

**Northern's Notes on  
Adorning the Doctrine (Titus 2:10) —**

**A Leadership and  
Work Program  
for  
New Testament  
Congregations**

**Fenter Northern  
and  
Gerald Stockstill**

**Published by  
J.C. Choate Publications  
Winona/Singapore/New Delhi/Cebu City/Jakarta/Cape Town**

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Cover Design: Betty B Choate  
Layout: Barbara A. Oliver

First Printing, 2002

Order From:

**J.C. Choate Publications**

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Winona, MS 38967

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# Dedication

Several years ago when I was working with the Fox and Lake congregation of the Lord's church in Carlsbad, New Mexico, a fine young gospel preacher named Gerald Stockstill was working with the Sunset church in the same city. One day he dropped by my office and asked me if I would take a look at some material he had put together on church leadership and development. He had entitled the material *March for the Master*. It was a good work.

A few months ago I was browsing through some of my old papers and discovered this material. I decided that I would recompose it, add some of my own observations and a few graphics and submit it for publication.

I called Gerald and asked him if it was all right if I combined the materials and published them under the name of **Adorning the Doctrine**. Brother Stockstill graciously consented and the result is the work in this present form. The original work was brother Stockstill's and is therefore dedicated to him. He is still laboring for the Lord in Astec, New Mexico.

I also would like to thank Eulene Ramsey at World Evangelism in Winona, MS for her hard work in proofreading the manuscript.

Fenter D. Northern

# **Publisher's Statement**

The Lord's people today can be led in the right way or the wrong way. The sad thing is that so many follow their leaders in whatever direction they go in. This is why it is so important that they be well trained in sound and scriptural teaching. Once this is done then they are in a position to give the kind of leadership that is so essential for the church to grow and to do its work. They are also able to train those around them to carry on after they are gone.

Brethren Fenter Northern and Gerald Stockstill are just the men who can give the kind of leadership training that is so badly needed today. As authors of this book, they are passing on the teachings and principles that will make great leaders.

Bro. Stockstill has served for many years as a gospel preacher in New Mexico and Bro. Northern has not only preached in that State but also in Oklahoma and in Mississippi where most of his work has been done. He has preached for congregations of the church of Christ in Ruleville, Greenwood, Winona, and other congregations in Mississippi, and for several years he has taught and served as Dean at Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, MS. He and his wife, Sue, are presently living in Shell Knob, MO where he preaches for the local church.

My wife and I have known the Northerns for a number of years, and we thank God for their dedication to the Lord's cause.

J. C. Choate  
Winona, MS 38967  
October 15, 2002

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—Lesson One—

# Introduction

## I. Four Basic Essentials for Church Development and Growth

### A. Leadership

1. Definition: Creating and maintaining an environment in the local church where individuals, working together in groups, can perform efficiently and effectively toward the attainment of individual and group goals.
2. The greatest business on earth is leading souls to Christ, and leading souls as they work together in the family of God.
3. James 3:1 — *“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”*



### B. Program

1. Definition: Driving together in the direction of definite goals, or
2. “A group effort designed to attain group goals at the least cost of time, money and material.” It may or may not be effective, depending on many other variables.”

3. Acts 15:6 — *“And the apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter.”*

#### C. Organization

1. Cooperative endeavor to reach group goals.
2. Philippians 1:1 — *“Paul and Timotheous, the servants of Jesus Christ; to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”*
3. Acts 6:1-3 — *“And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, it is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”*
4. Acts 2:14 — *“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words.”*

#### D. Morale

1. Maintaining esprit-de-corps.
2. Common feeling of loyalty and enthusiasm developed among members of a group.
3. Acts 4:32-34 — *“And the multitude of them that*

*believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet."*

## **II. Three Characteristics of Growing Churches**

### **A. Vision** or foresight, understanding and insight

1. Includes "possibility thinking."
2. Proverbs 29:18 — *"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."* While this is speaking about the law of God, it is equally true that it has a practical and true application in the way we use the word "vision" today.

