

Southwestern Assemblies of God University
Graduate School of Distance Education

Leadership in Ministry
PTH 5323

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Leadership in Ministry

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1. Theologizing

Biblical references concerning leadership: This is not to be a listing of scripture but an internalizing of scripture. An example would be the story of Moses and the 70 and how we learn that there is Wisdom in a multitude of council.

In my graduate level class in “Leadership in Ministry,” I had the privilege of reading three great books on the topic of leadership, with one of them providing theological insight to spiritual leadership principles. In the book, *They Smell Like Sheep*, by Dr. Lynn Anderson, the author desires readers to rediscover three biblical models for leading: shepherding, mentoring, and equipping.¹ Additionally, the story of Moses and Jethro shows the importance of delegating, and the book of Nehemiah shows a leader who encouraged the heart of people.

Of the three biblical models for spiritual leadership, Anderson says shepherding is the “chief model,”² with the shepherd metaphor showing up more than five hundred times in Scripture,³ throughout the Old and New Testaments. Among all these shepherding metaphors, Jesus is considered the “Chief Shepherd,”⁴ who charged Peter (perhaps as representative of all the apostles) to adopt His spiritual leadership style of shepherding.⁵ Further, Peter and Paul exhorted spiritual leaders to carry on this shepherding task,⁶ and thus we should all look to Jesus as the greatest model and expression of a shepherd-type leader who is worthy of emulation.

The story of Jesus feeding five thousand people in Mark 6:30-44 illustrates Jesus’ character as a Good Shepherd who taught and fed people out of love and care for those around

¹ Dr. Lynn Anderson, *They Smell Like Sheep: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century*, vol. 1 (New York: Howard Books, 1997), 3.

² *Ibid.*, 4.

³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴ 1 Peter 5:4.

⁵ Anderson, 18; John 21:15-17.

⁶ 1 Pet. 5:2-4; Acts 20:28.

Him, for “He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.”⁷ Jesus served as a model of a compassionate person who ministered and cared for the needs of all kinds of people, even those who were not welcomed by others. Jesus desires other care giving leaders to have such inclusiveness too when He says that caring deeds rendered to those considered least in society are really acts carried out unto Jesus,⁸ for all people are valuable to God. Caring for the people, Jesus fed them spiritually and physically. Thus, spiritual leaders should use interpersonal skills to care for those who are suffering, who are relatively weak or helpless, and who need some assistance in becoming stronger or comforted. Care can take the form of listening, visiting, encouraging, consoling, counseling, lovingly correcting, praying, giving financially, feeding, and other activities. Just as Jesus’ leadership and care flowed out of love, the leadership and care of a spiritual leader should flow out of love--the *agape* love of God and Christ--that desires to meet the needs of all who come, simply out of compassion. In regards to caring for the needs of unbelievers, such motives of love imply that care is given out of compassion and not primarily to convert them to Christianity, though such unconditional love will likely move an unbeliever closer to Christ, in accord with a ministry of reconciliation.⁹ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner also recognize the importance of love in leading as they conclude their excellent book, *The Leadership Challenge*, by saying “The best-kept secret of successful leaders is love: staying in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what their organizations produce, and with those who honor the organization by using its products and services.”¹⁰ Love coming from God and

⁷ Mark 6:34.

⁸ Matt. 25:40.

⁹ 2 Cor. 5:18-20.

¹⁰ James M. Kouzes, and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 351.

flowing through leaders to people is the best motivating influence for a leader to continue to serve people day in and day out.

In the Gospel of John, chapter 10, Jesus proclaimed Himself as the Good Shepherd and gives insight into the characteristics of good spiritual leadership, revolving around a good “relationship” between the leader and followers. Jesus said:

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own by name, and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. And a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.¹¹

A main emphasis in this passage is that a shepherd has a good relationship with his sheep and the sheep trust the shepherd. In reference to these verses, F. F. Bruce provides some historical-cultural background: “The fold would be a stone enclosure, roughly square in shape, with an entrance on one side. This entrance was guarded by a doorkeeper or watchmen whose business it was to admit authorized persons and to keep out intruders.”¹² A shepherd would approach the entrance and call for his sheep, which would recognize his voice and come. Further, “the flock would be small enough for him to know each of his sheep individually and distinguish them by name. The name might be based on some special mark or feature.”¹³ Leaders should develop good long-term personal relationships with their followers and know each one by name along with characteristics unique to each person. If a leader’s oversight involves hundreds or thousands of people, it may not be practical to know everyone but the leader should make an effort to know his/her direct reports and department heads as well as others. The key is showing an interest in

¹¹ John 10:1-5.

