discovered that they will need to have found as many as seven meaningful relationships in that church before they will commit themselves to it for a long period. As a rule, it is meaningful relationships, and not structures or programs that hold people in a church. Loneliness will drive people away and turn them against the church, because they do not expect to be lonely in what is supposed to be a loving, caring environment. People need at least to feel wanted.

Friendships that become cliques are wrong, because other people are excluded from and even feel threatened by such a group. However, friendships established with Jesus as the foundation, last and make a tremendous impact both on our life and on the lives of those to whom we come into contact day by day. The church would be a better place if all leaders had the right friends and all church members worked at this very important aspect of church life. Motivation would increase, more of God's work would be done, and God's love would flow more freely (and this never fails).

Questions for personal application

1. Do you know how you are getting on in God? Are you growing in your relationship with Him or are you just treading water? Do you ever prayerfully examine your walk with God? Should you? What are some of the dangers in doing this? Have you let self-examination become a stifling pre-occupation with yourself? Is self-examination worth the risk?
2. Write down some realistic goals for every area of your life. Pray about this before you do. Then rate the difficulty you are going to have in achieving each of these. If it is too difficult, make the goal easier! Try to separate external expectations (what other people expect of you!) from internal ones (what you expect of yourself!), because this will help you see what or who is motivating you in this area. Finally, examine how closely your sense of worth is wrapped up in your fulfillment of your expectations.
3. If love is shown by the actions it prompts, how much love do you have in your life? Do you need to ask God for more? What is the chief thing that motivates your service for God?
4. How much reverence and awe do you have for God? Do you go to God with the right attitude of heart? How wise are you in the choices you make?
5. What vision has captivated your heart? Is it of God? Are you excited about your work for

God? Do you feel like you are perishing or sinking or acting in an unrestrained manner, because you have no direction or guidelines from God; or are you just doing your own thing and hoping for the best?

6. Is the peace of Christ ruling in your heart? If not, why not; and what are you going to do about it?
7. Is your conscience clear before God? Are you feeling guilty about anything? What is the source of this; and should you do anything about it? Does God ever condemn us?
8. There are too many de-motivated lone-rangers in the church in positions of leadership. Are you one? What can you do about this situation? Are there any old friends you can look up? Do you need to work at the friendship you have with your wife?
9. Did the apostle Paul have friends? Was he committed to them? Did he continually affirm them and work at these friendships? Why did he do this? Did he depend on his friends? What lessons can we learn from Paul in this area?

AUTHORITY AS A LEADER UNDER CHRIST

All leaders in the church of which Jesus is the Head are delegated the authority needed to fill the position by Him. They, therefore, should only do as He would do in their situation.

Authority is defined as: the power or right to enforce obedience; delegate power; or personal influence. It is not something we take; it is 'given'. In fact, it is only valid if other people recognize it.

Whenever one human being relates to another positively, they are exercising or receiving authority at a personal level. Human society would cease to operate in any way meaningful if this was not true at almost every level of experience, i.e. in business, in social relationships, in government and in the home. In fact, without the recognition of personal authority, we could not exist together as human beings.

What is Biblical Authority?

The most common Greek word translated in the New Testament as 'authority' is '*exousia*'. This word means: 'liberty' to do as one pleases. The ability or strength with which one is endowed; the power of authority, i.e. the right to exercise power; the power of rule or government; or the power of one whose will and commands must be obeyed by others. It can also be thought of as power based on position. Other Greek words translated as authority include: '*huperoche*' meaning: 'a projection, a holding over, eminence, superiority, high place' (1 Timothy 2:2); '*epitage*' which means: 'to order upon, an injunction to command' (Titus 2:15); '*dunastes*' meaning: 'powerful one' (Acts 8:27); and '*authentoe*' which means: 'to use one's own armour, to usurp authority, to act on one's own authority' (1 Timothy 2:12).

The Bible does not say that authority in itself is wrong. It can be divine human or satanic; wise or foolish; helpful or destructive; accepted or imposed by force; but it is necessary. Authority imposes the limits we as people need because we have been corrupted by sin. We should never reject authority or even slander celestial beings as they were given their authority by God (Jude verses 8-10). After all, it must be remembered that there is no authority except that which God has established and He expects us to submit to it (Romans 13:1-7).

The Authority of Jesus

Jesus recognized that His authority came because He was acting on behalf of His heavenly Father (John 10:18; John 5:19, 30). He forgave people their sins, healed those who needed healing,

commanded demons to leave people, controlled nature, taught, and raised people from the dead;-all in the authority given to Him by God the Father. This authority gave Him the right to judge (John 5:27); give eternal life (John 17:2) and even lay down His own life (John 10:17-18). Jesus also obeyed the Scriptures, because they were to Him the words of His Father (John 10:34-35; Matthew 4:1-10). Jesus spoke and ministered with authority (Mark 1:22, 27; Luke 4:31-37). There was something about Him that made a tremendous impact on the lives of the people with whom He came into contact. Many willingly and positively responded to Him, others reacted negatively and with anger (Matthew 7:28-29; Luke 7:1-10), but He always seemed to get some type of response.

And when Jesus had entered into Capernaum, a centurion came to him, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my son lies at home paralyzed and grievously tormented. And Jesus says to him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my boy will be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, Go! And he goes; and to another, Come! And he comes; and to my servant, Do this! And he does it. When Jesus heard, He marveled and said to those who followed, Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say to you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. But the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go. and as you have believed, so let it be to you." And his boy was healed in that hour. (Matthew 8:5-13). The centurion in this passage recognized the authority of Jesus. As a military officer, the centurion derived his authority from the ruling Roman empire itself. It allowed the man to rule and control the behavior of his troops as if it were Caesar himself commanding the troops. The centurion's request of Jesus was a confession of faith, because he recognized that Jesus derived His authority from God and so He had the power to heal simply by speaking a word. i.e. he knew that Jesus spoke and acted with full divine authority and so when He spoke, it was as if God that Father were speaking. In fact, every word of Jesus was invested with His Father's authority because Jesus was totally submitted to Him and His will. He did nothing and spoke nothing unless His heavenly Father told Him to do so.

When we look at the ministry of Jesus, we can see certain clear features that characterize His work:

- It was by the Spirit. Jesus did not operate independently of His Father. This is expressed in the fact that Jesus Himself ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:28; John 5:7-32). Jesus accomplished no mighty deed until after His baptism in water and in the Spirit at Jordan.
- It was to the needy. The hallmark of the ministry of Jesus was that it was directed to those who knew their need of it. Jesus once said, 'Those who are whole do not need a physician' (Matthew 9:12). People came to Jesus empty and needy in spirit and found in Him the answer to that need (John 4:13-15).
- It was against the enemy. His whole ministry, including His life and death, was a direct challenge to the authority of the enemy. Satan is seen as the strong man whom Jesus will bind in the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:29). When he has been bound, his house can be plundered. The ministry of Jesus is a foretaste of the absolute overthrow and binding of satan on a day to come. It is a proclamation of the overthrow of the evil one and a sign of his ultimate defeat. Every mighty deed and healing worked by Jesus is a releasing of the grip of satan on the lives of men and women (John 12:31). The coming of Jesus into the world is a direct counter-challenge to the power of satan.
- It was for salvation. The purpose of Jesus was the total salvation of men and women. Repeatedly when He healed people physically, He took them beyond the level of their body and indicated that salvation was something far deeper. He often told people to go away because their faith had saved them! Jesus wants men and women who are complete in spirit, soul and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23- 24).
- It was in power. The Gospels are packed with examples of the power ministry of Jesus. A

true gospel ministry is not only a gospel of words. We do need to use words to give the reason for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15), but words by themselves are often insufficient for people who have lived in spiritual darkness and bondage all their lives. It takes a breakthrough of the direct power of God to awaken them to their need of God. This is what happened in the ministry of Jesus.

A Believer's Authority

God has given all authority in heaven and on earth to Jesus (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:22- 23; Colossians 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22). Jesus in turn, has delegated this authority to believers in His church. It is our position in Christ and our relationship with God the father through Him that gives us the authority to be involved in the ministry of the Kingdom of God. Our ministry should be a continuation of what Jesus began and be a reflection of His ministry (John 14:12). The secret for us, as it was for Jesus, is direct reliance on the Holy Spirit to bring the power of God to bear upon any perceived need. We will look at what our authority as believers enables us to do.

A Believing Leader's Authority

Jesus has delegated His role as leader to certain chosen believers in His church and He has given them some of His authority in order to lead. Any authority these leaders have is a 'given' authority and therefore, they should work in the church of Jesus Christ as His Servants and not lord it over those they lead. Jesus appoints leadership in the Church to represent His authority, continue His ministry and express His life.

(i) Two wrong attitudes

There are two wrong attitudes that tend to compete inside of every leader. The first is to think too highly of ourselves and so take all the glory for everything we achieve; the second is to think too little of ourselves, believing we are no good and feeling we are worthless. (When the enemy makes us feel inferior, we tend to compromise and we try to conform to the expectations of other people so that they will accept and love us.) Both attitudes are encouraged and fed by the enemy and both need to be resisted. We need to understand ourselves enough to know when these things are trying to take root in our lives and thus be able to take the appropriate corrective action. The reason for this is that the place between these two extremes is the place of stability and authority. Here we know who we are in God and who we are in ourselves.

(ii) Gentle authority

When we, as leaders, use our position of authority to ask someone to do something for us, we need to ask gently, humbly and lovingly. It is no good demanding submission or lording it over those who have been entrusted by God to our leadership-it is better to be an example to them (1 Peter 5:3). If a person will not co-operate with you, then remember that they are God's servants (and not yours!), and so God will correct them. If God leads you to discipline or correct them, do it with love and pray earnestly for them that they may have a change of heart (Romans 14:4). We need to fulfill our role as leader with gentle authority in Christ's humility. This does not mean we should be weak, but it does mean we need to love first. We, like the apostle Paul, need to work with our people and not against them (2 Corinthians 1:24).

(iii) Too much, too soon

Too many leaders, especially young ones, want full authority straight away. In general, this is not wise. Leaders need to learn how to operate with authority by taking on their responsibility step by step, while at the same time recognizing and obeying those in authority over them. To be given too much authority, too soon is usually unhelpful and can be disastrous, because it tends to lead to pride and an inability to be taught and be prudent. These people often want to rush ahead and the usual result is a pile of casualties left in their wake.

True authority comes as we submit ourselves to the authority over us and move on at God's speed.

(iv) Boundaries of authority

Leaders can only pass on and operate in the measure of authority they have been given by God. To step out of these boundaries leaves the leader without the resources of heaven to back up their activity and it can lead to bondage and anxiety as the leader gets out of his depth. These boundaries are the extent of God's will for the leader's life and within them there is great freedom for the leader, because he knows that he will have all he needs to do the work God asks of him.

(v) The fear of the Lord

At the heart of a leader's authority is the fear of the Lord.

The person who fears the Lord:

- has found the source of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).
- is freed from the desire to take the easy way out and make superficial or partial judgments (Isaiah 11:3-5).
- lives a life that is submitted to God, making his decisions and planning his actions according to what he believes God would do in the situation rather than making his own plans and doing his own thing.
- is content to do his bit in God's grand design no matter how small or insignificant that bit is and he is willing to put in his best effort as he does this.
- is enabled to take the responsibility for his sins and mistakes repenting and correcting where necessary.

(vi) Harmonious relationships

Serving as a leader in the body of Christ involves constant inter-relationship with other people. To enable harmonious relationships, leaders need to know the lines of authority in that organization. They also need to know the breadth of their role and how far their authority extends. If leaders attempt to impose their authority in an area in which they have no right, only negative feelings and hurt will result. Leaders need to know and accept their place in the church and know that it was God, not man who placed them.

(vii) Threat or help

People tend to behave largely in the way they see themselves and they tend to function according to how they perceive their role in the church. A person's reaction to authority even if they are a leader themselves, will depend on whether they perceive that authority as a threat or as a help. Even the guidelines laid down by authority will be viewed in this way. Demanding submission from people usually does not work. It is better to create a good atmosphere in your group and make decisions that encourage people to want to submit to your leadership. Of course, this should never be done at the expense of fulfilling God's will or compromising it.

What Christian Authority is Not

True Christian leadership is not authoritarian control over the mind and behavior of those we lead. It is not good public relations or a charismatic pulpit personality; and it certainly is not an ambitious seeking after power - rather it is humble service to the group for which God has made us responsible, using His power and authority (Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31). Authoritarian leadership tries to impose its authority, only elevates itself, tries to protect itself, and only brings legalism and heaviness. Christian leaders, on the other hand, do not have a total authority over those for whom they are responsible. They should not, therefore, try to dominate or lord it over those they lead, but

encourage them into maturity in Christ by acting as an example of Christ-likeness and obedience to God. In fact, the Bible states that the greatest of God's leaders are those who are the greatest servants, both of God and those they lead (Mark 10:42-45).

The authority Jesus gives to His leaders does not give them the right to compel those who follow them to carry out any action or to gain compliance. If they operate with the wrong idea of authority, they can easily crush their people by dominating them in a wrong way. Even the God-given authority we receive as His chosen leaders has to be used sensitively, with discernment, wisdom and maturity. In fact, as has been stated, God's leaders need to serve those they lead rather than try to control their actions and choices. They need to point to Christ when those they lead are straying from God's path and not force obedience. Even the apostle Paul, who obviously had great authority, was not harsh in the use of that authority, because he knew that the Lord only gave it to him to build up and not to tear down (2 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Corinthians 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:2). The only time God's leaders have the authority to be very strong with those they lead is when God, who is the ultimate authority, gives them it. Here God speaks and the leader is simply obeying and delivering the 'word' of God to His people (2 Corinthians 13:2-4).

As Christian leaders, we have no need to manipulate people or force them to do as we want them to do, because Jesus is the Head of His church and He has promised to build it. He is still as powerful today as He ever was (Hebrews 13:8). As long as we, as leaders, follow His lead, we will be able to exercise all the authority we need, and have all the power we need, to carry out the will of God in our situation. The leader's authority is simply to help believers to respond to Jesus and not to control them or to enforce the behavior the leader desires. Jesus Himself sets the best example in this area. He had the power to wipe out cities or even the world if He so wanted and He certainly could have easily manipulated people or compelled them to behave in certain ways, but He did not. He simply invited those who heard Him to believe and obey. If people did not He left them to their choice. Of course, they will be judged according to that choice. But while on earth they had the right to choose.

Leaders should never expect to gain authority or the respect of their people just because they are paid to lead or because they have a position of leadership. After all, the people in the church are not under any compulsion to submit. If a leader's authority is not recognized it makes their leadership impossible and they may as well resign. The authority Christian leaders exercise is dependent on the authority they are under. It is not derived from their title or office, but from God as they carry out His work on His behalf. E.g. no person is a pastor because they have a card to say so, they are only one if they can shepherd their people and if their sheep follow them. It is only when leaders are under God's authority that they can exercise the authority of His Kingdom. Leaders need therefore, to be the most submitted people in their group.

No position of authority in God's church should be used for the leader's fame or glory. All glory needs to go to God. God-given authority should seek to glorify God, to protect those under its care, and to release people into freedom, joy and fruitfulness. We, as leaders, need to walk humbly with our God, obeying Him and serving those we lead in whatever way is needed.

Authority and Submission

Jesus is the Head of the church and He purposes to function through it, because it is His body on earth. Believers therefore, need to submit to His Headship and to those whom the Lord places over them. This authority is best submitted to by being recognized or earned rather than being enforced. Submission is an attitude of heart, not a position of slavery. To submit is: to place yourself voluntarily under the care, protection and guidance of leadership. Remember, members of your group cannot be forced to do anything. However, when there is recognition of true spiritual authority within a leader, those under that authority will willingly submit.

Submission to authority in the church is based on a three-way relationship, i.e. between the leader, the people and God. If a leader bears God's mark, those who want to serve God will willingly follow. Group members who want to obey God will listen to and act upon their leader's guidance, if they

hear and recognize the word of God in them. In fact, the more a leader submits to God (who delegated the authority to them in the first place), the more of God's authority that leader will have, because those under authority find that they receive authority (Matthew 8:8- 9). God's authority in a leader, when released and then responded to by those they lead, enables great effectiveness and fruitfulness for God.

God is the ultimate authority and He is merely handing it out, or delegating it, when He raises up leadership. God asks His followers to obey their leaders and submit to them (Hebrews 13:17). As we submit to those whom God has raised up over us as believers, we are in fact submitting to Him. This does not mean a submission where we obey everything our leaders say because we have no choice, but rather it is a submission arising out of a respect and an acknowledgement of the leader's place before God (1 Thessalonians 5:12- 13).

Believers, as part of the body of Christ, need to get into rank behind God and His delegated leadership, if the church is really going to make an impact on this world for God. They need to more as God directs them through their leadership and so bring glory to God and extension to His Kingdom. They need to be committed and loyal to their leadership who are responsible for them before God. They need to be taught: to take seriously and personally the word of God they hear through their leaders (1 Thessalonians 2:13); to follow their leaders godly example (1 Thessalonians 1:6); to pray for their leaders' ministries and their families (Romans 15:30; 2 Thessalonians 3:1); to greet their leaders warmly, making them feel loved and welcomed; and to appreciate their leaders and give them due respect and recognition (1 Thessalonians 5:12- 13).

It is a wrong dependence that has arisen if we are always waiting for someone else to give us our answers. Of course, we need to submit, but this submission should never encourage us to be as a bunch of vegetables who do not know what they think or what to think. This situation often arises when very strong domineering leadership make the decisions for those they lead. This creates a church, which may not have any obedience problems, but which has no initiative and is every unproductive as a result. The Christians in such a system tend to be spoon-fed and so never really mature in Christ. They become slaves of those they lead and are told what to wear, how to think, when to marry, where to go on holiday, etc. This is not what God wants and it is certainly not a pattern seen in the early church. God wants mature Christians who can come to Him as priests and sons, who can make decisions on their own, and who are not people, who are simply extensions of their leaders. The submission demanded by authoritarian leaders is often nothing short of groveling or a sacrifice of free will, whereas real Christian submission allows people to grow into their full potential in God. It arises from leaders who love those they lead and want only the best for them, because they are an extension of Jesus, who looks on all His followers in this way.

Authority and Church Discipline

Part of the responsibility of God's leader is to bring God's discipline into the church of which Jesus is the Head. Church discipline, when carried out in the right way helps to keep the church in God's will. It is as if the church leaders are disciplining on behalf of Jesus Himself.

Two things need to be remembered when a leader is bringing discipline to a fellow believer. Firstly, they should only discipline out of love for the other person. Leaders should never discipline in anger or out of reaction, but seek to gain a heart of love for the person. This will help them to keep the right motivation as they discipline, and they will only do it for the best interests of both the person and the group for which they are responsible (Romans 12:10). Church discipline, arising out of a motivation of love, keeps group members in a place of righteousness. Secondly, we should always have as our aim in discipline: restoration (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19- 20; Jude 22- 23). Our aim in disciplining our people should be to get them back on course with God and in His will again.

The Bible lays down clear guidelines to follow concerning church discipline:

"If our brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens

to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses, ' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."(Matthew 18:15-17)

- Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses (2 Corinthians 13:1).
- We should not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were our father (1 Timothy 5:1).
- We should not entertain an accusation against an older, unless it is brought by two or three witnesses; and those who do sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that others may take warning (1 Timothy 5:19- 20).
 - We should warn a divisive person twice and then have nothing to do with them, if they do not repent (Titus 3:10- 11).
- We must not be too harsh with those we discipline, but be willing to accept them back when they turn from their ungodly ways, God wants every person to turn from their wicked ways and live (Ezekiel 33:10-20) and His leaders should feel the same way. We should not take pleasure when people fall into sin. We need to do all we can to restore them to a place of righteousness before God (2 Corinthians 2:5-8).
- At times, the right way to discipline a believer will be to hand them over to their sin or to satan, so that they may be 'shocked' into their senses or at least recognize their error and be restored to righteousness (1 Timothy 1:20; 1 Corinthians 5:5).
- We should not take our disputes before the ungodly (1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

God's leaders can act according to these principles, because the Word of God gives them the authority to do so (Titus 2:15). Church discipline should begin one to one and escalate only when necessary. Private sins should be dealt with privately and public ones publicly, as a rule. If we do not do the latter, the whole body will be affected, because it will be as if the leadership is condoning the wrong behavior by their silence.

It is important, before bringing any discipline, to give some time to wait on God. This gives Him the opportunity of letting us know what is on His heart in the circumstance and what He would have us do. When disciplining in difficult situations (which may have hurt you as a leader), it is also usually best to leave some time in order for the 'sting' to go out of this situation. This does not mean that we wait too long and allow something to take root in our group, which will be harmful to it (Proverbs 10:17; 1 Corinthians 5:6- 7), but it does mean that we discipline only in the Lord's timing.

Times when church discipline is needed include:

- When we find people causing divisions and putting obstacles (which are contrary to the Word of God) in the way of those who would seek to follow the Lord (Romans 16:17).
- When a dispute arises between members of the church (1 Corinthians 5:12- 13).
- When immorality of any kind attempts to take root in the church (1 Corinthians 5:1-5).
- When people are idle and do not live according to the teaching of the Word of God (2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:14).
- When we find people who have embraced any form of deception (Ephesians 5:6- 7).

Unfortunately, there are many leaders who do not like to correct or discipline their people. This tends to create an environment in which sin and compromise can take root, resulting in a weak body of Christ. God disciplines us because He loves us (Hebrews 12: 5- 6), and leaders ought to discipline their people because they love them and want to see them prospering.

Some of the reasons leaders do not discipline their people include:

- They do not discipline their own family and so they feel that they cannot discipline other people.
- They have unconfessed sin in their life, which hinders their walk with God and thus weakens

their position of authority in Christ.

- They may not know God or His Word sufficiently to know what areas need to be disciplined.
- They may want to please other people so much that they will not do anything that may disrupt this. Allowing people to do their own thing may make the people feel relaxed and happy, but it will not be effective for the Kingdom of God (Judges 21:25)
- They may not love those they lead enough to be firm with them when they need it.
- They may not want to be seen as somebody who is self-righteous or someone who nags people all the time; so they over-balance the other way and do not discipline even when it is needed.
- They may fear that their people will reject them or their discipline and so they shirk doing it to save face, to maintain their good reputation and their friends.
- They may be bowing to pressure from other people who do not want discipline, e.g. elders, other leaders, influential people in the group.
- They may be insecure in their authority as a leader.

Young children are happier and more secure when they have certain boundaries of behavior that they know they should not cross. The same is true of God's people. They need to know that they have Scriptural boundaries that they should not cross which will be watched by their leaders. God's discipline may not be pleasant to the flesh, but it is to the spirit and it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who have been trained by it (Hebrews 12:5-11). Remember words are not always sufficient to discipline someone-actions may be needed (Proverbs 29:19).

When you discipline someone, it is important to show them where they have gone wrong and to show them the right way to go. The people involved can then be shown their need to repent and know how to get back on course with God again, with knowledge that will help them not to fall into error in the same way again (2 Timothy 2:25- 26).

It should never be thought that all types of church discipline can be carried out by every member of the body of Christ. All believers should teach and admonish one another (Colossians 3:16- 17), but those in leadership, those who are more spiritual and mature in God, should be the only ones allowed to handle the more difficult cases.

Authority and Spiritual Warfare

Satan may have usurped the power and authority which God originally gave to mankind (Luke 4:6; Genesis 1:27- 28), but in Christ believers can again know that power and authority. The death and resurrection of Jesus has broken the usurped power of Satan and his fallen angels (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14- 15; 1 John 3:8). Jesus has had all authority given to Him and He has delegated some of it to His followers, commanding them to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Ephesians 1:17-23). He wants them to continue the work that He began, until the end comes when He hands over all dominion, authority and power to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). In the mean-time, God wants His people to exercise His authority over the evil one and to extend His Kingdom by obedience to His commands (Acts 1:8; Philippians 2:12- 13).

God's leaders need to encourage their people to stand against the powers of darkness, which will necessitate all of us being involved in some degree of spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18). Satan seeks to destroy all the works of God and therefore, the people of God must be aware of his schemes and resist them. The work of the Kingdom of God must go on and God's leaders need to rally their people to this task, God wants all His people, especially His leaders (who need to be setting the right example), to exercise the authority He has given them over the evil one (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8- 9). We have nothing to fear from the enemy if we are in Christ (Colossians 3:3), because He is reigning far above all rule and authority, power and dominion (Ephesians 1:17-23). They are subject to Him and to us as we do His will in His name. It is also comforting to know that a leader with God's authority is recognized and feared by the powers of darkness (Acts 19:15).

Christian leaders need to encourage their people to submit to the governing authorities. These are established by God to protect believers to some extent (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13- 14; Titus 3:1).

They are God's agents and without them in our sinful world, everyone would probably do as they pleased (2 Peter 2:10). The world would then be in total chaos, making it very difficult to get on with the work of the Kingdom of God. Attempting to live quiet lives in submission to the authorities over us will usually stop us suffering at their hands. If, however, they contravene God's laws, we have a responsibility to obey God first and do as He would have us do.

God's leaders need to remind their people that while God has established all governing authorities and He commands us to submit ourselves to them and not to rebel, it must be remembered that the control of the whole world system is at present in the hands of the evil one (1 John 5:19). The world system is one of Satan's main tools to influence and control humanity. The world of the unsaved is a place of darkness in which people have no hope; in fact, they are all under the power of the evil one. It is only believers, who have been rescued by Jesus from this darkness and brought into the Kingdom of God, who are not in the enemy's grasp (Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 1:13). Believers therefore need to submit to world leaders only as long as they do not contravene God's higher commands – He is the ultimate authority (Acts 4:19). They also need to be praying for their leaders so that a climate of peace will prevail and the work of God carried out more effectively (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Satan will attempt to hinder the work of God. He often does this by attempting to breed fear, insecurity or sin into a believer's life in order to undermine him and stop him living in God's authority. God's leaders need to remind themselves and their people, that as Christians they are operating on a higher plane of authority than the enemy (when they are in Christ) and therefore, they can resist his attacks and destroy his schemes. The church's task of winning of souls to Christ and setting the captives free cannot and will not be stopped by the enemy. He may win many small victories, but the end result is already established.

When believers submit to godly leadership, they are protected from the enemy, because their leadership is a spiritual covering for them. There is a great need today for God's leaders to act as a protective covering for their people. Satan seeks to subvert the Word of God and to destroy the effects of the Kingdom of God on earth. One of his most successful tactics is the spreading of deception, causing the people of God to be led astray into falsehood and error (Mark 13:22; Matthew 24:4-25:2; II Thessalonians 2:3). God's leaders need to so know the Word of God and God Himself that they recognize these deceptions and cause them to be unmasked, thus protecting the people of God from them. When God gives a leader the responsibility for a group of believers, he should not roam around, (e.g. attending numerous conferences, speaking at other churches, etc.) if this is not the Lord's will, because this will leave his flock uncovered. If he does go, he needs to make sure his flock is adequately covered and protected spiritually while he is gone.

Authority to Bring Changes

The spiritual leaders in Jesus' time often asked Him by what authority He did the things He did (Matthew 21:23; John 2:18). The same question is often asked today in the church when a leader tries to change things.

Leaders have authority to change things in a church when:

- the existing structures are not in line with God's Word or they are hindering the work of the gospel.
- when the leader is given the go ahead by God, i.e. it is God's timing, This is usually when the church is ready!
- when the church people realize in God that something needs to change and they ask the leadership to enable this.

Most people are threatened by change. It tends to encourage insecurities and cause people to want to revert to things they know and are comfortable with, e.g. church traditions. Change, therefore, often needs to be introduced slowly and gently with continual reference to the people it affects.

God's leaders need to see themselves as His delegated authority in their situation. They need to be committed to God and to the group for which He has made them responsible. They also need to see

the group, and the situation in which they minister, through God's eyes and have His priorities and perspective as their own by waiting on Him. This gives leaders a strength and a sense of proportion that will enable them to overcome the difficulties that inevitably arise when change is involved. If leaders can see change in the context of the Lord's larger plan for the group or church, it helps to ease their own fears and to 'sell' the change to their people.

The Responsibility of those in Authority in God's Kingdom

The members of God's Kingdom to whom God delegates authority have certain responsibilities:

- They should hear the word of God for themselves and for their group. A leader's authority is in the end, only the authority of the word of God in his life and ministry. The more authority and responsibility we have, the more we need to wait on the Lord. At times, leaders will hear things from God that they find emotionally hard, especially when it involves their people. Leaders need to realize that God is the ultimate authority and submit to His judgment as final. God's purposes should not be hindered by us as leaders-He knows what He is doing better than we.
- They should understand the signs of the times and the seasons in which the members of their group are living. They need to understand what is happening in God in any situation and communicate this effectively to those they lead.
- They should give authority and discipline on behalf of Jesus who is head of the church.
- They must be able to control both themselves and their own households (1 Timothy 3:1-7). A leader should be above reproach, loving, gentle, self-controlled and uncontentious and this should be reflected in their own home. They also must not neglect their family because of the pressure of ministry.
- They should have a real love and care for those they lead and they should lead so as to enable what is in the best interests of the group for which they are responsible.
- They should keep their people safe from the affects of enemy attack (Acts 20:28-31).
- They should be able to keep their people in unity both with each other and with God. The church needs Christians who are willing to lay aside their vanity, pride, self-importance, independence and pettiness and, instead, keep rank and be of undivided loyalty.
- They must live obedient, fruitful lives that are worth imitating (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 1 Timothy 3:2-5; 1 Timothy 4:12). They should be willing to go ahead of their people and do first what they are asking their people to do.
- They must live righteous lives. Satan will try and contaminate our walk with God by tempting us to sin. This is because if we do sin, our authority in Christ is weakened and, therefore, our warfare against the enemy is hindered or made ineffective and our work for God disabled to some extent. The Holy Spirit can only operate effectively through clean, prepared, called vessels to enable the work of God on earth.
- They must be people of faith. Leaders need to have a faith in God, which inspires their followers to trust God and their leadership.
- They need to be people who keep watch over those for whom they are responsible and regard themselves as answerable to God for their welfare and progress (1 Peter 5:2- 3).
- They need to be people who can take courageous action. If you cannot, you probably are not really a leader. In order to take such action, a leader needs to know what is right

in God (Daniel 11: 32), be confident in his position of authority and be determined to see results. If a leader acts as a result of human pressure or from a position of doubt and still tries to continue his action, it tends only to undermine his position of authority and he may fail to achieve what he set out to achieve (1 Corinthians 16:12-14).

- They need to be people who will not run away from their responsibilities even when the going gets very tough. To run away from our responsibilities as leaders is to lose our spiritual authority. The buck does stop with leaders and they need to accept this God-given responsibility. Remember, if a person shirks his responsibility, it does not disappear-it simply is transferred to someone else. God will not allow His leaders to be overwhelmed by their responsibility as long as they keep looking to Him and they only take on board the work that He has delegated to them. Crisis should not cause us to fall apart, but to go to God. Leaders need to learn how to live victoriously under pressure.
- They should never compromise God's Word. Those in authority in God's Kingdom should never compromise what they know is God's way. Even though Jesus loved the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-26; Luke 18:18-26), He did not run after the man and compromise the gospel in order to make it easier for this man to receive it. The man may have gone away sad, but the integrity of the gospel was intact and untainted.
- They need to be people who stay at the forefront. Too many leaders have left too many things undone; have shrugged their shoulders too many times; have been hurt, disappointed, misunderstood, criticized or disillusioned too often; have failed even to start those things they have known God wanted them to do; have postponed too many decisions and as a result have found that they have lost all their motivation and energy to serve the Lord. They would now prefer to take an easy road and to coast, perhaps until they retire. Anything for an easy life begins to become their motto. These people need to remember who it is they are serving and why. God has promised never to overload us or to demand the impossible of us. He even promises to give us all we need to do His will, no matter what is needed (Philippians 1:19; 2 Peter 1:3).
- They need to live lives that are totally submitted to God or at least be working towards this. They must also be responsive to God's will and expect God to work through them as they carry out the work He asks them to do. This means they do not have to strive and they can rest in God, trusting in Him and ministering to others out of the strength and provision gained from their relationship with Him. Remember, God cannot do through you, what you will not allow Him to do in you.
- They should not be concerned with self-advancement or promotion, but rather be content to fulfill what God is asking them to do for Him at that moment and let Him do the lifting up in due time. (1 Peter 5:6).

Questions and exercise

1. Who is the higher authority: God or His delegated authority. Therefore, who should you obey if there is a conflict of interest between these two authorities?
2. Should we be eager to teach and serve others in the body of Christ (James 3:1)? What should our attitude be when we do these things (1 Peter 4:11)?
3. Why do those under authority find that they have authority (Matthew 8:5-13)?
4. Do those you lead take what you say seriously and personally? Should they? Do they humble submit to your authority and follow your example as their leader? If not, why not?
5. Will God hold you accountable for your own walk with Him? Will He hold you accountable for those who are under your authority? Will He hold you accountable for running away from this responsibility, if He has called you to it? Are you willing to answer for your results?

6. Do you encourage those you lead to pray for you and your family and for other people in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-4)?
7. What is the difference between leading and driving the flock? How do you lead your flock?
8. Does the body of Christ need leaders who are willing to bring godly correction and discipline to its members when it is required? Do you?
9. What was Jesus' reaction to the woman caught in the act of adultery (John 8:3-11)? What lessons about God's discipline does this passage teach us as leaders? Do you have moral authority as well as spiritual authority?
10. Are you in leadership to please God, other people or yourself? Remember, unless a ministry is pleasing to God, it will be powerless.
11. Do you defend your authority and reputation? Did Jesus? Remember, humility is never self-centered it always points to another!
12. Does both success and failure drive you to God? Should it (2 Corinthians 3:4-6)?
13. Like Jesus, God's leaders should reflect God's authority. Do you? Are you under God's authority, submitting to His will and doing it rather than your own will? Do you submit to the authority of the Word of God and obey it? Who gave you the authority to do what you are doing?
14. Is there anyone you can go to for help and advice? Do you have people you can really trust? Are there people to whom you could reveal your worst secrets and who would continue to love you just the same? If not, why not?

HOW TO BUILD AN EFFECTIVE AND STRONGLY UNITED MINISTRY TEAM

Any large task worthy of accomplishment requires at least five factors:

1. Worthy and inspiring objective.
2. Suitable personnel. (A team of workers)
3. Organizational and management structure and skills.
4. Quality control, evaluating, adjusting.
5. Marketing strategy.

These five principles are necessary in any large endeavor. They constitute the basic factors of any business corporation or company. They are principles, which are also necessary to observe in the formation of a ministry team.

Large tasks requires a variety of persons

Part of success in leadership is blending the different types harmoniously. Each type is needed. Each has different characteristics, temperament, etc. Success demands effectively managing the various types.

With the above five factors in mind, let us look at some of the disciples Jesus chose and what their characters, temperaments and role might have been.

1. PETER – Conceptual – An idea person

Received revelation. Matt. 16:13-19.

Asked important questions. Gathering information. Matt. 18:21.

Planning to build three tabernacles. Matt. 17:4.

Characteristics: Eager, open to new ideas. Quick to catch on.

Contra: Needs balance of organizer, controller.

2. JOHN – A People person - Personnel relationships

He was amongst the inner circle of Jesus. Matt. 26:37.

Close to Jesus at supper, his head on his chest. John 13:23-25.

Jesus committed His mother to John's care. John 19:26-27.

His encouragement to Paul. Gal. 2:9.

Characteristics: Enjoys people, relates well to others. Empathizer.

Motivator, positive, enthusiastic and persuasive.

3. ANDREW – Organizer

Brought Peter to Christ. John 1:40-42.

Told Jesus about the lad's lunch. John. 6:8-9.

Organized an appointment with Jesus for the Greeks. John 12:20-26.

Asked further details of Jesus. Matt. 13: 3-4. "Andrew asked Jesus privately."

Wants to obtain fullest details.

Characteristics: Meticulous for details, cautious, slower to move.

Contra: May need special persuasion, inspiration and stirring up.

4. THOMAS – Cautious Controller

"Doubling Thomas"

Needed instruction and explanation from Jesus. John 14:1-3.