### **B. Devotion**, strong affection; loyalty

1. Matthew 6:24-34 — *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor*



*gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought of the things for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*

2. 2 Corinthians 12:15 — *"And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."*

**C. Urgency and energy — vigorous, brisk, powerful**

1. Measured in work done, or that can be done.
2. Mark 1:12 — *"And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness."*
3. Mark 1:18 — *"And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him."*

4. Mark 1:20 — *“And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.”*
5. Mark 1:21 — *“And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught.”*
6. Mark 2:2 — *“And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.”*

### **III. Churches languish and fail where there are leaders who show the following characteristics:**

- A. Indifference, lack of concern or interest; absence of favor and incentive, detachment, apathy, aloofness, carelessness, insensitive, listless. Note Revelation 3:1 — *“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.”*
- B. Lassitude — lack of physical or mental energy, weariness.
- C. Lack of faith
  1. Matthew 8:23-27 — *And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there was a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto*

*them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, Saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"*

2. Note Hebrews 11.

**IV. A prime problem in every local church is securing able leaders.**

A. No other factor approaches its importance.

B. Able, devoted, trained leadership is the key that opens the door to success as a church, and glorifying God.

1. Too often in the past, the emphasis on Christian leadership has been mostly an emphasis on "leading prayers," "making announcements." etc.

2. While important, a congregation whose leaders never develop past this stage is doomed to dismal failure.

3. On the other hand, congregations whose leaders are not content to be mediocre, but be aggressively visionary and rely on God, succeed beyond their wildest dreams.

4. 1 Kings 22:15-18 — Figure used to show what a leaderless people is like. *"So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And*

*the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the LORD? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"*

5. This analogy is carried over into the time of Christ. *"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest"* (Matthew 9:36-38)
6. We must pray diligently for the elders. They have a fearful charge. Any man must strive to develop qualities of leadership that will enable him to lead God's people in God's way. *"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which*

*was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out” (Ezekiel 34:1-11).*

- V. There is a definite need in the Lord’s church for specialized training in church leadership.**
- A. Leadership and maturity go hand in hand.
1. Generally recognize need for special training for preachers. Why not elders and deacons?

2. Since a congregation cannot rise above its leaders, we feel that these special classes in church leadership are of vital necessity whether or not those of us here will ever reach the qualifications necessary for elders or deacons.
- B. For elders and deacons, we must have all the prescribed qualifications.
1. 1 Timothy 3:1ff — *“This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?). Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”*

2. Titus 1:5-9 — *“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”*
  3. Acts 6:3 — *“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”*
  4. Most of these qualifications are relative, but they must be visible in their lives before these men are selected to serve.
  5. Men, with God’s help, can meet these.
- C. Elders and deacons must recognize the respective functions of each group, and the proper relationship with each other.
1. Many times preachers do the elders’ work, the elders do the deacons’ work, and deacons do little or nothing.
  2. Some seem to think that deacons are an independent

- group, having little or nothing to do with the elders.
3. Others believe that they are mutually dependent, that deacons must concur in every decision of the elders.
  4. Each of the above ideas is scripturally wrong. Elders are the congregational shepherds, pastors, overseers, rulers.
    - a. 1 Timothy 3:5 — *“(For if a man know not how to rule his own house how shall he take care of the church of God?)”*
    - b. 1 Timothy 5:17 — *“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”*
    - c. Hebrews 13:7 — *“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”*
    - d. 1 Peter 5:1-5 — *“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be sub-*



*ject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."*

- e. Acts 20:30 — *"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."*
- 5. Deacons are administrative assistants, subordinate to elders just as preachers, teachers, and other members of the church.
- 6. The Greek word for deacon is "diakonos", "one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master", thus a servant, attendant, minister (Thayer's Greek Dictionary).
- D. Elders are not dictators, arbitrary or capricious leaders who rule by consent of the congregation.
- E. Elders and deacons need to be highly honored.
  - 1. 1 Timothy 5:17 — *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."*
  - 2. 1 Thessalonians 5:13 — *"And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."*
  - 3. 1 Timothy 3:13 — *"For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."*
- F. Nothing furthers the progress of a congregation more

than having qualified elders and deacons who operate according to scriptural principles. Having such men, we should honor them greatly.