¹² F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 224.

¹³ Ibid.

and truly caring for the people who are assigned to the leader's responsibility, and then meeting the essential needs of those who are following.

“Flocks naturally gather around food, protection, affection, touch, and voice. Biblical shepherds are those who live among the sheep; serve the sheep; feed, water, and protect the sheep; touch and talk to the sheep—even lay down their lives for the sheep. Biblical shepherds *smell* like sheep.”¹⁴ Just as Peter was told by Jesus to feed His sheep,¹⁵ so Peter exhorts spiritual leaders to feed their congregations, for shepherding surely involves feeding sheep. Analogous to a shepherd feeding sheep, a spiritual leader should sufficiently feed people by teaching and preaching a balanced diet of biblical truths that help people grow spiritually. Instead of just letting sheep get fat on food, a shepherd needs to give them adequate exercise. Similarly, a spiritual leader needs to allow opportunities for the exercise of church members' gifts and ministries and to get them involved in acts of service. A spiritual leader is called to equip others for the work of ministry.¹⁶

A spiritual leader must care for each of his/her followers by knowing them deeply, by visiting them, and by talking and emailing them during the week. Knowing the condition of the flock, the spiritual leader has a right to initiate contact with an individual if a problem is perceived or if danger looms. The spiritual leader should be available to help counsel individuals in problematic situations or, at least, refer them to qualified individuals who can help. Out of a trusting, committed, personal relationship, a person will listen to the guidance and counsel of his/her leader preeminently instead of the advice of someone else. The true test of the quality of a leader comes when danger looms for the followers.

¹⁴ Anderson, 22.

¹⁵ John 21:17.

¹⁶ Eph. 4:11-12.

Again emphasizing the importance of the leaders' relationship to their followers, Jesus contrasts those leaders who have external responsibility but no inward care for the followers with those leaders who have a sincere desire to serve and protect the flock. Jesus says,

I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and my own know me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.¹⁷

Shepherding includes protecting, leading, and guiding of sheep. The spiritual leader will boldly help in danger and lay down his/her life for the people. Just as a shepherd protects the flock from wolves, harmful animals, and dangerous paths, so ought a spiritual leader be aware of the surrounding culture of the church members and warn against dangerous philosophies, beliefs, teachers, and activities that could ravage one's faith or lead one astray from God's Word and presence. Sometimes a spiritual leader may need to speak a corrective word in order to discipline or guide a person in the right direction. The spiritual leader leads others by example and word.

Additionally, people must not be forced or coerced to become spiritual leaders, and they must not be "hirelings" who only work for a paycheck and care nothing for the sheep, as evident by their running away from them in tough times.¹⁸ "When danger draws near [a hired hand] is more concerned for his own safety than for theirs. He will not risk his life to defend them against the marauding wolf, as the true shepherd will."¹⁹ A leader's care and administrative oversight must be done out of a willing and eager attitude that is directed by a motivation from God, out of love for Him and a desire to serve people, and not by a motivation of monetary reward, though ministers will be compensated with money. Further, Peter exhorts the elders, or spiritual leaders,

¹⁷ John 10:11-15.

¹⁸ Anderson, 31.

¹⁹ Bruce, 226-27.

to “shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.”²⁰ Just as shepherds take on a responsibility for caring for and protecting sheep, true spiritual leaders are men and women whom God calls to the responsibility of shepherding congregations of God’s people. Spiritual leaders must not lord over the people in a domineering way where the people are forced to obey, perhaps due to fear tactics, but spiritual leaders should lead by example and guide people in a kind but firm way, so as to protect them from the harm of sinful ways and of unbiblical thinking. “The ancient shepherd did not drive his sheep, but walked in front of them and called them to follow.”²¹ Spiritual leaders must be good examples for people to follow.

The second biblical model for spiritual leadership that Anderson discusses is that of mentoring. “Mentors pull up alongside human beings and model behavior, values, and faith through the shared life.”²² Jesus modeled the kind of behavior he wanted in his followers and it was radically different than what was practiced by typical rulers. The Gospel of Matthew shows that Jesus’ leadership style “is based on submission and service, not on authority”:²³

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Jesus emphasized that He and his followers, who would be great leaders, would lead by having a servant attitude and taking an interest in the needs of those being served. Any power granted to

²⁰ 1 Pet. 5:2-3.

²¹ Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, vol. of *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. Ned B. Stonehouse, F. F. Bruce, and Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 181.

²² Anderson, 49.

