

LEADERSHIP

A Heart for Ministry

Living to Influence a Community



THE SANCTUARY

As you make your way through this reader, be sure to look up and read through the scripture references, underline/highlight anything that stands out to you — you may want to even keep a list of questions you think of along the way, (there are a couple of pages for notes in the back) ...and once you're finished, be sure to get answers to those questions as well!



LEADERSHIP at The Sanctuary

A Heart for Ministry

LEADERSHIP DEFINED

Leadership is one of the most widely discussed topics of today. Entire sections of bookstores are dedicated to the subject, examining the effectiveness, style and communication abilities of leaders. Organizations fill calendars with symposiums and two-day conferences on how to sharpen one's leadership skills. Even the Church has ministries dedicated to "releasing the leader within." As common as this term is, in all its day-to-day variances, the question still arises, "What is leadership?" Is it a state of being (i.e. "I am a leader")? Is it something that is imparted (i.e. "I have been given leadership of")? Is it an action (i.e. "I am leading")? It, CAN include some or all of the above.

Webster's dictionary defines a leader as one who "guides" with "influence." This "guiding" ability can be the result of dictated influence (one who holds or has been given a positional leadership role) and/or an organic influence (one who has natural leadership/influencing qualities to their personality/being). In the Church, we can see how positional AND organic leadership, through its influence, either facilitates OR erodes health in a community. It could be said, a healthy church is marked by leaders who walk out their calling with deep humility and care, knowing that the power of their influence will bring about or destroy the effectiveness God desires to accomplish through the Church.

Jesus understood the influencing power of positional and organic leadership when he declared " ... the greatest among you must be a servant." (Matthew 23:11) The God of the universe has called each one of us, as His children, to lead through lifestyles of service. My prayer, in this brief reader, is that you will discover some of what a healthy community of "influencing" leadership looks like, as defined by the Bible. There are various expressions of leadership at The Sanctuary and each is equal in their uniqueness, significance, and value. Though some have greater responsibility than others, all leaders are required to walk according to the precepts of God's truth, with love ... for maximum influence.

BIBLICAL ROLES OF LEADERSHIP

Let's begin our examination of biblical "leadership with what is commonly referred to as the "ministry-gifts" or roles of the church, as declared in Ephesians 4:11.

Apostle – One sent forth. This ministry refers to the divine appointment of those sent by God to lay a foundation of doctrine and practice typically, to the Body of Christ at-large.

Prophet – One who speaks forth or openly proclaims a divine message. Since God's Word is already established, those with prophetic gifting convey the truths of God's Word with clarity and boldness and remind others of God's unfolding plans.

Evangelist – A messenger or proclaimer of the Good News. Those with an evangelistic gifting proclaim the message of God's love to other Christians and the world.

Pastor – One who "shepherds a flock." This involves tender care and watchful oversight. Those with a pastoral gifting "lead and feed" people, nurturing them with the Word of God – both living (Jesus) and written (the Bible).

Teacher – Instructors of the Truth. Those with a teaching gift are uniquely equipped and qualified to educate people in the truths of God's Word.

These ministry gifts refer to the divine gifts of an individual and, therefore, can be found in various positions in the church; a Sunday school teacher with the gift of an evangelist, a councilman with the gift of pastoring, a small group leader with the gift of prophecy, etc.

In addition to the ministry gifts, the Bible comments on the following ministry positions:

Deacon – servant. A deacon serves consistently and diligently in an acknowledged position of responsibility and influence in the church, generally without compensation. Deacons are often referred to as "lay-leaders" – those who have a specific responsibility and position of influence in the church yet maintain full-time employment outside the church.

Bishop – an overseer or elder. This ministry position is typically held by a spiritually mature person. A bishop has a position of responsibility and influence in the church like a deacon, yet on a greater scale. Bishops are commonly considered "full-time vocational ministers" – those who obtain their income from this service. It can also include those who are not called to full-time employment in a church yet, hold

positions of significant oversight in the church.

While “deacons” and “bishops” may have varying levels of responsibility, the requirements for them are essentially the same – they are “people of influence” in the church. The Bible clearly states the responsibilities of those who influence people are different from those being influenced.