**E**very Christian should be a leader in the Lord's church, striving toward a definite goal, striving to lead others to Christ, helping them to develop as Christians. Our remaining lessons will deal with principles of Christian worship and service that should be seen in every individual Christian, whether man or woman.

— Lesson Two —

# Definitions

## I. What Is a Leader?

### A. Common definitions:

1. One who draws along others — or goes before them with guidance by instruction and counsel.
2. The one who induces or allures.

### B. Additional definitions:

1. The one who guides his followers toward desired ends.
2. The one who is chiefly responsible for the strategy, program, and for unfolding plans that lead to achievement and victory.
3. The one who in comradeship, guides his followers toward goals cooperatively chosen and freely embraced.
4. One who creates and maintains an internal environment in an enterprise (the church) where individuals working together in groups can perform efficiently and effectively toward the attainment of group ends.
5. One who is responsible for formulating policy, administering the program and discharging individual responsibilities demanding initiative and skill.

6. Most of these definitions are combinations in one form or another of a paternalistic and a democratic leader.

## **II. Even though we all realize that the church is not a democracy, but a theocracy, we need to look at the democratic definition of leader.**

- A. A leader is responsible for the development, strategy, program, and plans. Since this is the strategy employed by leaders of growing congregations, at least to a great extent, the following thoughts on leadership are in order:
  1. *“Whosoever will be the chief among you let him be your servant”* (Matthew 20:27).
  2. The leader sees things through the eyes of his followers.
  3. The leader does not say, “Get going!” but “Let’s go,” and leads the way. He is not behind with an order, but in front with a challenge.
  4. The leader assumes that his followers are working with, not for, him.
  5. The leader duplicates himself in others. He builds character, or, rather, he shares character.
  6. He helps his followers to grow because the success and strength of a group undertaking depends upon it.
  7. A leader does not hold people down, but lifts them up. He helps all to scale the peaks. If in scaling the peaks, the follower outshines the leader, the true leader feels he has been successful in his leading.

8. The leader has faith in people. He believes in them, trusts them, and thus draws out the best in them.
9. The leader can be led. He is not interested in having his own way, but in finding the best way.

**III. There is a type of leadership which is neither paternalistic nor democratic, but autocratic.**

- A. This is defined as the “art of getting what one wants and making people like it.”
- B. The autocratic leadership has as its main disadvantage that it is apt to build resentment and leave a vacuum when his leadership fails or he is removed.
  1. Autocratic leadership can be fast and decisive, but is dictatorial.
  2. The achievements under autocratic leadership are less permanent than under either paternalistic or democratic types of leadership.

**IV. The National Institute of Leadership of Los Angeles defines bosses and leaders in the following fashion:**

- A. A boss creates fear, while a leader creates confidence.
- B. A boss promotes resentment; a leader develops enthusiasm.
- C. A boss says “I”, a leader says “We.”
- D. A boss fixes blame; a leader corrects mistakes.
- E. A boss knows it all, a leader asks questions.
- F. A boss makes work drudgery, a leader makes work interesting.

- G. A boss relies upon authority, a leader on cooperation.
- H. A boss drives, a leader persuades.
- I. The boss is interested in himself, a leader in groups.
- J. The boss is autocratic, the leader is democratic or paternalistic.
  - 1. As *Autocratic*, the boss rarely acknowledges or analyzes mistakes.
    - a. New programs are begun replacing those which were mistakes to begin with.
    - b. An autocratic boss is ruthless and will reap a harvest of hatred.
  - 2. As *Paternalistic*, the leader presents a father-like image, and is willing to assume responsibility when things go wrong. The leader is willing to analyze failing programs, to see where they can be bolstered and become great tools in the Master's service.
  - 3. A *Democratic* leader is interested in building up his group.
    - a. Training and educational programs are made available, and the group is encouraged in every way to take part in them.
    - b. The democratic leader is more apt to be leading an educated group than is the autocratic boss.
- V. **Some scriptural definitions of the type leaders God wants:**
  - A. Exodus 31:3 — “*And I have filled him with the spirit of*