²³ *Ibid.*, 52.

the spiritual leader would not be used for selfish purposes, but it would be used by the leader to enable other peoples' needs to be met. Jesus expected the apostles to imitate Him and for us to imitate them in modeling servant leadership and mentoring others. Paul said, "Be imitators of me, just as I am also of Christ."²⁴ Furthermore, Peter charges spiritual leaders to be "examples to the flock," and Paul explains that he has showed others his life so that they could emulate it and show it to others.²⁵ Anderson says, "God expects all of us to mentor others to some degree."²⁶

The third biblical model for spiritual leadership that Anderson discusses is that of equipping. This is clearly shown in Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. . . . from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.²⁷

From this passage, we conclude that God calls some people to have a special spiritual leadership that carries the responsibility of equipping others for the work of ministry. As Anderson says, "The leaders are to equip the saints, so that the saints, in turn, can do the ministry."²⁸ God desires to see His Kingdom grow and the church expand, and He desires to have every believer functioning within the body of Christ so that the body can grow up in love and expand. To accomplish this, spiritual leaders must set aside time and make the effort to train others in the practical (as well as the theoretical) aspects of ministry. Further, a spiritual leader needs to know individuals well enough to know what part of ministry would best suit them. Too often equipping

²⁴ 1 Cor. 11:1.

²⁵ Acts 20:18; 20:35.

²⁶ Anderson, 53.

²⁷ Eph. 4:11-13, 16.

²⁸ Anderson, 84.

of people is seen as “simply dumping jobs onto available bodies.”²⁹ People need to be delegated meaningful tasks whereby they are using some of their unique gifts and perceive themselves as making a difference for the kingdom of God and glorifying Christ. Anderson says, “Equipping calls for consistent investment of time in another person’s life and patience as that person appears, at times, to barely crawl up the learning curve.”³⁰ Spiritual leaders are called to equip believers for works of service, or ministry, which requires delegation.

From the story of Moses being confronted by his father-in-law in Exodus chapter 18, we learn that a wise leader will delegate ministry tasks to other capable leaders so as not to be overburdened with too much ministry. In Ex. 18:13-27, Moses is carrying a heavy burden of responsibility as he starts his journey of leadership of the people of God toward their promised land, and then he is confronted by Jethro saying,

You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you . . . you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. And let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you.³¹

LeRoy Bartel says, “One of the key things that must be acknowledged is the need to involve other people in the process of achieving mission or working toward the fulfillment of a vision.”³² Spiritual leaders must know their people and determine who would be suited for particular delegated tasks and responsibilities, and then enable others to act.

²⁹ Anderson, 85.

³⁰ Anderson, 99.

³¹ Ex. 18:18, 21-22.

³² LeRoy Bartel, “Enabling Others to Act,” lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, February 7, 2006, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/rharden/pth5323rharden/EnablingOtherstoAct_070206150429/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

Nehemiah is a biblical example of an inspiring leader who encouraged the heart of people so that they could achieve their full potential.³³ In Nehemiah chapter 4, Nehemiah encouraged the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Although the people were tired from their work, discouraged by their slow progress, and distracted by the enemies around them, Nehemiah told them to “remember”: Remember the Lord who is awesome and great, and remember your families who we are trying to protect.³⁴ Nehemiah was successful in inspiring the people because they trusted him—believing in him as a leader, believing that the vision was worth the effort, and believing that the plan would work.³⁵ Using strategic planning, he identified four strategic goals: rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, rebuild houses, reestablish worship, and resettle the city.³⁶ His vision became a reality with the help of his countrymen. Similarly, for leaders to be inspiring, we must have a good relationship with the people where they trust us. Such a relationship needs to be grounded in respect, whereby the constituents perceive us as competent and people of character—trustworthy. Further, our vision must give guidance to strategic planning and goals, which must be shared with our constituents in such a way that they feel it is worth their efforts and that the plan can be achieved, which stems from the track record of the leader or his/her competency and trustworthiness. Just as Nehemiah was able to complete the wall in fifty-two days with the help of his people,³⁷ so leaders today can accomplish great things as a result of inspiring others toward a common goal that, they feel, makes a difference.

³³ Scott Wilson, “Encouraging the Heart—Leaders Inspire Others,” lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, November 21, 2005, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/rharden/pth5323rharden/EncouragingTheHeart-LeadersInspireOthers_211105151455/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Kermit Bridges, “Role of Leadership in Strategic Planning,” lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, February 7, 2006, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/harden/pth5323rharden/RoleofLeadershipinPlanning_070206124800/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

³⁷ Neh. 6:15-16.