States his agenda for belief. John 20:25.

Jesus appears again to convince him. John 20:26-29.

Characteristics: Cautious, slow mover, needs facts and figures.

Contra: Sometimes over cautious, resistant to change.

5. PAUL - The Entrepreneur

Paul, as a leading apostle, is one of the leading entrepreneurs (promoters, pioneers, spearheads of the early church). The word entrepreneur means: “one who is enterprising”, i.e. adventurous, energetic, bold, eager spirited, venturesome and resourceful. In our modern world, the word is most frequently used in the realm of business enterprise. It signifies a person who is always alert to new business opportunities. One who seizes every opportunity to create new and successful business ventures.

Paul was an entrepreneur in the spiritual realm. He was whole-heartedly dedicated to the “business of establishing the church wherever and whenever possible.” He pursued his task with every skill and talent available.

Some of the factors in forming and sustaining a ministry team:

a) Conceive a clear vision, purpose and objective.

It is amazing how many churches have no real idea as to where they are “going”. They meander along from year to year with an annual program and certain short term goals but no clearly conceived long term objective to which they are moving. Many have never seriously given prayerful consideration as to exactly what they are seeking to achieve in the long term. They have to clearly developed picture of what kind of a church God wants them to be in 10 or 20 years from now.

b) Share the vision from the outset. Planning, discussing, strategizing.

It is very helpful for the effective functioning of a team if all the members are an integral part of the vision from its inception. If their prayers, ideas, concepts and strategies have been invested into the overall vision, they feel very much an integral part of its fulfillment. There is a team involvement, investment and commitment.

c) Write out a clear statement of mission.

Reducing the vision to writing is a great way to clarify it. It can be stated succinctly, comprehensively, yet briefly. There ought to be a brief, one paragraph statement that embodies the basic thrust of the vision. Afterwards this statement can be broken up into a few paragraphs, each of which describes a particular aspect of the aim of the vision. Copies of the basic statement, perhaps reduced to a “slogan”, can be strategically placed in numerous places around the church or office to keep the vision before the eyes and thoughts of the team and members.

d) Choose your team members carefully.

The various members of the team must be chosen with great care. The constitution of that team will depend to a large degree upon the specific nature of the vision and the particular objectives that you are seeking to attain. Team members should be chosen for their particular and unique skills and qualifications. There needs to be a proper balance to ensure that all areas of the vision are adequately covered. Generally, it is wise to add to your team, members who can handle tasks that are not your particular strength. Recruit people who compensate the weaker areas of the team. Three basic questions should be asked of every potential team member:

- Can they do the job? Are they suitably qualified and competent?
- Will they do the job? Are they committed and willing to work hard?
- Will they fit into the team harmoniously? Are they team players?

e) Encourage the team to “own the vision.”

It is important that every team member is wholly committed to the fulfillment of the vision. They must feel they are an integral and essential member of the team, vital to the effective accomplishment of the vision. We often call this “owning the vision”, feeling that the vision God has given is as much

their vision as that of anyone else. Help each member to realize that they have a vested interest in the fulfillment of the vision. Try to provide various legitimate incentives.

f) Recognize and appreciate and care for each individual.

We should always bear in mind the particular uniqueness of each individual in the team and appreciate them for the specific skills they are able to bring to the task. Too often a team leader will select someone because of their unique character and personality or spiritual gifting and afterwards will expect that person to change and conform to the style of the leader. Do not seek to have a team of clones who are all alike.

g) Consistently emphasize the need for team work.

Having recognized the value of each unique individual, we must also emphasize the consistent need for team spirit. No matter how brilliant a player may be, no individual can win alone. Victory depends upon the effective, harmonious working and flowing together of every team member. No captain can win alone. Eventually he is only as good as his team. His success is achieved by his ability to promote and maintain harmony and co-operation amongst all his team members.

h) Emphasize mutual loyalty at all times.

Loyalty is the virtue that holds a team together. It is usually a reciprocal quality. If you expect and desire your team members to be loyal to you, then you must be loyal to them at all times. Loyalty elicits loyalty. If the leader is obviously and evidently loyal to his team, they in turn will usually respond with a similar quality of loyalty. The degree of loyalty that a team manifests is often linked with the quality of loyalty that the leader demonstrates. He reaps whatever he sows.

- Loyalty to God.
- Loyalty to each other.
- Loyalty to the task and vision we are seeking to accomplish.

i) Encourage corporate enthusiasm. If the team wins, we will win.

Too many people have their own personal agenda at the top of their priorities. It ought not to be so, but frequently it is. Personal ambition must be sublimated to the good of the team and the fulfillment of the vision. Self-interest must be sacrificed for the good of the whole. Every member must know, "If the team wins, I have won. If it loses, I have lost." We should try to engender an enthusiasm that is corporate in its nature and rejoices most when a corporate victory is won. Each member must have a sense of belonging and an awareness that the true benefits are the mutual benefits.

j) Inculcate a family spirit. Encourage brotherly relationships.

A ministry group is more than a team; it is a family. In fact the whole Body of Christ is a family and certainly a local church ought to be. This family spirit can only be actuated if the ministry team demonstrates the reality and benefits of such a model. The apostolic company was like a band of brothers, each loving and caring for the others. We also need to strive for that kind of relationship. There is safety, strength, encouragement and satisfaction in such a relationship. These factors can permeate the whole church if they are properly taught and genuinely demonstrated right at the top.

k) Encourage a positive working environment.

Life is composed of both negatives and positives and it is the union of both, in correct proportion and balance that produces the synthesis of life. However, our primary task, as team leaders is to emphasize the positive aspects. This is the ethos and atmosphere of victory and accomplishment. No team can work effectively together without a positive attitude towards their common task and its successful fulfillment. Team spirit or morale is fashioned in a positive environment and we must try to ensure that all our team activities, our planning session, prayer times and fellowship gatherings foster a positive attitude. Every team member should seek to actively affirm his peers.

l) Share relevant information regularly.

Every team member needs to know that they are an integral and essential part of the effective functioning of their team. One of the factors that fosters this sense of belonging and being valued is

to ensure that information and news vital to the successful functioning of the team is shared with all the members at regular intervals. The leader should always ensure that regular meetings are convened at which pertinent information is shared and discussed with his departmental leaders. This activity always helps to weld a team together and encourage greater levels of commitment and participation. The experience of vital and meaningful sharing is essential for the team members in building their understanding and increasing their effectiveness.

Concerning the process of learning, one great mind has said:

I hear.....and I forget.

I see.....and I remember

I participateand I understand.

Regular reviews should be made to ascertain how effectively the vision is being fulfilled. It may be necessary at times to adjust the plans and strategies or the roles of workers in order to attain greater effectiveness.

ENCOURAGE PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Emphasize the need for constant and consistent development.
2. Provide incentives for development.
3. Provide or advise ways and means of development.
4. Endeavor to model the signs of maturity.
5. Try to make every team member feel needed and appreciated.
6. Endeavor to afford them job satisfaction.
7. Recognize human need factors. Esteem, acceptance, usefulness, and job satisfaction.

A primary purpose of training disciples is to adequately prepare them to effectively undertake the various tasks and responsibilities of leadership. An essential aspect of that preparation is the delegation of specific tasks to the undertaken by the disciples. This requires them to have a knowledge of the basic principles of delegation.

STRATEGIES IN DELEGATION:

1. Clearly identify the objectives and vision

Many churches are going nowhere fast, because they have never taken the time to properly identify their vision and the objectives to be attained in reaching that vision. Their objectives are always abstract and vague, lacking dimensions and time frames. Their desire is “to grow”, but they have never defined:

- How large?
- How will it happen?
- What concrete steps do we need to take to make it happen?
- What will it cost?
- How shall we meet that cost? (The cost is not primarily financial, but in terms of man power, labour, sacrifice etc. If we get the motives right, God will take care of the finances)

2. Reduce it to writing

Clarify and simplify it. Provide Flow charts of authority structure. The task of reducing the vision to writing is always a helpful exercise. It makes us prayerfully think through all the aspects of the vision. As we endeavor to express the vision clearly and succinctly, we are forced to responsibly think our way through the project. This enables us to get a realistic grasp and perspective upon what we are attempting. It makes us realistically consider the very basic requirements of its fulfillment and every aspect that will be necessary for its ultimate achievement.

3. Delegate specific responsibilities and provide written job descriptions

The delegation of responsibilities should always precede the conferring of authority. Responsible delegation can only occur when the specific requirements are clearly presented. It is always good to do this in writing, presenting a complete job description of all that is required.

4. Delegate sufficient authority

Authority is the delegated right to act within the scope of one's responsibilities, i.e. to go ahead and do the job that has been entrusted to you. To acquire the resources, personnel and equipment that is necessary in order to effectively complete the given task.

5. Clearly establish parameters

Whenever a task is committed to some person, clear guidelines must also be given as to the exact parameters within which the person is authorized to act. They must understand that they are authorized to act within the parameters of their task but not beyond them.

6. Require adequate accountability

Having delegated responsibility and authority you must also provide a consistent means whereby the person may be kept accountable as to the progress that is being made. This often happens in a (weekly) staff meeting, when everyone on the team is required to furnish a report of current progress in their sphere of activity.

7. Encourage initiative within guidelines of job description

Having clearly conveyed the parameters of the task and the appropriate authority that has been assigned to the person, scope must be given for the exercise of personal initiative. You will only get the value of a person's skills and abilities as you allow them adequate room in which to exercise those abilities.

8. Establish competent oversight

Much of the success of good leadership depends on the ability to exercise competent oversight. To know exactly what is transpiring at all times and to make the necessary adjustments and changes that maybe called for from time to time. This oversight must be administrated without constantly "breathing down the necks" of those to whom you have delegated responsibilities. A method of oversight must be established that is thorough, competent, conclusive, and yet unobtrusive. This will require some established method of receiving regular reports. A routine whereby each team member must furnish regular reports on their task accomplishments. These should be analyzed and commented upon, both positively and correctively.

9. Conduct regular de-briefing sessions both with individuals privately and with the team members corporately

Regular and consistent contract must be maintained with each individual in the team.

Routine team meetings are also essential at which every person on the team has opportunity to report of the status of their task. Such meetings are needful in order to foster and encourage the sense of belonging that every team member should have.

10. Share and celebrate victories

One of the factors that develop good team spirit is the achieving of victories together. It encourages mutual esteem. It is therefore beneficial to celebrate victories and achievements together. Emphasize the fact that these victories are only achieved by working in co-operation and that every team member is valued and appreciated. Let everyone enjoy the sweet taste of victory.

11. Recognize and show constructive concern for non-achievement

In addition to celebrating victories together, we must also recognize and acknowledge those times when we may have failed to achieve our immediate goal. We need to analyze the reasons for non-achievement and take steps to ensure that any weaknesses are eliminated. These steps must always be taken in a positive and constructive manner, not majoring on problems and weaknesses but on solutions.

12. Encourage members to take rest and recreation breaks

I have emphasized the need for strong commitment and a healthy willingness to work in order to reach our goals. Before concluding this chapter, I must also emphasize the need for workers to observe the need for proper breaks with time for rest and recuperation. Some team members will develop a workaholic attitude, sacrificing all other things to their work. We need to encourage a

balanced approach that combines a strong work commitment with the need to observe proper relaxation and recuperation requirements.

Team leaders should not only teach this concept, they must also model it before their associates, setting a good example as they themselves observe this important principle. Jesus did this. He frequently told His disciples to “Come apart and rest awhile.”

Emphasis must also be laid on the need to spend quality time with one’s family. Some leaders mistakenly feel that they are frittering away valuable time by spending it with their spouse and family but this is certainly not the case. I have witnessed several pastors, “winning the world and losing their family.” Devoting so much time to their workload that they have none to spend with their own family members. This is naturally resented by the family who feel they are not appreciated or valued. The result may well be a broken family unit, a tragedy that ought not to be!

TEAM MINISTRY: CONCEPT AND POWER

Team Ministry as a Biblical Pattern

Many leaders in the Church today do not appreciate the truth and importance of team ministry. In team ministry two or more leaders work together to accomplish a single spiritual task. It is a group of men or women of God who are knit together in spirit and purpose for God's kingdom.

Unfortunately, many leaders have never cooperated with others in team efforts. For many years, the Church has been dominated by "one man-bands," that is one person carrying all the responsibility and doing all of the work himself. God never intended for one man to carry all of the pressure or responsibility for a local church or major ministry. Many men have collapsed physically, mentally, morally or emotionally under such a load. For this practical reason, as well as moral, doctrinal and spiritual reasons God has ordained ministry to work in teams.

Team ministry is a Scriptural pattern. The list below provides some examples of team of ministry in the New Testament:

- Jesus and His apostles (the Gospels).
- Peter and John (Acts)
- Philip and then Peter and John (Acts 8).
- Peter and certain brethren (Acts 10).
- Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13, 14). (Acts 13:13 refers to Paul and his company.)
- Judas and Silas join Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15).
- Barnabas and John Mark travel together and Silas goes with Paul (Acts 15).
- Timothy joins and Silas (Acts 16).
- Paul takes Priscilla and Aquila with him (Acts 18).
- Timothy and Erastus are sent to Macedonia (Acts 19).
- Going Asia, Paul was accompanied by Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus (Acts 20).

The Purpose and Advantage of Team Ministry

- Team ministry provides a living demonstration of the principle of body ministry (I Corinthians 12).
 - In teaching present day truth, more than one voice speaking the same thing makes a better impact (Deuteronomy 17:6; Matthew 18: 16; II Corinthians 13:1).
 - A team can more effectively find the mind of the Lord for a meeting or series of meetings and pray towards the fulfillment of God's will (Matthew 18:19).
 - Team ministry will be much more effective and will produce greater results (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
 - Team ministry provides a greater possibility for safety and balance in ministry (Proverbs 11:14).
 - Team ministry helps guard against the immoral traps set by the enemy, which have snared so many individual ministries.
 - Team ministry provides strength and encouragement for the ministries themselves (Exodus 17:12).
- Ministering with others provides a sense of inspiration and spiritual growth. The great fellowship involved provides great strength.
- When less experience ministries can accompany more mature ones, the process of discipleship and training is strengthened.

The Principles and Practice of Team Ministry

The very first key to the success of team ministry is being teamed up with the Lord (Mark 16:20). If the Lord is not in an endeavor, it will certainly fail, or at least, will dissipate with only a small measure of success. Before all else, then, each member must earnestly seek the mind of the Lord, and all must be convinced that the venture is His will. This should also include the vision or goal for the ministry. Only then is it appropriate to form a team.

The second key to the success of team ministry is commitment. The measure of success will correspond with the measure of commitment from each individual member. The team should give itself without to fulfilling God's purpose for it, without allowing anything to hinder or distract. Also,

each member must commit himself to the other because that will be the foundation of his growing love for them.

Another key to success is both the individual and corporate devotional life of the team members. Ministry to the Lord will gauge the ministry to the people. A consistent, earnest and lively prayer life is of vital importance to team ministry. "The team that prays together will minister together."

The principle of leadership must be recognized in team ministry. Though no member is more important than another, for the sake of order and efficiency, one must take the leadership and have the final responsibility. To fail to recognize and apply this principle is to head toward disaster.

Closely connected to the previous principle is a tremendous key to the actual functioning of a team: the principle of submission (Ephesians 5:21). Time after time, true submission is required of a team member, and unless he has submissive spirit, he will find it very difficult to function in the team. Just one member deciding to go his own way without regard for the other members can greatly descript a team effort and spirit.

Success in the development of strong personal relationships is vital to team ministry. Unity is a must. Many team efforts have been squelched by breakdowns in this area. The principles of communication are of great benefit in this realm, and one should alertly guard against jealousies, rivalries, bitterness, a critical spirit and complaining.

Each member must constantly remind himself that he is a team member by the will of God, and as such, he must surrender his own personal rights and do all that he can to support and help the other ministries in the team.

Scripture supports the fact that God wants all Christian leaders to be involved in some form of them ministry in their work. What form of team ministry can each leader say that he is a part of now? With the restoration of team ministry to the local church and major ministries, the Church can function more safely and effectively in meeting the needs of God's people.

Moving an Existing Ministry into Team Ministry

In the case of young ministries, the faith venture of team ministry may well involve the beginning of a new ministry. Sometimes, however, a leader may be functioning in an established ministry, and desire to move into team ministry. At this point, he will go through the process of choosing co-leaders. This is an important transition, and must happen in a measured, orderly fashion to avoid confusion and enemy attacks against the ministry.

The following questions can help the leader evaluate his potential co-laborers, their contributions, and the nature of the team working relationship. These questions are an initial resource for a process that will take much time and prayer. The leader must develop a detailed understanding of his ministry team before actively moving into this form of ministry.

How should a shepherd choose his co-laborers?

- By the character and not just the ability of the person.
- After much prayer and seeking God.
- After examining others' feelings about the individual(s).
- By their dedication to Jesus Christ.
- By their specific ministry and calling.
- By their love for lost souls.
- By their love for God's people.
- By their willingness to serve when unnoticed.
- By their unity in spirit.

How should a shepherd NOT choose co-leaders?

- On their ability and not character.
- When under pressure to fill a position in the church.
- When he must compromise his own standards or the standards of the Word of God.
- Because the co-leader will give a lot of money to the church.
- Because they have the most academic education.
- Because they are young, with much talent and energy.
- Because they threaten to leave the church if you do not use them immediately.
- Because they have a competitive nature in other areas.

How Should A Shepherd Train his Co-laborers?

- = By giving them direction, not confusion
- = By giving them encouragement, not condemnation
- = By giving them service, not servitude
- = By giving them inspiration, not negation
- = By giving them discipline, not disconcert
- = By giving them channel, not control
- = By giving them release, not bondage
- = By giving them hope not despair

How should a shepherd work with his co-labourers?

- By recognizing his own ministry strengths.
- By recognizing his own ministry limitations and weaknesses.
- By recognizing other team members' strengths.
- By maintaining a servant's heart and spirit.
- By having interpersonal involvement with one another.
- By maintaining a family spirit in the team.
- By cultivating loyalty and trust in the team.
- By maintaining and encouraging a forgiving spirit.
- By cultivating an honest and open attitude with the team.
- By maintaining a teachable spirit.
- By maintaining good communications.

THE CHARACTER OF A MINISTRY TEAM MEMBER

The following qualities are those that one should be maturing in:

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 1. | Born again | John 3:3-7; Rom. 6:23 |
| 2. | Continually (being) filled with the Spirit | Eph 5:18 |
| 3. | Displaying the fruit of the Spirit; rooted, established in and motivated by God's love | Gal. 5:22-25
Eph.3:16-19; 1Cor 13:1-8 |
| 4. | Manifesting the gifts of the Spirit | 1 Cor.12: 7-11 |
| 5. | Moving with the Lord's agenda | 1 Sam.16:7; John 5:19 |
| 6. | Open to receiving ministry as well as giving it teachable, open to continual growth and becoming emotionally whole. | Prov.15:5, 32
Matt.7:3-5
Phil.2:12- 13 |
| 7. | Well grounded in the Word of God | 1 Tim 4:6- 7
2 Tim 2:15; 3:16 |
| 8. | Functioning member of a local church | Heb. 10:25; Rom. 12:4- 5 |
| 9. | A submissive, non-rebellious heart understanding accountability and godly authority | Eph 5:21; Heb. 13: 17
1 Sam 15:22- 23; Matt. 8: 9 |
| 10. | Denominationally impartial in ministry | 1 Cor.3: 3-11 |
| 11. | Servant's heart, sacrificial attitude, wholly available to the Lord, endurance | Heb. 12:1-2; Rom. 12:1
2 Tim. 2: 3-6 |
| 12. | Sensitive and obedient to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, trusting Him for the anointing to do His will in praying for others | Rom. 12: 2; 2 Tim. 1:6-7
John 14: 12-14
Mark 16:17-20 |
| 13. | Non-judgmental, non-critical, merciful | Is. 11:2-4; 2 Cor.1: 4 |
| 14. | Walking in "search me, oh Lord"- principle Forgiveness as a life-style choice | Ps. 139:23- 24
Heb. 12: 15 |
| 15. | Vital personal prayer life-intimacy with God | 1 Thess.5:17; Eph. 6:18 |
| 16. | Know who are you in Christ | Rom.8: 1; 1 John 4: 4
Eph.1:3 - 2: 10 |

TEAM MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

References showing the concept of team ministry in the New Testament:

- a. Jesus and the Twelve Apostles (Matthew 10). Jesus sent them out two by two into every city
- b. Jesus sent out the 70, two into every city (Luke 10:12)
- c. Peter and John worked together (Acts 3).
- d. Philip, then Peter and John at Samaria (Acts 8).
- e. Peter and six other brethren (Acts 10-11).
- f. Paul and Barnabas worked together (Acts 13:13-14) Paul and his company mentioned.
- g. Judas and Silas join Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15.
- h. Barnabas and John Mark travel together (Acts 15).
- i. Paul and Silas team together (Acts 15).
- j. Timothy joins Paul and Silas (Acts 16).
- k. Paul takes Priscilla and Aquilla with him in the work (Acts 18).
- l. Timothy and Erastus sent to Macedonia by Paul (Acts 19).
- m. Apostolic company into Asia was Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus along with Paul (Acts 20).
- m. Bishops and Deacons worked together in Philippi (Philippians 1:1).
- n. Apostles, elders and brethren in council (Acts 15:1-2; 21:17-18).
- o. Elders at Crete with Titus (Titus 1:5).
- p. Elders at Ephesus with Timothy (Acts 20:17).
- q. Prophets and Teachers at Antioch (Acts 13:1-4).

Thus we have a number of references to show that ministries worked together in the early Church. There must have been good team spirit and principles there to be what the Lord intended the Church to be, even though there was, at times, some dissension and disputation.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF TEAM-WORK

1. The Head or Leader of the Team

Whatever the head of the team is, so will be the team. Whether he be called the Senior, Elder or Minister, or whatever title he carries, he is one of the keys to successful team-work. Hence, the importance of the leader working according to Biblical principles.

- a. He must be an example the team can follow (I Corinthians 11:1; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:9). Paul said that the believers had learned, heard, received and seen in him the things they were to do. A leader must be an example spiritually, morally, ethically, socially, doctrinally and in his family. He must conform to the standard of the Word at all times (Romans 12:1-2).
 - Lead by Principle – What you believe.
 - Lead by Precept – What you say (Psalms 119:4, 168). Rule of moral conduct.
 - Lead by Practice – What you do (Matthew 23:1-3). Not hypocrite.
 - Lead by Personal Example – What you are (Philippians 3:17; 1 Peter 5:3). A specimen, a pattern for others to follow (Philippians 4:9; II Timothy 3:10).
- b. Must not have a dictatorial spirit (Luke 22:24-27; Mark 10:42-45; II Corinthians 1:24; Daniel 5:19). Not like running for Presidency or Political Office. Not lordship, domineering, authoritarianism, etc.

Someone has listed out the differences between a Boss and a Leader:

- 1) A boss drives men – a leader coaches them.
- 2) A boss depends on authority – a leader depends on good will.
- 3) A boss inspires fear – a leader inspires enthusiasm.
- 4) A boss assigns the task – a leader sets the pace.
- 5) A boss gives orders – a leader makes suggestions.
- 6) A boss fixes the blame for the breakdown – a leader fixes the breakdown.
- 7) A boss pushes people – a leader persuades people.

- 8) A boss gets complaints – a leader gets co-operation.
- 9) A boss says “Get going” – a leader says “Let’s go “
- 10) A boss builds machines – a leader builds men.
- 11) The world needs leaders – nobody wants a boss!

- c. He must have a servant spirit (Mark 10:45; 1 Kings 12:7- 8). If one rules as a king with a servant spirit, people will serve you.
- d. He must be a person who can have others work with him and not just for him. Many ministers cannot have people work with them as they become insecure in their position and then get rid of them. (John 13:3; 1 Timothy 1: 12).
- e. He must allow for mistakes in the development of the team like Jesus did with the Twelve Apostles.
- f. He must have confidence in the team and not question their integrity or motives.
- g. He must be willing to delegate responsibilities and the corresponding authority (Mark 13:34). Yet, require accountability.
- h. He must respect his own chain of command given to team members.
- i. He must be willing to share his honour and not be jealous of others when they succeed (Numbers 27:20; 11:14-17).
- j. He must seek to release the ministry of the team and not suppress them.
- k. He must be willing to admonish, confront and counsel team members and not pass the spade to others to do it. Deal with problems while small.
- l. He must keep the lines of communication clear and open always. Communication breakdown is one of the greatest causes of trouble in teamwork. Need to speak freely without taking offence, or being on the defensive.
- m. He must recognize three major problems to watch for in team ministry:
 - 1) Misuse – unqualified persons, not trained, failure to train others for responsibility.
 - 2) Disuse – uninvolved feeling you can do it better yourself and not involve others.
 - 3) Abuse – overload and overwork the most talented and gifted ones.
- n. He must build all members of the team into a team by concept, precept and practice organization.
- o. He must seek to maintain unity of speech, mind, judgment and vision (Psalms 133).
- p. He must build relationships with the team members. Relationships do not just happen. They have to be built. Relationships cannot be legislated; cannot relate the un-relatable.
 - 1) Relationships begin with God first (I John 1:7-9).
 - 2) Relationships built with others (I John 1:5- 6). Vertical, then horizontal.
 - 3) Relationships precede commitment to each other.
 - 4) Relationships have to be maintained. The same things that bring relationship are the things, which maintain it.

In a building, one stone can only relate to six other stones and this is so throughout the whole building.
 - 5) Relationship is in the spirit; one in spirit; commitment “for better, for worse, till death do us part”.
- q. He must be loyal to the team even if they make errors. He rebukes privately. He will support his fellow elder and not allow attack on them, even as he would not allow children to attack parents.
- r. He should surround himself with strong men who can strengthen his weaknesses and vice versa: not have a group of “yes men” (Proverbs 15:22). In the multitude of counselors there is safety.

- s. He must maintain clear vision (Proverbs 29:18), for his own personal life and ministry; for the Church as a whole; for the leadership and for the Body of Christ as a whole. There must be purpose, vision, goals and direction.
- t. He must make time for the team getting together; fellowship, teaching.
- u. He must have Divine love for them (I Corinthians 13).
- v. He must always attack problems, never personalities.
- w. He must give encouragement (not flattery) for work well done.
- x. He must be a man of principles that are Word based.
- y. He must be a man of courage himself to encourage others.
- z. He must have Godly character.
 - a. He must be a gracious man.
 - b. He must be humble.
 - c. He must have his priorities in order.
 - d. He must be able to make decisions based on sound judgment.
 - e. He must be sensitive to people, but not over-sensitive, touchy.
 - f. He must be impartial in his dealings with others; unprejudiced.
 - g. He must have pure motivation.
 - h. He must not be a hypocrite, a stage-actor or a man of many masks (Matthew 23).
 - i. He must be a faithful man; his word is as good as himself. (Luke 16:10-12).

Choosing Leadership

There are certain things to watch for in the choosing of potential leadership to be developed into a team, some of which we list here.

- a. Watch for the ambitious spirit and political maneuvers. Promotion comes from the Lord (Psalms 75).
- b. Leadership position must not be “bought”.
- c. Watch for faithfulness in little things. Well done, thou good and faithful servant. One can be good (i.e. pianist) but not faithful (Proverbs 25:19; I Corinthians 4:1-2; Luke 19:17; Matthew 25:14-36).
- d. Watch for men of character qualities (I Timothy 3, Titus 1).
- e. Watch for self-will. Test the will to watch responses or reactions (Titus 1:7; II Peter 2:10; Isaiah 14:12-14; Daniel 11:36).
- f. Watch for a teachable spirit (Psalms 27:11; 86:11). Need meek spirit.
- g. Watch that he is flexible, available, adjustable, and dispensable; can receive discipline, rebuke (James 4:7; Hebrews 13:17; Ecclesiastes 10:4).
- h. Watch that he has love for the sheep more than love for his ministry (I Peter 4:7; Romans 12:10).
- i. Watch for the servant spirit; love slave (Mark 10:43-45).
- j. Watch that he relates to people and people to him. Do people desire to follow him? Does he relate or turn people away? Is he acceptable to his brethren (Deuteronomy 33:24).
- k. Watch for zeal and diligence. Is he slothful? Zeal without knowledge? (II Peter 1:5; Romans 10:1-2).
- l. Place in period of probation (I Thessalonians 5:21; Timothy 3). Prove in small areas first where they cannot hurt themselves or people, it takes time to prove.
- m. Do not allow charisma to blind to character. Character alone can handle charisma.

- o. Watch that he is an ethical person; of good behavior, good conduct.
- p. Watch that he is a good communicator.
- q. Watch for a co-operative spirit and good attitudes (I Peter 2:17; Romans 12:17). Develop the “lamb” spirit before the “lion” boldness.
- s. Make evaluation checks periodically. Deal with positives and adjust negatives.
- t. Watch for tests of loyalty; to senior minister, leadership, family, the Church and vision of the Church.
- u. Watch for a submissive spirit (I Peter 5:1-5), however, not over dependent.
- v. Watch for a spirit of humility. Beware of pride or arrogance.
- w. Watch for his spiritual life; prayer, word, worship, good relationship with the Lord.
- x. Watch for pure and strong motivation. Or does he have to be always motivated.
- y. Watch for self-centeredness.
- z. Watch for discouragement, despondency, moodiness, murmurings or rejoicing spirit.

Successful Functioning of the Team

The following are some principles and practical guidelines for the proper functioning of team ministry.

- a. There can only be one head of a team, as seen in the role of “first among equals”. The principle of leadership must be recognized in Team Ministry. Though no one is more important than another, for the sake of order and efficiency there must be someone who takes the leadership and has the final responsibility. Failing to recognize this is to head for disaster.
- b. The Team must be brought together by the Lord (Mark 16:20). If the Lord is not in it, then the team will fail. Each member must seek the Lord that this is His will that they work together. Cf. The Twelve and Seventy sent out by Jesus two by two (Luke 9-10).
- c. The Team must be men whose hearts God has touched (I Samuel 10:26). Internal joining of the heart to the leader. If only external, it will not last. Must have one heart to keep rank together (I Chronicles 12).
- d. The Team must have the same spirit upon them as their leader (Numbers 11:14-17).
- e. The Team must have and maintain loyalty to each other.
- f. The Team must keep the lines of communication open at all times. Avoid impartial information, or inadequate information.
- g. The Team must have clear job description. Write out and define areas of responsibility. This is their “charge”.
- h. The Team must be accountable for areas of responsibility.
- i. The Team must have individual and corporate devotional life. Ministry to the Lord determines ministry to the people. The team that prays together stays together.
 - 1) Pray together – spiritual times.
 - 2) Share together – friendship, fellowship.
 - 3) Being with each other (Mark 3:14).
 - 4) Discussion and dialogue together. Retreats, etc. Maintain team spirit.
 - 5) Business and staff meetings together.

By doing this the team will come to speak the same thing, be joined together in the same mind and the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10).

- j. The Team must recognize that safety is only in the team. There is strength, security, checks and balances in the team. No one person has it all. Each have strengths and weaknesses, but together there is the many-sided wisdom of the Lord. Use each other's strengths to balance weaknesses.
- k. The Team must know the principle of submission (Ephesians 5:21). Submission will be tested from time to time.
- l. The Team must know the strength of commitment. Each member should be committed to the other and to the vision of the team.
- m. The Team must surrender personal rights and do all to support the vision the Lord has given the team.
- n. The Team endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit at all costs. Unity is a "must" in love and in truth. Beware of anything that would bring division, schism or splits into the team.

Find listed below some of the things that destroy team-work:

- 1) A competitive or comparative spirit (Matthew 18:1-14).
- 2) A dictatorial spirit, or lordship (I Peter 5:1-5; Matthew 23:11).
- 3) A proud, self-exalting spirit (Luke 22:24) that brings strife. Pride brings contention (Proverbs 13:10).
- 4) Party spirit (I Corinthians 1:10).
- 5) A "Diotrephes-spirit", loving the pre-eminence (III John 9- 10). The fruit of such is evil deeds, malicious spirit, and rejection of others, forbidding fellowship and excommunicating others.
- 6) Lack of communication.
- 7) Lack of transparency, dishonesty with each other cf. (Ephesians 5:8-14).
- 8) Lack of Divine love.
- 9) Lack of tolerance, cf. The Twelve apostles.
- 10) Lack of forgiving spirit (Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 18:21- 22).
- 11) Lack of spiritual maturity; carnality manifested (I Corinthians 3:1-4).
- 12) Lack of true humility (Matthew 18:1-4; Mark 9:33-37).
- 13) Lack of wisdom, doing a thing the right way, time, place, words.
- 14) Lack of submissive, servant spirit (I Peter 5:3; Mark 10:42-45; I Kings 12:7-11).
- 15) Lack of confidence in each other (Philippians 4:13).
- 16) Lack of consecration or wrong priorities (Matthew 6:33).
- 17) Lack of organization in the team; misdirected efforts.
- 18) Lack of spiritual concern for others (Matthew 23).
- 19) Lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6; Proverbs 3).
- 20) Lack of mutual respect for each other (Ephesians 5:29- 30).
- 21) Lack of co-operative effort.
- 22) Lack of appreciation for one another; taking one another for granted.
- 23) Lack of maintaining vision (Proverbs 29:18).

- 24) Lack of involvement in the work (Haggai 1:4).
- 25) Lack of pure motives. Beware of Judas or Simon spirit (I Timothy 6).
- 26) Lack of teachable spirit; leaning to own understanding.

Purpose and Blessings of Team Ministry

The blessing is to be found in the cluster of grapes, not in one grape alone (Isaiah 65:8).

Please study the following points on team ministry:

1. A Team Ministry provides a living demonstration of Body ministry (I Corinthians 12).
2. Team Ministry makes it better in speaking “present truth” for there is more than one voice speaking the same thing (Deuteronomy 17:6; Matthew 18:16; II Corinthians 13:1).
3. Team Ministry makes it easier to find the mind of the Lord and His will in things (Matthew 18:19-20; Daniel 2-4. Daniel and his friends).
4. Team Ministry is more effective and produces greater results (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
5. Team Ministry provides for greater safety and checks and balances (Proverbs 11:14).
6. Team Ministry helps to guard against the immoral or other snares set by the enemy which have ensnared so many lone ministries.
7. Team Ministry provides strength and encouragement for the ministries themselves (Exodus 17:12). Hands may be upheld giving inspiration and spiritual strength in the fellowship of team-work.
8. Team Ministry provides an opportunity for the development of disciples in the Lord and releasing their ministries, i.e., Timothy, Titus, Joshua, Elisha, all were trained under other ministries.

When brethren dwell together in UNITY, then the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore. This unity must be demonstrated in the leadership of the local Church in order to be manifested in the congregation (Psalms 133).

Conclusion:

In concluding this study, we may illustrate the RELATIONSHIP that should exist between the leader and the team.

Various pictures could be used to show this, God has given numerous types of Christ and the Church, and the same principle follows through to the leadership and the congregation.

- There is one head, but many members in the Body of Christ. Christ is the Head. All believers are equal as members, but all have their particular place and function.
- There is one hub in a wheel but many spokes. All spokes are equal, all related to each other by the rim and the hub, yet each have their proper location.
- There was one true Israel of God, yet 12 tribes. All tribes were equal before God, yet all gave their divinely appointed place in the camp of God.
- There was but one Moses, yet many Judges and Elders counseled together with him on behalf of the thousands of the nation of Israel under the Jethro principle.
- There was one Tabernacle of the Lord, yet many parts, and various furnishings, yet all together were related to the Ark of God and His glory.
- There was one High Priest, namely, Aaron, yet many priests in the Levitical tribe, and these constituted the priesthood to the nation of Israel.

- There was only one Temple of the Lord, yet many stones and other materials. All stones were equal, yet all had their proper placement in the house of the Lord.
- There is one Pyramid, yet many stones that make up a Pyramid. The Pyramid has but one Capstone, and one Cornerstone. All other stones relate to each other in their placement.
- There is one King over the Kingdom of God but numerous citizens having equal rights under the laws of the Kingdom, yet there is Divine order.
- There is one Throne of God and the Lamb, but myriads of angels and saints who gather in a circle around the Throne in their midst. All have their place and their relationship to each other and to that throne.
- There is one Chief Shepherd but numerous under-shepherds and myriads of sheep in the one fold, the flock of God.