*God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.”*

B. A leader must possess:

1. Spirit of God
2. Wisdom
3. Understanding
4. Knowledge
5. Skill

C. Acts 6:3-5 — *“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch.”*

D. God’s leader is one who:

1. Has an honest report.
2. Is full of the Holy Spirit.
3. Is full of wisdom.
4. Is full of faith.

E. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 — *“This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant,*

*sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler; not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?). Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."*

- F. Titus 1 :5-7 — *"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate."*
- G. Titus 1:9 — *"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayer."*

## **VI. Qualifications of bishops (elders), leaders**

- A. A summary of these different qualifications shows that God's leader must be well-rounded.
- B. These qualifications fall easily into four categories:
1. Good report in domestic, economic and social life.
  2. Wisdom and knowledge of the Word of God.



3. So filled with the Spirit that he prepares himself and teaches a sound class (desires the work).
  4. Full of faith and a lover of all good.
  5. 1 Peter 5:1-3 — *“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”*
- C. A leader, not a boss, sets a proper example. From all these definitions we note that a leader is:
1. Dynamic
  2. Friendly
  3. Cooperative
  4. Positive, not negative
  5. Participates, but does not dictate
  6. Work centered, not self-centered
  7. Consultive
  8. Inquisitive
  9. Informal
- D. He has not campaigned for the high office.

— Lesson Three —

# You Don't Have to Have Sheep to Be a Shepherd

- I. Don't wait for someone to tell you where and how to help people.**
- A. A problem with our plans for doing good is that we depend too much on the plan.
1. Matthew 5:16
  2. One can help lead to Christ only when he knows where people are.
  3. John 4:35
  4. Others' misfortunes are Christian opportunities.
- B. Leadership is a call and responsibility from God.
1. Larger leadership goes not to those who campaign for it, but to those who are ready for it.
  2. Get ready by recognizing opportunities, by filling them, by study, by practice, and by Christian growth.
  3. John 13:3-17.
  4. To have persuasiveness enough to be a leader of men, one must have humility enough to serve them.
  5. Our attitude determines our altitude.

- C. Leadership is a skill which requires development.
1. Being mediocre honors neither God nor man.
  2. 1 Corinthians 14:12.
  3. Training and growing involve attitude as much as activity.
    - a. Must become dissatisfied with just getting by or with less than our best.
    - b. Must determine to be and do our best for Christ's sake. Serving God demands excellence.
    - c. Possess the conviction that the greatest room is the room for improvement.
  4. When we stop training and learning, we stop leading.
  5. Leading is action, not just reaction.

**II. The title of our series "Adorning the Doctrine" must be taken seriously:**

- A. Source of joy, but it also implies great responsibilities on the part of every Christian.
- B. Lack of leadership ability and/or alertness on the part of older Christians, as well as on the part of bishops, can prove fatal to both the new converts, as well as older, supposedly more mature Christians.
- C. Success of Christian leaders is determined by the success of followers.
  1. Faithful Christian leaders keep their eyes on the goal, and also lead the way.

- a. John 10:4 — *“And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.”*
2. Competent Christian leaders will be aiding each Christian to function and exercise self in the type of work suited to his talents.
3. Well developed Christian leaders will aid each Christian in fruit-bearing so that they will remain a part of the vine.
  - a. John 15:2 — *“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”*
4. Successful Christian leaders are those who are constantly aiding in the care and treatment of weak and sickly members (Galatians 6:1).

**III. Hopefully, we will all develop into Christian leaders whether or not we ever become elders, deacons, or ministers in the church of our Lord. If so, we will have developed the following characteristics:**

- A. Respect for the Bible as God’s inspired Word.
  1. 2 Timothy 3:16,17 — *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”*
  2. 1 Corinthians 2:12,13 — *“Now we have received,*

*not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."*

3. This implies that even though the Bible does not speak of many of the problems of today, that there are Biblical principles that will apply, and may be used in similar circumstances.
4. See Genesis 6 and then compare:
  - a. 1 Peter 2:1-10 — *"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of*

*stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."*

**B. Strong faith in the efficacy of prayer.**

1. James 5:16 — *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."*

**C. Business requires certain characteristics or qualities that are found in successful managers. These are essential to the successful Christian leader as well.**