2. Focus

Who or what will be the purpose of your ministry?

Although there are many great opportunities calling for people's attention, I have realized that I must be focused on my particular purpose and calling, in order to be effective and pleasing to God. I found it very interesting to read that one of Billy Graham's secrets to leadership success has been his precise focus on his calling and purpose. "He identified his calling, then refused to be diverted. He focused on his mission: evangelism, 'to bring people out of their torpor of sin to salvation from it.'"³⁸ Even when President Lyndon Johnson suggested to Graham that he run for president or when rich people offered him money to run for president, his focus remained clear and responded each time "God called me to preach, and I do not intend to do anything else as long as I live."³⁹ Although Graham was in favor of higher education, after long discussions, he refused an offer of being the president of a new Christian University, feeling it "would divert too much energy and funding away from his primary mission, evangelism."⁴⁰ Graham did not get involved in politics so that he would not segregate himself from any people group, and he left the follow-up and growth of converts for churches so that he could focus on "one element—connecting with broad audiences and bringing them to the point of decision [for Christ]."⁴¹ From Graham's example of an extra-ordinary leader with a laser sharp focus, I also plan to focus on my God-given calling and purpose for ministry.

³⁸ Harold Myra and Marshall Shelley, *The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 65-66.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 69.

I believe that we all have a “general” calling and purpose for life and a “specific” calling and purpose for life.⁴² In general, my purpose in life is to glorify God, maintain faith in Jesus Christ, and obediently live according to the teachings of the Bible and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I believe God has called me specifically to serve people as a teacher of theology/Bible, as a computer programmer of real world applications, as a witness of Christ through word and deed especially among professionals, and as a speaker and author of the message that all work is valuable to God—especially when done whole-heartedly and unto Christ.

To amplify, my purpose in ministry is to help people know God and His ways; thus, it is important for me to share the Bible’s contents and teachings with interested students wherever and whenever God opens doors of opportunity. I intend to teach with passion for God, His Word, the students, and the teaching process. People must be trained to know that they are on this earth to glorify God in all that they do, which includes their daily occupations. Leading by example, I will proclaim that all work is to be done unto the Lord (with a motive of serving Christ), with diligence, passion, and excellence, regardless of the occupation. While we should be prepared to utilize our gifts and talents to the fullest in service to people, we should also be prepared to work whole-heartedly in any occupation that God places us in at the moment (until He leads us to other areas of service for people). Through hard work as a computer programmer (in the field of Web Development), I will let my light shine before people in such a way that they see my good works and glorify God in heaven. I pray for open doors to share Christ with unbelievers and to encourage Christians to work unto the Lord in service toward people, whom God loves.

⁴² Leland Ryken differentiates the two types of calling as “general” calling (the call to salvation, godliness, and discipleship) and “particular” calling (the call to religious service or to ordinary work and occupations); Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work & Leisure* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 191-93.

3. Attitude

How do you feel about the people to whom God has called you to minister? Do you trust them? Do they trust you? Just how open can you be with your people?

I feel great about the people to whom God has called me to minister. I have been called to minister in three main areas: among interested Bible students wanting to be taught the Word of God, among computer professionals, and among members and visitors of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI). It is important for me to extend trust to those I am called to minister and such trust helps reciprocate their trust back to me. "Trust begets trust."⁴³ "Trust is at the core of long-term success with people."⁴⁴ People will not follow me as a leader if they do not trust me, and trust takes time to earn.⁴⁵ People will extend trust to me as a leader if their relationship with me has given them reason for believing that my character is trustworthy and credible and if I have shown competence in their desired arena. I feel privileged to be entrusted with leadership responsibilities among three groups of wonderful people.

In the classroom where I teach Berean Bible classes to ministry interns, I extend trust and respect to each of the students. Being friendly and respectful to them, I have established a good relationship of mutual trust. They have seen my commitment to teaching them each week, showing up for class on time in the morning and postponing the start of my regular work day till noon. They see me as trustworthy, but they also see me as competent in my field of theology and

⁴³ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership," in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 28.