There is no conflict as to which of these illustrations is used for all point to the same truth. Christ and the Church, or the Leader and the Team.

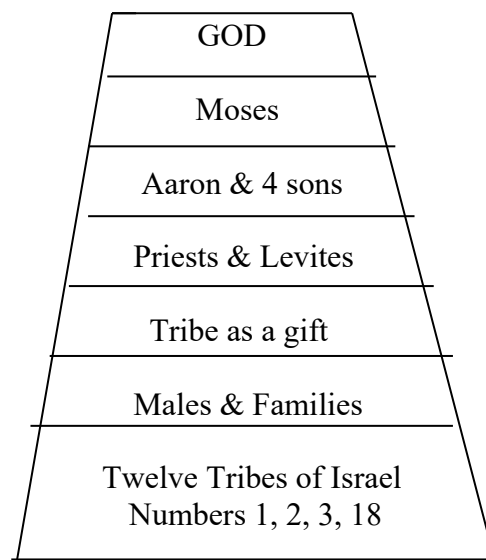
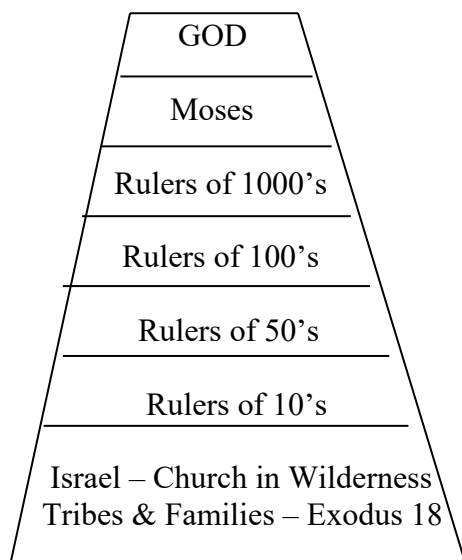
- Christ is the Head of the many-membered Body.
- Christ is the Hub of the many-spoked Wheel.
- Christ is the King of the tribes of spiritual Israel.
- Christ is the great High Priest in the Melchizedekian Order of King-Priest,
- Christ is the Ark of God in the midst of His Tabernacle, His Temple – The Church.
- Christ is the Capstone and the Cornerstone, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, in the Pyramid of many stones.
- Christ is the Lamb of God in the throne of God and all the angels and saints worship around that throne.
- Christ is the Chief shepherd in the flock of God, over the one fold.

In the earthy and practical expression of Team Ministry, the principle of the above can also be applied. The leader of the team and the team relate to each other as Christ relates to His people. Whether the structure of the Church or the Team be as a Body, a Wheel, a Nation, a Temple, a Pyramid, a Kingdom, a Flock or other, it is the spirit and attitude that makes any of these structures good or evil, not necessarily the structure itself.

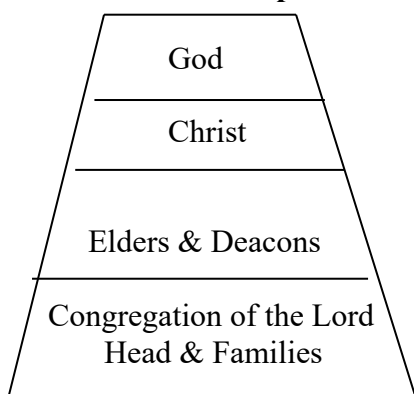
All in the team are equal as persons, but each have the measure of the gift of Christ. This measure determines their function and place in the team. All in the team relate to each other and the team leader who also relates to the team members. This is the truth illustrated in each of these pictures below.

It is possible to have structure without life, and life without structure. God's idea is to have UNITY in the structure and LIFE therein. It is here the Lord commands the blessing, even life forever more.

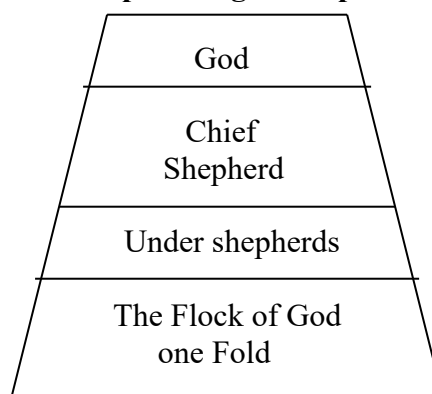
Any of the above types could be used here but we use the following Pyramidal diagrams to illustrate the principle that has been noted here.



Church Principle



Shepherding Principle



TWELVE FOUNDATIONAL TEAM PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS

The following are twelve important foundational principles upon which a ministry team should

be built, if it is going to be really fruitful and effective for God:

(i) **Excellence**

Someone once said, 'Mediocrity is excellent to the eye of the mediocre.'

We can all settle for second best, because this is usually the easy way and excellence tends to be costly. Excellence requires self-sacrifice and selflessness, but it is worth it. Christians and especially Christian leaders need to work at doing their best for God. To know that we, as one of God's servants, have given our best to Him, is a fulfilling and abundant way to live. After all, God has given His best for us! Our motivation to excel should be: in our personal life (2 Timothy 2:20-21; Titus 3:2, 8); in our standards (2 Corinthians 8:7 Philippians 4:8); and in our ministry (2 Timothy 2:15). Remember though that excellence is not going over – the – top! Excellence is doing things because we are trustworthy stewards / servants of God, who want to do everything we do for His Glory alone.

“ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus, to the Glory and praise of God.” (Philippians 1:9)

(ii) **Commitment**

A team's success will correspond to the level of commitment of each individual Team member. Every team member should unreservedly and determinedly commit himself or herself to fulfilling their part of God's purpose / vision for the team, without allowing anything to deter, hinder or distract them. If team members are not committed to God and to what He has called them to do for Him, then they will tend to find themselves continually being sidetracked and ineffective in their service for Him. Team members need to be committed to the work / vision and the place to which God has called them. Again, this may be costly, but it is the only way in God's Kingdom (Luke 9: 57-62; Luke 14:25-33; John 12:23-26) Jesus showed God's commitment to us, and we should follow His example. Any Christian team should also be committed to each other and to the infallibility/central role of the Word of God, without which no theology is certain. Note, if a team member can do anything else with a clear conscience (i.e. instead of being a team member), then they should be released to go and do it (because they will not be able wholeheartedly to commit themselves to the team, if they are thinking about, or longing to do, something else).

(iii) **Maturity**

Every team member should aim to be continually growing in spiritual maturity. The more mature team members should be setting an example for others to follow (Titus 2:6-8). This maturity reveals itself: in the well-balanced teaching and life of team members; in the integrity, faithfulness, and reliability of team members (Psalm 25: 21); and in the perception and sensitivity of team members towards self/others/situations (Proverbs 16:21-22).

(iv) **Faith**

Faith believes God and not what we see or feel. It is an attitude/largeness of heart that says, 'God can do it!' In fact, faith can be thought of as how much we can encompass in God. It is the certainty that what we believe will be at some time experienced by us (Hebrews 11:1), even if this requires the moving of mountains (Mark 11: 22-24). Remember, without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11: 6). Christians should therefore live a life that is an ongoing experiment in faith.

(v) **Communication / openness**

Team members need to learn how to communicate effectively (i.e. make themselves understood) with each other and with those outside the team (especially where this involves the achievement of team goals / vision). This communication needs to be positive and not negative/gossips/slander, because spoken words have the potential to do enormous good, or

cause great harm and do extensive damage (James 3:6). Remember, our words reveal what is in our hearts (Matthew 12:34).

(vi) **Humility**

God blesses (Matthew 5:5) and raises up (1 Peter 5: 6) the humble. Humility is a very practical attitude. It stops team members jockeying for position (Mathew 23:11-12) and it gives them the right attitude to each other/other people (Philippians 2:3-4). Humility is recognizing our natural weakness /foolishness and God's strength/wisdom (which can be ours in Jesus 1 Corinthians 1:25-31), it is only the humble who can give up their own personal rights and demands in order to prefer / support help other people /team members. Someone once said, 'Humility is standing at our full height and realizing that God is far bigger still.'

(vi) **Perseverance**

A persevering person is one who: has a grip on their calling in God (John 4:34); understands the place of patience, as well as the place of quick thinking (James 1: 2-4); is consistent; and has their goals clearly in mind and is determined to achieve them (Hebrews 12:1-3; Philippians 4:13), whatever the cost to themselves.

(vii) **Fellowship**

Every Christian team needs to have Jesus Christ as its key member (Mark 16:20). Regular fellowship with Him by all team members is essential (every team member needs to be meeting with God on a daily basis, thus developing and deepening their relationship with Him; and they need to learn how to encourage themselves in the Lord, and know how to dig deep in Him, especially when they are in difficulty). Team member devotional life should be of a high standard both individually and corporately. The depth of a team's ministry to the Lord will be gauge of the breadth and effectiveness of its ministry to other people. In fact, if the Lord is not in a work, it will either fail or slowly fizzle out team members need an attitude of heart, which is always ready to be challenged and refreshed by God. Without this, they would never be able to successfully meet the demands of their work (or their part of this vision), and they would too readily start to operate in the flesh or out of self-defense mechanism. Team members should also be seeking to strengthen their fellowship and, therefore their relationships with each other, so that a good team spirit can grow and develop strong personal relationships and unity are vital to the effectiveness of any team as it seeks to fulfill its God-given goals. Team leaders should be alert to guard against jealousy, rivalry, unforgiveness, a critical spirit, misunderstanding, gossip, slander and complaining because these are all destructive of good fellowship/relationships. Remember, all fellowship should be motivated by selfless love. Remember also that the call God places on an individual's life should harmonize both with His call on the team as a whole and with His call on other individual team member's (i.e. A team should flow together in God).

(viii) **Vision**

Every team needs a God-given vision, otherwise it will be aimless / direction less (or worse, be going in the wrong direction) (Amos 3:3; Proverbs 29:18). Team members need to work within that vision, because that is where the anointing of God is flowing. To move out of the vision, will be to produce 'dead', ineffective works Every team member must fit the shape (or template) of the vision and not try to hanger it to fit their ministry. In fact, individual team members need to submit their spiritual gifts, abilities and ministry to the vision. After all, the vision is grater than the individual. As team members submit to the vision, they will flow in a grater anointing than they could individually. Team members also need to be aware of any changes / expansion in the vision which God would have them implement so that they continue to work in the fullness of what God wants. They must also be compatible with the whole of the vision, even if they only work in one sector of it. Before a team is formed (or joined), each potential member should seek God to determine if it His will that they do join. The person should also seek God to determine if it is His will that they do join. The person

should also seek God to make sure that they are called by Him to fulfill part of the God-given vision of that team.

(ix) Leadership

The leadership of any team needs to be recognized and submitted to by all team members. The leader of the leadership team may not be more important than any other member, but they do enable the ordering and efficiency of any team actions and decisions.

Disaster awaits any team that does not have effective leadership. Team members (including the leader) also need to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:21). One team member who decides to do their own thing can cause great confusion and disruption in any team (especially to its unity, cohesion and team spirit). Each team member needs to flow in their part of the stream of the team ministry. They should operate in their own particular gift/ability/anointing/work, but in willing submission to the overall ministry (i.e. its leadership/vision/goals/etc.) Remember, leaders should do more than what is necessary. That should always be pushing back their boundaries / limitations and be able to do more for God each year that goes by. That should also be people who are willing to do things that are outside their specific responsibility / interest, and be able to carry a breadth of capability (this requires a largeness of heart in God and a person who is willing to be stretched to their limit in God)

(x) Discipline

Every aspect of a team member's life (i.e. family, home, work, private, etc) must be under the discipline of the Holy Spirit and this should be obvious to everyone who cares to look. Discipline enables team members to live lives of integrity with God and to be consistent in their walk with Him (non – believers watching such a life will not be disappointed in God). Remember, discipline has to be willingly submitted to and carried out with God's enabling because otherwise it will simply be starving.

(xi) Power / anointing

Every team member needs to know the value of the anointing of God. In fact, they should be willing to give up everything for it (like the prophet Elisha). The anointing of God is not always an easy thing to bear and often the anointed person will not feel good about it (because of the cost of it), but they will still want it more than anything else. This is because they realize the absolute necessity of God's anointing/power to be able to carry out the work He has set aside for them to do. They realize that without the power of God, they will not get very far. In fact, any leadership depends on and is enabled by the anointing of God. Team members need to remember that an anointing from God is a gift from Him and not a feeling. They also need to understand how to release their anointing in God; know how that anointing works/flows; and know in what areas they are anointed, so that they can resist any pressure from other people to take up things that God never called them to do (remember though that God may have a new anointing for them, so they should not limit Him by using this as an excuse).

Team Structure

Organism versus organization

A team should be an organism rather than an organization. An organism is a living, active body in which life takes precedence over structure. The organism needs a structure to support its life, but it is secondary to it. Structure is necessary, but structure without life equals a skeleton. An organization, on the other hand, has structure as its primary element and life as its secondary consideration. Any team needs to make sure that its structure / organization serves the life. Remember: God anoints men, not machines!

A good example of a team / church functioning as an organism rather than an organization can be seen in the early church (Acts 4:32-35).

The need for simplicity

KISS - KEEP IT SIMPLE SAINTS!!

The secret of team ministry structure is simplicity. Simple team structuring does not mean that a ministry will not grow or that it does not need organizing, but it does allow a flowing of the Holy spirit through every part of the team. The reason for this is that the Holy Spirit is not organized out or prevented from acting by the complicated structural organization of the team. No individual or team can work up, organize or structure the anointing of God. Every team needs to stick to its anointing and keep its structure as simple and uncomplicated as it can be!

THE ART OF DELEGATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Thought: *"I would rather set ten men to work than do the work of ten men!"*

Introduction

Delegation is defined in the Oxford dictionary as ‘the entrusting or committing of authority (etc.) to another as an agent or deputy; or the sending or commissioning of a person as a deputy or representative, with the power to act for another.’ Another way to define delegation is ‘to get things done through other people’. A lone leader is limited in strength, ability and time, but these factors are multiplied when that leader shares their responsibility with other people.

We have put this important topic here, because if the art of delegation is not practiced properly, then a team will not be able to function effectively / efficiently. In fact, really effective/fruitful Christian teamwork requires/necessitates the delegation of tasks/authority to those people who can best do (or should do) the jobs. After all, no one man could possibly do all work called for in even the most modest of church situations (although some people do try!). God’s way for most of His work to be carried out is the formation of Christian teams, which are made up of people who are called and gifted by God to share part of the task/responsibility/leadership of a church or organization.

Jethro’s advice

Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, gave Moses some of the best advice he ever got. In Exodus 18 we read that Moses was wearing himself, and the people, out by taking on the whole responsibility for leading, judging and counseling the people of Israel (and the extras who had joined them). This was no mean task considering that including women and children there could have been over two million people who were part of this assembly. Moses was not very wise in his approach to his position of leadership. He tried to do it all on his own and so from morning until evening he would take his seat and the people would ‘queue’ to be heard /judged by him. When Jethro saw what Moses was doing, he remonstrated with him (i.e. told him off!) and then gave him the following advice:

“What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. But select capable men from all the people – men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain-and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.” (Exodus 18:17-23)

Fortunately, Moses listened to his father-in-law and did as he suggested, otherwise Moses may not have survived much longer (he would have either collapsed from exhaustion, undergone a mental breakdown due to the pressure, or been lynched by an unhappy/disillusioned/frustrated group of people). Jethro had realized that not only Moses, but also the people will be dissatisfied with the existing leadership arrangement; and if the people were unhappy, then Moses’ leadership was in jeopardy (danger). Jethro’s advice can be split into four parts. He told Moses that he needed to:

- spend more time with God rather talking to people about their problems. Moses did this a large proportion of the first five books of the Bible are the result. He also told Moses to submit his advice to last authority i.e. God
- teach the people the truth of God as an assembly, rather than trying to do it on a one-to – one basis all the time. This drastically reduced Moses workload.
- Delegate the responsibility of leadership / judging to the right sort of men (not just anybody) (i.e. parcel out the burden and pressure of leadership), so that the load was spread among many people instead of being born by Moses alone. The right sort of men (according to Jethro) were able /capable, trustworthy men who feared God and hated dishonest gain (covetousness). These men then had to delegate responsibility according to their ability, i.e. some could be set over 1000 people, whereas others could only be set over ten. Note that they had to be available as Judges to the people all the

times. These men became Moses' co-workers (i.e. they shared part of the responsibility for leading/judging the people of Israel and therefore they had their potential recognized, released and realized. This spreading of the leadership load also helped to stem the tide of discontent among the people of Israel (because they were being seen to) and it went some ways towards setting up the pattern of leadership that would continue after Moses' death (too many organizations fail, because no replacement leadership is ready when the initiating leader dies or leaves). Leaders today should not make the same mistake that Moses made; i.e. take on more tasks /jobs than they can adequately handle and satisfactorily complete. There is no future for the leader who cannot discern and live within his own limitations (at times, all leaders need to listen to their Jethro types who bring them wise/godly admonition).

- be a leader to the leaders (i.e. be a high source of authority and a spiritual covering Moses had to first appoint leaders, so that the people would know that he ratified / approved the selection of them; and he had to be available to help these leaders out if they ever got a case that they could not handle i.e. he was to be father figure/pastor/counselor to them. Jethro knew that this newly appointed leaders would need help, because at times they would find themselves out of their depth.

God recommended delegation

Some people have queried the advice of Jethro, because it was not sourced in God, but simply in a wise old man. This may be true but Moses was advised by Jethro to seek God on the matter to make sure He agreed; and there is no record of any rejection of the idea by God. In fact later in chapter 11 of the Book of Numbers, we read that God recommended a similar concept when Moses again found himself over worked. Here Moses was feeling very sorry for himself and not without reason. Most of the people were wailing and moaning about the fact that they had no meat to eat and Moses (as was his custom) went to God with the matter. Moses was still carrying most of the burden of leadership of the people of Israel. He complains to God about this (reminding God that it was He who talked Moses into leadership of the children of Israel in the first place) and he admits that alone he did not have what it took to carry and nurse these rebellious people all the way to the promised land (i.e. alone he could not do what God had asked him to do). He realized that the burden was just too great and he needed help. Moses seemed to be desperate, as can be seen by the final words of his prayer to God:

“ I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now – if I have found favor in your eyes – and do not let me face my own ruin.” (Numbers 11:14-15)

God's answer to Moses' cry was to ask Moses to bring seventy of Israel' elders (probably some of those who were chosen to be judges previously). These men had to be known to Moses as leaders /elders and officials (i.e. gain they could not just be anybody). They were to come and join themselves with Moses as he waited on God, and then God would not only allow some more of Moses' leadership responsibility to be delegated to them, but he would also take some of the spirit / anointing which rested on Moses and place/rest it on these seventy men. These men were not only to be placed into a position of leadership with Moses, but they were also going to have some of the enabling/empowering God had given Moses. When God did the delegating, He also provided what those people needed spiritually in order to carry out their new responsibility. God made quite a show of the whole event by down in a cloud to speak to Moses; and He even proved that those leaders who had been picked were also acceptable to Him and that they had received His spirit / anointing, by enabling them to prophesy (therefore the people had a clear sign that these leaders were approved by God Himself). It would even seem that He found two men whom Moses had missed and raised them up into leadership by resting his spirit on them and enabling them to prophesy.

Reasons for Delegation

Some of the signs that a church /organization needs to delegate are:

- dead-lines are frequently missed

- the leaders are wasting too much time doing trivial/minor tasks (that other people really should be doing) and, therefore, not investing enough time in what they should be doing.
 - big jobs are being left unfinished (and sometimes not even started)
 - some people are working far too hard for their own health/good, whereas other people are sitting around doing nothing, much e.g. some people are cracking up under pressure and others are depressed and/or frustrated because they are under-used.
 - the organization/church is not heading in the way that would have it go, because the wrong people are in the wrong jobs and, therefore, the organization has the wrong priorities. People in the church/organization are not being cared for individually/personally/quickly enough (e.g. leaders cannot care for 40 people same way that they can 4 or 5 people; if they try to do this then urgent cases tend to be seen too late because they had to wait their turn).
- The main reason for practicing delegation is that it is biblical. As we have seen, Moses practised delegation and was therefore enabled to carry out his ministry. Jesus practised and encouraged delegation, e.g. He commissioned His disciples to carry out certain functions and later He gave all the Christians the great commission (which is in effect a charge given to all Christians to carry out their specific bit of the work which Jesus began and His church is to get on with what they really need to be doing and so they instituted a fore-runner of many today will call a deaconate (Acts 6: 1-7). These are but a few of the many biblical examples of delegation.
- God does not any individual to even attempt to fulfill every role/responsibility in a church. He wants every church/organization to be a body in which every member does his part (1 Corinthians 12:12-31). One of the reasons God gifts leaders to the church is to enable delegation of responsibility, and so enable church members to grow/develop to Him (especially in gift and capability) and be increasingly fruitful for Him (Ephesians 4:11-16). A church /organization can then begin to grow numerically and not short of the staff to enable this growth to be maintained / continue. Church leaders should never do the tasks that other people are called God to do (especially in the name of servant hood). This only breeds confusion and may cause those they lead to feel neglected / unwanted, because they are never asked to do anything. Remember, every person in the body of Christ has a different, unique, God-ordained role for which they are the best person. If these people are not able (or enabled) to function, the whole local body will suffer, because it will lack the operation of a certain gift/ministry/ability. Never deprive a person of the blessing of serving God! In fact, leaders should enable /encourage/ make room for the whole range of spiritual gifts/ministries to operate in their area of responsibility (it is leadership's responsibility to do this). They therefore, need to recognize, train and release those potential leaders in their midst and those to whom God gives spiritual gifting. Sometimes, this training will involve dropping these people into the midst of demanding / difficult situation for which a person may not feel they are prepared (only do this if you sense in God that is right and that the person has the potential/ capability to cope). In fact, often being thrown in the deep end is the best way to get a person to grow in Christ and in gift, because the person then has to cry out to God and fully depend on Him (Whereas before they may have been able to lazily coast along in their own strength). To set other people free to grow in faith / gift, leadership has to provide situations in which those people can develop. Remember, Christians have been called by God to serve Him and, therefore, if they are doing nothing, they are doing nothing, they are doing nothing, they are probably either bored, frustrated, unhappy, disillusioned, or unfulfilled.
- God wants His church to be increasingly able to minister His life to the dying world. The sheer immensity of the task necessitates the practice of delegation, even in a local church context. He therefore wants His leaders, clearly and simply to communicate the principles of the Kingdom of God and ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit to those reliable people they lead, so that they too can minister in faith/truth/power (2 Timothy 2:2). The more Christians who are trained to minister effectively, the more people who will be reached /helped/blessed/etc. God's leaders, therefore, need to learn how to discern who these spiritually reliable people are, and be so able to teach /disciple these people, that they in turn are able to pass this information on to other spiritually people. This

progression is the main way that God has chosen to accomplish His work on earth; and, in effect, it is a practising of the art of delegation. Remember, these truths/principles need to be taught by faith and received in faith for them to be effective (rote learning is not sufficient). If there is a failure to develop ministries within any local expressions of the body of Christ, the result will be stagnation, frustration and unrest. In fact, church leadership, which fails to delegate properly, will be limited by the capacities of those in leadership. For example, a pastor (who is leading on his own) who can care for 60 people, will never have church much larger than 60 (even though he may long for this), if he does not allow other ministries to be recognized/enabled to function, because he will be restricting the church to his capacity alone. Leaders will always be able to accomplish far more by wise delegation, than ever they could achieve by trying to do everything themselves.

- There are people who, if trained, could do the job better than the leaders who are doing them at present. This would then release the existing leaders to be on and do other work in other areas or enable them to have other people to share their work/ministry responsibility. Remember., never quench the fire in a zealous Christian. While they are motivated, they will do much to improve themselves. Putting a lid on them or holding them up for too long (unnecessarily) will only cause them to get frustrated and leave the church/organization or eventually to lose their motivation (and therefore settle for doing something less than they should be doing for God). Remember also that people who are always having things done for them, will never learn to do the things for themselves and consequently they will never be able to do things for other people.
- A leader's load is lighter and they can concentrate their efforts on doing the important things, instead of rushing around trying to complete a never-ending list of urgent tasks.
- The people to whom a task is delegated will be better able to empathize and, therefore, support their leadership (at least in part), because they will be helping to bear/carry part of their leaders' burden. They will also often be enabled to grow spiritually and in confidence, because of the challenges/stretching/stimulation involved in carrying out the delegated task. Many people will not grow in faith/ability/power or realize their potential in God unless they are given tasks which stretch them and which force them to go beyond their own natural abilities (i.e. this will bring out the best in the people and save them from a life of mediocrity –e.g. Paul encouraging Timothy). Leaders need to discern correctly the people who need to be stretched, because trying this approach on the wrong people could cause those people to be devastated/crushed.
- Leaders who delegate can enjoy many different types of jobs or new avenues of work, because they will have made more room and time for themselves by delegating some of their responsibility in certain areas. In fact, delegation will usually have to take place if a leader wants to take on new responsibilities, develop any needed skills, or take on new challenges. Leaders who delegate will also be far more efficient/effective in the leadership/work that they undertake.
- When delegation is not practised by church / organization, everything will tend to come to stand still i.e. progress will not be made and the best possible result is maintenance of the present position. This is because the leaders who ought to be good looking to God and to the future are bogged down by administration/practicality/etc. Jobs done, are done hurriedly (and often not very well), due to insufficient time given to them (especially to preparation) everything has to be done immediately (or yesterday!), due to the fact that yet another job's deadline has been reached (this often causes the important tasks to be forgotten in favour of the urgent tasks); and it results in potential leaders failing to develop.

Reasons Why God's Leaders Will Not Delegate

- They fear that another person may not be able to do a job better than they could and so show them up (i.e. pride). Others fear that they will not be needed as much as so lose favour with the people or even lose their job (i.e. be displaced). Leaders must never fall into the trap of being too proud of their busyness and the pace at which they work to pass on some of their tasks to other people, and they must never believe that they are indispensable.

- They may so enjoy doing a certain job that they are reluctant to delegate it to someone else (especially if the person is going to do the job differently).
- They do not want to admit their own limitations/weakness to themselves or to other people. Leaders will often try to hide inadequacy in a certain area, even though it may be painfully obvious to other people. They will also not want their subordinates to know that they do not know as much about something as they do. Not many people find it effortless to admit that they cannot do something. Delegation to such people is an admission that they cannot cope in some area or that they cannot handle the magnitude of their job.
- They fear that another person may do the job wrongly or worse than they could, and so hinder goal achievement or decrease team effectiveness; or they may believe that they cannot wait for the length of time necessary for a person to learn how to do effectively (i.e. for the person to grow sufficiently in experience and confidence to do a job well).
- They believe that God has called them alone to carry out all the Church/ organization's work. This may be because of the traditional position of their denomination; they do not want to share their position / prestige with anyone else; they do not want to lose control of their congregation / group; or they do not want to lose control of their church/organization. They genuinely believe that they are acting faithfully towards their congregation/group; or they do not want anyone else to get the credit for work achieved (this usually happens because the leader needs to be constantly reassured as to their own importance).
- They may believe that special features of their work preclude the practising of delegation.
- They are unable to train a person sufficiently to enable them to take up a delegated role. This problem often arises when the leaders doubt their ability to train someone to do a job their way. Unfortunately, often how a job is done is far more important to a leader than whether the job is done (this is a valid consideration only when something may be done in an ungodly way). Other leaders are simply too lazy to take extra load (i.e. spending the time and the giving of themselves) involved in giving the necessary training to other people to enable them to take up another task/ job. They think that it is easier to do it themselves (and it probably is, in the short term).
- They have such a disorganized system that they are not sure if they need to delegate any tasks or take on any more team members, because they do not know what they need or want.
- They only have a loose idea of what everybody on the team is supposed to be doing and therefore, they think a job is covered when in reality it is not.
- They have created such a fear/dislike for responsibility in their church/organization that no one would take up the role even if it was offered to them i.e. they do want the cost, commitment or criticism that accompanies the role.
- They so lack confidence in the people they lead that they would not trust them to take on any responsibility task within the church / organization. Too many leaders have been put off delegation because of the failure of other people to respond/complete the tasks that they set them. These leaders need to learn how to delegate properly so that they enable a person to carry out the delegated task effectively. Note, the more insecure a leader is, the more they will tend to look with disdain upon the capacity of the people around them (this is usually because doing this makes them look bigger and better). This type of leader surrounds themselves with 'lesser lights' in order to make themselves seem brighter. On the other hand, leaders with an ego problem or a superior attitude tend to never find anybody good enough to delegate a task to; or they want to remain on the top so much that they severely restrict subordinated abilities and freedom to act.
- They believe that they do not have the time to delegate properly (unfortunately, the longer they put off delegating, the less time they will have!).
- They are ignorant of the concept of delegation (and often also of the whole administrative process); or they have seen it done badly/incorrectly so many times that it has put them off practicing delegation.

- They are afraid of changing the way have always done it in the church / organization; or they are afraid of unknown and they do not want to have to learn a new skill/concept/etc.
- They are afraid that the people they lead will interpret delegation as work avoidance. The truth is that it is a leader's job to stand back and view the whole picture within a church / organization and try to put the right jobs, so that their church / organization can do what it is supposed to do in God.

Remember, if God has called you to be leader, then He has also given you the ability: to get wisdom you need to delegate effectively (James 1:5-8); and to overcome any fear/jealously/lack of confidence (which are usually ultimately sourced in the enemy) which prevents you from practising delegation (2 Timothy 1:7).

How to delegate:

There are basically four steps in the process of delegation i.e. planning, delegation, training and reviewing.

i) Planning

This part of process of delegation is deciding what tasks / jobs need to be delegated. This needs to be done with care and deliberation. Remember, to delegate some of the leaders job would be wrong. Therefore, it is important to decide which jobs can be delegated and which ones a leader should do themselves (leaders should never dodge / avoid their responsibility). There is vast difference between delegation and passing on unpleasant tasks to other people. A check you can use to make sure that you are not doing this is ask yourself if you are delegating for your personal convenience, or because it will be for the good of the church/organization/person to whom you are delegating the task?

As we have seen, a job description should be written for any long-term task (e.g. leadership of a group etc.). In fact, even for short term or one-off tasks/jobs, the delegate should be given a clear idea of what those tasks/jobs entail (e.g. goals, size and time length of task, etc). Planning involves: prayerfully deciding/selecting to whom you will delegate the task (i.e. matching the person to the job); what training the person will need in order to do the task/job; who will train / encourage / help / be directly responsible for those to whom you delegate the task; and how you will do the delegating. Remember, sometimes leaders will have to take a calculated risk with a person when delegating but failure to do so could result in the church/ organization failing to be effective / fruitful or move forward in God.

(ii) Delegating

This is the actual giving of the job to the prayerfully chosen person. The leaders who are doing the delegation should at least include those leaders to whom the person will be directly responsible. These leaders need to make it clear what the job involves (i.e. give a clear job description which explains even the smallest of details necessary to do the job, because no one can be expected to function acceptably if they do not clearly understand what their job entails). Before the person is asked to commit themselves, makes sure the job description is not too broad (because this causes confusion about what is expected to the discouraging to be given the responsibility for a task job without guidance as to how to carry it out). The job requirements/details/ etc need to be given in an affirming at atmosphere and no pressure should be applied to the person to force them to take on something they do not really want to do. Having an unwilling person doing a job usually ends up in difficulty or failure. The person also needs to be helped to fit/integrate into the new task/job that they are taking on (it is especially important to put the right complementary people together to do the work). Once the person knows what the job involves (and has prayed to make sure it is what God wants them to do) and they accept the task/job, the leader should encourage the person and express their confidence that the person will be able to do the job i.e. motivate, inspire (with the leadership's God-given vision and goals) and affirm the person. It is a leaders job to draw the person into the task and to build them up in a godly way so that they will want to do the task. Leaders should also encourage the delegated to

set high but reasonable, standards which glorify God by telling them what (in their opinion) constitutes a job well done, and they should help the person to avoid/ prepare for any problems or difficulties that they may encounter in their job.

(iii) Training

The type of training necessary for the job needs to be decided in the planning stage and at least some of the training of the delegatee (the person to whom the job is delegated) should be carried out before they take up the task job. Some people will have already received adequate training (e.g. in a similar job) and so will not require anything in this area more than orientation, familiarization with the new task job situation. Most people also benefit from on the job training i.e. training after they have started the task job. This can be both practical, working alongside and formal training. Leadership should make it as easy as they can for those to whom they delegate responsibility. This may involve trying to cut down the size of the task or doing the job with the delegatee (or getting another experienced person to do this) especially when the delegatee is first starting out (i.e. to show them how the job is done.) Remember leaders should be seeking to reproduce the life of Christ that is in them in other people (they therefore need to be and set a good, Christ like example). Leaders should never allow cause a work to fall apart collapse, because they built it around themselves. Leaders should also never keep learned knowledge to themselves (even if it did take them many painful years to learn it). Especially when that knowledge is going to be helpful to the person to whom they are delegating a task. Knowledge is only effectively put to work when it is shared.

(iv) Reviewing

Once a person has been delegated a task leadership should not forget them, i.e. there needs to be an ongoing process of discreet review. Leaders should plan a feedback process at the planning stage of delegation. Of course, this will have to remain flexible due to the variety of circumstance that can arise, but the concept of review or feedback needs to be planned for in advance. The following are some important principles of the review phase of delegation.

- Leaders who are responsible for people to whom task jobs have been delegated should remain available to those people. They should be ready to encourage correct motivate inspire as the person needs, and the only way to know what a person needs is to be watchful. Review needs to include the giving of praise and credit where this is due especially when a task is successfully completed. Failure to do this can lead to severe loss of motivation self confidence on the part of the delegatee. In fact, leader should do everything they possibly can to enable the delegatee to succeed.
- Leaders need to remember that everyone fails or makes mistakes at times and therefore they should decide in advance, what they are going to do in such circumstances. Leaders should not their back on mistakes, but find out what went wrong and why and then help the person to learn from the mistake. The leadership should also help to build up the person's confidence again (rather than pulling them down and rubbing their noses in it). Failures/ mistakes can make a person teachable and open a leaders help / correction. Advance preparation for mistakes (where possible) does help because it can help prevent leaders from over reacting to those mistakes. Note though that a person who repeatedly makes mistakes is either doing the wrong job or the leadership has not delegated explained the task adequately (and this needs to be corrected)
- Leaders need to know whether the task, which has been delegated, has been done and they will not know this unless some review procedure is established. They should ask the delegatee to report to them once they have done a task especially when first starting a job (leaders can also answer questions, help overcome difficulties, encourage etc, during these reporting sessions). If the delegatee does not get in touch with the leadership then the leadership needs to go to the person. Remember leaders

may have delegated the task but they are still responsible accountable before God for that task.

- Leadership need to make sure that they support and stand by any good decisions made by those people to whom they have delegated responsibility (especially if the person was only recently appointed) because these will always be people who will resist criticize any change (especially if it was brought in by newly appointed leadership).
- The review procedure can help to prevent protect against satanic attack, because the more experienced leader can show the delegatee where the enemy can is getting in when delegating a task (especially positions of considerable responsibility), it is wise to help the person a lot at the beginning (even do the job with the person). Later it is important to give the person an increasingly free hand i.e. let them eventually do the job on their own with only review feedback retained. There is no point selecting good people to do jobs if leaders then refuse to give them a free hand to get on and do it. Leaders will never know if a person is even capable of doing a job if they keep interfering meddling as the person tries to do the job.
- After delegating task, leaders need to build in controls which will enable them to spot anticipate difficulties problems and deal with them before they do too much damage. Built in regular reporting sessions are the best way to do this.
- Leaders need to make sure that the delegatee know that such a review does not mean the leadership lacks confidence in them but it simply is a method of helping and encouraging them to do their best for God and the team. Remember leaders should only want the best for those they lead.
- Review also enables progress to be recognized affirmed and commended difficulty to be assessed and it helps leaders to see how goal achievement is coming along.