First, and foundationally, the Bible declares these “book-ends” of truth: Anyone wanting to become a leader desires a good work. (1 Timothy 3:1) and not many of you should become leaders because we know that we who lead will be judged more strictly. (James 3:1) Leading others, as Christ leads us, is a wonderful and good work yet, this leadership must be viewed with sobriety and full understanding of its requirements before the Lord.

BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS OF LEADERSHIP

In his letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul gives us 32 very clear snapshots of what “people of influence” look like.

1. **Be above reproach.** They must be innocent, not guilty of wrongdoing, and having a good reputation inside and outside the church.
2. **Be the “husband of one wife.”** They cannot be given to unbiblical divorce or marital instability.
3. **Be temperate.** They must be sober-minded, alert, and discerning
4. **Be self-controlled.** They must be prudent of sound mind, disciplined.
5. **Be respectable.** They must exhibit good behavior, be morally excellent and well-mannered.
6. **Be hospitable.** They must be loving and kind to strangers.
7. **Be able to teach.** They must have a solid knowledge of God’s Word, capable of rightly dividing the Word of truth” and making disciples of Jesus.
8. **Not be “given to wine.”** They cannot be found participating in or promoting intoxication. They cannot allow any substance to dictate their behavior. (This might be exemplified with comments like, “I like to have a drink to help me relax at night.”)
9. **Not be aggressive.** They cannot be a brawler, provoker of violence or belligerent.
10. **Be gentle and not quick-tempered.** They must be free from wrath, insensitivity, and lack of discretion.
11. **Be uncontentious.** They cannot be given to arguing, or be argumentative.
12. **Not be a lover of money.** They must not find their identity in material things.
13. **Not pursue or applaud dishonest gain.** They must be pure in all activities and not follow those who are dishonest.

14. **Manage their household well.** They must be a good steward of family relationships and resources.
15. **Have obedient and believing children at home.** Their children must reflect a well-managed home; not given to rebellion against authority or participating in ungodly living.
16. **Not be a new believer.** They must show clear evidence of a solid and 'mature foundation in Christ, often marked by "years" of faithful service to God.
17. **Have a good reputation with "outsiders."** They must be respected by those with whom they have relationship with outside the church .
18. **Be people of dignity.** They must be respectful, admirable, and holy in all things.
19. **Not be "double-tongued."** Their "yes" must mean yes, and their 'no" must mean no.
20. **Hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.** They must have a genuine understanding of and belief in the covenant of salvation only through Jesus Christ, knowing what they believe, why they believe, and possess the ability to express this conviction to others.
21. **Not be self-willed.** They cannot be given to pride, rebellion or stubbornness.
22. **Love what is good.** They must pursue, applaud and cling to that which brings glory to God.
23. **Be sensible.** They must be understanding and apply the wisdom of God in all areas of life.
24. **Be just.** They must be innocent, impartial, and holy.
25. **Be devout.** They must seriously and soberly pursue God.
26. **Be dignified.** They must be holy, reverent and submitted. (All, but specifically women/wives)
27. **Not be malicious gossips.** They must not share opinions haphazardly or be given to many words. (All, but specifically women/wives)
28. **Be faithful in all things.** They must be trustworthy, reliable, and humble. (All, but specifically women/wives)
29. **Shepherd the flock of God.** They must take personal responsibility for leading and feeding God's people.
30. **Voluntarily exercise oversight over the flock according to God's will.** Leading cannot be a result of compulsion, fleshly obligation, or selfishness.
31. **Not lead others for personal gain.** They cannot be in ministry for fame or fortune.
32. **Not use a position of influence to control others.** Leaders, like Jesus, must be examples of selfless serving.

When one walks through the list of biblical qualifications for those who assume positions of influence in the church, a common response is "I'm disqualified!" or "they're disqualified!" Yet, when we read of the lives of men like Paul and Peter, we understand God uses us - in spite of us! 'Still, God would not have expressed these standards for leadership if they were not important to Him.

Some leaders/people of influence find themselves in the position of having authority over others in the church. This can be a hard position to be in because the walk of those in leadership is extremely narrow, full of trials and problems. In many situations, leaders are not always well received by those they try to serve, just take a look at the lives of Moses, Noah, Jeremiah, Paul, Jesus and many more.