⁴⁴ Greg Beadles, "Building Trust," lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, October 14, 2005, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/harden/pth5323rharden/BuildingTrust_141005152014/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

⁴⁵ Robert Harden, "A Credible Leader," lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, October 5, 2005, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/rharden/pth5323rharden/ACredibleLeader_051005111513/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

the Bible. I have put in years of study in this field and I am well prepared for each class session, having processed the same material as all the students yet with some extra thought for classroom discussion. It seems evident that they trust my teaching of the Word of God, yet I help them to come to a place where they are free to voice contrary opinions and to come to their own conviction based on the data presented to them in the Word of God. I show respect for their questions and occasional variation on a biblical topic, and yet they respect the enormous amount of research and study I have done on a particular topic and thus often trust my Evangelical-Pentecostal perspective of the topic. My consistent behavior and teaching in accordance with the Word of God has lead to their trust of me.⁴⁶

At my workplace in Verizon, I have learned to extend trust even when it seems that others are not trusting of me. A decade and a half ago, I had the privilege of co-leading a group to Portugal to install and test a new computer billing system. I had established a great relationship with my co-leader, but then a boss quit and there seemed to be a possibility that one of us would fill her shoes. For some reason, circumstances occurred that put me in a bad light, thus making my co-leader look good. I suspected that he was trying to undermine me for the position. After much agonizing thought and prayer, I figured I would approach him, as might be suggested in the Bible, and discuss the issue to alleviate any misunderstanding or wrong feelings. Although I had come with the right spirit of wanting to clarify things between us, he was offended that I would even “think” such things. I was open to letting such thoughts go with his open responses, but the temporary mistrust caused a breach in our relationship which resulted in his mistrust of me. Such mistrust affected our relationship, but after years of consistent behavior and competence, I had gained his trust and all the team members. In my current work environment, I am trusting of others, giving them the benefit of the doubt even if I err in love.

⁴⁶ Beadles.

Through my consistent actions, work ethics, and ethical choices I've made in accordance with my faith, people have come to respect me and trust me. They have observed my competence in application batch monitoring and both mainframe programming and Web programming assignments. In a secular work environment like Verizon, I have learned from past experience that complete openness does not always produce good results. To speak my mind and verbalize a "thought" of mistrust could damage the relation on the receiving end since not everyone will handle their thoughts in a biblical manner. However, I think the principle of being open and authentic with my group is to everyone's benefit most of the time. I have learned that "teamwork and collaboration can only happen as we begin to trust each other . . . as the leader learns to trust those he leads. Trust is a foundational quality of a good leader!"⁴⁷

Serving as a National Director for FGBFMI, I extend trust to each of the members and chapter officers. Overseeing the elections of chapter officers, I encourage people to serve as an officer and I trust them to be faithful and able to perform their duties. Although this has not always resulted in faithful, competent individuals holding office, it has enabled the chapters to have a better number of qualified candidates and for the elected officers to perform better than had I not expressed trust in them. As the guest speaker at many different FGBFMI events, I have the opportunity of sharing my testimony and being vulnerable and authentic to the members and guests in attendance. I believe trust is built as others see me being vulnerable and authentic, and then the atmosphere invites others to be vulnerable and authentic, resulting in mutual trust in the organization and the potential for real teamwork.⁴⁸ I try to build a "safe" environment for those under my leadership, and I have encouraged the men to share their heart and, when they do, I affirm their story/testimony in some way, which helps others to be affirming and trusting too.

⁴⁷ Bartel.

⁴⁸ Bartel.

4. Motivation

Why do you want to minister?

I would like to minister to glorify God and to serve people according to their needs. “The love of Christ controls [me].”⁴⁹ Out of love for Christ and with Christ’s love, I want to minister to people in accordance with the way that God desires me to meet people’s needs. God has placed an internal desire within me to serve people in ways that are congruent with my skills, gifting, purpose, and calling. I desire to increase my skills in the area of my gifting through training to fulfill my calling that God has given to me. I admire King Solomon who asked for wisdom when the Lord asked him to make a request for something—anything. Solomon acknowledged that he was now king after the passing of his father David, and Solomon asked for wisdom with the motive “to judge Thy people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?”⁵⁰ God was pleased that he wanted wisdom, which would help him to serve God’s people better, and that he did not ask for selfish things.⁵¹ Similarly, I want to become more effective in my skills and ministry to better serve God’s people, whether they are interns learning the Bible from me, co-workers using a new Web tool that I developed or enhanced, or members or visitors of an FGBMFI meeting from which I speak or oversee.

I want to minister because it is a passion of mine, which I believe is God-given. I am passionate about learning the Bible, since God delights in us knowing His word, and I want to know God and His ways for me as much as I can. Out of this desire to learn, I have a passion to teach the Bible, since so many people need to know teachings of the Bible to help them live a life of godliness and properly serve God. I am passionate about learning computers and how to

⁴⁹ 2 Cor. 5:14.

⁵⁰ 1 Kings 3:9.