Principles of Delegation

The only way a church can avoid having many ups and downs in its operation is to spread its work load over as broad a base as possible (without compromising Gods will). This will mean that leaders will have to institute a second level of leadership ministry and thus enable the full range of gifting necessary for the effective functioning of any church to be released /released. No one leader can hope to avoid variable church effectiveness (i.e. frequent ups and downs according to their mood / work/ load etc.). Also a broad base leadership in which tasks are delegated to those called / anointed /able to do them enables a church to have an operation that will cover the full range of ministries necessary for that church to function effectively and grow. To concentrate on just one (or a few) types of ministry (because these are the areas in which a church / organizations leadership is gifted) at the expenses of all the other areas of ministry, will cause a church to fail to meet its members needs and therefore it will ultimately fail (usually such a church stays small / ineffective and is always looking for excuses to explain why this is the case).

Delegation starts with leadership. It occurs as a leaders shares out his responsibilities / tasks to other people. Leaders who fail to do this will place a constriction on their own work and spiritual growth. Leaders who delegate need to grow spiritually sometimes just to keep up with those to whom they have delegated responsibility. Leaders should also be willing to let those they lead advanced beyond them in power and effectiveness because they are working for the Kingdom of God and not their own little empire. Leaders, who do not delegate, often fail to grow because they do not have to (i.e. they can keep things going on their own). However alone they can do no more for God. Often such a leader is the main factor limiting the growth a church / organizations would like to see (this is because this leader is operating at their capacity and they are refusing to allow other people to come in and thereby broaden the church / organizations capacity). As an individual develop in God through the nurture /

encouragement / training of the leadership there will be a distinct growth in the church / organizations in the areas in which this person is gifted and the whole body will therefore be blessed helped and enabled to grow.

Delegation should be looked upon as an investment in the future. Immediately after delegating a task, leaders often have to devote more of their attention and expend more of themselves and their time to enable a delegatee to succeed and it would probably be easier to do the job themselves. However in the long term after checking / reviewing / correcting / etc has been carried out for a time the result is a person who can do a job without much supervision thus freeing leaders to do other perhaps more important tasks. This investment may take some time with some people (and this can lead to discouragement / frustration) but delegation should never be discarded for this reason (eventually it will yield fruit as long as the art of delegation is practised correctly).

Never off load task / authority onto other people who are unable to bear it. Over stretching a less talented person is just as bad as trying to suppress a talented one. Leaders need to be able to discern limitations as well as abilities/ strengths.

Never delegate a task to another person which has already been delegated to someone else (perhaps in their job description.) if this is necessary, then make sure you have the support and consent of the person who originally was given the job because otherwise that person will have their confidence / position severely undermined.

When authority or a task is delegated to another person, it is necessary to provide that person with whatever training is needed to enable the person to function effectively. No leader should expect a person to achieve a high level of performance without adequate training (when this is needed). However once the person has been adequately equipped/ trained the leadership should expect a good performance from those to whom responsibility has been delegated.

Delegate according to the result that you want achieved and do not insist on the methodology the person must use to achieve those results. Often the delegatee will do things quite differently from the way a leader would for them, but they will still achieve the same result in the end. Of course, it must be remembered that the end does not justify the means in the Kingdom of God.

The person attempting to delegate a task should clearly be known to have the authority / right to do so. This requires that all team members know the organizational hierarchy of their team and to whom they are responsible within that hierarchy.

Leaders should always give sound reason to people for their delegation of responsibility to them. Unless they do this will be in danger of starting another institution / tradition based around them and their beliefs.

When a task is delegated an appropriate measure of authority needs to be delegated / entrusted with it to enable the person to carry out that task effectively i.e. should be given the power / authority to initiate and carry out anything necessary to complete the task successfully. Of course leadership should still exercise some control / direction but they should not interfere too much. The person should be allowed to seek God for the anointing/ methodology necessary to enable them effectively to complete the task that was delegated to them.

It is God who ultimately runs His Church, and He will be preparing people to take up leadership and carry out any task that needs to be delegated (unless the work of that church / organization is finished). Leaders should, therefore, never despair of finding a worthy replacement in God for themselves; and churches/ organizations should never be shaken / dismayed by changes in human leadership. Remember, Jesus Christ is the Chief leader of the church and He has the ultimate control.

Properly administered delegation should focus attention on the achievement of team goals, rather than be concerned with the maintenance of authority or power by the leadership. Autocratic or domineering leaders are, therefore, usually poor in the area of delegation.

When a task/job is delegated, the leadership should allow the people to do their job and not be continually interfering i.e. the person needs to be given some room to move / breath (and even make mistakes). Of course, the leadership should still exercise some control and give some direction to the delegated person, but they should never try to do the job for the person (except perhaps when the person is training).

Those people to whom a task is delegated should be like-minded with their leader/s, i.e. they should agree with their basic goals and objectives. They should also be loyal and faithful to their leaders and, like any servant of God, be holy, righteous and willing to give 100% of themselves to whatever they are doing for God.

Sometimes, leaders need to express a confidence and trust in a person by delegating a task to them that the person may not feel capable of doing (i.e. because they do not have confidence in themselves). At times, they will have to make such a decision with no real evidence that the person has what it takes to do a job, i.e. they just know it is right in God and that the person has unrealized potential.

No one can really be set free to minister in a certain area, unless the person /people already ministering in that area stop or make sufficient room.

Home things go when a leader is not there is the best indication of the wisdom and effectiveness of any delegation carried out by that leader.

Delegating the responsibility of leadership to a potential leader on a trail /temporary basis can be a very good way to assess whether the person is ready for leadership. The leadership should only do this when they sense the person is ready (some people swim when they are thrown in at the deep end, and others drown!). Any leadership needs to provide opportunities /situations to enable the development of their people. If the leaders continually take on all the demanding situations, their people will not grow /develop faith and authority beyond their present experience. In fact, faith and authority only grow when exercised. Remember, many people do not find out what their ministry is until they have had a go at a number of different things. When a person does discover their place of ministry, their leaders should encourage them to stick at it until God moves then on to something different.

Leaders should encourage and affirm (when possible) those to whom they have delegated responsibility. At times, this will have to be done in faith. Encouragement given at the right time also makes it easier for the person to receive (and act upon) any correction that is necessary. Remember, encouragement usually leads to more effective service and not to pride.

Delegates need to be free to make some mistakes (with leadership only trying to help them not to). Leadership should never put too much pressure on a person to succeed, especially when they first start a job (and therefore are still learning the ropes). However, leadership should regularly review their delegates, especially those new to a job. People learn by their mistakes, especially if someone tells them where they went wrong and how they can improve (most people quickly respond to correction and help lovingly given).

If things go wrong when leadership delegates a task to a person, the leadership should stick by the person and see time through any difficulty. In fact, delegates should be utterly sure of their leader's support in any action they feel is necessary to complete a task effectively. No matter what the result, as long as that person has acted within their job description (this is assuming that their area of responsibility has been as clearly defined – in writing –as it should have been, so that no misunderstanding can occur). After all, if something goes wrong, it is as much the leadership's fault as it is the person's (i.e. wrong person placed in the wrong job; inadequate training provided; insufficient encouragement / correction; etc.)

When delegating a responsibility, make sure that you explain/communication /define the requirements/ scope/goals etc. of the job clearly, i.e. give them a clear job description and explain to the person everything necessary to effectively accomplish the delegated task. This

helps avoid misunderstanding, which can do severe harm to any team's unity and effectiveness. Generalization can cause the practice of delegation to be ineffective and even harmful to a team / church / organization. Also, make sure that the person is adequately trained in any area required by the job; show them how they fit into the organization structurally; and help them to get started (especially by expressing your confidence / trust in the person, because they may not really believe in themselves or their ability and, therefore, need this).

The effective leader will know that they have to start with what a person can do for God, rather than with what the job that is unfilled requires. Leaders also need to make sure that they get the right person for the right job.

Leadership need to make sure the person to whom a job has been delegated realizes they are responsible/accountable to that leadership. In fact, delegation should have accountability built in, because leaders still have the ultimate responsibility of seeing that the job gets done. Delegation is not abdication of responsibility – it is more a sharing of the load and therefore, enabling leaders to get more done. If a job does not get done by the person to whom leaders to get more done. If a job does not get done by the person to whom leaders have delegated it, ultimately it is the leadership's fault. As one president said, 'The buck stops here!' i.e. with the leadership. A leader may delegate a task or responsibility, but they are ultimately accountable to their superiors for what they delegate to their subordinates. It is also important to establish lines of accountability and observation when delegating any task/job. Often people only do that for which/what they will be held accountable. Leaders, therefore need to keep a check on those to whom they have delegated tasks, and give correction / help / encouragement / concern / direction as it is required. Unfortunately, 'People do what we inspect, not what we expect.'

When delegating a task, it is important for leadership to take into account the person's character and personality type, and to encourage / correct / affirm etc. accordingly. Certain people need to be gently worked with, whereas others require a more firm hand in order to bring the best out of them.

Many Christians have exaggerated ideas of their abilities. Never let a person take on more than you can perceive they are gifted / able to take on. There is often a discrepancy between what they are able to do and what they would like to do! Some helpful questions to ask yourself to make sure that a person is able to have a task delegated to them include. Is the person sufficiently trained and capable to understand the job? Does the person really want the job (many people accept jobs because they fear the consequences of turning them down)? Will the rest of the team / leadership / congregation accept the person in that job?

Delegation in the Local Church

Far too many churches function like a football team – eleven exhausted staff members on the playing field, and the grandstand filled with cheering, but under exercised church members.'

In the mainly volunteer / unpaid work of a local church, many section leaders are required in order to carry out the necessary functions/activities. These leaders require a delegated authority to function effectively, and they in turn should delegate some of their activities to those they lead. In this way, all of the necessary tasks/ activities of the church are spread around and the load/pressure is shared by many people, instead of just a few.

GRACE AND ANOINTING – Both are needed

The grace of God opens the way and the anointing of God gives us the ability to fulfill God's will.

In this study we will study the grace and anointing of God and what they mean to us as believers. It is not the here do an exhaustive study on these themes, but rather to give us, as leaders, an insight into the importance of these concepts. We cannot do anything for God unless we have experienced His grace and we know and operate in His anointing. In fact, grace and anointing go hand-in-hand, because they are both things which are sourced in God and have little to do with our effort. These two themes reveal just how dependent on God we really are as Christians and especially as Christian leaders.

What is the Grace of God?

The grace of God is almost entirely a New Testament concept. In the New Testament, the word 'grace' is translated from the Greek word 'charis'. In general terms, this word means: 'that which bestows or occasions, pleasure, delight or causes favorable regard: a friendly disposition from which a kindly act proceeds; a sense of favour bestowed; or a feeling of gratitude'.

The grace of God means far more than this. It is God being God. It is the bestowal by God the Father of His mercy and undeserved favour into our lives. It is God helping the undeserving and pardoning the unpardonable. The grace of God is the visible expression of God's power in action. God, who is compassionate, merciful and loving, is responding to our cries to Him, not because we merit help, but because He recognizes our desperate need and love moves Him to exercise His power to meet that need. It is God's riches at Christ's expense, because it is God's free action, based on the sacrifice of Jesus and motivated by love, to redeem and make righteous all who believe in Him.

The grace of God is sourced both in God the Father and in his Son, Jesus (Romans 5:15; 2 Corinthians 1:12; Galatians 1:3,6; 2 Thessalonians 1:12). It is the difference between human attempts to win God's favour, and the way in which a personal relationship with God is actually established and developed. It is rejecting any confidence we may have in ourselves, who are sinful and incapable of pleasing God on our own, and entrusting ourselves totally to God, who in Jesus, has enabled us to be truly righteous people who can experience God's unlimited power (1 Corinthians 15:10).

The marks of God's grace

The grace of God:

- Releases us from the dominion of sin, satan and the law (Romans 6:1-14; Ephesians 2:1-5).
- Provides the way of our salvation, because god has acted in Jesus to bring us redemption, forgiveness and a new life through His atoning sacrifice on the cross, despite our being undeserving sinners (Romans 3:21- 26; Romans 5:15-21).
- Is equally shown to all (Matthew 20:1-16).
- Requires us to act mercifully (Matthew 18:21-35).
- Will always be available to us, whatever our response is to God (Luke 15:11-32)
- Is not dependent on our works, way of life, religion, struggle, self-sacrifice, or goodness (Galatians 5:4; Romans 11:5;6).
- Allows to come to God confidently and find whatever help we need in our times of need (Hebrews 4:16).
- Is always sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- Does not start with us. It starts with God! It is not earned or merited – it is freely and loving given to us by God (Ephesians 2:8-10).

- Enables us to operate in the different gifts and callings of God (Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:7-13; 1 Corinthians 12-7-11).

Grace and Gift

When we are saved by grace, we become eligible for the gifts and call of God. In fact, the seed of what God wants us to be will often be planted in us at conversion i.e. the grace for our faith and salvation has written within it the embryo of the call of God for our lives. God is no respecter of persons, when He distributes the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:4).

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." (Rom. 12: 6)

"But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it." (Eph. 4: 7).

The Greek word 'gift' is 'charisma', as we have seen, means 'grace' and 'ma' means 'thing'. Therefore, the New Testament word translated 'gift' really means 'thing of grace'. In other words, when the Scriptures talk about spiritual gifts, they are talking about an expression or manifestation of the grace of God in our lives. The 'charismata' (the plural of 'charisma') are gifts of the Holy Spirit to the whole body of Christ and are available to every member of that body. These 'body-gifts' are manifested through the lives of specific individuals and they contribute to the up building and

harmony of the body of Christ, the church. These gifts seem to be made available by the Holy Spirit according to the need of the moment in the body and are given for the common good just as He determines (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11). They only operate occasionally and carry their authority within themselves, i.e. the person who is being used to manifest the gift is given the authority to do so in an immediate and transient way.

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others: faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)

Every Christian needs to be open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives and learn how to operate in the power and authority of these gifts. A spiritual gift can carry with it a tremendous level of authority into the lives of other people, because in this gift they perceive the grace of God and they submit to that grace.

The Out-working of Grace

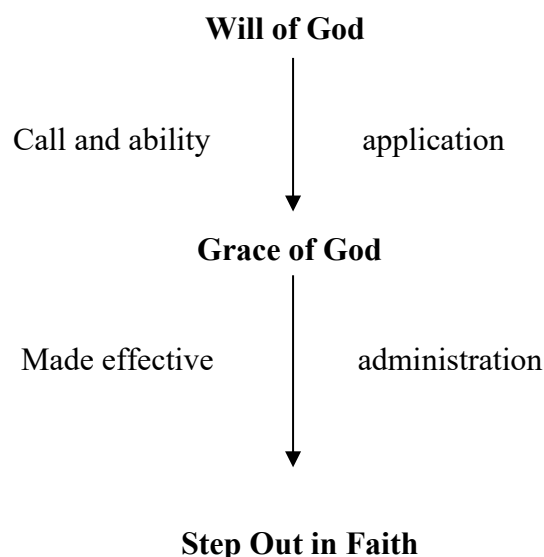
The grace of God is the foundation of our life and service for Him. As Christians, we all have a particular call or gifting which is, ours through our heavenly Father’s choice and this is the grace of God specifically for us. Our calling by God to our work and service for Him, is an expression of the heart of God and, as such, carries with it the very hallmark of heaven. It is something to be prized and valued and we should be concerned to work it out in the most effective way possible.

We need constantly to polish this call or gifting of God and use it to its greatest potential for the good of others (2 Timothy 1:6).

This grace (call or gift) of God should be the motivating power for our whole life and work. We are saved by grace and called into grace. Grace is more than particular gifts of the Spirit, it is more like than hand of God coming upon someone’s life to single them out for a particular work or area of ministry. The gifting no doubt comes with the grace God has given us, but this grace is a deep and powerful reality in the lives of those who know its calling.

As Christians, we should all be controlled and directed by the grace which God has given to us. We receive God’s grace living in His will. This grace then gives us the potential to carry out the will of God. The grace of God, however, is only made effective when we move forward in faith and actually respond to the will of God in the appropriate way. In other words, we first need to know God’s will, we then need to receive the grace of God for that will to be accomplished, and finally we need to step out in practical ways in order for the will of God to be achieved.

For a graphic illustration see diagram below.



Something that started with God can now be out-worked by a human being, because of the grace of God. The grace of God is almost tangible. It could be likened to a staff that can be lifted up to do the will of God.

We see God's grace by its effect as we live out our lives. This, for the apostle Paul, was one of the chief motivating power of everything he did. He knew what the grace of God was. He and others had identified the grace of God within his life (Romans 15:15-16; Galatians 2:9).

"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. (1 Corinthians 15:10).

"I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given to me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches in Christ." (Ephesians 3:7-8)

Fruitfulness and effectiveness are real signs that we are living in the grace of God. God's grace is always effective and it produces fruit in us and in the lives of those to whom we minister (John 15:1-16). They are proofs that we are called and gifted by God.

What is God's Anointing?

The main Hebrew word translated 'anoint' in the Bible's '*masah*' (or '*mashach*') which means: 'to apply oil by smearing, pouring or spreading'. The Hebrew word '*masiah*', transliterated 'messiah', means 'anointed one' and it seems to be derived from this word.

In Old Testament times, the anointing of God was often symbolized by pouring oil into the person. This sacred use of oil was for anointing things or people in order to consecrate them to God (Genesis 28:18; Exodus 29:1-9). It was a symbol of the setting apart (i.e. consecration) of people with divinely imparted qualifications to be priests (Exodus 29:1-9; Exodus 28:41); kings (1 Samuel 10:1); and prophets (1 Kings 19:16). Once anointed with oil, these people were considered chosen and set apart for special respect by God and to carry out His appointed services as His leaders. This anointing was for a specific function or reason, but it could change as can be seen by the three anointings of King David (1 Samuel 16:13; II Samuel 2:4; 2 Samuel 5:3).

The two main Greek words translated as 'anoint' in the New Testament of the Bible are '*aleipho*' which was a general term for anointing of any kind; and '*chrrio*' (or '*chrisma*' – corresponding noun) which is more limited in its usage, because it is confined to sacred or symbolic anointings. Both words simply mean the rubbing or spreading of oil, perfume or ointment. The title 'Christ' uses the second word and it means 'The anointed One'.

The New Testament does not talk about using physical anointing with oil in worship or to consecrate people for leadership, although the elders are encouraged to anoint sick people with olive oil when praying over them in the name of Jesus (James 5:14). The New Testament does however, speak of a spiritual anointing. By it, God consecrates all believers to Himself and empowers them to serve Him by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27).

The early church may not have anointed people physically with oil to set them apart for different leadership roles in the church, but they did lay hands on them to do this. It could be said that the laying on of hands in the New Testament replaced anointing with oil used in the Old Testament, because they both symbolically represent the impartation of the anointing of God and a consecration of the people to Him.

'Taking all these facts into account, the anointing of God can be defined as God pouring His Holy Spirit onto and into our lives as we consecrate them to Him, enabling us to serve Him with His power and so impart His life into the lives of those with whom we come into contact.'

The Importance of God's Anointing

A leader in God's church, without His anointing, will be unable to produce any lasting fruit for His Kingdom. It is only the anointing of God that can produce true life. It is only as God's leaders move with the anointing they have received from Him that they can do what He asks them to do. After all,

it is only the changes the Holy Spirit works into the lives of those we lead that will last. Therefore, the most important aspect of any leader's ministry is not how they look or what they know, but well they can flow with the anointing of God that is on their lives.

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

The anointing of the Holy Spirit, rather than natural personality, ability, eloquence, training, or gifting is the source of true effectiveness for God. This anointing of God gives power to our work, authority to our words, freshness to our presentation, and relevancy to our actions. This anointing an essential, indispensable prerequisite for all God's leaders (Zechariah 4:6). When the early church needed people to wait on tables, they looked for people who were full of the Spirit and wisdom in order to meet the need (Acts 6:1-6). Leaders such as this have an abundance that makes them a source of supply to other people.

The Source of God's Anointing

The anointing of God is birthed in humility and released through brokenness. God wants to deal with His leaders deeply. This will involve us going through times of testing and difficulty; but the end result will be lives that are truly humble and broken before God. It is lives like this, in which Jesus is Lord of every part that God can anoint with His Holy Spirit. In such lives, there is less of us and more of Him. These people live holy lives before God, because they do not want to do anything that will dishonour Him who has done so much for them. They will obey God, because they know Him, they know how much He loves them and they understand that He wants only the best for them. It is upon such people that God can pour out His anointing, because the anointing will not remain just with them, but will enable and empower them to achieve God's will. These people depend on God's anointing and will not intentionally do anything that may cause it to be lost. They live to do the will of God and be His witnesses in the world, and they know that if they lose His anointing, this will not be possible (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit only anoints those whom God has chosen, in His time. We need to wait for God's anointing before we step out into any form of ministry and so, in a sense, let the anointing lead us. We will then be functioning in ministry in the Lord's timing and we will be letting Him, and not the pressure of circumstances or the pressure from other people, lead us. If we do this, we will not need to be limited to things we have prepared or planned, because we will be open to God and be ready to move in the direction His anointing is leading us.

The anointing of God comes upon a person who is totally submitted to the authority of God. In fact, our anointing flows out of our relationship with God and the call He has placed on our lives. God will not anoint something He has not initiated, so if we want to know the anointing of God, we must stay inside His call on our lives. This is just as true in the general sense of our call as it is with the specific details of how we out-work that call. We need God's specific anointing on each aspect of our work for Him.

A leader's anointing must be renewed continually (Ephesians 5:18). It is a wise practice to seek the Lord on a daily basis for His anointing. As God's leaders, we need this fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit in order to equip us and empower us for the work God had set aside for us to for Him each day.

Releasing God's Anointing

When we know the Holy Spirit anointing, we need to recognize how it operates. We need to learn how to flow with it and never to try and force or train it. We also need to know how to recover our anointing. For much of our life, we will not be functioning actively in our anointing. In a sense, it is lying dormant within us (e.g. when we sleep, relax, eat, etc) waiting for the times it needs to be released. We do, however, always need to stay available to God and open to Him, and we need to know how to tap into our anointing when we need it. This is not waking it up, because God will make it available to us at the right time, but rather it is waking us up to it and making ourselves available to it. The best way to do this is to wait on God and begin to learn the keys in ourselves that will

release us to the anointing of the Holy Spirit within us. These keys will be different for different people and will vary even for the same person, i.e. it is not a formula – it is being sensitive to God and His way at any particular time.

Some keys people have found to be effective include: praise and worship (especially certain songs which God has inspired to you), praying to God, meditation on God (especially His past faithfulness), being prayed for by people you trust, receiving a specific ‘word’ from God for you or for the situation into which you are about to minister, being still and silent before God and waiting on Him (especially when there is a real sense of His presence), reading appropriate parts of God’s Word, etc. There are probably many other ways of making ourselves available to the anointing of God. The right thing to do is to discover what works for you, making sure you never resort to a rigid formula into which the Holy Spirit has no chance of breaking.

It is very important that you wait on God in this way before any time of ministry. This will help you to tune into God and enable you to flow with His anointing. It must be noted, however that as God’s leaders, we should live with these keys as part of our life-style and always be open to being used by Him. It is not right to live a selfish life most of the time and then come to God and ask for His anointing only when we need to do something as part of our role as a leader.

Increasing our Anointing

A leader’s anointing is only increased as they:

- Prove faithful in the small things God asks them to do for Him, i.e. they discover what God wants them to do and they get on with it.
- Give sacrificially of themselves and their possessions to God. This anointing of God costs every leader something, and the deeper we go with Him, the more He will ask us to give up.
- Get to know more of God by entering into His presence more frequently and entering more deeply into the ministry of prayer and worship of God. After all, the anointing of God is sourced in God.
- Are broken before God and they become less allowing him to have more of them.
- Appreciate, guard and protect the Holy Spirits anointing which God has already made available to them thus showing Him that they know the value of this precious gift from Him.

We Still Need to Prepare

The anointing of God does not negate the need for us to prepare both our life and our material. There are no short cuts to becoming a craftsman of the Word of God. It requires discipline study diligence hard work and application as well as the ability to run with the anointing of God. Too many preachers today have heard great preachers say they have got the message they have preached the hour before the meeting or some similar thing. This is probably true but the thing many people forget is the many hours of study of God’s Word and the years of life preparation these people have been through. The anointing of God is only part of the equation for effectiveness as a leader in God’s church. Of course, there are many who preach in the church without relaying on the anointing of God leaning instead on their preparation. This also is wrong. We need to get the right balance between these two important aspects of Christian ministry and this balance will vary according to the situation our maturity in Christ our level of knowledge and learning the type of leader we are our experience and what god to do in the situation.

Fasting can also be part our preparation for ministry. Fasting the meal before we minister can help us to be more responsive to God s leading and his anointing because it tends to sharpen our spiritual awareness. Eating a big meal before any ministry has the opposite effect.

The Laying On of Hands to Receive Gods Anointing

All of Gods leaders should submit themselves to Him and to the church for the laying on of hands. This is for the identification and releasing of their ministry the impartation of spiritual gifts; the consecration of these people to the Lord and His work and the receiving of the anointing of God (Acts 6:6; Acts 13:2-3; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6). Leaders who have hands laid on them to set them apart or a particular work for God also often receive a prophetic word that is foundational for their work.

The laying on of hands should not be done on the basis of random selection but in response to seeing the hands of God at work in a persons life in a certain way i.e. God is seen to be setting the person aside for a certain work and the laying on of hands is among other things a way of affirming this publicly.

It must be remembered that although only anointed leaders in a church should lay hands on those who are being raised up into leadership the anointing does not come from the leaders but from God. The people on whom hands are laid will not automatically receive Gods anointing but must look to the Lord in faith to receive it. To receive anything good from God requires faith.

The Scriptures urge us not to be too hasty in the laying on of hands, because to prematurely acclaim someone as a leader by this action can be dangerous both to the church and to the individual involved (1Timoth 5:22). This is why it is best to first see evidence that God is leading a person into a place of leadership before we set them apart to that work. It is also important that we only raise up a person in God's timing (1Timoth 3:6). It is serious matter to have someone whom God has not called in a position of leadership in his church.

Results of Gods Anointing

It enables and empowers us in our work for God (Acts 1:8; Matthew 3:16-17; Acts 10:38). In fact, without it, we would not be able to do the things God wants us to do as his leaders (2 Corinthians 3:4-6). If we tried, we would fall flat on our faces. It would be like trying to walk on water without Jesus. It must be noted however that the Holy Spirit never attempts leaders will at times be astonished by what they can accomplish for God when they function in his anointing. Without it, they could not do what God wanted them to do and so they would be impotent in the face of the needs He brought to their attention. There is little that is more frustrating than seeing a need we are unable to meet God leaders should therefore be careful not to do anything to hinder his anointing and they certainly should do nothing that will cause him to withdraw it. The thought of losing the anointing God has given to us should motivate us to continue to obey Him and live righteous lives that are pleasing to Him.

Things That Can Destroy Gods Anointing

Presuming on the anointing (1 kings 22:24). God wants His people to look to Him continually and never to presume that He will do as He has done in the past. We need to wait on God and make this our life-style. Even the Son of God, Jesus had to do this and we are to follow His example (1 John 2:6).

Sin. When we sin or give ourselves to the things of the world. God may still be able to work through us to some extent, but we will not be able to live in the full blessing and anointing of God.

Disunity, especially among a church's leaders. God can only command His blessing where there is unity (Psalm 133:1-3).

Unbelief. This makes God's anointing ineffective, because it is the opposite of faith and God can only work in response to faith (Mark 6:4-6).

Fear. Fear destroys our courage and renders us ineffective, if we let it dominate our lives, as it will seek to do. We need to fear God, but nothing else, especially not the opinions of other people (2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18).

Not living in our anointing. We can do this by denying our anointing and living as if it is not there. Here we, like the foolish Galatians, try to attain our goals by human effort (Galatians 3:3). God has assigned a work for us to do for Him and we will not be able to do it as He wants without His

anointing. In fact, every part of our life needs to be under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, because otherwise it will be lived in our human strength. If you cannot sense the anointing of God on a particular part of work, you probably should not be doing it! We need to fan into flame our gifts and anointing and live in the good of them – staying open and available to God of all times (2 Timothy 1:6).

By taking on things outside our anointing, even if they do ‘go with the job’. Instead of letting God’s anointing lead them, these people are doing things. He never intended them to do and, therefore, they are crowding out the things they should be doing for Him i.e. the things that He would anoint. Busyness can be very damaging to our anointing, if we are busy doing the wrong things. We need to find out what God wants us to do and devote ourselves singly and totally to these things.

By using a professional or secular approach to church leadership, instead of leading the church according to spiritual, Biblical principles. God can only move in power when we do His will in His way. Trying to do things, the way the world does them or using professionalism (which tends to glorify natural abilities) or gimmicks as a substitute for God’s anointing is doomed to fail.

Leading by following formulas learned from books or Bible colleges etc., instead of relying on God’s anointing. We need to rely on God, not on theories.

Spiritual lethargy (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15). This is being idle and not bothering to do what we know we should be doing in God. Some of the causes of this include disillusionment, frustration, disappointment, failure, defeat and laziness.

All talk and no power (1 Corinthians 2:4- 5; 1 Corinthians 4:20). Leaders who lead intellectually instead of from their spirit which is filled with God’s Holy Spirit, will not know God’s anointing and power and will tend to produce Christians with a lot of head knowledge, but little of God’s power in their lives.

Confusing position, and the authority this may carry, with anointing. Strong leaders can cause people to follow them simply by sheer force of personality. They know that many people want someone to rally to and to do all their thinking for them. Such leaders need to be broken before God and learn that effectiveness in God’s Kingdom is not counted in the numbers of people following us, but in how well we obey God and do His will. God wants people to be led into His life, and this can only happen if they follow leaders who have His anointing.

Confusing emotionalism with anointing. A good communicator will be able to elicit a tremendous emotional response from people, especially when they are speaking to a crowd. However, emotions wear off, and the people who have responded to an emotional appeal tend to revert quickly to what they were before. This type of leadership is no substitute for God’s anointing and tends to produce people who need emotionally charged meetings to keep their faith alive. When people meet with God’s anointing, they are meeting with God, and this will have the lasting impact on their lives that all leaders desire those they lead to have.

Relying on natural abilities or talents instead on God. This is living in the flesh rather than in the Spirit, and God cannot allow His anointing to rest upon the flesh. Our natural abilities and talents are not wrong in themselves, they just need to be consecrated to God so that He can anoint them. They will then be very effective tools in His service.

Tiredness. This can put us in a bad frame of mind and cause us to fail to tap into our anointing by waiting on God, who is the source of our refreshment and strength.

An ungodly atmosphere. When there is atmosphere of unbelief or oppression, the anointing of God will be hindered and people will be distracted from receiving from Him. We need to resist the enemy at such times and speak words of faith into the midst of the unbelief as the Lord so directs to us.

Illness. We need to come to the Lord and resist illness if this is getting in the way of us presenting the word of God to a group of people. Remember though, illness and weakness are not the same thing, because God works especially well through our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9- 10).

Aggravation. When we are angry or even irritated, we will find that we cannot minister effectively to other people. We need to resist the enemy, if he is encouraging this, and keep on guard against him to prevent him gaining a victory in our life. We also need to forgive anyone who may have wronged us, no matter how right we are (Mathew 6:14- 15).

Hurt, disappointment, failure and discouragement. All these things tend to cause us to lose confidence in ourselves and in what God can do through us. We need to come to God and increase our faith by meeting with Him, and hearing His word to us. We need to learn how to step over these difficulties and to always live in victory, so that we are available to God 24 hours a day.

Using the anointing for our own ends. If we seek to gain fame, power, wealth, position, respect etc. from our anointing, instead of giving all glory to God, we are in danger of not only losing our anointing, but also incurring God's wrath and severe judgment. We should never dishonour God by despoiling the anointing. He has given us in this way. We must also never glorify what the anointing enables us to achieve, more than we glorify God.

Believing it is unnecessary. Many Christians still believe that God only worked in power in the early church. They have relegated the working of the Holy Spirit largely to times past and they, therefore, do not look to Him for empowering and enabling today to God's work. Instead they battle on in their own strength, reason, expectations, intellect and ability and do the best they can. They have limited themselves to the known and have largely excluded faith in God and even God Himself. Instead, they have become religious, just like the Pharisees in the days of Jesus.

Fruit and result of the Holy Spirit Anointing

God never intended to suppress our human potential, but rather He seeks to enable it to be fully realized. The anointing of God enhances and extends our normal human capabilities and capacities if we consecrate them to Him, and it enables us to achieve far more as a human servant of God than we could do without it.

= It enables us to produce fruit that will last for God because we will be empowered to impart his life into the lives of those we lead (John 15:16). It is the anointing of God that enables a Christian to witness effectively, heal the sick, raise the dead, drive out demons, etc.

= It confirms that we have God's authority to carry out our ministry. When others and we see signs of the anointing of God on our lives, we know that He has delegated His authority to us and is confirming our ministry in the situation. This confirmation of our authority cannot be worked up or be sourced in human effort it can only come from God. In fact, authority can be thought of as the twin brother of anointing. One without the other is devastating. When people feel the flow of God's anointing they will be more willing to submit to our authority. If you have not got God's anointing you may as well give up trying to operate in a place of authority such as any from of church leadership.

= It reveals God's unfailing kindness and faithfulness to His anointed ones (psalm 18:50). God will not ask his people to do something for Him and then not make available to them everything they need in order to do that thing.

= It reveals the nature and the heart of God because He will only do what is consistent with His character and what He has revealed of it in His Word.

= It opens us more to God and to other people making us a more useful tool in His hands and enabling us to carry out the work of His kingdom more effectively.

= It enables us to rest in God to be truly free and to know His peace because we will be doing His work in His strength and power and not in our own. This takes much of the sweat hassle and striving

out of serving God. His yoke is easy and his burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30). With the anointing of God we as his leaders can gladly take up the responsibility, he has given to us.

= It brings with it sensitivity. When Gods anointed leaders flow with his anointing they will be more sensitive to the needs of their people thus enabling them to avoid being too heavy handed or crushing as they deal with them. They are also more conscious of Gods presence and the way he moves among his people and therefore they can see and do what Jesus would do in their situation. This can result in a prophetic sermon that speaks into the needs of the members of the church or the leading to pray for people for deliverance or healing, etc. God wants us to be sensitive to Him and his leading and for us his leaders to obey him as he prompts us by his Holy Spirit.

= It gives us the right to lead Gods people because it is the stamp of God's approval on our lives i.e. it qualifies and equips a person for effective leadership in Gods Kingdom.

= It teaches us the truth about all things and it teaches us to remain in Jesus Christ (1 John 2:20, 27).

= It enables us to see things as God sees them and to have His insight wisdom understanding and discernment. These things are not given to us for their own sake but to enable us to serve God more effectively.

= It brings us the joy of the Lord (Hebrews 1:9)

= As we, as leaders, function in our anointing it will enable those we lead to come into their anointing.

= The anointing of God brings the presence and power of God into any situation. We can even know Gods anointing in the seemingly mundane or routine tasks of life like eating a meal or talking with friends it takes all over activities out of the realm of the human and into the realm of God's Holy Spirit.

= When we are truly in the anointing of God it will draw us to God inspire us to do His will and encourage us to want to praise and worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). We will also only want to glorify God in all that we do and put Him first before anyone or anything.

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ONE'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

A leader's success in ministry depends heavily on the Holy Spirit's anointing on his life. Without God's anointing on a leader's ministry, it will not produce any lasting fruit for the kingdom of God. Without the spiritual quickening which only God can provide, a leader's ministry will be dead and lifeless. The external, professional look of a leader is not a primary issue, but the Spirit's ability to use his life to bring change into the lives and characters of others is a primary issue. As Paul said, "For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power." (I Cor. 4:20; Cf. I Cor.2:4- 5).

The Church today desperately needs to operate under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This need is heightened by the Church tendency to go the other way - to rely on operating practices of the professions. The Church obviously needs something divine to create its success. A spiritual lethargy that has come upon churches today demonstrates this need. Because the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, it must operate under spiritual principles and spiritual power.