As we serve God, and His plans at The Sanctuary, we are not interested in legalism (a strict adherence to or the enforcement of rules without love or grace), yet we are interested in holiness (fleeing from sin to pursue Christ-like living). While we attempt to avoid the trap of identity based on position we also understand the need to identify and release those who are called to leadership in the church and who take that call seriously, knowing they are an "influencer." All of us suffer the temporary setbacks of our humanity. None of us are perfectly capable of building the lives of others without tremendous help from God. Therefore, qualifications for leadership begin by knowing in our weakness His strength is perfected. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH AND HOW TO RESPOND TO IT

In general, authority has been given a "bad rap", perpetuated by those who do not understand it or have been hurt by a reckless use of it. Some of us, upon hearing the term "authority", respond with a negative image - one of control, dominance or even abuse. As a result, we instinctively respond to authority with rebellion and often, without awareness, undermine the grace of God in our lives. Since God is capable of putting authority in our lives, He must also be capable of accomplishing what concerns us under that authority.

Most people fear submitting to those in spiritual authority because they might be abused or led down a path of unrighteousness. Unfortunately, this can happen if we are not discerning. Yet, it should not cause us to abandon the importance of submitting to godly authority. The tendency to rebel against authority, in general, reveals a more fundamental problem: we need to get our eyes on Jesus and off those He places over us as leaders. I am not suggesting blind following of church leadership (or any leadership) but a discerning submission to those in positions of authority. Anytime we lose sight of Jesus we are in danger of being misled or wounded. With our eyes focused on men and their attributes we can easily become disappointed because all men will fail in some way. We follow our pastors and other leaders within the church as they follow Christ, (1 Corinthians 11:1) and we need to make sure we can always see Christ ahead of those leaders.

A QUICK THOUGHT ON PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Pastors are people too! I know. . .it sounds like an annoying song you might hear on a kids show, but it is true, pastors really are people too! They have failures, successes, challenges, feelings, etc. It has been said pastors have the hardest job in the universe: representing the One who made it. Pastors, for the most part, understand this dilemma; we stand for authority and are perceived as being "more able" to handle attacks than the average sheep. Yet, pastors still remain vulnerable to getting hurt, being rejected, feeling neglected, etc;. Pastors are simply "sheep with bells on" the "bell" representing the calling and anointing of God. In reality, it should be the calling and anointing of God others follow and not, necessarily the "leader-sheep."

HOW TO RESPOND TO LEADERSHIP WHEN QUESTIONS ARISE

Unfortunately, there are a growing number of bad examples of authority both in secular society and in the Church. For this reason it is important those in leadership are prepared for people who want to follow but who greatly fear doing so. Those in positions of authority and influence should allow those they serve the freedom to make mistakes with a view to change, just as God does with His children. Our response to authority, in any form, should be grounded in our trust in and understanding of God, not men.

So often when we have a concern with leadership, there is a tendency to gossip. God should always have the first "crack " at our concern to determine whether it is really spiritual discernment, personal opinion or, in actuality, our problem. Before doing anything we should pray for the leader we are concerned about that the Lord would have His way in their life regardless of our opinions and that we would be an instrument of God's will and not act out of our own agenda. When we pray we should ask the Lord to examine our heart and motives and ask God to forgive us for any judgment, pride or criticism in which we have participated.

If, after much prayer, there is the definite sense that what we see in the life of a leader is unscriptural and could potentially harm them or others, and once we have sensed freedom from the Lord to approach them, we should bring the issue to the leader and nobody else. This takes maturity on everyone's part. Speak the truth in love. "Bouncing it off " someone else sounds wise but is often just another form of gossip. We should look for the counsel of others only when a leader seems not to respond in a Christ-like manner to the concerns we have presented. Make sure we give the leader time to grow; they may need time to respond to our concern.

The Bible tells us “Do not listen to complaints against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses to accuse him.” (1 Timothy 5:19) We are also told, “...if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly are to gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path.” (Galatians 6:1) In our concern for leadership, we can best assist by serving, loving, praying, forgiving, and speaking the truth, in love.