⁵¹ 1 Kings 3:10-11.

program computers, since this is an aptitude with which God has gifted me. When I develop and use the gifts that God has given me, I can feel His pleasure. I am passionate about sharing with others how Christians can and should work unto the Lord, with passion and excellence. I am passionate about sharing the gospel with interested people, and I jump for joy when a person is touched by God, repents of his/her sins, and trusts in Jesus as his/her Savior, as this is the heart of God; the Bible says that even the angels rejoice when a sinner repents and turns to God.⁵² These passions of mine could also be described as a “love” for using my skills, pursuing interests, and caring for people. As mentioned previously, “The best-kept secret of successful leaders is love: staying in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what their organizations produce, and with those who honor the organization by using its products and services.”⁵³ Further, Kouzes and Posner say, “Of all the things that sustain a leader over time, love is the most lasting.” Love coming from God and flowing through leaders to people is the best motivating influence for a leader to continue to serve people day in and day out.⁵⁴

A less noble motivation for ministry is to earn a paycheck--in essence, to make money. Granted, there are times in the economy when a person has to take whatever job is available to earn money and pay bills, but, even then, a Christian should always keep in mind Paul’s words, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”⁵⁵ Jesus warned against shepherds, or spiritual leaders, that were hired hands and did not have a sincere care for those they were serving.⁵⁶ Yet, I think the motivation to use one’s talents to serve people out of love or a sincere desire to meet their needs is a nobler purpose for everyone in any occupation. Recently, I turned down a promotion with a raise in order to “serve” in my current capacity.

⁵² Luke 15:10.

⁵³ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 351.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Col. 3:23.

⁵⁶ John 10:12

5. Values

What are those things, which you hold to be most important? Do you always have to be right? Are you success-oriented? How do you seek to solve problems, within or do you ask for help?

“Values are important because they drive people’s behavior,”⁵⁷ according to Ken Blanchard. Further, he advises, “values must be ranked to be effective . . . because life is about value conflicts,” and thus Walt Disney ranked the immediate safety of a person ahead of being courteous to some other person at that moment, even though courtesy was a core value of his too.⁵⁸ “Values inform your decisions about what to do and what not to do, when to say yes or when to say no, and to really understand *why* you make those decisions. They supply you with a moral compass by which to navigate the course of your daily life.”⁵⁹ Sam Farnia advises us to reexamine our core theological values and personal values once every three years since we see things differently as we get older.⁶⁰ Several core values are “most important” to me today.

For me, having a love relationship with God, entered into (and sustained) by faith in Christ, is foundational to all my values. Out of that love for Him (and knowing that He loves me), I desire to live according to the Bible and be guided by His Holy Spirit. My priority is seeking God’s kingdom and righteousness, knowing that all necessary things will be provided for me.⁶¹ Thus, I value serving the Lord and putting Him first in my life, so I ensure that I spend time daily with the Lord and purpose in my heart to do all things ultimately for Him. I value working unto the Lord, thus my prayer and motivation is working for His glory and to serve

⁵⁷ Ken Blanchard, “Reflections on Encourage the Heart,” in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 107.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Kouzes and Posner, “The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership,” 11.

⁶⁰ Sam Farnia, “Leading by Example,” lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, November 18, 2005, Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/rharden/pth5323rharden/leadingbyexample_181105110618/class/default.htm (accessed April 10, 2010).

⁶¹ Matt. 6:33.

people by the skills and services that I provide in my job. I try to build positive relationships as I serve them and work with them and to treat people with respect, hoping to be a witness to them in word and deed. My heart for God and for evangelism motivates me to love people throughout the day, hoping for an opportunity to be a witness to them. I value continuous education, both spiritually and in the field for which God has called me to work. Thus, I passionately spend much time outside of work learning Christian content and Computer programming content, with the goal of wanting to serve people better in both contexts. Therefore, Graduate studies in Theology contributes towards my value of growing in the Lord and developing skills to better serve people in church, work, and in FGBMFI. I spend time teaching ministry interns various Berean Bible classes, since I value teaching the Word of God and equipping people with the Word. With FGBMFI, I spend time overseeing and visiting various “chapters” that meet on a monthly basis in Florida, offering encouragement with my words and presence. I enjoy the opportunities in this Fellowship to share my testimony with others of the difference that Christ has made in my life. I’ve had the privilege to share evangelistically throughout the world at various conferences and events with FGBMFI, which requires much time and money on my part. I attend national and international meetings, representing chapters to the International and National Headquarters and represent the values and mission of the Fellowship to the “chapters” in Florida, especially. I value time with my family, so I also set aside time each day (or accumulate the time for a weekend) to be with my sons, wife, and/or family.