Improper Sources of Anointing

Unfortunately, Church leaders today that are trained in secular institutions or highly academic seminaries know virtually nothing about God's supernatural anointing power. Yet some seminary graduates are made to feel that they have learned most of the "how-to's" of local church success.

They graduate with confidence, having studied such areas as: How to prepare a Sermon, How to Preach, How to Baptize, How to Serve Communion, How to hold a Church Service, How to hold a Revival Meeting, How to make the Church Grow. Obviously, these are all important to Church ministry, but they must have the life of the Spirit.

When graduates enter their ministries, some encounter much trouble in making these “how-to’s” work. Little professional pastor’s kits are essentially the average equipment of many beginning leaders today. When the kits do not work, these leaders experience extreme frustration.

One problem immediately appears. Many of the principles learned in secular colleges and some seminaries are not based on the Word of God. I thank God for those seminaries that are deeply committed to the Word of God, and instill firm Biblical convictions into their graduates.

Unfortunately, some seminaries do not provide this, instead offering dry academics (often filled with humanistic content and “higher critical” studies) that quench the Spirit. How can three to eight years of dwelling in this kind of environment fail to affect a man or woman’s spiritual life? Too many seminaries use the Bible as a secondary reference. To answer the church’s needs, they look primarily to psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, social psychology, secular history, business management, etc. All when they become the focus of a leader’s study life, they can dry up his anointing in the Spirit.

Why? Because God will not let any flesh glory in His presence (I Corinthians 1:2) The holy anointing oil cannot rest upon the things of the flesh. It can only rest upon that which has experienced the death and cleansing of the blood of Jesus Christ. When a leader insists on ministering intellectually from his mind, rather than from his spirit under the hand of God, he will produce Christians with full heads and empty hands - much knowledge, but no power. As in every past spiritual visitation of the Holy Spirit, God is again emphasizing the things He uses to build His kingdom: prayer, the Word, holiness, fasting, obedience and a dependence upon the anointing of His Holy Spirit.

What the Anointing Is Not

Before we move into defining the anointing of the Spirit, let us define what it is not. The anointing of God is not:

- Mere natural ability or talent.
- Professionalism.
- External show.
- Mere fancy oratory.
- Famous preaching styles mimicked .
- Formal homiletics courses.
- Ecclesiastical position or authority.
- Recognition by an organization.
- Good speaking techniques.
- The direct result of a good education.
- External religious forms.
- Nice-sounding, aesthetic music.
- Mere emotionalism.
- Following a simple “how to” list.
- A quiet religious meeting.

None of the above can ensure God’s anointed presence on a life, a leader or a church service. The anointing is born from a humble and broken heart before God.

Anointing defined

To make a general, conceptual definition of God’s anointing on a ministry, we must first view the basic Hebrew and Greek words the Bible translates as “anointing” or “anoint”.

Hebrew Words:

“*Balal*”: a primary root, meaning to overflow (especially with oil, and by implication, meaning to mix.

“*Dashen*”: a primary root, meaning root, meaning to be fat or, transitively, to fatten or regard as fat. It means, especially, to anoint, or figuratively, to satisfy.

“*Yitshar*”: a noun for oil, as used to produce light or figuratively to anoint.

“*Mimshach*”: comes from a primary root, which means to rub with oil, in the sense of expansion and outspreading (by extension, do this with outstretched wings.)

“*Mashach*”: a primary root, meaning to rub with oil, to anoint. By implication, it means to consecrate. Also to paint.

“*Mashiyach*”: usually refers to a consecrated person (king, priest or saint) and especially to the Messiah.

“*Cuwk*”: a primary root, meaning to smear over with oil, to anoint.

“*Shemen*”: a form of grease, especially liquid (as from the olive), which is often perfumed. Figuratively, this word means richness.

New Testament Greek Words:

“*Aleipho*”: to oil (usually with perfume).

“*Egchrio*”: to rub in (oil), to besmear.

“*Epichrio*”: to smear over or upon.

“*Murizo*”: to apply (perfumed) unguent to something.

“*Chrio*”: to smear or rub with oil; by implication, to consecrate to an office or religious service.

Related English Words:

“Anoint”: to rub over with oil or an oily substance: to apply oil to something as part of a sacred rite, especially for purposes of conserving.

“Anointed”: a person who is consecrated to God.

“Ointment”: a salve or unguent applied to the skin, often mixed with some form of medication, for healing or beautification purposes.

“Quickening”: to make alive, to come to life, to revive spiritually, to cause to be spiritually stimulated or kindled, to cause to burn more intensely, to hasten or accelerate, to enter into a stage of active growth and development, to shine more brightly.

“Consecrated”: dedicated to God for His purposes; made holy in character and, thus, fit for spiritual use and a setting apart for God’s service.

General definition of Anointing: Let us now combine the meanings of these Hebrew, Greek and English words into one general and conceptional definition of anointing. This will provide some spiritual understanding of the anointing of God’s Spirit:

The anointing of God’s Spirit is the overflowing of the Messiah’s divine life of holiness into a human life, which has been consecrated to God through the personal cross of Christ experiences which make it spiritually rich and thus able to impact effectively the light and fragrance of God’s Word into the lives of others, producing in them deep spiritual satisfaction and obvious Christian fruitfulness.

Illustrations of the Anointing

To make this compact definition more practical at this point, however we offer the following items as both further definitions and illustrations of God’s anointing in the life of a teacher. The anointing of the Spirit is in evidence:

= When God goes beyond the natural abilities of a leader and gives him supernatural ability to preach, teach or counsel.

= When a leader preaches an entire message spontaneously, as quickened by the Spirit totally discarding his planned message, and the congregation is moved spiritually in a special way. (If you have ever seen this attempted without the moving of the Holy Spirit, however, you can remember that it was obviously non-productive!)

= When the conscious sense of God’s abiding and moving presence appears.

- = When a leader's message brings spiritual results in the lives of his hearers, even though it might not follow the rules of grammar, homiletics, organization or professional presentation. (This does not negate the need for these speaking skills, however. They are greatly needed!)
- = When a leader senses God very near to him after he is broken or repents of some sin, and then he ministers to his people in the same spirit.
- = The power of the spirit in the ministry of a leader when God heals the sick, delivers sinners, and shows His power through His yielded vessel.
- = When some Christians' song or music has the touch of God's presence and power upon it, even though all the singers or musicians are not professional.
- = When a singer or a musician sings or plays a song spontaneously unto the Lord, which spiritually edifies the congregation.
- = When a leader is lifted up in spirit and ministers the Word of God by prophetic illumination and speaks directly to the needs of the people present.
- = When a spirit of prayer and intercession comes upon a congregation and all pray, in turn, spontaneously as God puts particular burdens on different individuals' hearts.
- = When God through the Lord Jesus Christ gives spiritual authority to demonstrate the character and / or gift of a leader.
- = When the practical ministry of true healing, which happens through love, understanding and prayer, helps one whose heart is broken or wounded.
- = When a person's whole being (spirit, mind, will, emotions and body) responds positively to the wooing of the Holy Spirit.
- = When a person is sensitive and obedient to the inward leadings of the Holy Spirit, which never contradicts the Word of God.
- = When a leader inwardly senses through the Spirit the specific spiritual or physical needs of a congregation in a church service, and ministers to them.

We could state more of these descriptions, because God moves mightily in so many ways. The essence of all descriptions would focus on spontaneously following the leading of the Spirit, which always glorifies Jesus Christ and exposes (for healing) the spiritual condition of people. We should add here that a leader can function in the anointing by following previously made plans, previously outlined sermons, etc., provided that they were originated or quickened for that occasion by the Holy Spirit. The anointing does not make void the mind of man. It uses the mind of a leader as a vessel for transmitting the heart and spirit of God into each particular occasion, as the leader flows with the moving of the Spirit.

In fact, the anointing requires great effort and discipline to exercise spiritual gifts. It requires discipline in pursuing a deep prayer life, and in true spiritual meditation on the Word of God. It also requires a leader to diligently focus his spiritual ear on God at each service or event, and to be prepared to change his "game plan" to shift to another way of releasing God's provision for the people at that specific time. The Spirit will release further understanding of the anointing to leaders who do these things.

The subject of the anointing is truly a delicate one. It is a very mystical (spiritual) thing, and yet relates directly to practical application in specific situations. One important key to moving in the anointing: keep a humble heart, and realize that God has not used any of us yet as fully as He would desire. Another key: remain open to the specific and different ways the Spirit may lead us to save souls, edify the Church, and release the presence and power of Jesus Christ in meetings. God's Word provides the balance, the "safety-check" and the principles that can help us understand the leading of the Spirit.

Uses of the Anointing

In the Old Testament, the anointing oil was a symbol for prosperity (Deuteronomy 32:13), spiritual tithing (12:17), and a means of financial payments (I Kings 5:11). In addition, one of the main uses of the anointing oil was its addition to some of Israel's various sacrifices and offerings.

The unleavened cake wafers used to consecrate Aaron and his sons to God were spread with oil (Exodus 29:1,2). This has significant applications to today's leaders for two reasons. First, to be anointed by the Holy Spirit, a leader must have sin (leaven) removed from his life and only sincerity and truth in his attitude and motivation (see I Corinthians 5.1-13). Second, all leaders must be anointed to be consecrated to God's service, as were Aaron and his sons (Exodus 29:1, 23; Leviticus 6:20-22; Numbers 6:13-15).

The fact that the fine flour was offered with a lamb offering both morning and night and was mixed with oil (Exodus 29:2, 7, 40) – has two spiritual applications today. A leader must be aware that his anointing must be renewed continually (morning and night). When a leader offers sacrifices to God (a lamb in the Old Testament), he can know that anointing (the oil) will come along with it. It pays for every leader to make sacrifices to God. In return for a leader's sacrifices, God gives a richer anointing to his life and ministry.

The grain offerings that were baked in the oven or cooked on the griddle were mixed with oil (Leviticus 2:4-5; see also 2:1-2, 6-7 and 7:10,12 and 9:4 and 14:10, 21 and 23:10-13). In application, this signifies that God will give a leader the anointing of His Spirit no matter what tests and trials (the oven or the griddle) through which He causes a leader to pass. Every leader should be able to confess with confidence, "All things work together for the good of my life and ministry, because I love God and am called to minister according to His purpose" (derived from Romans 8:28).

The peace offerings that were offered with thanksgiving were also mixed with oil (Leviticus 7:12). This expresses the spiritual truth that God will pour His anointing upon the leader who "makes peace" (as it were) with all of his troubling circumstances (welcoming them as friends, as in James 1:1-3). As a leader thanks the Lord for the spiritual good in every circumstance, he will experience an ever greater release of the Holy Spirit in his life.

The burnt offering of the male lamb that was offered on the same day as the sheaf of first fruits after Israel entered the land was also mixed with oil (Leviticus 23:10-13). This indicates that the Lord will anoint the leader with more of His Spirit's unction as he enters into a new truth from the Lord (a new part of the land), along with the necessary sacrifice from a leader (family misunderstanding, church rejection, church rejection, loss of friends). God will always honor such sacrifices.

The unleavened cakes, which were a part of the offering for the Nazarite, were mixed and spread with oil (Numbers 6:15). This signifies that God will always give His anointing to those who seriously separate themselves (as the Nazarites did) wholly unto the Lord. God anoints a leader with His holy ointment in a greater way every time a leader further separates himself from involvements with the world system (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, bitterness hatred, anger). Every leader must embrace repentance as a lifestyle (not an one-time event), for both he and his family, as they set the example for their people.

The offerings of the leaders silver dishes, which were filled with fine flour, also included oil (Numbers 7). This signifies that only through the anointing of the Holy Spirit (God's oil) can a leader fully enter into all of the promises and provisions inherent in the Lord Jesus Christ's full redemption (whose colour is silver). Only the Holy Spirit can make the truths of God's redemptive work in Jesus Christ real, practical and experiential to a leader.

The offering for the cleansing of the Levites for their priestly service included the addition of oil (Numbers 8:6, 8). A New Testament priest (1 Peter 2:5, 9) must be cleansed by the Holy Spirit, revealing and then working out of him all of the impurities in his life. This is true for all Christian. Believers (who are all New Covenant priests), but particularly applies to everyone who must lead God's people into truth.

The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offerings (from the peace offerings for Aaron and his sons) were considered to be their anointed portions (Leviticus 7:34- 35). This can signify to every leader that the two most important parts of his life, his heart affections (the breast)

and his strengths (the strong thigh) must be given totally to God in order for the Spirit to anoint his life. What is done with the area of a leader's heart affections and strengths can mean either the total success or the complete failure of his ministry. May every leader give his spiritual "breast" and "thigh" to God.

The sacrifices that the prince and the people offered for Sabbath and new moon observances were mixed with oil (Ezekiel 46:1-12). This signifies a truth of utmost importance: Church leaders (princes) and the people (the congregation) totally depend on the Holy Spirit for peace (Sabbath) with one another, and for entering into all of the new truth (new moon) that God has for the Church.

Anointing oil was used to consecrate Moses' tabernacle and Solomon's temple, along with all of their parts (Exodus 40:9; Numbers 7:1, 10, 84, 88). This list of the different parts of the tabernacle, and the references where they were anointed with the holy oil for service also includes spiritual applications to a leader:

- Anointing of the brass altar (Exodus 29:36 and 30:25, 28 and 40:11) encourages every leader that the place of sacrifice to God is the place of the anointing of the Spirit.
- Anointing of the brass laver (30:25, 28 and 40:11) encourages every leader that the place of cleansing by the Word (Ephesians 5:25-27) is the place of the anointing of the Spirit.
- Daily anointing the golden candlestick and all of its utensils (30:25, 27b) speaks to a leader of the importance of daily filling his vessel (life) with the Spirit of God.
- Anointing of the showbread table (the table of His Presence) and all of its utensils (30:25, 27a) challenges a leader to pray for more illumination and understanding on the communion table of the Lord, so the Church can experience more of God's Spirit here.
- Anointing of the golden altar of incense (30:25, 27c) signifies to the leader that the more deeply he enters into the ministry of prayer (Revelation 5:8 and 8:4) and worship unto the Lord, the more he will experience God's anointing.
- Anointing of the golden ark of the covenant (30:25, 26b) speaks to the leader that the more he enters into the presence of God through the blood of Jesus Christ the more he will experience the anointing of the Lord upon him. The two anointed cherubim over the ark and the doors of the inner sanctuary in Solomon's temple being made of olive wood (1 Kings 6:23, 31-35).

Anointing to Prophecy

All of these spiritual applications of the anointing point to one ultimate prophetic application for the anointing of God. That is to anoint the Church of Jesus Christ to go out and witness with power for Christ (Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 1:21- 22). One of the Old Testament types of the Holy Spirit anointing coming down upon the Church is that of Jacob (the third of the three main patriarchal fathers.)

JACOB:

Poured oil and drink offering
(The Holy Spirit)
upon the stone pillar
(the Church - 1 Timothy 3:15)
where he had the revelation of the heavenly ladder
(Jesus Christ, John 1:51; Genesis 28:18 and 31:13 and 35:14)

The oil came upon the stone pillar just as the spirit has and will come upon the Church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. In the New Testament as well the anointing of the physical body of Jesus Christ (Mark 14:3:8 and 16:1) becomes prophetic of the anointing that was to come to his Body, the Church (I Corinthians 12:12-27).

More specifically the New Testament very clearly teaches the importance of receiving the sight insight and illumination of the Holy Spirit. John wrote to the Church of Laodicea about their need of this anointing: "I advice you to buy from me eye salve to anoint your eyes that you may see" (Revelation 3:18) Today leaders of the Church need to see with the help of the Spirit, Gods eternal purpose and use of His glory and power. Because Jesus Christ Himself was anointed by God (Acts

4:27 and 10:38; Hebrews 1:9), so shall His Church be clothed with His power from on high (Luke 24:49).

In connection with the area of God's anointing coming upon His Body we can note another spiritual truth for the leader. In ancient Israel, both priests and kings received the anointing upon their heads and garments (I Samuel 9:16 and 10:1 and 12:3, 5 and 15:17 and 16:3, 12-13). The anointing oil would also drip down from their heads upon their garments. When Aaron and his sons were anointed Exodus 28:41 states, "and you shall put them the tunics sashes and caps on Aaron our brother and on his sons with him and you shall anoint and ordain them and consecrate them". Here the anointing oil is connected with the donning of clean priestly garments (Leviticus 8:30). Furthermore Exodus 29:7 says, "Then thou shall take the anointing oil and pour in on his head and anoint him" (Exodus 30:30 and 40:13,15; Leviticus 8:12 and 21:10; Numbers 3:3 and 35:25).

Why did holders of two of the most important offices in Israel receive the anointing oil upon their heads? It was certainly prophetic of the necessity of the sight insight and illumination of the Holy Spirit in the minds of the Church leaders.

All of Gods leaders must have minds and thoughts (heads) totally consecrated to God in order to be the leaders that they are meant to be. David realized this even as a lowly Shepherd when he wrote, "Thou anoints my head with oil" (Psalm 23:5). David was referring to the oil that he as a shepherd would apply to the heads of his sheep to protect them from the pestilent springtime flies, But he was also referring to his desire to place his head under total control of his Lord that his entire life might be consecrated to God. Similarly a woman broke a vial of precious ointment over the head of Jesus recognizing Him as Lord in Mark 14:3. May every leader realize that God uses his anointing to keep his leaders totally controlled through His Spirit and His Word.

Anointing Tied to Character

Anointing oil was also used figuratively in the Bible to portray different character qualities that would receive the blessing of God. Christian leaders should see that God is interested in more than developing in them the gifts of the Spirit. Also and more importantly, God wants to develop in them the fruit of the Spirit. As stated before God desires a balance between character (integrity) and ability (power) in every leader's ministry.

Some of the most important character qualities which the Bible connects with receiving the anointing of the Spirit are:

Concern. Thou anoints my head (David a shepherd concerned for the sheep's welfare) with oil" (Psalm 23:5b)

Giving. "The liberal (giving) person shall be made fat (filled with oil)" (Proverbs 11:25).

Diligence. "The soul of the diligent shall be made fat (filled with oil)" (Proverbs 13:4).

Trust. "He who trusts in the Lord shall prosper (be made fat with oil)" (Proverbs 28:25).

Responsibility. "About this time tomorrow I will send you (Samuel) a man (Saul) ... and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel" (I Samuel 9:16).

Righteousness. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity therefore God, even thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Psalm 45:7).

Purity. "Wash yourself, therefore, and anoint yourself (Ruth) and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor" (Ruth 3:3).

Courage. "They (the enemy) set the table, they spread out the cloth, they eat, they drink; 'Rise up, captains, oil the shields, ' for thus says the Lord to me, 'Go station the sentry'" (Isaiah 21:5- 6).

Obedience. "O mountains of Gilboa, let not dew nor rain be on you, nor fields of offerings. For the shield of the mighty was defiled, the field of Saul, not anointed with oil" (I Samuel 1:21; I Samuel 15:22).

Submissiveness. “This is the law of the leper (a type of the sinner) in the day of his cleansing. Now, he shall be brought in to the priest...then the priest shall take ... the log of oil.... And present them as a wave offering before the Lord” (Leviticus 14:2, 12); see also oil in vs. 10, 14-18, 21, 24, 26-29).

Unity. “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head” (Psalm 133:1, 2).

Joy. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me... to grant those who mourn in Zion... the oil of gladness” (Isaiah 61:3).

Humility and Brokenness. “And behold there was a woman in the city who was... standing behind Him at his feet, weeping... kissing His feet, and anointing them with the perfume” (Luke 7:36-50).

These are some of the most essential character qualities in a leader’s life. With their development, a leader can believe God for a greater anointing.

Finally, several other uses of oil also have certain spiritual truths for a leader of God’s people. These can commonly be categorized as social uses.

- Oil was used in the preparation of food (I Kings 17:12-16). The spiritual food that a leader feeds his people through teaching and preaching the Word must be quickened by the Holy Spirit to be digested.
- Oil was used as fuel for domestic and other kinds of lamps (Matthew 25:1-13); see also the wicks of flax in Isaiah 42:3). Every leader must accept part of the responsibility to fill the lamps of his people’s lives with the oil of the Spirit, that they might truly be what Jesus Christ Himself said they would be; the light of the world’ (Matthew 5:14).
- Oil was used in various medicines (Isaiah 1:6; Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34). Every leader must be a clean channel through which the Holy Spirit can heal the minds and lives of the spiritually wounded.
- Oil was included in some cosmetic ointments (II Samuel 14:2; Ruth 3:3; Psalm 104:15). Every leader must use the Spirit’s anointing upon the Church so that she might show forth the image and countenance of Jesus Christ.
- Oil was customarily used to anoint and refresh guests in one’s home (Luke 7:46). Every leader’s spirit of hospitality (I Timothy 3:2) should minister spiritual refreshing to everyone who enters his home.
- Oil was used in combination with myrrh to anoint the dead (Mark 14:8 Luke 23:55:56). The anointing of the Spirit of God should be so blended together with a leader’s experience of the cross of Jesus Christ (myrrh), that he will be able to bring spiritual life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

Purposes of the Anointing

Purposes of the anointing oil are very similar to its uses. But we have listed here several that should add to our understanding. Each can be applied to the New Testament leader. Some of the major purposes of the anointing (oil) were:

1. To enable God’s leaders to defeat their enemies (as when the Spirit of the Lord came upon judges of Israel for this purpose: Judges 3:10 and 11:29 and 13:25 and 14:6, 19 and 29:29).
2. To consecrate things and people to God and his service (Exodus 28:41 and 29:29)
3. To enable people to perform their ministries unto the Lord.
4. To bring good news to the afflicted (Isaiah 61:1).
5. To bind up the broken –hearted (Isaiah 61:1).
6. To proclaim liberty to the captives (Isaiah 61:1).
7. To proclaim freedom for the prisoners (Isaiah 61:1).
8. To proclaim the favorable and acceptable year of the Lord (Isaiah 61:1- 2).
9. To proclaim the day of God’s vengeance (Isaiah 61:1- 2).

10. To comfort all who mourn (Isaiah 61:1- 2).
11. To grant a garland of beauty instead of ashes to those who mourn in Zion (Isaiah 61:1- 2).
12. To give the oil of gladness to those who mourn in Zion (Isaiah 61:1, 3).
- 13.) To give a garment of praise, instead of a spirit of fainting, to those who mourn (Isaiah 61:1, 3).
14. To cause those who mourn to be called oaks of righteousness and the planting of the Lord (Isaiah 61:1, 3).
15. To glorify the Lord and not man (Isaiah 61:1, 3).
16. To qualify Aaron's sons for their ministries (Exodus 40:15).
17. To qualify Aaron for his ministry of the offerings (Numbers 18:8).
18. To moisten the fine flour in the offerings (Ezekiel 46:13-15).
19. To be an essential part of the daily burnt offering (Ezekiel 46:13-15).
20. To make blind eyes see (John 9:6).
21. To empower the Christian with the gifts and ministries of the Lord (I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11- 12).

All of these purposes seek their spiritual fulfillment in the life and ministry of a leader. Probably the most important of all these purposes in the list above are 3, 16 and 17, in light of our purpose of helping leaders function in the anointing. Succinctly, these purposes are to enable people to perform their ministries unto the Lord, and to qualify them for their offices.

As already stated, one of the greatest controversies in Christianity has always been: "Who is qualified for the ministry? Who is able to speak with authority in the name of the Lord? What qualifies a person for a certain ministry?" These questions are still debated today. The purpose of the anointing we have just singled out (3, 16 and 17) lead us to part of the answer to these questions.

One side of qualification for ministry is character and integrity (I Timothy 3:2-7), and no one should deny this. Whenever a person steps beyond Scriptural guidelines for moral character and conduct, he disqualifies himself from ministry. But ministry also requires more than character. A man may be a very honest and virtuous plumber, but if he can't fix a leaky sink, how much good is he to a person with a leaky sink? Similarly, a person needs God's anointing (ability) in addition to character to perform a specific ministry. A person must have the power and ability in the Lord to perform that ministry effectively.

God chose Bezaleel and Oholiab (Exodus 31:2 and 35:30 and 36:1-2 and 37: 1 and 38:22 see also II Chronicles 2:14) to build the pieces of furniture for the tabernacle in the wilderness. God did not choose them just because they had integrity and fine moral virtues. He chose them because he was going to anoint them by His Spirit he was going to put the enabling of His Spirit on their naturally developed talents to make them uniquely equipped for a specific purpose.

When David chose singers and musicians to minister before the ark in God's tabernacle, he did not choose people just because they had certain spiritual traits. He chose them also because he knew that they would be able to sing and play skillfully before the Lord (I Chronicles 15:22 and 28:21; II Chronicles 34:12 and Psalm 33: 3 and 78:72). When God chose a man to write thirteen books of the New Testament he did not choose Peter the fisherman. He chose a very able Pharisee of the Law of Moses – Paul.

Therefore it is not just character that qualifies people for a ministry. It is also the anointing of the Spirit that God has given to them. True, it is not always natural abilities or skills that are used by the Lord. Even certain abilities must experience the cross before they can be resurrected to give God glory. But the point here is that God gives each person a certain anointing which enables him to perform his ministry effectively. Leaders however must be careful not to enter into the spirit of professionalism which glorifies men's abilities. The anointing may or may not fall on natural talent;

the anointing is the important matter here not the talent. God will sometimes take weakness, lack of talents or abilities and needs in people and then supernaturally anoint them for a task.

It is also interesting to note the ingredients of the holy anointing oil. The holy anointing oil was comprised of the finest of spices. (Exodus 30:23-25). These fine species were: myrrh, cinnamon, calamus (or cane), cassia and olive oil. Anointing oil contained nothing inferior or degenerate. This fact speaks of God's desire to provide His leaders with only the best graces in his particular ministry. To receive this anointing, however, a leader must give his time and energy to the good things of God's Spirit, and not the things of this world. God will anoint every one of His leaders. But he desires to anoint the leader's best gifts and abilities, and He will anoint nothing of the devil's kingdom.

Traits of Anointing Oil

The Bible uses the following words to describe the anointing oil:

= Beaten (Exodus 29:40)

The anointing oil in the Old Testament was beaten from olives. The anointing of the Holy Spirit in the life of a leader of God comes through the hard and deep dealings of God (which release the life of the Holy Spirit within him.)

= Fresh (Psalm 92:10)

The holy anointing oil had to be fresh and new for use. No leader can depend on past anointings to serve him today. Every leader must obtain a fresh anointing daily in the Lord.

= Holy (Ex. 30:25,31-32; Psalm 89:20)

The anointing oil was a holy. The Holy Spirit enters the life of a leader to make him holy, but will flow through him to others only as the leader himself embraces this holiness.

= Perfumed (Ex. 30:25)

The holy anointing oil was a perfumed mixture. The Holy Spirit performs in the life of a leader that which releases a pleasing perfumed fragrance unto God.

= Mixed (Ex. 30:25)

The holy anointing oil was a mixture of species. The life of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of a leader will be developed and expressed in and through a mixture of various spiritual principles and experiences.

= Handcrafted (Ex 30:25)

The holy anointing oil was a handcrafted work. The Holy Spirit in the life of a leader will work and labor to form him into God's perfect will.

= Olive (Ex 27:20; 30:24)

The holy anointing oil came from the mashing of the olive. The anointing of the Holy Spirit comes upon a leader to develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit in his life (Galatians 5:21- 22), and in response to the presence of those fruit.

= Pure (Ex 27:20; I Kings 5:11)

The holy anointing oil was pure. The Holy Spirit will flow through a leader's life only as he is pure before the Lord (morally, emotionally and spiritually).

= Anointed (Ex. 37: 29)

The holy oil was set aside for the purpose of anointing certain ministries. Every leader has been called to cooperate with the discerning power of the Spirit, that he can be used to set in and anoint certain ministries in the body of Christ.

= Precious (Prov. 21: 20)

Anointing oil was very precious. Every leader should guard and protect the holy Spirit's precious anointing in his life, as he considers it to be the most valuable possession in his ministry.

= Prescribed (Ezek. 45: 13-14)

The anointing oil was specified by God for use in certain prescribed portions in Israel's offerings. The Holy Spirit will require different levels of sacrifice to be made, according to the degree of the anointing He gives.

= Quality (Amos 6: 6; Ex. 30: 23; Numb. 18: 12)

Only the finest oils in Israel were used in the anointing oil. Every leader should realize that the fine quality of the work of the Holy Spirit, in and through his life, is more important than the quantity of the work.

= Costly (Mark 14: 3)

Anointing oil required very expensive ingredients. Every leader must realize that for every new depth of spiritual anointing he desires to experience, he must give up precious and costly things to God. The anointing costs the leader something. It cost Jesus Christ His entire life.

Requirements for the Anointing of the Holy Spirit

The oil, rain or temple in natural Israel, became prophetic of the Holy Spirit anointing in spiritual Israel the Church. The natural points to the spiritual.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit as it applies to a Christian leader depends upon:

A leader obeying and teaching his people to obey the Word of God (Deuteronomy 7:12-13 and 11:13-14 and 28:1-68).

A leader entering into the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Deut 11:13- 14; Joel 2:23-24).

A leader actively building up the house of the Lord, the Church (Haggai 1:7-11).

A leader recognizing that God and not himself is the source of supply for his spiritual anointing and prosperity (Hosea 2:8- 9).

A leader using his spiritual anointing and prosperity for the Lord and not the devil (Hosea 2:8-9).

A leader not glorifying his spiritual anointing and prosperity more than God (Hosea 2:8- 9)

A leader giving himself voluntarily and freely and teaching the people to do so too to the construction of the house of the Lord the Church (Exodus 35:20-29)

A leader appreciating and guarding the anointing in his life and in the lives of his people (Numbers 4:9,16; Proverbs 21:20).

Fruit Resulting From the Anointing

What promises has God given to those who have been anointed by His Spirit? What are some of the good effects from following the Spirit's anointing? Each one of the below mentioned reference points can be developed for further study by the leader.

Some of the major results of the anointing of the Holy Spirit are:

- God's help (Psalm 89:19).
- Exaltation and authority (Psalm 89:19, 24, 27, 29).
- Being called a servant of the Lord (Ps. 89:20).
- God's hand being with you (Ps.89:21).
- God's strength (Ps.89:21).
- Freedom from deception (Ps.89:22).
- Freedom from affliction by the wicked (Ps.89:22).
- God's victory over ones enemies (Ps.89:23).
- God's faithfulness and loving kindness (Ps. 89:24-28).
- Influence over the nations ("the seas " in Ps 89:25).
- A father son relationship (Ps.89:26).
- God's saving power (Ps. 89:26).
- Partaking in God's everlasting covenant (Ps.89:28, 30-37).
- Membership in the Church of the first born (Ps.89-27).
- Establishment of ones descendants forever (Ps 89:27).

- A glistening countenance (Ps.104:15).
- A breaking of the yoke of bondage (Isaiah 10:27).
- Physical healing of the body (Mark 6:13).
- The whole house church too being filled with the fragrance of the ointment (John 12:1-3).
- Spiritual sight and insight (Revelation 3:18).
- The power of God (Acts 10:38).
- Ability to go forth and do good (Acts 10:38).
- Ability to heal all who are oppressed by the devil (Acts 10:38).
- The presence of God (Acts 10:38).
- Surpassing joy (Hebrews 1:9).
- Continuing in the truth by unmasking deception (I John 2:26-29).
- Continuing in might and strength from the time of its reception (I Samuel 16:13).
- Recognition in the midst of ones family (I Samuel 16:13).
- The Spirit of prophecy (I Samuel 19:18-24).
- The office of a prophet (II Samuel 23:17-7).
- Spiritual fruitfulness (Number 17:1-11).

The anointing power and presence are among the greatest needs in the Church today. Many leaders and churches lack the anointing in their activities. Consequently, leaders must enter into a lifestyle that leads into the anointing of Gods power and must teach the people to do the same. Only in this way will we see the harvest of souls, which God desires in our day.

SERVANT HOOD, a pattern for leaders to follow throughout their lives!

To understand the concept of servanthood better, it is fitting to study it first in its original setting, esp. the way it was used in the New Testament in its original Greek meanings. The Greek word “diakoneo” connotes a slave who gives his life for others, either figuratively in service to even the smallest need of another, or literally, as for example someone manning the oars in a galley who might be worked to death.

In Greek thought, this type of service was shameful. The first duty of Greek citizen was to himself, to achieve his potential for excellence (do any of those words sound familiar in today’s culture?). To be forced to subject his will to another, or to surrender his time and efforts for others, was in distasteful and humiliating to a Greek.

The New Testament drives home Christ’s message of service by using these very words for service, that is so distasteful to the Greeks, as the standard of Christian service. Jesus Himself set a pattern for transformed value system. In Christ, serving is the highway to greatness. We achieve our full potential by giving to Christ and His Church, not by grasping!

A love-slave was someone who had chosen a lifetime of service to another person, not out of obligation, but out of desire to continue to serve. The love-slave had hole punched through the ear lobe as a mark of his status. The apostle Paul described himself in most of his epistles as a love-slave or a bondservant of Christ.

In Christ the servant / giver, we see the ultimate servant hood of someone who surrendered His life for our sakes, in a free and un-coerced choice, placing our good above His own. As our ransom, Christ voluntarily, totally and sacrificially gave everything necessary to release the slaves of sin. Christ illustrated His teachings for us with His own life. He proved that greatness is not a goal to be sought, but a by-product of learning to serve others. To achieve true greatness, we must first discard our own ideas of what it is.

Obstacles to True Serving

1) Confusing man's ways with God's ways. The Bible clearly teaches us that learning how to serve God and the Church will require us to overcome the natural man's instincts. It tells us that we must plan to die as a grain of wheat dies before it can bear fruit in the ground (John 12:24-25). It tells us that God's thoughts and His ways are too high for us to understand naturally (Isaiah 55:10-11). It tells us that we must resist conformity to the world, and seek God's transformation in the very way think, if we are to serve God as He deserves (Romans 12:1-2). The chart below illustrates the conflicts between the natural man and the spiritual man when it comes to service.

MAN'S WAY TO GREATNESS

Focus on power
Emphasize freedom
Concern gain
Desire immediate fulfillment
Yearn for the praise of men
Aspire to be served
Long for self-gratification
Need to push ahead
Strive to lead men
Desire to compete

GOD'S WAY TO GREATNESS

Focus on submission
Emphasize responsibility
Concern for giving
Desire lasting achievement
Yearn for the approval of God
Aspire to serve others.
Long for self control
Need for patience
Strive to follow God
Desire to cooperate

2) Self-centered living. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others." (Philippians 2:3-4). Another translation uses the words stop acting from motives of selfish strife or petty ambition.

How foreign that sounds to the "ME-Generation"! Some of the most popular wisdom in our culture today: feather your own nest and take care of number one. Advertising has latched onto this spirit with a vengeance. You are told: you can "Have it your way," that you should: "Do yourself a favor," that "You owe it to yourself," that "You deserve a break today" and that you should "please yourself". This is actually nothing new however as this list of strong cultural influences from different cultures shows us:

CULTURE

Greece
Rome
Epicureanism
Education
Psychology
Materialism
Humanism

STATEMENT

Be wise, know yourself
Be strong, discipline yourself
Be sensuous, enjoy yourself
Be resourceful, expand yourself
Be confident, assert yourself
Be satisfied, please yourself
Be capable, believe in yourself

But Jesus came with a totally deferent agenda, Jesus said, "Be a servant, give yourself and deny yourself". True Christianity has never been popular, though true Christians have occasionally enjoyed public favor. (This usually does not last for long, however). The New Testament in thirteen places uses the Greek word for deny, "*aparneomai*." This word has the meaning of: denying utterly, to the point of disowning abstaining from, enouncing.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) He refers to the death of our own will, that we may serve God's will. This is a death to self. We are also told that "you are dead and, your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). And "you are not your own.... you are bought with a price" (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Clearly, the way of Christian service runs very contrary to the way of the "freedom" that modern western culture espouses. True Christian service is not only undesirable, but actually impossible to

the “ME -Generation.” True service requires a strong self-image and real self-knowledge, both of which are generally lacking. When Jesus washed his disciples’ feet after their last Passover feast (John 13:1-16) He showed them how resolutely they would have to strive to overcome self-centeredness to become true servants.