HOW TO BLESS LEADERSHIP

The Bible tells us “...honor those who are your leaders in the Lord’s work. They work hard among you and warn you against all that is wrong. Think highly of them and give them your wholehearted love because of their work.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13) “Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow.” (Hebrews 13:17)

So how can someone bless leadership? **Pray for them.** Make it a daily habit to pray for your leaders and their families. **Defend them.** If someone has a complaint, exhort them to take it to the Lord first, and then, if released, directly to the leader. **Encourage them.** Take the time to send a card write a thank you note or make a quick telephone call to let your leader know you appreciate and love them. **Esteem them.** Give them the respect they deserve by treating them as appointed servants of God and not merely hired hands. **Obey them.** As long as a pastor or leader requires us to do things according to God’s Word, we should submit to them as unto the Lord. **Release them.** Give your leader room to grow, to receive grace and mercy from God, and to be fulfilled in their ministry. Let them serve with joy and give them the freedom to learn through their mistakes.

HOW POSITIONAL LEADERS ARE CHOSEN AT THE SANCTUARY

We are very calculated in our decisions, and especially so, when it comes to selecting people to lead. Standing on God’s Word as our foundation, we follow this principle: leaders can only learn to lead by leading. Jesus called the most unlikely group of men together to lay the foundation of the Church: tax collectors (hated by most of the population), fisherman (looked down upon as simpletons), and even ex-persecutors of the Church, and released them to lead. Following Jesus’ example, we choose and release support staff and full-time staff not for their perfect conduct but for their divine calling and pursuit of God.

Depending on the scope of responsibilities and duration of service, all decisions regarding full-time staffing and most releases of congregational leadership receive the oversight of the Church Council and pastoral staff. Besides the basics of (1) recognizing Jesus as one’s personal Lord and Savior, (2) living in a prioritized commitment to the Word of God and (3) being an abiding Partner at The Sanctuary,

there are three key areas we evaluate to confirm and release those who sense a “calling” to positional leadership within our church community.

Character - What are they characterized by? Is their demeanor, decision-making, relationships, community, etc. marked by pursuit of Christ-likeness?

Competence - What is the state of their gifts and abilities? Are they developing their divine personal resources with good stewardship?

Commitment – Have they consistently partnered? What is their involvement and posture toward the Church (the world-wide community of Christians) and the church (the congregational community of Christians at The Sanctuary)?

If we find an individual with leadership qualities within the congregation, we look in the areas of character, competency and commitment to find Paul’s 32 qualifications bearing fruit in their life. Typically this happens in a season of mutual accountability and relationship.

WHY SOME LEADERS ARE COMPENSATED

Scripture tells us as partners; we all work hard as a team with the same purpose. (1 Corinthians 3:8-9) Why then are only a few salaried while others serve as volunteer support staff? Although there is a desire to compensate all those who serve, vocational employment is decided by three possible factors:

The instruction of the Lord - If it is God’s will for someone to receive financial “reward”, He will make it evident to church leadership (i.e. pastors, Church Council, etc.) through prayer and discussion regarding potential leaders.

Evidence of a “call” to full-time vocational ministry - There are certain characteristics that speak of possible confirmation of those who are called to ministry, including (but not limited to):

1. humility regarding placement in a “position” of authority (as opposed to someone ambitiously seeking that position),
2. signs of having experienced “purifying” trials,
3. a broken and submitted heart,
4. a passion for: God beyond the norm,
5. an uneasiness with the world or its ways, and
6. a great desire to serve God and His people.

Body-wide ministry - A heart and call to provide ministry to the entire Church as opposed to a smaller segment.

A PERSONAL NOTE

Authority, leadership, and submission remain important components of God's work on earth. Though this leader does not provide an exhaustive treatment of this enormous subject, I hope it helps you better understand our passion for and commitment to biblical leadership at The Sanctuary.

I am a man under submission and we are a church under submission, and in this we have found great spiritual health and well-being. Though our methods are not free from error we still preach a perfect message of hope to mankind... and we do this undeniably through the "jars of clay" (2 Corinthians 4:7) called "leaders", living to influence a community for the glory of God.

Living as Loved!!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Marty". The word "Pastor" is written in a smaller, more compact script, while "Marty" is written in a larger, more flowing cursive style.

Pastor Marty Walker
The Sanctuary

Notes

We exist as a *community*
to be a *safe place* FOR
each person to grow in
God's love + truth.



thesanctuarychurch.com

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