While I do not have to be right all the time, I do hope that I am right most of the time. If I am simply thinking out loud with people around me, I might only be right half of the time, but when I think things through and proclaim my findings and thoughts, I am usually right most of the time. However, I will sometimes add a phrase like “though, I could be wrong” at the end of a

statement for which I am not positive. I acknowledge that I could be wrong in things that I say, and that is okay, since we should all be entitled to make mistakes and learn from them. After Nancy Ortberg heard someone say that “leaders are only right 50 percent of the time,” she realized that she was wearing herself out “trying to be right all the time, or 90 percent of the time.”⁶² People need to see leaders admit that they are wrong and hear them say, “I’m sorry,” and then they will feel okay to do that too. An atmosphere of trust in an organization allows people to make mistakes and be wrong and a leader should lead the way and say “here’s where I have fallen short.”⁶³

Although I would consider myself “success-oriented,” I do not think we should never fail, for I am not opposed to making mistakes and learning from them. I like how the White Stag Leadership Development views failure: “We don’t see failure as an end result, but as positive feedback of where we went wrong.”⁶⁴ I believe in giving my best and working very hard and determining to improve; however, I aim to encourage others (and myself) that failure is not final and that it is okay to try again. I try to place a high value on learning new things and on developing creative things and extending forgiveness for mistakes along the way. Engaging in new things inevitably means making mistakes. Experimentation involves trial and “error.” However, if nothing new is ever tried then nothing new will ever be accomplished. To make progress, I realize that mistakes will be made along the way. This needs to be understood individually and corporately. The group philosophy must be such that it is okay to make mistakes as long as learning results from it. Every mistake is a learning opportunity. Such wisdom will

⁶² Nancy Ortberg, “Reflections on Enable Others to Act,” in *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, ed. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 90.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁶⁴ White Stag Leadership Development, “Success Oriented,” 1998-2010, <http://www.whitestag.org/about/characteristics/success-oriented.html> (accessed April 13, 2010).

help a person to avoid that mistake again, hopefully. In this respect, I am not “always” success oriented, but I believe that failures can provide great learning experiences.

I think it is important to learn from my mistakes and temporary failures. Every mistake or failure has something to teach me—helping me to become wiser. The first characteristic needed to allow mistakes to teach me is a willingness to learn from mistakes and not focus on blaming the problems or failures on others. I think a proper mental attitude is important whereby we want to succeed but realize that we will inevitably make mistakes as we strive toward our goals. Failure is not final. I can bounce back, learn from my temporary failures, and grow from my mistakes. While attaining the desired goal may be delayed a bit longer, growth in character and wisdom can take place quicker. Growth comes from “both” positive and negative experiences. One way to learn from experiences is to conduct a postmortem, either by myself or with my team members. In the postmortem, we could ask questions such as what things did we do (and not do) well in, what we can learn from the experience, and how can we improve? As a result, failures can contribute towards my future success, since I am “oriented” toward success.

In reference to solving problems, I usually seek to solve problems from within, but I will ask for help on occasions. Great learning occurs for me when I have struggled with a problem and come up with a solution, and thus this is a great path to take. However, if time is of the essence, and I know that someone else could also work on this problem, then I will delegate the problem to that person or ask for his/her help to solve the problem. Often, I solicit others’ opinions or thoughts prior to making a decision on a problematic situation, and thus people feel a part of the decision that I make and seem to support my decisions, which usually turn out very good.

6. Conclusion

In the conclusion of the paper (at least one page) interact with how you see yourself as a leader. List the strengths and weakness of your leadership style. In listing what you see as weaknesses in your leadership style give ways to improve these weaknesses.

As a result of reading Anderson's book, *They Smell Like Sheep*, I realize that the "shepherding model" should be the primary leadership model of Christian leaders. Therefore, I hope that others would characterize my leadership style in accordance with a shepherding model. A true picture of my strengths and weaknesses would require the honest feedback of others whom I lead. In my opinion, I have been effective in the area of shepherding, mentoring, and equipping, in the realms for which I lead; however, there is much that I could improve upon.

Instead of being a spiritual leader that appears more as a celebrity who is remote from the common people, I think I am more like a shepherd that smells like sheep because I am among the sheep. Just as a shepherd touches his sheep, carries them, handles them, tends them, feeds them, and protects them, so I believe I am attentive to the members of my class, the FG BMFI organization, and my workplace, and know their condition and build personal relationships with them— talking to them. As I have taken the time and interest to interact with individual people, I am starting to smell like them. As this is happening, the members are developing a trust for me as their spiritual leader and want to follow me. The key ingredient has been developing authentic relationships, as Jesus exemplified.