3) “Quick Fix”-mentality. This “Quick-fix” attitude is harmful in the spiritual warfare between the church and satan, because the outcome of this warfare is eternal. Christ told the disciples that He came to serve, and that in his service He would pay the ultimate price of giving his life as “a ransom for many”(Mark 10:45)

The principle of sacrifice has always been God’s way, never man’s.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES

As Christians, how should we define problems?

The traditionally accepted definition of the word ‘problem’ is the one used in the oxford dictionary. It defines problem as: a doubtful or difficult questions or things that are hard to understand. The Greek word for problem: “*proballein*” (‘*pro*’ meaning: forward and ‘*ballein*’ meaning: to throw) give us more interesting definition. It literally means: thing thrown or put forward. God wants us as Christians to see problems in the light of the Greek definition. He wants us to see them as positive things. They are doors to answers! They are things that get us moving forward instead of staying where we are. They may be difficult and we may even have to suffer due to them but having overcome or learned from them we will have moved in God. In fact without problems we would get nowhere in God.

The three sources of problems for the Christian

(i) God

Christians often attribute problems to the enemy, when in reality the source of the problem is God. He is giving us an opportunity to grow in Him and be more like His Son, Jesus. God has chosen us for His glory and not for our comfort. We should trust God and put our confidence in Him, no matter what problems or difficulties we face (Romans 8:28-30).

(ii) Body and soul

There is a battle going on within us, as believers, between our old way of thinking and acting and that which God has done and is continuing to do in our lives. To overcome in this area we need to yield our bodies and minds into God’s hands. This requires: self-discipline, self-awareness and a will that has God on the throne (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Romans 12:1- 2; Ephesians 4:22 –24). To live in victory in this area we should:

- Never tell God what to do but rather obey Him.

- Not only believe that the Word of God is infallible. But live in the good of it. We should sift every immediate word we receive from God through the established Word of God as it is revealed in the Bible.
- Know and live in the good of who we are in Christ, but not live in a false triumphalism which denies problems and suffering for the Christian.
- Never let other people do our thinking or decision-making for us, when we should be doing it for ourselves. Putting our minds in neutral, and coasting along behind other people is dangerous and will keep us as immature, weak Christians.

(iii) Opposition

Some problems are sourced in the enemy. Here we need to resist and even get into battle against anything, which is opposing us as we seek to carry out God's will. Satan and his demonic horde are the main target in this battle and it is foolishness to believe that he is not interested in us (Job 1+ 2; Luke 22:31-34). Satan will attempt to crush us with problems. However, we must remember that God is in control and that He will not let us be overburdened. If we continue to look to Him and submit to ourselves to His will. As long as we are living, as God wants us to we have nothing to fear from the enemy (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-10)

Twelve Reasons Why Problems are Positive Things:

- They expose the depths of our maturity in God. They show us where we are at with God and where we need to improve.
- They show us the true values of life. When persecution and difficulty comes, it is not long before we know what is really important and what is just window dressing.
- They create self-awareness (i.e. show us who we really are) and highlight our character strengths and weaknesses (like metal testing).
- They develop spiritual perseverance if we want to overcome or solve a problem, we have to press on and not give up. Too many Christians give up before they overcome.
- They build our sensitivity to and empathy with other people and their needs because we learn by experience what it is like to be in their shoes.
- They refine and polish our gifts and capabilities. The pressure of problems knocks off our rough edges and drives out the rubbish with our lives when we handle problems in God's way and in God's power.
- They develop our confidence in God rather than ourselves. We learn to trust God who always proves faithful.
- They enlarge our capacity in God and enable our faith in Him to grow because they stretch us and create the need for us and our faith to grow.
- They test our securities. They teach us that we need to rely on God and that we can depend on Him and often on not much else, who is the only unshakeable, permanently stable entity.
- They stimulate us and prevent complacency. Problems are like a red-hot poker behind us.
- They enable creativity and help us to think and develop new ideas. They often force us to challenge the way we have always done it syndrome and to come up with new and more effective ways doing things.
- They develop wisdom because we learn what God would do in our situation if we wait on Him rather than immediately reacting to our problems

God wants us to grow up

God is our Father and we are His children. At the start of our Christian life, He tends to protect and spoon-feed us because He knows we need it. However, he does not want us to stay in this place of immaturity in Him (Hebrews 5:11-14). He wants us to grow up! He, therefore presents us with challenges and problems appropriate to where we are at with Him and He give us room to learn by experience. He allows us to make decisions and even mistakes. Of course, He does attempt to instruct, correct and discipline us on the way to teach us the boundaries of safety to keep us on the right path and to stop us doing the wrong thing or something that may be damaging to us but He does not shield us from problems.

“God corrects us all our days for our own benefit to teach us his holiness. Now obviously no chastening seems pleasant at the time it is in fact most unpleasant. Yet, when it is all over we can see that it has quietly produced the fruit of real goodness in the characters of those who have accepted it in the right spirit. So, tighten your loosening grip and steady your wavering stand. Do not wander away from the path but forge steadily onward. On the right path the limping foot recovers strength and does not collapse.” (Hebrews 12: 11-13)

Remember God will never over load us with problems. He knows us better than we know ourselves and He will only allow problems to come our way that we will be able to cope with. The bigger the problem He gives to us, the greater the confidence and trust He has in us. God wants mature Christians who not only know what God would have them do in any situation but who actually do it! If He shielded us from every problem and intervened before we encountered any difficulty, we would never grow into maturity in Him. He wants us to not only know this truth but also live in the good of it. We therefore need to know that the truth works experientially. God gives us this opportunity by presenting us with his designer made problems and than giving us room to learn by experience.

Running from God's Problems Results in Immature Christians.

Many Christians today stay in a place of immaturity in God because they refuse to take on the problems or trials which He has designed for them to enable their growth into maturity in Him. When confronted with a problem these people:

- Get angry with God and demand that He remove the problem form them. These people tend to complain all the time.
- Put up with a problem instead of trying to overcome it. These people tend to be quite fatalistic and suffer anything because they believe it is God's will for them.
- Get depressed, throw a tantrum and cry out to God for Him to take the problem away. These people tend to moan all the time.
- Blame satan and get into battle against him instead of tackling a problem and overcoming it. These people tend to get confused disappointed and then disillusioned, because their battling often does not work

The truth is that often a problem is God's response to the prayer of His people. They ask God to change them or to take them on into greater maturity in Him and yet when He answers with the problem that will enable this they do not want it. This is usually because they have a preconceived idea about how God works or they expect Him to just miraculously change them. God is a loving God, and He will often let a problem which He has designed for a person remain for a time, even if that person does respond to it negatively, because He can see that this the best possible thing for them. However, if they persist in asking God to remove the problems, or they react to it in such a wrong way that it is beginning to damage their Christian walk, God will remove it. He often then lets these people have their own way for a time, but eventually He will take them back to that same problem, or another just like it, hoping for the desired aim to be achieved this time. The tragedy is that many Christians have failed to go on in God, because they refuse to face and resolve the problems that God has designed for them.

Christian leaders have been chosen by God to handle more difficult problems. He only gives them these problems, because He knows that if they keep looking to Him, they can cope with them. When

under pressure, the quality of a leader's relationship with God should show through. When the going gets tough, your actions will reveal just where you really placed your love and trust.

Ten Common areas of problems for the Christian:

God presents us with many types of problems to enable us to grow into maturity in Him. Answer the following questions prayerfully. They will help you to discover where you are at in God in the various areas.

(i) Money

- Are you a good steward of the finances God has put into your charge?
- Do you live by faith in the area of finances?
- Do you see God as the source of your money or do you look to the world for your provision?
- Do you have integrity in the area of your finances or your church's finances?
- Do you know that you are doing what God wants you to do with your money?
- Do you take on speaking engagements because they pay or because God has told you to?
- How important is money to your motivation to serve the Lord?

(ii) Sex

- Do you treat members of the opposite sex in the way that God expects (1 Timothy 5:1- 2)?
- Do you show proper caution when with members of the opposite sex, especially when you are alone with them?
- Is what you feed into your mind through T.V., radio, books, magazines, etc. helpful or harmful?

(iii) Power

- Do you regard leadership as a right or a privilege?
- As a leader, do you see yourself as a boss or servant?
- Do you see yourself as proud or humble?

(iv) Fear, worry and anxiety

- Do you have any fears that plague you life and that you do not seem to be able to overcome?
- Do you know that to worry is to sin, because you are not trusting in God and putting your faith in Him (Mathew 6:25-34)?
- Did you realize that fear is probably the devil's most effective weapon against Christians?
- Do you so want to please other people that you cannot say, "No" when they ask you to do something for them even when you know it is not what God wants you to do at that time?

(v) Disappointment, discouragement and disillusionment

- Do you find that you want to give up and run under the pressure of disappointment, discouragement or disillusionment?
- How is it that Christians, who know God Himself, who have been saved out of darkness and who have eternal life, can be subject to these sorts of things?
- These things are often encouraged by the enemy, so what do you do about them?

(vi) Competition

- Do you compare yourself with other people, or do you just get on with what God has called you to do and look only to Him?
- Do you see the success of other people in the church as a threat to your own?
- Do you enjoy the success of other people as they work for the Lord?

(vii) Lack of faith

- Do you trust God, His Word and His promises to you, or do you look at the physical circumstances and trust them more, especially if they do not seem to be in line with what God has said?
- Do you find that you cannot fully overcome your doubts?

(viii) Relationships

- Do you enjoy gossip, slander or misunderstanding?
- Are you still harboring anger in your heart against anyone?
- Are you humble and forgiving?
- How do you deal with strife and friction – with love, or by burying the opposition?
- Do you see family problems as challenges to overcome in order to aid both your own and your family's growth into maturity in God?
- Do you see relationship problems as difficult things that you need to endure, or do you see them (as Jesus did) as an opportunity to display the fruit of the Spirit and the general principles of the Kingdom of God?

(ix) Habits

- Have they mastered you or have you mastered them?
- Is there anything outside of God that you could not give up?

(x) Circumstances

- Do you control them in the power of God or do you let them control you and your life?
- Do you bother to ask God what he wants you to do in your circumstances?
- Do you feel that God is big enough to cope with even the most difficult of situation using you, as the channel of His will?

Overcoming

As Christian leaders we need to learn how to respond to difficulty and challenge in God's way; we need to know to handle life and to make the things that happen to us productive to the glory of God; we need to overcome our own limitations and so grow into maturity in Christ and we need to learn how to handle success as well as failure so that satan has no opportunity in our lives through pride. Pride turns faith into presumption and causes us to demand our rights; and pride of life and position tends to become the motivation for our work and service. Even our successes need to die at the foot of the cross of Jesus.

“We are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” (Romans 8:37)

As God's leaders, we need to know where we stand in ourselves. We need to recognize what affects us, in what areas and we need to know the overcoming power of Christ and where we need to alter our reactions and responses from the negative to the positive to enable us to operate without fear or favour in the zone into which God has called us. This is not positive confession, which is often simply an attempt to cover over to mask what is really there in our life instead of dealing with it. You cannot confess yourself in to victory. Many Christians do not want to come face to face with the facts, so they live in a super spiritual unreality, which renders them largely ineffective for God. Instead of overcoming, these people pretend that their problems are not there. This often results in severe self-condemnation when things do not work out and their life persists to be totally lacking in freedom and togetherness.

“If you do not stand firm in your faith you will not stand at all.” (Isaiah 7:9)

As Christian leaders, we need to set the example to those who follow us. We need to stand firm, no matter what confronts us and so know God, His ways and His power that nothing can get on top of us. We need to be the head and not the tail and we need to show other people that it is possible to live victorious Christian life not in our strength but in God's.

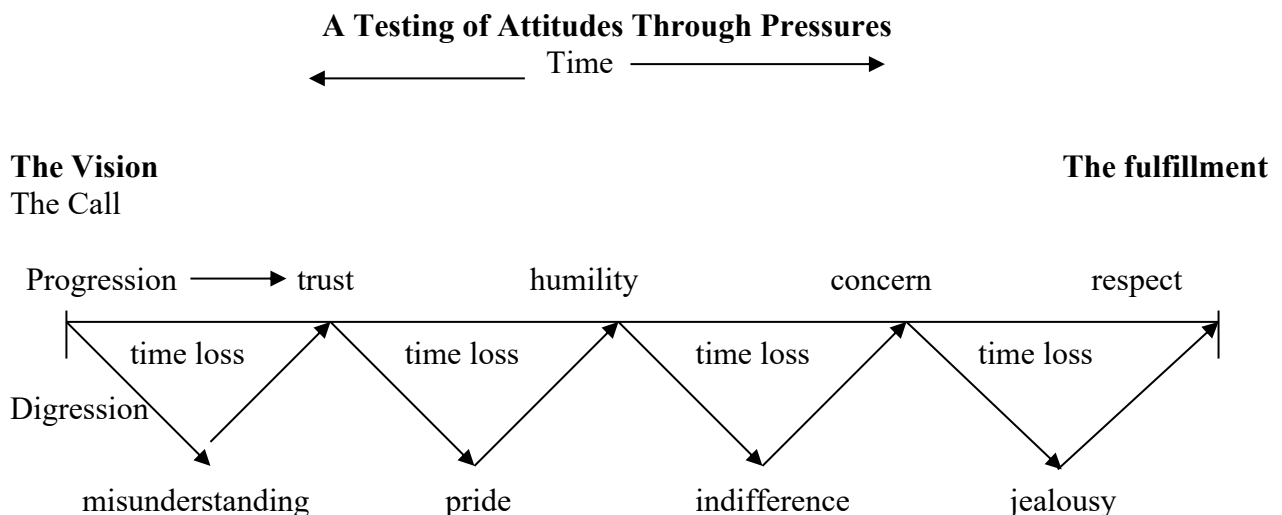
The main Greek word translated as overcome is: ‘nikao’ which means: ‘to win a victory’ or ‘to conquer’. As Christians, we need to overcome!

Progress and setbacks in leadership

Many questions arise along a leader's way to the fulfillment of God's will for his life. A leader may have different questions at different times in his life and ministry. Most men and women of God however will be challenged at some point with some of the following questions.

- What is my ultimate place in the Church?
- How do I find opportunities for ministry?
- How do I know that I am being properly prepared?
- What do I do when I feel jealous over another's success?
- How do I get started in a ministry?
- How will my presbytery prophecies be fulfilled?
- What role does time play in the development of my ministry?
- Why doesn't anyone recognize my ministry?
- What must I do to minister successfully?

Here we will lay some of the Scriptural foundations for explaining how ministries can progress or digress in their ultimate calling in God. In doing so it will answer many of the above questions. Some leaders begin well, but fall by the wayside (Samson, Saul and Solomon). Others do not begin as well as they finish. In any case, every leader not only wants to know God's will for his life, but also wants to know how to stay dead center in it for all of his years. Church leadership today does too much swerving in and out of the pathway of the Lord. Here we will point out not only the main pitfalls along the way but also the positive steps that help a man or women of God reach their goal in the Lord. Consider the following diagram.



Attitude Testing Through Pressures

The main horizontal line in this diagram represents the time line of a leader's life. To the far left, at the beginning of the diagram, is the point at which a man or woman of God receives a call and vision for the ministry. To the far right, at the end of the chart, is the point at which a leader's call and vision for the ministry is fulfilled. The space between these two points represents the time in which God sovereignly tests a leader's attitudes.

A leader's attitude (his mental and internal dispositions towards life and the ministry) will help to determine his success or failure in ministry. If a leader cooperates with God in developing godly attitudes in his life, he will succeed. If, however, a leader allows the roots of ungodly attitude to grow

within him, he will fail in performing what God has asked him to do. On the chart, for example, you can see that the attitude of “misunderstanding” has caused the life of this leader to take a digression from the perfect will of God. However, when the leader instead, allows “trust” to be his inner attitude, his progress continues. The rest of the diagram follows this pattern “indifference” caused a digression, but “concern” released progress. So it is in the life of every leader. When God convicts a leader of a sinful attitude, his best response is immediate repentance and prayer for cleansing. For more study on the above mentioned issues, please continue in the next Chapter.

DEALING WITH NEGATIVES FROM BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

It is possible for Christians to overcome / avoid those negatives which plague the lives of people in the world!

There are many negatives, which any Christian has to overcome in order to live life as God intends. Some of these negatives are particularly a problem for Christian leaders. This Chapter is not designed to be a complete list of these negatives, but rather to be a help that God’s leaders can use in order to notice and overcome /avoid some of the more destructive and de-motivating of them.

Competition

Christians today live in a fiercely competitive world, and this spirit of competition has entered into church life. God has called His people to work together as part of the worldwide body of Christ. Unfortunately, some Christians see other people, who should be their partners and fellow workers in the Kingdom of God, as threats. Pastors fight with feelings of ill will towards another whose congregation is larger; preachers compare another’s public acceptance to their own; and church members all compete to get the best leadership positions in their churches. When a competitive spirit takes root, everybody else’s success becomes a threat to our own. This is a dangerous position to be in, because we will always be looking sideways at the path that others are taking, instead of keeping our eyes on the Lord and following the path that He has chosen for us to walk. A competitive spirit breeds distrust of other people, especially those in similar positions to us, and it causes us to make only shallow relationships with these people. Competition also introduces paranoia and great insecurity into a church, and wherever it takes root, it tends to negate the peace of God and destroy unity. All these things are very de-motivating for the Christian who is seeking to live righteous, holy life and who wants to obey God wholeheartedly.

Criticism

This is when we find it easy to see the problems and difficulties in the church (and in everything else we encounter), and we enjoy sharing these with other people. It is the tendency to emphasize the negative in every situation; to major on the ideological or doctrinal differences at the expense of everything else that is said; to see the character fault and not the rest of the person; and to concentrate

on locating the weaknesses in a program, instead of finding the answers. Leaders often fall into this trap when they see other leaders doing something that they do not think is right. Critical people tend to spend so much time criticizing that they run out of time and energy to actually solve the problems and get the job done. These people look at everything with a critical eye and they cannot often even see the positive. Such criticism tends to nullify any motivation to serve the Lord that we might once have had, mainly because we cannot see how a job with so many faults could be achieved.

Christians need to learn how to cope in God's way with the criticism of other people; and not react with bitterness or resentment, but rather with forgiveness as Jesus taught us to do (Matthew 6:14-15). The criticism may hurt, but it is better out in the open than behind our back. It is virtually impossible to be in a place of leadership and not receive some criticism, if we are doing our job properly. When we do receive any form of criticism, we should not overreact, especially if it is in an area in which we know we are weak. We should stay calm, and then honestly assess what has been said in order to establish in our heart whether it is true or not. We then need to commit the problem to God and make sure that we never entertain any thought of revenge in our heart (Proverbs 20:22). Remember, there is usually a small amount of truth in every criticism; if we can find this truth and learn from it, we will be the better person for it (Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 25:12).

Vanity

This is when we want people to prefer or like us and we dare not do anything, which might jeopardize this. This inner need to be admired usually arises from our own insecurities. Here, the desire to impress other people overcomes or at best compromises our motivation to serve the Lord in His way and in His time. As Christians, we need to seek our approval from God and not from other people.

Ambition

This is the urge to get ahead and to establish ourselves powerfully and securely. It is the force that gets us to climb over and manipulate other people in order for us to get to the top, no matter what effect this has on other people. Ambition wants fame, reputation, success, power and the rewards that go with these things, and it weighs every situation in order to achieve those ends. Once we are caught in ambition's web, we will seize every opportunity in which to prove our gifts and ourselves. Ambitious people try to impress other people by name-dropping and are more concerned with position than they are with other people and servant hood. Cultivating an image often becomes a priority in ambitious people's lives. This only serves to channel their attention and energy away from others and towards themselves. Such people fear letting other people see who they really are, because they are trying to make those people see something different. These people also have to work very hard to maintain this image and keep up the pretence. This may necessitate them to have to lie and cheat on a regular basis. In fact, these people are continually trying to prove themselves to other people (e.g. boast that they are at least one better than those they lead).

Our service for the Lord will take on twisted motives if ambition is not kept in check. In fact, ambition will drain our motivation to serve the Lord, because we will never be satisfied with where we are at, what we have, or what are doing (Philippians 2:3-4). It is alright to want to improve ourselves or to aspire to leadership, but we should only do so for the right reasons, i.e. to bring glory to God and to enable His work to be done. If we have an overwhelming ambition to be 'somebody', then we will focus too much on that and not enough on serving other people (and helping them to become somebodies).

Pride

This could be defined, in Christian terms, as the inability to handle the popularity, success, position or gifts with which we have been entrusted by God (1 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 10:12-13). It is a condition where we put ourselves first and we are what matters most. Here, the applause and adulation intoxicate, seduce and blind us, and this becomes our motivation to do what we do. Our motivation is to serve and even enthrone ourselves rather than the Lord. This is the trap that caused the downfall of Lucifer. The very fact that we have risen to a position of leadership can breed a secret self-congratulation and pride. The only way out of this pitfall is to humble ourselves under the mighty

hand of God and let Him raise us up in His time (1 Peter 5:6). Leaders need to watch out for and stop any exaggerated deference other people many give to them. It is too easy to let such praise and adulation go to our head and result in pride (Ecclesiastes 7:5). Leaders should be esteemed and respected, but they should never be put on a pedestal and idolized. Instead, leaders should deflect any praise and adulation they may get to the Lord (James 4:1-10). If people do put us on a pedestal, their expectations of us can be very high and very hard for any leader to maintain. This introduces a tremendous tension and restriction into a leader's life, because the leader knows that those who have put them on a pedestal could reject them the moment they see the slightest imperfection. Leaders need to avoid this all costs.

Failure

Even God-called, Spirit-filled, Spirit-lead and empowered leaders fail and make mistakes at times. We must never think of ourselves as infallible, even if we have prayed about something more than everybody else or we are usually right. On the other hand, we never let failure cause us to give up or to de-motivate us for any length of time. If we fail by falling into sin, we need to confess it and get right with God (1 John 1:9); and then forgive ourselves and not indulge in self-pity or self-condemnation. If our failure is related to our leadership or ministry, e.g. failing to achieve goals, incorrect discernment when ministering etc., we need to go to God and commit the problem to Him. He may reveal something to us that makes our failure easier to accept or He may show us what we need to do next. Our failures may hurt, but we must not let them be blown out of all proportion in our mind and so dominate our thinking and our emotions. Once the sting has gone out of the failure, we should look to see if there is anything we can do to improve the situation. If not, we need to learn from the experience, and then put it behind us and get on with life. Failure may cause us to have to start all over again, but at least we can learn from our experience; and God willing, we will do a better job for Him next time.

Many leaders distance themselves from their past mistakes and failures by becoming cynical. If this takes root in our lives, it can be devastating to our hope, courage and motivation to serve the Lord. Christians should not like failure, but they should not fear it. If we are afraid to fail, we will never be really fruitful for God, because we will never take the risks, confront the challenges or be creative in the way needed for this. (Walking by faith means taking risks) The truth is that mistakes and failure are not the obstacles, but the fear of them is. Rising above failures and mistakes is essential if we are going to stay motivated in our services for the Lord. We need to learn how to forgive ourselves for our failures, so that we can approach new goals with clarity of mind and conscience.

Success

In some ways, success is more difficult to handle than failure, because it is intoxicating and it encourages pride (which can so easily destroy us). We need to remember that success in the work of God is the result of God at work and, therefore, all the glory needs to go to Him. Leadership should only be undertaken in God's Kingdom at His request and it should only be carried out to bring glory to Him. It is wrong to take on Christian leadership as a tool to achieve our own personal ambitions, to increase our prestige, or to enable our advancement. We need to have God's motives and His glory in mind only. This may have to be our aim at the beginning of our lives as one of God's leaders, because God may not have yet uncovered many of the attitude problems that we harbor deep inside of us.

Jealousy

Jealous people covet the success, gift or possessions of other people so much that it begins to affect them, their actions and their motives. They want other people have. As Christian leaders, we should be jealous only for God and so give Him all the glory at all times. This then leaves no room for us to be jealous of other people. We also need to learn to live and minister in the limits God has set for us, and to bless others who are gifted by Him.

Indispensability

It is big mistake to think of ourselves as irreplaceable or as the only person God could possibly use for a job (Romans 12:3). The truth is that it is God who accomplishes the work and He can do so without us. Many older leaders, in particular, have trouble in this area and they, therefore, cling to their office long after they should have passed it on to other younger men (whom they should have trained to do the work). This has been the cause of so many organizations that started well, falling into decay. Leaders can lead in such a way that people become dependent on them (usually this is motivated by insecurity, pride, and the need to be needed and appreciated); or they can lead in a way that causes people to depend on the Lord while at the same time training another person to take up their role as leader in the future. This is the only way to ensure the long term success of any work for the Lord. To be possessive about a work and to quench the potential of any who could possibly take our place of leadership is to hinder the work of God. We may have started a work and we may be the best person available to lead a work, but the truth is that it is God's work and if we let him, He can raise up a leader to replace us even as He raised us up.

Inferiority and Loneliness

Inferiority is self-doubt about who we are and what we can do. If the enemy succeeds in making us feel inferior we will tend to conform and fit into what other people want so that they will love and accept us. Fear or rejection is a powerful motivation to such people. Inferiority also causes people to draw in on themselves and even isolate themselves from other people. A person suffering from this will find that they cannot lead other people effectively.

It is often very lonely being a leader and this can cause us great hurt at times. Lonely leaders often protect themselves by keeping in with people. They therefore avoid saying anything that may be unpopular; avoid rebuking those who need it; conform to what other people expect of them; give other people what they want; and often use the poor me technique to gain other people's attention, affirmation and sympathy. In fact, many leaders who suffer from inferiority, insecurity or loneliness surround themselves with people who always support and agree with them (i.e. "yes men"). Of course, **leaders should avoid causing unnecessary offence but they need to remember that they are in the business of doing God's will and bringing people into maturity in Christ.** To aim just to make people feel good and to accept our leadership (i.e. meeting our need to be liked and accepted) is to miss out on what God has called us to do as His leaders. Achieving popularity by compromise may be easy but it will eventually destroy our spiritual ministry. Remember our value as a leader does not depend on other people liking or esteeming us it depends on God and the way He views us. The truth is that He loves us and wants only our best. Our worth in God's sight is settled and we can rest secure in this. We do not need to prove ourselves or look good to other people we just need to do what is right by obeying God and serving him lovingly and wholeheartedly (2 Corinthians 10:12-18; 1 Thessalonians 2:4-6)

Guilt

Guilt whether real or imagined can motivate us to work for our salvation because we feel we owe a debt to God or humanity and we need to work it out. In fact, this can cause us to work very hard and even wear ourselves out without really knowing why. To be motivated by guilt can lead to a very unhappy life, which never finds fulfillment. Because guilt is never satisfied, God wants us to know his forgiveness acceptance and love and to live a life that is free of guilt.

Fear

This is a very powerful motivating force. It can cause us to forget what we know to be right and do things we will regret. Fear can even be aroused simply by the way we are thinking, e.g. thinking about the unknown rejection or failure. This fear can cause us as leaders to distance ourselves from those we lead in order to protect ourselves and avoid hurt and rejection. Fearful leaders often refuse to open themselves up to other people because they have decided that getting close to others can cause them too much pain. These leaders keep people at an arms length and give their attention and commitment instead to the tasks that need to be done. Unfortunately, these leaders have forgotten that leadership is more about people than work especially in God's church. Leaders need to love their

people and give selflessly to them. This is true even for prophets, teachers and administrators, who most commonly suffer from this problem. We need to get close to those we lead if we want to be effective leaders. This may mean that other people see our faults but we should not let fear of this cause us to distance ourselves from those we lead. Equipping other people for service in God's kingdom is enabled by relationships, not a set of detailed rules handed out by a distant leader.

Over-caution is often the result of a fear filled life. Overcautious, fearful people tend to have nothing but financial and health problems. Nothing goes right for them, because they are too afraid to enter into anything wholeheartedly. They avoid anything that hints of risk and so are rarely creative or successful. 'Let the record books show you won, or let it show you lost, but don't let it show you failed to play the game!' We need to remember that, as Christians, God has not given to us spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7).

Doubt and Pessimism

If we continue to think negative thoughts, and allow doubt to become unbelief instead of faith, we will find ourselves becoming totally demoralized, de-motivated and disillusioned with our Christian life. In fact, depression and the things associated with it, are the only end results of such pessimistic thinking which goes on for long enough.

Laziness and Complacency

These will both rob us of our motivation and our drive to obey God and see His will carried out, especially if we are lazy in our times with God and His Word (Proverbs 18:9; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). There is no place for laziness or complacency in the kingdom of God. We need to guard against these things by seeing our life and our work as God does. He sees us as His sons whom He loves, and those to whom He has entrusted His will. Like the apostle Paul, we need to press on until we finish the work God has set out before us (Philippians 3:12-14).

Indifference and Indecision

Indifference breeds fatalism and causes us not to care what happens. This only succeeds in robbing us of any form of success. It also results in indecision, which is the thief of opportunity. As Christians, we need to make the most of every opportunity (Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 5:15- 16; Colossians 4:5). This is the only way to know the abundant life that Jesus promised (John 10:10).

Conclusion

There are probably many other negatives which you can think of that will de-motivate a believer in Christ and hinder the effectiveness of their service for the Lord. However, the negatives mentioned above are a good starting point to study, so that you will not fall into the pitfalls into which many other Christian leaders have already fallen. To keep motivated is an essential part of our Christian walk. Too many Christians, the moment things start to get tough, pull out of the running and give up. We desperately need to determine what motivates us and what keeps us motivated, so that we are prepared in any situation, no matter how difficult or costly, to do God's will.

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:12-14)

The apostle Paul had a lot to forget. In the past, he had behaved appallingly towards the faith he now confessed, and had fought for all he was worth against Him who was now His Lord. Later however, Paul became one of the most motivated Christians ever known. He may have failed early in life, but he was determined to put that behind him and do everything he possibly could to serve!

THE SPIRIT OF FORGIVENESS REQUIRED IN LEADERSHIP

Here we want to study about another heart issue of integrity. Not of the heart being invaded, but the heart being infected. This has to do with the leader and the spirit of forgiveness.

The primary idea of forgiveness is release or to let go. When we were forgiven by the Lord, we were let go from the power of sin. We were released from our bondage to eternal death. So we understand how forgiveness relates to release. But the Bible teaches about the spirit of forgiveness. It is to experience a life that lives in the spirit of release. When our heart and hands are open in a liberated attitude towards God and others, they will not become full of issues that are issues of anger or bitterness.

Release in freedom of ministry depends on the spirit of release dominating the heart of the leader.

Study the following passage: Matthew 18:21-35

= We see here an honest inquiry:

1. Peter's question reveals a position he believed had grown beyond the teaching of his day.
2. On the basis of such passages as: Amos 1:3,6,9,11,18 (etc. into chapter 2 of Amos), the rabbis of Jesus' time presumed that God Himself did not forgive more than three times
3. But the Lord said to Peter gently, NO Peter, but seventy times seven.
4. What Jesus was saying is not 490 times but: indefinite forgiveness (1 Cor. 13:4-7); Greek: "Love doesn't keep score!"

A new dimension (Matt. 18: 22-23a).

1. Jesus not only expands this limited view, but He attaches to this teaching the importance of the Kingdom principle.
2. When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom, two things are true:
 - a. He is speaking of something that God has called us into in the environment of redemption. It isn't something we can't do in ourselves, but being born-again into His Kingdom, He'll give us the power.
 - b. There is command in the kingdom.
A lesson showed so clear that Jesus shows frightening consequences if it is not responded to (Matt. 18: 34-35).

3. What does it mean to be delivered to the tortures?
 - a. The unforgiving servant was not returned to his original situation (Matt 18: 25cf. 34)
 - b. There was the nagging of bill collectors regularly to collect payments from him (Matt. 18:34).

The lesson:

1. It is possible to be forgiven of everything and know what salvation means.
2. If we forget how great forgiveness was given to us, and do not live in the same spirit of complete release and forgiveness towards others, there will be pains that torture our souls regularly because of unforgiveness.
3. The spirit of unforgiveness will take away joy, spiritual power, and physical health. An attitude of unforgiveness will take blessings/things out of you!
4. Medical studies proof that 70% of human diseases are the results of bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness inside the human being

The unforgiving servant (Matt. 18: 24-34).

1. An incredible debt (Matt. 18: 25).
 - a. Matt.18:25. Note the destruction that was about to take place to a man's life, family and future. His debt, which forecast his imminent ruin, depicts the total lost-ness of our situation outside God's grace and forgiveness in Christ.
 - b. Matt. 18: 26. Note the servant's plea, which proposes an impossible proposition. The multi-million dollar debt could never be repaid, given any amount of time. He could not even have kept pace with interest payments, much less pay off the principle amount.
 - c. Matt. 18: 27. Note the overwhelming compassion of the man's master. His character is completely contrary to the practice of the society then or now. This is NOT a usual response to debt: Jesus is depicting the Father's heart towards our burden and debt of sin and guilt.

2. An incredible response (Matt. 18: 28-29).

In an unbelievably insensitive way, the servant forgiven so great a debt goes to a fellow-servant, demanding payment for an obligation which existed between them (Please note: This debt has nothing to do with the relationship between the master and the servants. It is entirely between the two of them. (This is important to the lesson.).

1. Matt. 18:28. The two debts can in no way be compared: The original was an unpayable amount, given a lifetime. This debt is only the equivalent of about 3-4 months labor's wages.
2. Matt.18:28. Note the "forgiven" servant's approach: he immediately takes his fellow-servant by the neck, driving him to his knees. He is not only forgotten of the forgiveness shown him, he is cruel hearted in his approach to another servant.
3. Matt.18:29. Note the words spoken by the second servant: they are exactly the same words spoken by the first when he faced his master. Amazingly, he does not even hear the echo of his own appeal coming from the lips of his fellow-servant.
4. Matt.18: 30. Remember, the second request, "I will pay," was a reasonable one. This is the drastic difference in the two situations. The unforgiveness shown was in a setting that was infinitely less indebted, and therefore appropriately more likely to find patience.

The spirit of unforgiveness wants to take control, and once it has taken it can't pay back.

HOW DOES UNFORGIVENESS ENTER THE HEART OF A LEADER?

The spirit of unforgiveness enters one's life and heart through:

- jealousy,
- hurts,
- criticism,
- resentment (to be resentful is to keep people in the prison of our anger)
- judgementalism,
 - My opinion is: that person is wrong and I'm right. Thus we are putting others in the prison of our opinion. This could also apply to judging others' ministry styles.
 - These attitudes tragically fill the body of Christ. They cripple the effectiveness of the living church. They sap the spiritual strength of leaders. They build walls of separation between parts of the Body of Christ.

Application for a leader who does not live in continuous forgives, but who has unforgiveness in his heart:

- = It cripples his ministry.
- = It binds up the leader.
- = It binds up the people as well.

Thus, ask yourself: How well do I relate to other ministers?

SOME SCRIPTURAL KEYS TO RESOLVING CONFLICTS

In any team, including a "ministry team", there is a potential for some degree of conflict. Most teams are initially comprised of a number of skillful individuals. The task of a coach or trainer is to blend those various talents together for the good of the whole.

1. Some initial conflicts are almost inevitable.

Given the need for a variety of skills and expertise and the fact that such skills are found in the different types of character, personality and temperament, it is almost inevitable that there will surface initial areas of misunderstanding and conflict. This was certainly true amongst the disciples that Jesus drew around Himself. Their backgrounds, life experience, and temperaments were obviously widely divergent and when they first joined Him, there was blatant jostling for positions and roles. There were clear signs of rivalry and conflict, but Jesus persevered with the initial immaturity of His followers, gradually forming and shaping their lives they emerged with greater maturity and competence.

2. They should be recognized and resolved quickly and fairly.

The recognition and resolution of conflict or potential conflict is necessary in type of team situation. No team can function at its best if there is unresolved conflict present. The effectiveness of any corporate body depends to a large degree on the harmonious unity of purpose of its members. However, this is especially true of a Christian ministry team. God attaches a special value to unity and reserves a unique quality of "blessing" for the "brethren who dwell in unity." (Ps. 133). It is therefore important that dis-unity is dealt with speedily in a manner that is fair and just to all concerned. God will always bless such actions.