I try to model the shepherd style of leadership. One of the main characteristics of a good shepherd is that he is a servant of the sheep. I believe that I sacrificially serve those under my leadership as I volunteer my time to teach students and to lead as a National Director for FG BMFI. People notice that I am a servant since I gladly serve in these two capacities without

monetary compensation. I am committed to the vision and lead by example with my lifestyle. I truly care about the students that I teach and the men that I direct. I try to feed them with good spiritual food, whether it is biblical content or encouraging testimonies and experiences. I feel I do a good job of encouraging their hearts to continue in their ministries. Similarly, I feel I do a good job of serving my co-workers at Verizon, though I do get paid for doing this. Everyone at Verizon gets paid, but not everyone who gets paid goes out of their way to be nice and helpful, yet I try to do this on a consistent basis.

In contrast to the distorted leadership styles, I believe that I exhibit a more proper shepherd style of leadership. Instead of being a “butcher” that verbally cuts people to shreds, I try to tenderly love people and gently guide them in the right path. Instead of leading like a “hired hand,” who does not have passion in his job and does not sincerely care for people, I have passion for my job and care for people. Unlike the “cowboy” leadership model, I try to lead by example and not drive the people by force or threats. Unlike the “sheriff” style, I do not lead by waving my badge of authority, but I believe that I carry authority by my lifestyle and by my relationships with people that I lead. Unlike the “CEO/chairman of the board” style of leadership, I effectively build relationships with people that I lead and enjoy socializing with them to know them.⁶⁵

I feel I have done a good job in mentoring others inside the classroom and outside the classroom. They see my life, especially as I share much of it with them. I am accessible outside of the normal settings for which they see me, and thus they observe me in those contexts as well. I have shared my life and my life stories with many in FGBFMI. I have taken other men with me to places that I oversee and to see how to encourage and direct the chapters of FGBMFI.

⁶⁵ Anderson, 29-36.

Additionally, I think I do a good job of equipping people with skills needed for the work of ministry. In the classroom, I am teaching biblical content and practical applications of ministry to help young ministry interns be equipped for real ministry. In FGBMFI, I lead by example and show others how to perform the various functions of running a chapter and reaching out to others with invitations to meetings and in welcoming guests to our events. At my workplace, I am often equipping my co-workers with innovative ideas and skills that I recently acquire from the work that I do, and thus they are then able to perform similarly.

People perceive me as a leader who models exemplary values. At work, people have found me to be a credible leader. For me, honesty (or integrity) is an important characteristic, as it is with the company. I believe it is a characteristic that is high on God's list for all humans and I try to model this in all my dealings with people and the organization. Thus, I feel my presence, integrity, and example are making a positive difference in the work area. Having shown competence in past accomplishments and in quickly learning my current job responsibilities and technology environment, people are respecting my forward-looking vision of moving our department to a new technology platform—both hardware and software. As I share the vision of having an up-to-date environment with increased security, people become excited by the possibilities, especially my co-worker who does similar work as I do. He encourages me to continue learning the new technology, believing that I have the competence to lead the group into this new environment. In my leadership, I build good personal relationships with those I work with and lead (or serve). I genuinely care about the people with whom I work, and thus they are more willing to follow my ideas when presented, usually from a collaborated effort.

Some of my weakness of my leadership style includes a tendency to lack compassion for those closest to me, not being relatable enough because of my high intellect and tendency to be

self-absorbed, and a tendency to not want to get my hands dirty doing menial tasks. I suppose others could be added to this list, and one way to determine those weaknesses and to improve those weaknesses is to seek feedback from those I lead. “Seeking feedback provides a powerful statement about the value of self-improvement and how everyone can be even better than they are today.”⁶⁶ I want to know how my behavior affects others, and then I can focus on improving in particular areas, perhaps from the direction of those sharing or perhaps from reading a leadership book dealing with these particular issues. Some ways I could improve on my identified weaknesses would be to draw on God’s compassion for people’s needs, value people not just for their intellect but for a multitude of gifting beyond the intellectual, engage in more real life scenarios common to most people, and volunteer to do activities outside of my box or comfort zone. Certainly, I could ask God to help me with my weaknesses, find godly leaders who are strong in these areas to mentor me, and read good leadership books to gain skills in my weak areas. I thank God for the SAGU Leadership in Ministry class, since it has dramatically improved my ability to lead and to know what leading is.

⁶⁶ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 85.

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