3. The solving of team can be positive and productive.

The leader must also be prepared to patiently seek to resolve any areas of conflict that may become evident. It is often through the resolution of such problems that true relationship is developed in its deeper dimensions. A ministry team that does not reach the openness and honesty required to properly deal with these kinds of problems will probably never achieve genuine strengths of relationship. Resolving such issue and going beyond them effectively demands the facility of "speaking the truth in love" and it is only as this quality is achieved that a team can graduate from superficial to deeper levels of maturity and relationship. The apostle Paul, who in the earlier stages of their relationship

held serious reservations about John Mark, later specifically requested his presence saying, “he is profitable to me.” (2 Tim 4:11).

4. Conduct regular and frequent team meetings.

Opportunities to get together regularly to share matters relating to the corporate vision are essential. Such meetings must occur frequently and regularly. Obviously many of these team meetings will be for de-briefing, reporting, discussing and prayer about the progress of the vision. They are essential for forward planning and organizing, which without regular attention will lose its edge and effectiveness.

However, the team members should also come together frequently for more informal times of fellowship and relaxation. It is only through the sharing of lives in these ordinary aspects of life that members can truly discover each other and team to know the true and real person. Relationship and fellowship at this level is essential to the development and deepening of genuine brotherliness.

5. Encourage openness and honesty.

It is essential, for the effective functioning of a ministry team that all the members relate to each other in frankness, openness and honesty. This is vital for the quality of unity that is needed for effective operation. This quality of relationship is also imperative as a protection for all the team members. Such a relationship can solve problems of temptation to which most leaders are subjected from time to time.

6. Give people room to be themselves and to express their uniqueness.

It is grave mistake to demand conformity amongst the team members. The unity that God seeks and desires is that of ‘variety in harmony’. A wide variety of giftings are needed in order to accomplish a many faceted task. This inevitably requires a considerable variety of skills and of personalities. Having chosen such a variety it is foolish to expect them all to be like and conform to one particular personality type. An important aspect of leadership is the ability to gain harmonious co-operation from a team of widely different persons.

7 Trust your team members. Express and show confidence in them.

One of the main reasons why some leaders do not delegate as they ought to is, because they do not fully trust their fellow workers. Delegation is essential to effectiveness and growth but in order to do it you must learn to trust your fellow workers. Three important factors in delegations are:

- Choose the right people.
- Delegate well defined task to the appropriate persons.
- Trust them to get on with it.

8. Don’t breathe down their necks.

Having committed a delegated task and role, give the person room to get on with it in their own inevitable way. Workers will usually rise to the level of competence that you trust them for. In the process, they will probably make some mistakes and you must be prepared for this. The person who never makes a mistake never makes anything.

9. Learn to listen to people.

A successful leader needs to be a good communicator. However, it is also very important that he learns to listen with humility too. Effective communication is of necessity a two-way function. The leader, who never listens, never learns. He will never really get to know and understand his team members if he does not lean to listen to them and make notice of them.

10. Make opportunities to talk with them.

In a smaller church, you will usually be amongst your team on a consistent and regular basis. The larger the organization the more challenging the need to stay in close personal touch with every member. Regular one on the talks will help to achieve this. You do not need to have long, profound conversations. Verbal contact on friendly, personal level at regular intervals helps to maintain the sense of togetherness and belonging. It promotes unity, loyalty and team commitment.

11. Express genuine appreciation.

Many leaders often feel appreciative, but fail to convey or express it, and frequently the other person feels unappreciated and neglected. It is a relatively simple thing to develop a habit of briefly expressing appreciation whenever you feel aware of it. You may do it verbally with a sincere: “Thank you, I really appreciate the way you accomplished that task and I greatly value you as a fellow worker.” Once in while you might write a note or send a card. You could take a person out for a meal or buy them a simple gift. There are many ways to express appreciation and each of them are valued by the recipient.

12. Administer corrective measures in private.

While appreciation and thanks can often be expressed publicly, corrective measures should always be attended to privately and confidentially except in extreme or unusual circumstances. No one likes to be criticized, rebuked or corrected before their peers. It undermines confidence and destroys relationship. Always try to bring the person aside and talk with them privately when you need to correct behavior, attitude, or performance.

13. Seek to build people’s confidence and competence levels.

An essential aspect of effective leadership is to reproduce other leaders. Every Paul should have his Timothy. Every leader should be a mentor to one of several apprentices. Every company should pour some time and effort into preparing its leaders for the future. This is particularly so in the case of churches where the fundamental purpose of the pastoral /teaching ministry is preparing the saints for the work of the ministry. (Eph. 4:11).

14. Accentuate positives, not negatives.

The synthesis of life is composed of positive and negatives and both are inevitable and essential to the function of life in the real world. However, while recognizing the inevitable reality of negative forces, leaders and their teams should consciously concentrate their thoughts and attitudes on the positive rather than the negatives. Concentrating primarily on the positive aspects will prepare one to face both the positive and negative issue of life. Of course, the ideal attitude is a healthy balance of both but where this is obtainable, then it is better to learn towards the positive.

15. Encourage them to spend quality time together.

Teams cannot develop in relationship or unity without spending quality time together in every possible area of life. Jesus shared His life completely with the twelve. They were together almost day and night for more than three years. They saw and experienced each other under almost every possible circumstance. They walked, worked, ate and talked together.

16. Be available to them, as individuals and corporately.

A true leader cannot afford to live in isolation from his team. He must be approachable, accessible and available to them. He should be ready and willing to meet with them consistently, individually or corporately.

17. Endeavor to model leadership at all times.

Whether consciously or un-consciously, it is a fact that the leader is a role model at all times. To gain and hold the credibility of leadership he should consistently portray the image of a good leader. His team members are constantly aware of their leader and are imbibing attitudes and perspectives from him. An important aspect of his role is therefore to demonstrate the characteristics of good leadership.

18. Assign specific and productive tasks to each.

Every team member needs to have specific and productive tasks allotted to them. They need to know and clearly understand what their role and duties are and their should always include some things that are positively productive. They need to know their work is integral to the success of the operation.

19. Challenge their potential. Give them something to rise to.

Most people, given favorable opportunity, will rise to the level of their competence but they need constant challenges to help them to do so. Such challenges should progressively increase in intensity,

i.e. they should become more and more challenging and stimulating as the person grows in skills and competence.

20. Adjust the tasks somewhat to suit the person.

One of the major fears of a delegator (someone who delegates jobs and responsibilities to others) is that his nominee will not perform the task in the manner that he, the leader would. He must understand that people have different approaches and methods of successfully accomplishing the same task. Sometimes the task may need to be adjusted somewhat to suit the approach of a certain person but this can be done without sacrificing the ultimate quality of performance.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE: Why, When and How?

Wherever there is a group of people, there must be order, there must be rules of ethics. If one is alone, then there is no need of laws governing interpersonal relationships. Laws are needed to preserve order and happiness and good relations between persons. If there are laws, then there needs to be submission to these laws for harmony to be maintained. If people violate these laws, then there comes the need for disciplines (Romans 13:2; Matthew 5:25- 26). These laws should not just be obeyed externally but internally, to have a clear conscience before God (Romans 13:5). Therefore, there is the need for the 'I will' of every person to be submitted to the supreme will, the will of God. The will of God is expressed in the laws of God. Scripture shows His will is law, and His law is His will. God's law is king. Because of the sinfulness of man and the imperfection of believers, oftentimes there is need of divine discipline in the Church.

This discipline may be executed under Divine sovereignty, directly by God Himself, or by human responsibility, acting in accordance with the principles of Scripture. Without discipline in a natural family, there would be disorder and chaos. The same is true in the Church, the family of God.

The second reference of the Lord concerning the Church, as mentioned in Matthew's Gospel, involves the need and the procedure for Church discipline. Read Matthew 16:15-20 with 18:15-20. Church discipline is one of the hardest and the most delicate areas in Church life. This comes because of misunderstanding concerning the nature and purpose of discipline or because of human sympathies, which stand against the spiritual administration of the same. However, Church discipline is absolutely necessary to maintain a strong, healthy and holy Church.

Definition of the word discipline

The word discipline means:

1. Teaching, learning, to disciple.
2. Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or morals.
3. Punishment, to inflict pain or a penalty.
4. A rule or system of rules, which govern conduct or activity.

The Meaning of Discipline

Without question, the New Testament teaches discipline. Discipleship is impossible without it. It ranges from self-discipline to Church discipline; from exhortation to excommunication.

What is implied by the fact that the Scriptures teach the responsibility of the Church to discipline its members when necessary?

1. It means that I am my brother's keeper. 'If any man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such a one. Bear you one another's burdens.'" (Galatians 6: 1- 2).
2. It demonstrates that "none of us lives unto himself" (Romans 14:8). Some times someone will tell you to mind your own business and not meddle in theirs, but the fact is that your brother is your business as being members of God's family.
3. It plainly says that God is holy and sin is not an insignificant thing. The early Church had purity and power while the Church today lacks much or this
4. It teaches that sin is contagious. Discipline is not to divide between the good and the bad, but it is to quarantine contagious sin in order to keep others from "catching it", for we are sufficiently alike to make us all susceptible to the same evils. It is restorative rather than punitive.
5. It manifests the fact that a Christian life is a corporate life. We are all baptized into one body, and when one member suffers, we all suffer. Individualism is the sin of division (1 Corinthians 12:13, 23).
6. It shows the mind of spiritual membership that existed in the New Testament. People became a part of the New Testament Church, or they could never have been put out of it (Matthew 18:17). People who are merely "members-at-large" of the mystical, invisible, universal Church can never fulfill the pattern found in Scripture.
7. It proves the sovereignty of the local Church. Disciplined people in Matthew 18:17- 18 find in the local Church a supreme court on earth. There is no structure of ecclesiasticism, district leaders, superintendents, bishop, or popes to which they might appeal. The local Church has it's Head in heaven.

The Necessity of Discipline

As in the natural family, so is the spiritual family. Discipline is needed for the following reasons:

1. Discipline is designed to make order and happiness possible. Without it, there would be lawlessness and anarchy (Judges 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).
2. Discipline introduces the principle of submission; my will submitted to or crossing the will of God.
3. Selfishness and self will bring destruction and misery in and home (Isaiah 14: 12-14).
4. Discipline exercised in love gives individuals and a congregation a sense of security saves a backslider from hell, and prevents worse problems.
5. Discipline is needed to uphold the moral standard of God's word, maintaining the holiness of God in the Church.
6. Discipline guides the immature, stabilizes the weak, and causes people to come to maturity in the Lord.

The Twofold Purpose of Discipline

There are two main aspects of discipline seen in Scripture, these being as follows.

1. Discipline unto restoration (Galatians 6: 1; Revelation 3: 19; Hebrews 12:5- 11).
This is correction to bring about repentance unto restoration. It is correction of the error, not rejection of the person. There is acceptance of the person with the view to restore them. One cannot restore unless one accepts the person being restored Unconditional love and total acceptance of the person is necessary but not the evil behavior.
It is worthy to note that 'restore', in Galatians 6:1 means: to set, mend as a dislocated bone, to completely and thoroughly mend. It is a wound to be healed. Even in the Corinthian case, excommunication led to repentance and restoration (2 Corinthians 2:6-8; James 5:19-20; 1 John 5:16; Proverbs 10:12; Psalms 51:12; Jeremiah 3:22; 20:16- 17; Hosea 14:4; Micah 7: 18-19). God desires us to save a soul from death and give him life. This is through Scriptural disciplines.
2. Discipline unto condemnation (I Corinthians 11:29-32; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, 11). The Corinthian case is a point in view. He was excommunicated from the Church but still with

the view to restoration by repentance.

God will judge, punish and chastise in order to bring a restoration of fellowship with Himself and believers. If men refuse to accept God's judgment of sin at Calvary, then God judges them with eternal judgment (John 5:24-29; 3:36; I Peter 4: 17; 1 Corinthians 5: 1-5, 12-13; 6: 1-11; Isaiah 4:4).

Examples of Discipline

A. Old Testament Disciplines

There are many examples of Divine discipline under the Old Testament times. We list a number of these cases.

- a. Adam and Eve received Divine discipline and judgment for sin (Genesis 3).
They were dismissed from Eden, placed under the penalty of death for sin.
'The wages of sin is death' (Romans 3:23).
- b. Abraham was reproved by Pharaoh for his "situational ethics" (Genesis 20).
- c. Cain was judged by the Lord for rejecting the lamb and for the sin of murder (Genesis 4).
- d. Aaron was rebuked for the sin of golden calf idolatry (Exodus 32:20- 21).
- e. Miriam was smitten with leprosy for sin of criticism of leadership (Numbers 12).
Then she was restored after 7 days.
- f. Korah, Dathan and Abiram were judged by death for their rebellion against God and His leadership (Numbers 16).
- g. Achan was judged by death on his family for sins of deceit (Joshua 7).
- h. Saul was rebuked publicly and judged for his sins (I Samuel 13:13; 15:14).
- i. A stubborn rebellious son was stoned to death by the elders (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).
- j. Hophni and Phinehas were judged by death for immorality and presumption (I Samuel 2:25).
- k. Ahab the king was rebuked by the prophet Elijah for his evils (I Kings 18:18).
- l. King Uzziah was smitten with leprosy for pride and presumption until his death (2 Chronicles 26).
- m. Ezra reproved those with strange wives (Ezra 10:18-23)
- n. Nehemiah contended with the rulers and nobles because of Sabbath violation and forsaking God's house (Nehemiah 13:11, 17).
- o. Daniel reproved the king for his pride and presumption (Daniel 5:22- 23).
- p. The days of Noah were days of judgment (Genesis 6-8; Luke 17:26- 27).
- q. The days of Sodom and Gomorrah were days of judgment (Genesis 18 + 19; Jude 7; Matthew 11:20-24). Remember Lot's wife.
- r. The nation of Egypt was judged by God (Genesis 15:14; Exodus 5-14).
- s. The Tower of Babel was Divine judgment (Genesis 10+ 11).
- t. The Nations of Israel and Judah were judged even though they were God's people (Exodus 31-33; Deuteronomy 27-28).

Some of the Divine disciplines in Israel involved excommunication and sometimes the death penalty. All these were types and examples to us upon whom the ends of the age have come (I Corinthians 10:6, 11).

Excommunication:

Under the following Old Testament examples, we see the Divine reasons given when persons had to be excommunicated from the camp of Israel, or "cut off from his people" as it was commonly referred to. Some of these reasons were:

- ❖ Failure to accept the covenant seal of circumcision (Genesis 17:4).
- ❖ Eating leavened bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:15).
- ❖ Counterfeiting the holy anointing oil or incense (Exodus 30:33, 37).
- ❖ Eating blood (Leviticus 7:27).
- ❖ Offering burnt offerings away from the Door of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 17:8- 9).
- ❖ Partaking of the Peace Offering on the third day after it was sacrificed (Leviticus 19:7).
- ❖ Carnal relationships with a woman in her natural uncleanness (Leviticus 20:18).

- ❖ Coming to the holy things in an unclean state (Leviticus 22:3).
- ❖ Failure to keep the Feast of Passover (Numbers 9: 13).
- ❖ Having a plague of leprosy in the person (Numbers 5:2-4).
- ❖ Sinning presumptuously (Numbers 15:31).
- ❖ Failure to purify oneself from death's defilement (Numbers 19:13).

Death Penalty

Some serious violations of the law of God were punishable with the death penalty, under two or three witnesses. Some of these are listed here:

- ❖ Idolatry (Deuteronomy 17:2-6).
- ❖ Contempt and rebellion against Priestly judgments in certain matters (Deuteronomy 17: 8-13).
- ❖ False witness (Deuteronomy 19:18).
- ❖ Stubborn and rebellious sons (Deuteronomy 21:18).
- ❖ Discovery of violated virginity by a husband (Deuteronomy 22: 13-21).
- ❖ Adultery (Deuteronomy 22:22).
- ❖ Immoral behavior to one betrothed (Deuteronomy 22:23- 24).
- ❖ Homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13) and bestiality (Leviticus 18:23-30;20:15- 16)

New Testament Disciplines

The New Testament shows various things also that have to come under Divine discipline in the Church. Unless leadership deals with those in error, then the whole congregation can be defiled. The Corinthian Church exemplifies this truth. We note a list of things, which were and need to be disciplined in a Church.

No Church can prosper if it allows sin to go unjudged. The Lord will withdraw His blessing (Revelation 1-2-3).

Sin is contagious. The spiritual health of the Body is at stake. Sin in a member is like “leaven” (I Corinthians 5:6- 7). Sin can affect the whole Body (Joshua 7, Achan; 1 Corinthians 5, Fornicator; and Revelation 2: 14-16, 20-23; Idolatry, Immorality and False Doctrines).

What offences require Church discipline?

A - Doctrinal Offences

- ❖ Paul dealt with Hymenaeus and Alexander over the doctrine of the resurrection (I Timothy 1: 20; II Timothy 2: 17-26). Also Hymenaeus and Philetus.
 - ❖ Doctrines not according to godliness were dealt with (I Timothy 6:3-5).
 - ❖ Doctrines of idolatry and immorality were dealt with (Revelation 2:12-17).
 - ❖ Doctrines that bring division contrary to apostles doctrines dealt with (Romans 16: 17- 18).
 - ❖ Heresy and doctrines of devils (1 Timothy 4:1-3; Titus 3:9,11; 1 John 4:1; Matthew 7:15; Galatians 1:7-10; II Peter 2:1-4; Jude 4).
- Such must be “shunned” (II Timothy 2:16); "purged" (II Timothy 2:23); "avoid discussion" (II Timothy 2:25); “withdraw from” (I Timothy 6:3, 5); "delivered to Satan" (I Timothy 1: 20); "not received into house, or bless" (II John 10); and "charged not to teach other doctrine" (I Timothy 1:7).

These must be “reproved, rebuked and exhorted” to continue in the sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:1-2; Titus 1:1; 11 Peter 1: 3).

Read also (Matthew 5:9; John 15:9; Matthew 24:11-13; Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10; Galatians 1:7-9).

False doctrine causes people to "put away faith" and "shipwreck"(1 Timothy 1:19). In Church discipline, God's protection is withdrawn from these, and they are delivered to satan from whom they received their false doctrines.

B - Behavioral Offences

Offences against the members of the Body of Christ have to be dealt with also. As members one of

another, none of us live to ourselves (Matthew 25:40; I Corinthians 8:2; Matthew 10:40; 18:5; Luke 10: 16; Acts 9:4).

This has to do with a brother or sister's perpetual lifestyle, not just single incidents or mistakes. It is dealing with 'brothers and sisters', in the family of God -NOT outsiders. God judges them –not the Church (I Corinthians 5: 12-13).

➤ **Fornicator-** I Corinthians 5: 1.

Generally speaking, it is immorality of the unmarried. In Matthew 19:5; 5:32 it here includes adultery (immorality of those married). It deals with moral impurity. In totality, this can include Sodomites and Sodomitesses (Homosexuality, Lesbianism, Moral Perversions). In I Cor. 5: 1-5 it involved incest; a man with his own mother.

In broadest term, it includes all illicit sexual relationships. This works as leaven in the Church unless dealt with (Read I Corinthians 5 with II Corinthians 12:20-21). Not to eat or company with immoral persons. Immoral persons hide under the cover of the Church. When excommunicated by the Church God can deal with him.

➤ **Covetous-** I Corinthians 5: 11.

One who is inordinately desirous, greedy. Unlawful lustfulness.

Cf. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1-11).

Cf. Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20-27). Covetousness evidenced.

Cf. Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8: 18-23).

Cf. Balaam the soothsayer prophet (Numbers 22; Jude 11).

Covetousness can include many things, but it is evidenced in the love of money In numerous cases (I Peter 5:2). Covetousness is idolatry (Ephesians 5:3). Read also Philippians 3: 15-19; Luke 12:15, 34; John 6:26, 27; Romans 1:29; 13:9; Colossians 3:2-6; 1 Thessalonians 2:5; I Timothy 3:3; 6:5-17; II Timothy 3:2; Hebrews 13:5; James 4:2; II Peter 2:3; I John 2:15.

Remember Judas!

➤ **Idolater- I Corinthians 5: 11**

Inordinately fond of a person or thing. Anything that comes between God and the believer is

Idolatry:

1. **Literal Idols** - I Corinthians 6:9; 10:14, 20; Revelation 21:8. Thus pictures, statues, worship of saints, Buddha, etc., and material, physical or spiritual objects, and selfism – all equal idolatry. We are to have no other gods before or beside God.
2. **Spiritual Idols** - Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5. Covetousness is idolatry. Romans 1: 23. Anything between God and a believer becomes an idol.

➤ **Railer** - I Corinthians 5: 11; I Peter 3:9; Proverbs 26:4.

“A verbal brawler, evil speaker, contentious, extremely argumentative.” It speaks of abusive language, scornful, one who is against everything, speaks evil and blasphemously of leaders and brothers. One impossible to get along with.

I Timothy 6:4; Colossians 3:8; Ephesians 4:31. Evil speaking is condemned. Some are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries (II Peter 2: 10). John would deal with Diotrephes for his arrogance (II John 9- 10).

➤ **Drunkard- I Corinthians 5: 11.**

One who habitually drinks, and is perpetually under the influence or strong drink. Habitual intoxication is a moral weakness.

Galatians 5: 19. Drunkenness is a work of the flesh.

Ephesians 5:18. We are not to be drunk with wine.

Read also Romans 13:13; I Thessalonians 5:7; Proverbs 20:1; 23:20-21; 23:29-35; Isaiah 5: 11; Deuteronomy 21: 20- 21.

➤ **Extortioner-** I Corinthians 5: 11.

“To obtain from a person by oppression, or abuse of authority.” It is deep desire for advantage and speaks of one who seizes upon them and takes them by force, or one who gets money (or whatever he wants) by threat, force, fraud, or illegal use of authority. It is akin to covetousness. It is the crime of one using one's official position to obtain money or other things of value unlawfully (i.e., False cheques written, etc.).

A thief... extortioner (I Corinthians 6:10). Read also Psalms 109:11; Isaiah 16:4; Ezekiel 22:12; Micah 3:2-3; Matthew 23:25; Luke 18:11.

➤ **Disorderly Conduct** - II Thessalonians 3:6-15.

“Not keeping order”, as a military team marching, and one who gets out of step. One who is insubordinate and obstinate in attitude; one who violates regularly the principle of labour and support. Idle busybodies! From this person one is to “withdraw” (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14), but not treat him as an enemy but a brother under discipline (II Thessalonians 3:5). Thus this is not a case of excommunication as in Matthew 18:17.

An unruly person needs to be quiet, and work and eat his bread (I Thessalonians 5:11-12, 14; II Thessalonians 3:11). No food = no rations if he does not work.

Disorderliness = “slothfulness, laziness, sluggard, busybody”. It involves irresponsibility (Luke 16:11; I Timothy 5:8, 13; II Thessalonians 3:7-9; Proverb 6:6-11; 18:9; 19:15; Matthew 25:26; Romans 12:11).

He should be encouraged to get work and not become a “parasite” on the hospitality of saints in the Church. Then he can meet his own needs and help others.

➤ **Divisionaries**- Romans 16:16-18.

Those who bring divisions contrary to sound doctrine need to be disciplined. They are to be marked and avoided. Deliberately not seek their company. Even, leadership may draw disciples after themselves and divide the Church (Acts 20:28-32).

Doctrines especially contrary to the redemptive truths of the Bible are to be avoided.

➤ **Sectarianism**- I Corinthians 3:1-3; Ephesians 5:12; II Corinthians 7:11, 12.

Sectarianism is evidence of carnality and needs to be disciplined also. Paul's Epistle was corrective and disciplinary to deal with such.

➤ **Unforgiving attitude** -Matthew 5:25; 18:15-35; Luke 12:58.

This person brings himself or herself under Divine discipline for failing to forgive.

➤ **Not discerning the Body** -I Corinthians 11:23-32.

This has been dealt with previously. But, weakness, sickness and premature death are all part of Divine discipline. If we would judge ourselves we would not be judged, but the Lord chastens us with these things so that we will not be condemned with the world.

- The Sorcerer was judged for resisting the Gospel of Christ, (Acts 13:6-12).
- One refusing to be reconciled to his brother and refusing to hear the witnesses and the whole Church is to be excommunicated (Matthew 18:15-20; 5:21-26).
- Lying to the Holy Spirit brought Divine Judgment (Acts 5:1-11).

These things can work like leaven or leprosy and spread through the Body if not dealt with. The Church is God's house, His covering for His people. While under this covering, they often escape discipline. God will get them out sometimes to deal with them (I Samuel 2:25).

Sins of ignorance were dealt with in the Church in the Wilderness (Leviticus 4; Numbers 15:24-31), as well as sins of presumption, leprosy in the person, the garment or the house must be cleansed. (Leviticus 13, 14).

Who Administers Discipline?

Who is the one or who are the ones who should administer discipline, especially when it comes to the local Church.

1. Sovereign Discipline

Sometimes God in His own sovereignty administers discipline. He chastens His own people (Hebrews 12:5; Proverbs 3:11, 12; I Corinthians 11:29-32; James 5:14, 15; I John 5: 16, 17). Sometimes there “is a sin unto (physical) death.”

2. Spiritual Members (Galatians 6:1)

“Which are *spiritual* restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.” Carnal handling of problem only makes matters worse (I Corinthians 6:4). Only the spiritually mature should discipline and this should be done in the Eldership. Parents generally discipline their children and not the children the parents. So the spiritual parents in the Church should do the same. Paul, as a father in the Lord, asked the Corinthian whether he should come with a rod of correction or not (I Corinthians 4:15-21).

3. The Whole Church

Sometimes the whole Church attests to the discipline of a person. This is confirmed by a study of Matthew 18:15-20.

“Tell it to the Church if he neglect to hear the Church...”

“When ye are come together...deliver such an one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so the spirit can be saved.” (I Corinthians 5:4)

“Which was inflicted of many...(II Corinthians 2:6).

Thus, the man was dis-fellowshipped or excommunicated. This was to be respected by the whole Church. The only contact was to see him come to repentance and restoration otherwise they were not to eat with him at all.

Principles of Disciplinary Judgment

Certain principles should be evidenced in any area of Church discipline. It should be remembered that the whole purpose of discipline is restorative.

Discipline should be administered:

1. By and according to the Word (John 12:47, 48; II Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 2:2; Matthew 24: 11; II Peter 2: 1).
2. Balanced with the mercy of God (James 2:12- 13; Luke 17:2-4; Leviticus 19:17).
3. In truth and righteousness (Zechariah 7:9- 10; Ezekiel 44:17-24; Isaiah 32: 1, 16; 16:5; Psalms 122:5; 101:1). Mercy and truth should meet together: righteousness and peace kiss each other, in Divine balance.
4. In Divine love (I Corinthians 13; Revelation 3:19).
5. In a spirit of meekness and humility, realizing ones own humanity (II Timothy 2:25; Galatians 6: 1; Ephesians 6:4).

Discipline without love and meekness creates rebellion. Discipline without punishment generally is ineffective, producing little or no results.

Scriptural Procedures in Discipline

Leadership cannot act rashly in Church discipline and expect God to back it up as His discipline.

1. Private Discipline

Most discipline should be done on a private level. Nobody generally airs their “dirty linen” to the neighbors. If the transgression or fault is private, then it should be dealt with privately. How much trouble would be averted in the Church amongst members if the first basic principle of Matthew 18:15-20 was followed through. “Go to your brother...” Note the emphasis on, “Go to him...” in these Scriptures (Matthew 5:24; 18:15; Luke 17:3- 4; Leviticus 19:17).

2 Public Discipline

Matthew 18:5-20 lays out the clearest order for reconciliation between members of the Church and excommunication if they stubbornly and willfully refuse to be reconciled and

hear the Church. Note the steps laid out by Jesus for this.

a. First Step and Admonition

If there is any offence between brothers (or sisters) “Go to him alone...”

This involves:

- A right attitude and manner of approach;
- The right words said in the right spirit;
- A genuine desire for reconciliation with the brother:
- Acceptance of the person you want reconciliation with.

(Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6: 1; Proverbs 25:9; 16:28; Matthew 5:24; Luke 17:3-5). You are to go to him ALONE! This is the FIRST and foundational step for reconciliation according to Christ, the Head of the Church, His Body.

b. Second Step and Admonition

After genuinely and honestly and meekly before God and taking the initiative to go to your brother and he refuses reconciliation, then the Scripture says to take two or three others (Matthew 18: 16).

This would involve:

- Perhaps some of the persons close friends.
- People he or she has confidence in and trusts.
- Spiritually mature persons.
- Persons who have discernment.
- Persons who also desire to see reconciliation come about.

Read again {Galatians 6: 1; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 4: 14; Colossians 3:16}.

These two or three witnesses can hear and weigh the whole case exercising loving discernment, meekness and judgment, with a view to affect reconciliation.

This second admonition is designed to shake the offender and help them see the seriousness of their error and the need to correct it. It is to bring the influence of spiritual members and their admonitions to bear so that the offender will break down his resistance to reconciliation. It also involves showing the offender the next step before going to the Church should he fail to respond to these two steps (Proverbs 25:9-12; 27: 5-6; 16:28).

c. Final Step and Admonition

Matthew 18: 17; I Timothy 5:20; I Corinthians 5: 13; John 20:23. The final step and admonition is to bring the person who refuses to be reconciled before THE CHURCH! It seems as if the whole local Church should rise up, or various ones, representing the congregation and plead with the person to be reconciled. After hearing the offended alone, hearing the two or three witnesses, and then being brought before the Church, surely he will hear the Church,

This no doubt would involve the ministry of the Church, along with the two or three witnesses, presenting the situation to the congregation. The step here even is to effect reconciliation. The purpose is not to judge or condemn him as a trial in court, but to win him. It is not to humiliate him but to reconcile him. How hard the heart must be to refuse these three steps of reconciliation!

“If he neglects to hear...” this is the final sin, not necessarily the one fault originally to be dealt with. It is his REFUSAL TO HEAR his brother, the two or three others, and then his refusal to hear THE CHURCH!

There is no other alternative but the fourth step.

d. Fourth Step -Excommunication

This step is indeed the last resort, when all else has failed. He has been rebuked before all (cf. I Timothy 5:19-21).

Excommunication now takes place. He is cut off from the local congregation, even as Old Testament people were “cut off”(Exodus 12: 15- 19; Leviticus 17:4- 9; Numbers 19:20).

Even as others were put out of the Synagogue, so this person is put out of the Church (Luke 6:22; John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). A Jew was excommunicated from the local Synagogue and

from the community at large. It was banishment, anathematized (cursed). The Jews anathematized Jesus (I Corinthians 12:3). All who love not the Lord Jesus will be anathematized at Christ's coming (I Corinthians 16:22).

The person here is cast out of the Church, becoming as a heathen, publican and sinner. It is by the authority of the whole Church God backs it up. Read I Corinthians 5:4; II Corinthians 2:6; I Samuel 2:25.

Here the Church puts away from them that wicked person. There must be unity in the Church. All members are concerned and all must consent to this act. If some do not believe, then division of opinion comes; sympathies arise against the Word of God (I Corinthians 1:10).

This is "binding and loosing" spoken of in the matter of Church discipline. The person is "bound" and cannot be "loosed" until he comes to repentance.

e. Fifth Step –Repentance /Reconciliation

If the desired discipline works, then the person should come to genuine repentance, confession, reconciliation with the offended person, and public confession and reconciliation in the Church. He is then "loosed" and restored to favour as before.

Biblical Effects of Discipline

Having covered rather fully the area of discipline, we note some of the things that happen in discipline.

- 1) Unrepentant persons are excommunicated from the Church and treated as heathen, or publican or unbeliever or sinner. They are bound until loosed by the Church. {Matthew 18:15-20}.
- 2) The fornicator was turned over to satan for the destruction of the flesh (I Corinthians 5:3-5).
- 3) Ananias and Sapphires died for lying to the Holy Spirit, Peter only declaring it (Acts 5: 1-11)
- 4) The sorcerer was smitten with blindness for a season for opposing the Gospel of Christ through Paul (Acts 13:6-13).
- 5) Divisionaries were marked and avoided (Romans 16: 16-18)
- 6) Brothers who are of the number in I Corinthians 5:1-13) were dis-fellowshipped by the saints
- 7) Brothers who were walked disorderly were to be withdrawn from, but not treated as enemies (II Thessalonians 3:6-15).
- 8) Sins are retained against persons until they repent and are reconciled (Mark 2:7; John 20:23; Matthew 18: 18; II Corinthians 5: 19).

Discipline of Ministry

The Scripture shows that even the Ministry has to come under discipline. Unless those in leadership, who are in error, are dealt with, then those under their charge will be affected by following their leadership.

If there is public knowledge of the elder's faults, then they should be dealt with and settled in the congregation.

It is important for any congregation to realize that it is God who disciplines leadership ministries- NOT the people!

If the people take it into their hands to do it, then God judges the people even though the ministry needs discipline. He says, "Touch not the Lord's anointed and do His prophets no harm" (Psalms 105: 15).

David would not touch king Saul, as the Lord's anointed, even though Saul was in the wrong (I Samuel 26:9). David respected the office- even though Saul had forfeited the anointing and the Spirit of the Lord. Though David was urged by his men to slay Saul, God used these occasions to test out the heart of David.

Revelation 1-2-3 show that the "angels" are in His hand, upheld, supported by and disciplined by Christ, the Head of the Church.

1. Touch not the Lord's Anointed

- a) The stars are in His hand to be disciplined (Revelation 1:20).
- b) The leadership is His anointed to be disciplined by Him (I Chronicles 16:22)
- c) Miriam and Aaron were judged when they touched Moses {Numbers 12}.
- d) Korah and his company were judged, when they touched Moses and Aaron (Numbers 16). Read also Jude 11.
- e) Nadab and Abihu were judged in death by God as ministry (Leviticus 10:1-3).
- f) God judged Saul in time, not David (I Samuel 26:9-11)
- g) Against eldership, receive no accusations without two or three witnesses (I Timothy 5:1, 19-21).
- h) God will judge the shepherds of His people (Jeremiah 23: 1-3; Ezekiel 34: 1-10).

2. Divine Sovereignty

- o Sometimes God, in His own sovereignty, deals discipline to His leaders. It was not left to the people to do it.
- o Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, were Divinely judged. (Leviticus 10: 1 -3).
- o Miriam was smitten with leprosy, Aaron rebuked by the Lord (Numbers 12).
- o God allowed Saul to be killed in battle, confirming Samuel's word (I Samuel 2)
- o Korah and his rebellious company knew Divine discipline {Numbers 16}.
- o God sent the plague on thousands who touched Aaron's priesthood (Numbers 16-17).
- o Moses and Aaron both missed the Promised Land, as leadership, under Divine discipline (Numbers 20: 12; Psalms 106:30-33).
- o Ananias and Sapphira were Divinely judged (Acts 5: 1-11).

3. Human Responsibility

Sometimes God used ministries to deal with ministries; but again, never the people.

- a. Nathan reproved David for his sin (II Samuel 12:7). A prophet reproved a king.
- b. Samuel, a prophet reproved Saul a king, for his sin (I Samuel 13:13).
- c. The Man of God reproved Eli the priest (I Samuel 12:27-29).
- d. Paul reproved Peter, the apostle (Galatians 2:11-14)
- e. Peter, the apostle, speaks to the Eldership (I Peter 5:1-5)
- f. Moses reproved Korah and company (Numbers 16).
- g. The apostles and elders discussed the doctrinal matters of Jew and Gentile (Acts 15).
- h. Prophets were sent to reprove and rebuke kings for their evils in the Old Testament times.
- i. John the Apostle dealt with Diotrephes (II John 9, 10)
- j. Undoubtedly the Eldership tested out the false apostles (Revelation 2:2)
- k. Elders are to deal with others when they fail and need rebuke (I Timothy 5:19-21) Eldership comes under great attack, criticism, complaints, etc. However, if there is a violation authority and it should be dealt with. Otherwise, there is loss of respect and authority in the Church. An elder should be rebuked before elders. If it is public, then it should be clarified in the Church. Military leaders experience the great and terrible shame of being 'defrocked', in front of their regiment. Elders are to be respected, loved and obeyed, for they are responsible and accountable for the flock of God (Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24).

4. Ministry and Morals

Perhaps one of the most devastating areas of breakdown in the ministry is that which pertains to morals. Immorality affects a person, and more especially the ministry, in the following areas of life and should be dealt with according to Scriptural principles; otherwise, redemptive restoration cannot be properly effected.

We note some of the important things pertaining to discipline of ministry in the matter of morals.

- a. **Morally-** A minister disqualifies himself where there is a breakdown especially in the area of morals. A wife can also disqualify her husband from the ministry by immoral conduct.
- b. **Domestically-** If an elder (minister) does not have his own house in order, he cannot rule the

house of God. This order and rule involves husband /wife relationships and his children. The husband /wife relationship has to be rebuilt and restored.

- c. **Mentally and Emotionally-** Moral breakdowns affect one mentally and emotionally also. The great damage done and the torment of guilt have to be dealt with God's way. This is done by genuine repentance, confession, cleansing and renewal. Rationalizations for the sin cannot be justified or tolerated; otherwise, one opens themselves to great deception.
- d. **Ethically-** Any minister who fails morally, if he governed by any Scriptural ethics should step down from public ministry for a period of time.
- e. **Spiritually-** Moral breakdowns seem to have the most damaging and devastating affect especially in the ministry, as being so much in the public view and held up for an example of a Godly lifestyle. Therefore there needs to be spiritual restoration first.
- f. **Ecclesiastically-** Because the minister in function is before the Ekklesia, his area of influence is great. Because none of us live to ourselves, but we all affect others, so there needs to be proper and Scriptural discipline. Otherwise, the Church suffers and we set precedents for all or any other moral breakdowns. The elder that sins should be rebuked before all so that others may fear. These things generally become Church, or public knowledge and therefore should be dealt with Scripturally. These can then cause gossiping and imaginations to cease because sin has been dealt with in a Scriptural manner.
- g. **Practically-** General and practical guidelines for restoration would be as follows:
 1. Genuine repentance and confession on the part of the guilt, depending on the person(s) involved and depending whether public or private knowledge.
 2. Forgiveness of God and the party(ies) or others involved in the Church, as to the sin and reproach brought on the Name of the Lord, the husband and wife, the family, the leadership and the Church.
 3. Disciplinary measures taken by stepping down from public ministry.
 4. A period of probation to be determined, giving time for "rebuilding the walls" broken down through immorality, in the various areas above. Clearing away the damage and rebuilding the marriage relationship takes time, but is top priority. God's order is forgiveness probation, then restoration as the plan of redemption through the whole Bible shows.
 5. Counseling in an on-going manner through relationship with someone who can minister redemption in a restorative manner.
 6. Restoration after suitable probationary period to ministry.
This must not be done in any legalistic or Pharisaical "holier-than-thou"-attitude or spirit. It should be done to restore one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted in the same area

These guidelines are based on the qualifications of eldership as set forth in the Pastoral Epistles (I Timothy 3: 1- 7; Titus 1:5-9 with I Timothy 5: 17 -25).

Eternal Judgment

There are many things which escape Church discipline and judgment. These will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ, or the Great White Throne Judgment.

Note (I Timothy 5:24- 25. Amplified New Testament).

1. The Word of God teaches a future judgment (II Corinthians 5:10-11; 1 John 4: 17; Romans 14:10-12; John 12:47-48; Revelation 11:18).
2. There are two judgments in the Word of God as to eternal judgment:
 - a. **Judgment for Believers:**
This is according to a believers works (I Corinthians 3:11 –15; II Corinthians 5: 10; I John 4: 17; Romans 14:10-12; John 12:47-48).
 - 1) **Threefold aspect of judgment for the believer**
 - Judgment Past -As a sinner at the Cross.
 - Judgment Present -As a son at the table of the Lord (I Corinthians 11: 23-34).

- Judgment Future -As a servant at the Bema Seat of Christ.

2) Five Crowns as Rewards for believers

- Crown of Life (James 1: 12; Revelation 2: 10).
- Crown of Righteousness (II Timothy 4:8).
- Crown of Glory (I Peter 5:2-4).
- Crown of Rejoicing (I Thessalonians 2: 19-20).
- Crown of Incorruption (I Corinthians 9:25-27; I John 2:28).

b. Judgment for Unbelievers

This is also for works. It is judgment at the Great White Throne- Eternal Judgment.

1. God is the perfect Judge. He is incapable of making any errors of judgment because he has all the facts before Him by reason of His essential attributes (Genesis 18:25; Hebrews 12:23; Psalms 89:14; 19:7-8; 94:2; 96:13; 98:9; Jeremiah 11:20; I Peter 1:17).
2. Wicked angels will be judged (II Peter 2: 1-3; 3:7; II Peter 2:4-9; Jude 6).
3. Satan will be eternally judged in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20: 1-15).
4. All ungodly will be judged, all who have rejected the word of God and Christ Jesus. They will be judged by the Word (Psalms 149:1-9; 1:5; 9:7, 16; Revelation 14:7; I Timothy 5:24; Hebrews 9:27; 10:27; Romans 2:5).

This will be eternal judgment - eternal discipline. If men refuse to accept God's discipline unto restoration in Christ, then there is no alternative but to know, God's discipline unto damnation for all eternity!

CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

Isaiah 43:18- 19 says, “Do not remember the former things nor meditate on the things of old. Behold I will do a new thing, even now it shall spring forth.”

One of the greatest challenges that confronts the church today is the challenge of change. The world scene is changing rapidly in every sphere. Much of that change is good and some of it is bad. The great challenge that confronts us is to discern the manner in which the church should relate to those changes. Many church leaders and organizations are resistant to any and all change, yet there are many legitimate changes that are long overdue as we move rapidly forward in this new century. If the church is to retain any credibility, it must be willing to recognize its need to be relevant to its times. We need to be in harmony with God’s present purpose. God is not old fashioned, out of date, behind the times. He is the God of the eternal present.

Relatively few people feel comfortable with change. We feel a certain security in things the way we have always known them. The fast changing world is bewildering and challenges our sense of security and well-being. The fact is that change is transpiring and we cannot deny or alter that. Certain fundamental changes must take place in the church in order to maintain relevance in our modern world.

Positive and productive change should be initiated from the top by the leadership. Leaders who are unwilling to change may find themselves forfeiting the exciting opportunities that presently exist in our changing world.

What God is saying, through Jeremiah (43:18) is: “do not hang on to the past because I am about to do a new thing and if you insist in hanging on to the past, you will not be able to grasp (lay hold of) the future.” A simple analogy might be that of a trapeze artist, swinging from one trapeze to the next. If he is unwilling to let go of the first swing, he will not be able to grasp the second. He will therefore keep swinging in ever decreasing arcs until he finally loses all momentum. We must release our tenacious hold upon the past in order to reach forward to lay hold upon the future that God is unveiling. “Brethren, I do not consider that I have fully arrived, but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, I reach forward to those things which are ahead.” Phil. 3:13

If the leadership is not willing to release the past and press on into all that God has for us in the future, then the people will not possess their inheritance.

Numerous scriptures indicate the need to confront the challenge of change. I will mention but a few of them.

Jer 12:5, “If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horsemen? And if in the land of peace wherein you trusted, they wearied you, how will you manage in the swelling of Jordan?”

1 Chron 12:32, “...the sons of Issachar, who had an understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command.”

Num. 10:14, “The children of Judah set out first”. v15, “Over the tribe of the children of Issachar was Nethanel the son of Zuar.”

Haggai 2:6- 7, “Once more, for a short time, I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.”

Heb. 12:26- 27, "I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also, signifying the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain."

As we rapidly move forward in this new Century, we have entered a period of dramatic, swift, exponential change, an irreversible phenomena which greatly challenges every aspect of human life, particularly that of the Church. If we do not recognize its huge implications and adequately cope with the phenomena, the church may sacrifice much of its destiny.

The ability or inability to successfully initiate positive change may prove to be the ultimate test of a leader's effectiveness

Definitions of CHANGE:

- To make or become different.
- To modify or alter.
- To substitute one thing for another.
- To update and upgrade to achieve improvement.

Why do we change things? To improve their performance or function

Conversion and Sanctification are radical changes:

- a) 2 Cor. 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. Old things have passed away; all things have become new."
- b) 2 Cor. 3:18, "But we all with open face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being changed into that same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord."
The advent of the Kingdom will be the most radical change of all.
- c) 1 Cor. 15:51- 52 "and we shall all be changed in a moment."

CHANGE IS AN INTEGRAL, INEVITABLE ASPECT OF LIFE

Both secular and Biblical history proves this.

Nature confirms it. Every living thing changes as it grows.

The processes of change are implicit in every living thing that God created. Nothing develops and grows except through ordered processes of change and transformation.

Since its inception the world has been going through various processes of change. It is an inevitable and inescapable factor of life. There is no point in hiding, or running from it for it is bound to catch up with you.

PROCESSES OF CHANGE HAVE RAPIDLY ACCELERATED IN OUR DAY.

Bible Prophecy predicts it: "In the last days!" – Accelerated change.

(Matt. 24:22 "Except those days be shortened" – 'accelerated')

Dan. 12:4 "...at the time of the end, many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase."
("Rabah" = increase exceedingly)

Every region of the world will be affected.

Every organization, company, and institution will be affected.

Change will affect every aspect of life, including:

A. Political

E.g. Fall of Marxism and the disintegration of the Communist dream of worldwide domination

B. Technological.

Huge changes have been initiated with the emergence of the Computer Age and all the startling innovations spawned by this. Space travel has become a reality, and the so-called information highway threatens to change the pattern of life forever.

C. Economic.

There have been tremendous changes in world economics. Centres of economic power have shifted from the West to the East. The full significance of these changes has not yet been recognized.

D. Social.

Immense sociological changes are transpiring in the world. The gigantic moves of population from rural to urban constitute only one small part of the huge social experiment that is taking place.

E. Religious.

Many world religions are undergoing both intensification (Fundamentalism) and disenchantment. Huge vacuums are opening up in the religious world scene.

F. Spiritual. “Spirit to be poured out on all flesh.”

In retrospect, it will become obvious that the greatest changes that have transpired in these momentous times, will be those associated with the fulfillment of God prophetic purposes. The program of God will impact every area of the universe, as those things that He says, “Shall come to pass in the last days,” are enacted in our day.

NO ONE RESENTS AND RESISTS CHANGE LIKE THE CHURCH

The church, for the most part, is determined to stand still, resisting all potential change.

They see the old as sacred, the modern as sacrilegious.

The Western Church is mired in the past. (Buildings, hymns, liturgies, vision).

What could be some of the reasons for this stagnation and unwillingness to change:

A. Our Faith is historic.

Christianity was founded 2,000 years ago. As we study our historic Faith our minds are constantly dwelling on events that transpired 2,000 years ago, therefore, in our thoughts, we live in the ancient past. We tend to see the early church as an ideal model of church life and practice, but we often forget on important thing about that church, that it was relevant and contemporary to its day and setting.

B. Our Bible is ancient.

Much of our Bible was originally written thousands of years ago. Even the New Testament was written almost 2,000 years ago. Therefore, our reading and study of the scriptures constantly takes our minds back into the historic past. Many of the versions of the scriptures are also several hundred years old. The King James Version, which is still preferred by many pastors, was written in 1611. Its expressions are the languages of that day and as a result, “King James English” has been revered as some kind of sacred language and is still widely used in many churches today. Actually, it is no more sacred than modern English, yet our frequent use of it tends to suggest that old English is more sacred and spiritual than our modern tongue. Many therefore have a tendency to pray and prophesy in King James English as though it were more “spiritual”, which is not true.

C. We tend to cling to religious traditions.

Much of our Christian culture is comprised of human tradition rather than Biblical concept. We have become like the Pharisees of Christ’s day who, “made the commandments of God of none effect by their vain traditions received of men.” (Matt. 15:3; Mark 7:5)

D. We tend to suspect and resist any kind of change.

Entrenched in ancient culture and tradition, many church leaders see a contemporary view as a betrayal of their Faith. Anything “modern” is suspect. The church of Jesus Christ was not meant to be an old fashioned, obsolete people; we are intended to be a prophetic people. A people of the future. God does not want His people to be constantly dragging along behind, not able to keep up with all the changes that are transpiring. He wants us to be right in the front, indicating the path that the nations should take.

E. Much unwillingness to change is due to lack of faith.

There is always an element of risk in faith as in change. Many Christians do not like risk. We are comfortable and feel secure with what we know in the present and the future has a vein of the unknown of which we are afraid. However, whether we like it or not, change is taking place, and we must face it not in fear, but in faith.

GOD IS NOT AGAINST CHANGE.

He never changes: Mal. 3:6, “I am the LORD, I change not.”

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.” Heb 13: 8.

His nature, character, disposition, laws and purposes do not change.

God laws never change: E.g. Laws of nature, gravity, aerodynamics.

Modern science is just discovering some of the basic, foundational laws of God.

However, His methods and strategies do.

Ex 3:16, “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

The God of succeeding generations and changing circumstances.

God valued and appreciated David because he “served the Will of God in his generation.” (Acts 13:36).

His methods in conquering and possessing the Promised Land changed from place to place. E.g. The conquest of Canaan, Jericho, Ai, etc.

PROPHECY REVEALS THAT MANY THINGS WILL CHANGE DRAMATICALLY PRIOR TO CHRIST’S RETURN AND MANIFEST KINGDOM.

Heb. 12: 25-29, “I will shake the earth and also heaven...that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Out of which shaking we shall receive a Kingdom, which cannot be shaken.

WHY PEOPLE RESIST CHANGE.

a. A mistaken belief.

Many Christians have a mistaken belief that “the old is better”. Jesus mentioned this tendency. “And no one, having drunk old wine, desires new; for he says, the old is better.” (Luke 5:39) He mentions it in the context of explaining that it is unwise to put new wine into old (brittle) bottles, because the old bottles will undoubtedly burst and the wine will be wasted. He further adds that “new wine must be put into new wine skins, and both will be preserved.”

The word He employs for “new” is ‘Kainos’, which means renewed, or restored to as new condition. Jesus is referring to a process whereby old (skin) bottles can be renewed and perform task usually reserved for new skins. The process involved soaking the old skins in water for several days until they are thoroughly moistened again. Removing them from the water, they are then subjected to a vigorous rubbing in of olive oil. A massaging with oil until it thoroughly impregnates the skin making it supple and strong again.

This process has a spiritual counterpart by which old skins, made brittle through having hung in a smoky tent too long, are first immersed in water (the Word of God) for a considerable period and then subjected to a fresh anointing with oil (the Holy Spirit). The result of this process is renewal of the wine skin to the degree that it is again able to contain the dynamic quality of new wine.

Many Christians need to experience such a renewing in order to effectively cope with the challenges of change. Their old, legalistic attitudes are too brittle, inflexible and fragile to receive and contain the volatile nature of change. Therefore, the skins must undergo some spiritual renovation to enable them to embrace change and advance into the developing purposes of God.

b. Unwilling to leave their security Zone.

Many people have fashioned for themselves a “comfort zone”, i.e. a life style that is as convenient and comfortable as possible. The prospect of change always threatens that comfortable existence and people tend to try to dodge the inconvenience that transition so often brings.

c. Satisfied with the status quo.

It is often the quest for improvement and fulfillment that leads people into the processes of change. However, when people are happy and content with things the way they are, they see no need for change. Improving things means making changes and many people are unwilling to acknowledge the need for improvement and change.

d. Mired in traditions.

Receive wisdom from the statement: “In matters of principle, stand like a rock; in matters of taste, swim with the current.” Or as someone else has emphasized the need for both steadfastness and change, “Anchored to the rock and geared to the times”. This is good concept that every Christian organization should consider.

e. Worshipping sacred cows and “white elephants”.

“Sacred cows” are pet traditions that are deeply rooted in our societies. Church bodies often have many of them. Habits and traditions of men that have become deeply entrenched and usually have no Biblical basis. They are “the traditions of men” that Jesus said, “make void the Word of God.” “White elephants” are venerated objects or projects that are expensive to maintain but relatively non-productive. The King of Siam supposedly gave white elephants to members of his court he wished to ruin. The creatures were sacred and not allowed to work – yet they still had to be fed and cared for.

f. Unwilling to take risks.

Initiating change often involves taking some risk. It usually involves unknown factors and we must frequently step from the security of the known into the uncertainty of a changed situation. Some leaders, for various reasons, are not willing to take any risks, but the exercise of faith invariably entails doing so.

Processing through the transitions of change is rather like swinging from one trapeze to another. No doubt you have been seen this exercise somewhere. The artist swings out on one trapeze with the intention of switching to the next. The timing for this must be perfect. He must release his hold on the first trapeze in order to grasp the second. Any hesitation or delay will ruin the exercise and send him plunging to the next below. Any fear of the risk involved will spoil the required flow. If the artist does not relinquish the first trapeze at the critical moment the chance of a smooth transition may be lost. Many leaders are afraid to release their hold on the past in order to effectively grasp the future.

g. Faith must be exercised.

Paul says that, “Faith is the evidence of things not yet seen.” (Heb 11:1).

There is usually a “risk factor” involved in the exercise of faith as there is in the initiation of changes. We have no guarantee but our faith, which we trust is based on what we perceive to be God’s word.

HOW TO COPE WITH CHANGE.

a. Recognize, acknowledge and accept its inevitability.

Many people resent and resist the need to make changes. We must recognize that changes in life are inevitable. They are not to be dodged or resisted but to be confronted with faith and confidence in God.

b. Realize that God is not surprised or overwhelmed by it.

Many Christians have a sub-conscious image of God as an elderly gentleman who is innately old fashioned. This is far from the truth. God is not old fashioned, antiquated or obsolete. He is the God of the past, present and future. God is not only up to date. He is decidedly futuristic. No change that would ever occur will take God by surprise or catch Him off balance. So many sincere Christians have an idea if that if a thing is modern it cannot possibly have God’s approval. They think that by remaining quaint and old fashioned in their view of life, they are somehow more spiritual than others.

c. Understand that not all change is negative, carnal or sinful.

Although much of the change that is transpiring in the world is part of the decay to which the world has been subjected because of the Fall, not every change is negative. Many good changes are transpiring in the world too.

Some change is for the worst, some for the best. We need to prayerfully discern those changes that are able to better facilitate the spread of the Gospel and take advantage of them.

d. Future change must be faced with faith in God, His Word, His purposes, His inevitable triumph, and His manifest Kingdom. (Rom. 8:28)

Someone has said of God, that history is ‘His’-story. The sovereign God of the universe is in total control of the unfolding saga of human history. The Bible predicts that in the last days there will be many fearful changes in the world and a general deterioration of life, morals and standards. However, the unveiling of God’s glorious kingdom will ultimately eclipse all the gloom and despair that may fill the earth before the Return of Christ. Whatever ill the future may bring the ultimate reality will be the unveiling of God’s eternal, glorious kingdom.

e. We must be steadfast, yet flexible, like a tree. Ps. 1:3

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.

A tree that is planted by the water develops a deep and powerful root system that tends to make that tree unmovable. However, its trunk and branches remain flexible and pliable, able to bend with the strong winds that may blow against it. This is how we must be, and how we trust face the winds of change that blow against us. Solidly anchored into God's Word by a powerful root system yet with branches that are always supple and pliable.

LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE.

a. Leaders must recognize inevitable needs for legitimate change.

Leaders are responsible for some degree of prophetic insight into the future. One vital aspect of all effective leadership is the ability to foresee future trends and formulate appropriate strategies. Many businesses have failed through a lack of this ability and many churches and ministries have missed opportunities to achieve great things because of an inability to foresee the future or an unwillingness to act on prophetic insight

Though the sons of Issachar were few in number they played leading role in the life and movements of their nation, because they, "understood the significance of their times and knew what Israel ought to do." 1 Chron. 12:32, "And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do: the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment."

In Numbers 10:14, 15; we discover something interesting about the "sons of Issachar" and the place they occupied in the journeys of the children of Israel. Whenever that nation marched at the command of the Lord, they did so in a specific order. The tribe of Judah (the people of praise) always went first, leading the way. Immediately after them came the "tribe of the children of Issachar". This formation reminded me of a verse in Isaiah 30:21 which says, "Your ear shall hear a word behind you saying, This is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right hand and whenever you turn to the left hand." I visualize Judah, leading the nation with the praises of God in their mouths, but followed immediately by the prophetic sons of Issachar who gave directional commands to Judah according to the way in which they discerned God wanted them to proceed.

In the crucial times in which we now live, the church needs prophetic guidance as to the way it should go and the directional changes that ought to be made. This guidance must come through the leadership who ought to be "2,000 cubit ahead of the people of Israel."

b. Not change for the sake of change.

In talking so much of change and its inevitability, I must make it perfectly clear that I am not advocating change for the sake of change. I am certainly not saying that all change is desirable or profitable. I am not intimating that all churches must radically change everything and anything. NO! Changes must always be initiated by God. However, when He clearly indicates the need for certain changes, we must be bold and courageous to make those changes.

c. Some changes are for the best, some for the worst.

Change is an extremely powerful force that is sweeping through our contemporary world. Much of this change has been hurtful and detrimental. Many other changes have been positive and beneficial. Change, for better or worse, is inevitable. None but God can halt the tide of change. Many more things will change in our lifetime. We must stay in tune with God to ensure that the changes in which we are involved are for good and not bad.

d. Prayerful consideration must precede any change.

We should never be too eager to change without prayerful thought and consideration. Any prospective changes should first become the subject of earnest prayer for guidance. Once God gives a green light in answer to much prayer, we must continue prayerfully, only initiating those changes that He clearly intimates.

e. Unity of hearts and mind must precede it. Acts 15:25.

The early church were faced with the challenge of many changes all of which they firstly made the subject of intense prayer. They also brought such issues to a forum of apostles, prophets and teachers in order to gain their united consensus.

Such a situation evolved in Acts 15 concerning the great issue of circumcision or non-circumcision. Verse 25 says, "It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord".

Verse 28, "for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things."

Firstly, they sought the mind of the Spirit and then they sought a united consensus of those gathered for this purpose. They were not willing to take any steps or make any changes unless they had a unity of heart and mind on the subject.

f. Teaching and explanation must be given.

No radical changes should be thrust upon people without talking the time to teach and fully inform them of all the ramifications (consequences) involved. Change should never be undertaken lightly. It should never be initiated by the decision of any one individual. The decision to make far-reaching changes should be a corporate one reached amongst multitude of counselors.

g. Necessary change must be effected with wisdom and courage.

Once a firm decision has been taken in respect of proposed change, the decisions should be implemented with great wisdom and courage. Initiating change usually requires considerable courage and much wisdom.

h. Healthy change usually comes transitionally, in phases.

Occasionally change is ushered in like a whirlwind, but this is not usually the case. More frequently, it occurs in stages that are achieved progressively. Healthy growth involves transitional change, e.g. healthy children grow steadily but consistently.

CHURCH GROWTH AND NECESSARY CHANGE.

a. Church growth will inevitably involve changes. Acts 6:1-7; Acts 15.

Growth always involves processes of change. It cannot occur without doing so. As a living creature or being grows, it changes. In some ways, a parent may be sorry to see their child growing out of the baby stage. Actually, and parent would soon become alarmed if those natural changes did not transpire. Growth and change are normal. Lack of them are abnormal.

b. If your church is not growing, some things probably need to change.

Growth is a normal process of any living being. If no growth occurs, something is radically wrong. The condition is sub-normal and needs to be open to appropriate changes that will stimulate growth. We may offer all manner of excuses and even reasons for lack of growth. Some of those reasons may be valid, but often they are really excuses for our unwillingness to face reality and to take the necessary steps to stimulate growth.

We must be willing to ask ourselves some searching questions alike:

- Is the church functioning and growing, as it ought to do?
- Is there any room for improvement in the effectiveness of the church?
- What are some of the things that are retarding or preventing growth?
- How can we rectify those problems?
- What changes could be made to improve our effectiveness?
- Why have we not already made those changes?
- How can we modify our attitudes and effect the necessary changes?

c. Some changes stimulate growth.

There are frequently numerous changes, not necessarily radical, that can immediately stimulate growth. For example, a change of venue, moving into a facility that is more accessible, can initiate growth. A change in the emphasis of our preaching can sometimes bring growth.

d. Some changes are often needed to sustain growth.

Many churches have a problem because of inadequate follow up programs. They are like fishermen with holes in their nets. A number of fish are caught in the net, but soon escape again through those holes. The solution for this is to train numbers of people in effective methods of follow up through which every new visitor to the church, and certainly everyone that makes a commitment to Christ, is faithfully and effectively followed up. Teaching programs for new believers must be conducted.

e. Changes will transpire as a result of growth.

One of the greatest changes that transpired in the early church is recorded in Acts. 6:1-7. It came as a result of a crisis occasioned by rapid growth. Some of the new believers were being neglected by the ministration of the church. The solution was provided by the appointment of deacons and the introduction of delegation of duties.

f. The Church must be in step with God's purposes.

The most important changes that must be made to promote healthy growth are those changes needed to bring us into step with God's present purpose. Find out what God is wanting to do, and do it with Him.

EFFECTIVE CHANGE MUST BE INITIATED BY GOD.

a. Clearly indicated by God.

All legitimate changes in the work of God should be initiated by God Himself. In fact, everything we "do" for God should be "birthed" out of our relationship with Him. I am convinced that there are many leaders "working for God" on projects that He has never imitated. Therefore, our tasks and ministries should be birthed by God and so must nay changes that we may make in the performance of those ministries.

b. Confirmed in God's Word – often by principles.

Before we embark on the path of change, we must get solid confirmation through the Bible, the Word of God. We will frequently find that the Bible does not specifically mention the particular subject in which we are interested. However, it does deal with parallel and similar subjects and thereby gives us certain principles that we may apply to the subject in hand. In doing so, we must approach the Bible honestly and openly. Not endeavoring to make it say what we want it say which is called "handling the Word of God deceitfully". (2 Cor. 4:2).

c. Confirmation by a group of several mature leaders.

(Divine guidance should always be confirmed by your "brethren")

We should always seek the guidance of spiritual mature peers. The Bible tells us that, "there is wisdom in the multitude of counselors." (Prov. 11:14; 24:6)

d. Circumstantial indications.

Once you have begun to move into the processes of change you will discover that circumstances begin to transpire that are circumstantial, i.e. they fall into place, in harmony with the path you have taken. God begins to supply the specific needs. He brings along the right people. Things begin to happen that seem to be coincidental, but they are really God-incidental. God orders the accompanying circumstances of your situation to harmonize with the plans on which you have embarked.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE.

Changes initiated by God usually occur through processes of transition.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18)

Is. 28:10, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

Nothing is gained by undue haste. We should never rush into making changes without due prayerful and careful consideration. Once we are thoroughly convinced of the need for changes we must then undertake them with courage and boldness.

a. Change is always a challenge.

Change challenges our security, traditions and our comfort zones, our faith and vision. For some people, conservative and cautious by nature, it is a much greater challenge than for others who are naturally more adventurous and impulsive. Nevertheless, it always constitutes a challenge and we must not be surprised or disconcerted by this. We must boldly face the challenge.

b. Recognize its inevitability in every area of life.

Is. 43:18- 19, “Remember not the former things, neither meditate on the things of old. Behold, I will do new thing, now shall it spring forth.”

We cannot escape from the inevitability of change. It is transpiring in every area of life around us. It is unrelenting in its process. We may not like many of the changes, but they are happening anyway. What we must determine is how we should face their challenge. What does God wants us to do in the light of the tremendous changes talking place around us? He certainly does not want to pretend they are not happening. We must face up to reality, but we must face it in the wisdom, faith and power of God.

God is not surprised or disadvantaged by the changes. He is not taken unawares by it. He will use all things to the ultimate advantage of His Kingdom purpose. “All things are working together for good to those that love God and are called according to His purpose.” (Rom. 8:28)

c. The challenge to change creates crisis.

The Chinese word for crisis is composed of two characters. The first is “danger” and the second is “opportunity”. I believe that this is an accurate picture of what crisis truly represents. Firstly, there is a prospect of danger, which must not be underestimated. However, if we face that crisis with the right attitude it usually presents some tremendous door of opportunity. It is frequently in the context of solving a potential crisis that we experience our greatest achievement.

d. Fostering the right conditions for change.

- The vision must be clear, not fuzzy.
- It should be ‘spelt out’ clearly and fully.
- The implications should be prayerfully considered and fears allayed.
- The ministry team should be genuinely convinced and excited.
- Persons of maturity should confirm the vision.
- Test it before making total commitment.
- Adjust it whenever and wherever necessary.

e. Enlist the right personnel.

Eventually and ideally, you want everyone to become actively involved, but this will not usually happen at once.

- Commence with the visionaries.
- Convince the facilitators.
- Inspire and recruit the functionaries.
- Include the participators.

f. Earnestly encourage ownership of the vision.

- Explain the purpose and objective thoroughly.
- Keep everyone well informed.
- Involve the body of people in discussion and planning.
- Be open and adaptable to possible need for changes.
- Keep their role and involvement constantly before them.
- Give due recognition and appreciation whenever appropriate.

g. Transition often occurs in stages. Phasing out, and phasing in.

Is. 30:21 “You shall hear a word behind you saying, this is the way, walk in it.” Is. 28:10 “Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.” The journey into change and transition is very much a walk of faith. Changes introduce elements of uncertainty as we tread new pathways. Faith is like that too. Paul says, “For we walk by faith and not by sight”. (2 Cor. 5:7). The walk of

faith is often a step-by-step experience. We take one step in obedience and as we fulfill that, the next step opens up before us. Since the process of change is an exercise of faith, it often follows a similar pattern.

h. Monitoring the results.

Change is meant to increase effectiveness and productivity. It is meant to achieve positive results. Therefore, we must consistently monitor the results to make sure that this is happening. If those changes effected are not producing the desired result, they may need to be modified.

i. Adjusting the application.

Never be afraid to make necessary modifications to the changes implemented. This is certainly not an indication of failure. It is necessary to have the plans and changes in motion before you can effect the necessary adjustments. In aeronautical terms this is called “in-flight modification”. Once you are up and moving you need to make certain directional adjustments. However, if you never get the plans in motion, you are not going anywhere.

j. Achieving the objective.

Change is only valid if it achieves the desired results.

Certain changes are forced upon us and we have no power to resist or stop them. However, we are talking about the kind of changes that are purposely initiated. Such change should only be embraced if it will achieve positive results and fulfill a productive purpose. Change for the sake of change or to be different can often be detrimental.

What I am advocating is the foresight, initiative and courage to undertake changes that are necessary and fruitful. We want to change certain things for good, valid reasons. We want to become more effective. We want to achieve more fruitfulness. We want to be more relevant in our community. We want to be used by God to a greater degree. We want to achieve the objective that God has set for us in life.

The fact is that if all this is not happening right now, then some things need to be changed. Most of us need to be changed in order to be the person that God has truly planned for us to be, but if we are closed to all change, it may never happen. There is no virtue in continuing to do things a certain way because “this is the way we have always done it”. Neither should we be content merely to maintain the status quo. We have been created and redeemed for higher things. Let us move on through the processes of change and transformation that will bring us into those things.

THE KINGDOM CHANGE.

The coming and establishment of the Kingdom Rule will occasion more change and transformation than any event in global history.

It is also true that lead up to that most momentous event will cause more changes than have been experienced in any period of human history. A shaking is taking place throughout the world as God predicted it would.

“Yet once more I will shake not the earth only but the heavens...signifying the removing of those that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain...wherefore we shall receive a Kingdom which cannot be moved.” (Heb 12:25-28).

The shaking that God predicted is occurring now and will become more intense as the Day of the Lord approaches. Everything on earth will be shaken and the heavens too will be shaken. Within the context of this shaking, the Spirit of God will be moving in the earth in a greater measure and God will be accomplishing unusual and mighty things in the lives of His people. We must not allow our attention to be directed to those things that God is shaking but to the Lord Himself. He is the source and instigator of the change that are to happen in the church and in His people. As we steadfastly keep our eyes, our attention and our faith upon Him, He will transform us by His Spirit to become His special people for that day and hour.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.” II Cor. 3:18.

At this present time those who are yielded to God, and to His purpose for their life, are being changed into His image by the Spirit of the Lord. This is a process of change that transpires little by little, as we consistently behold God as in a mirror. The climax of this gradual transformation will be effected when finally we see the Lord face to face.

“When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3:2.

The Greek New Testament has several words that are translated “new” in our English version. Two of the most frequently used ones are “*neos*” and “*kainos*”. Though both are translated “new”, their meanings are considerably different.

“*Neos*” means: new in the sense of recent origin. Something in original condition, neither used nor worn. An illustration of this might be that of a motor vehicle right off the assembly line. No one has yet driven it. No one has even sat in it. It is absolutely brand new.

“*Kainos*” is: a word that describes something that has been restored to its as new condition. The illustration of this might be of an old car that has been lovingly and carefully restored so that it is as good as new. It looks new. It functions as good a new. However, it has actually been renewed to that condition.

This is a word that is frequently used in the New Testament. For example, Peter says, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth.” (2 Peter 3:13). The word employed here is “*kainos*” signifying that the heaven and earth of which God speaks, is not new in the sense of another, different heaven and earth. It is the same, original heavens and earth that will have been freed from the curse lovingly restored to their “as new” condition.

Nevertheless, tremendous changes will take place when this happens. The most dramatic and amazing changes that mankind has ever witnessed.

Sensational transformations will transpire that will stagger the human imagination as the Lord declares. “Behold, I made all things new.” (Rev. 21:5)

My friends, tremendous changes lie before us, many of them very difficult to accept. But many other changes lie ahead that will be gloriously achieved by the sovereign hand of God. Changes that will transform this planet into a virtual paradise over which God will directly rule through the Kingly reign of Jesus Christ. So we need to “fasten our seatbelts” and boldly confront the changing future, for out of these earth-shaking changes, the Kingdom of our God and His Messiah will emerge.

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO CHANGE.

Although many leaders, for a variety of reasons, have steadfastly resisted change, it is never too late to change.

- Change is inevitable.
- Change is transpiring everywhere in the world.
- Much change is good and enriches production.
- Resistance to change often emanates from self-centred pride.
- A lack of change sometimes indicates the presence of death.
- Progress and improvement can rarely occur without change.

Changes should be initiated from the leadership.

Rise up and comfort the challenge to change!

CHECK LIST FOR CHANGE

- When is change desirable?
When honest examination reveals areas of effectiveness which could be improved
- When is change necessary?
When no real growth or progress is being made and some basic things obviously need to be changed.
- Is change always necessary?
Changes are usually necessary at regular intervals because we live in a changing world with which we need to keep pace. People are conditioned to certain things and can only “hear” us when we communicate in the appropriate language and mode.
- When might change be unadvisable?
If something is working effectively at the peak of its potential and honest examination reveals that there are no areas that can be improved by modification or change, then change might be unadvisable.
- What kind of changes are advisable?
 - changes that increase effectiveness and efficiency
 - changes that bring our activities up to date with our environment
 - changes that improve harmonious relationships
 - changes that increase growth and productivity
- What is the process of change?
The process of change usually involves certain basic factors:
 - Honestly examine the current situation
 - Recognize and acknowledge any aspects that could be improved
 - Give prayerful and positive consideration to possible improvements
 - Introduce creative thinking patterns
 - Infuse enthusiasm for effective and productive changes
 - Initiate positive changes
 - Confirm and consolidate the new direction
- Is change always painful?
 - Change is invariably but not inevitably painful. Most people prefer the security of the known and familiar
 - Change thrusts us into the unknown and untried
 - Change makes us dependent upon people
 - Changes introduce elements of risk

- Introducing positive changes usually increase our work load

➤ How can we minimize the pain of change?

- By ensuring that everyone involved thoroughly understands the benefit of the changes
- By conferring with everyone affected, through the thinking and planning stages
- By “looking before you leap”. Responsibly consider the probable effects.
- By endeavouring to help everyone feel they are part of the change
- By effecting the changes together with other responsible persons
- By effecting the changes with careful confidence
- By monitoring the transition for possible modifications
- By keeping everyone informed of improved performance as a result of the changes

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