1. Physical qualities:
  - a. Health
  - b. Vigor or energy
  - c. The ability to give thought or effort to required tasks
  - d. A pleasing manner of conducting oneself.
2. Mental qualities:
  - a. Ability

- b. Judgment
  - c. Mental vigilance
  - d. Adaptability
3. Moral qualities:
- a. Energy
  - b. Firmness
  - c. Willingness to understand and learn
  - d. Initiative
  - e. Loyalty
  - f. Tact
  - g. Dignity
4. Educational quality — general acquaintance with matters not belonging exclusively to the function performed.
5. Technical quality — acquaintance with matters peculiar to the function performed.
6. Experience quality — arising from the work proper.
7. Spiritual quality — God dependent, prayerful, etc.

**IV. There are several ways of training and growing in Christian leadership:**

- A. Prepare thoroughly for every act of service, however humble.
- B. Study the field of service in which you are now engaged, or in which you are interested. Study books and maga-

zines. Try to read two books in this particular field yearly. If there are no books relating to this field, subscribe to some of the brotherhood periodicals that relate to this interest.

- C. Develop your natural talents. Use them for the Lord or lose them. Never be satisfied to remain where you are.
- D. Develop good working habits. Be systematic in studying, working, thinking. Organize your plans. Do not procrastinate. Make that phone call, correct that mistake, make that assignment, formulate those plans, write that letter, make that visit now — before that idea fades. Charles Buxton said, “You will never find time for anything. If you want time, you must make it.”
- E. Ask counsel and criticism from successful people in your field.
- F. Observe a good leader in action. Ask yourself: what makes him effective? How does he approach his audience, people, class or gathering? How does he draw them out? How does he gain their confidence? Does he seem to like his audience, etc.? How do I know? What can I learn from him?
- G. Be an apprentice to some successful leader. Watch, work, and learn.
- H. Constructively evaluate every program. What makes it effective? Practice these points and pass them on to new leadership:
  - 1. Take time to observe.



2. Be able to assemble facts that will help to determine what needs to be done.
  3. Study the facts and learn how to utilize the capabilities of the group.
  4. Use your imagination. See a raw recruit develop into great usefulness.
- I. Attend at least one leadership training course per year for service, inspiration, ideas, and a fresh reminder of things you already know.
  - J. Enlarge your interests and broaden your sympathy. Take an interest in the local congregation's work, the work of the church as a whole, and every good work on earth which our brethren attempt to accomplish. Scholars have said, "The average man does not develop more than 10% of his possible mental power."
  - K. Never be content with being "average." In business, the firm which would continue to enjoy profit dare not be content to be mediocre, but must aggressively attempt to be more efficient than its competitors. Likewise, the leader who would continue to grow, and the church which would continue to reach souls of men — must never be content to be merely mediocre.

## — Lesson Four —

# Functions and Authority of Leadership

## I. Authority and Functions of Elders set forth by the scriptures:

### A. Description

1. Elder: Greek — *presbuteras* — an older person.
2. 1 Peter 5:1 — *“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.”*

### B. Functions

1. Shepherd — from the Greek word *poimaino* — to tend or feed.
  - a. Acts 20:28 — *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*
2. Rule from the Greek word *proistemi* — to place over for the purpose of governing.
  - a. 1 Timothy 5:17-19 — *“Let the elders that rule*

*well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."*

3. Lead or guide: Greek — *hegeomaia*. Hebrews 13:17 — *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*
4. Watch, be alert, wide awake: Greek — *agrupneo*. Hebrews 13:17 — *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*
5. Teach: from the Greek word *didaktikon*.
  - a. 1 Timothy 3:2 — *"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach."*
  - b. How well must he know the doctrine?
  - c. Titus 1:9 — *"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."*

6. Examples: Greek — *pupoi* — patterns
  - a. 1 Peter 5:3 — *“Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”*
7. To make policy decisions for the church as a result of debate and discussion. Acts 15:22-29 — *“Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren: And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.”*

- C. The overall job of any leader is to create within the group (church) an environment which will facilitate the accomplishment of its objective.
  - D. As seen above, elders as overall rulers have the authority to designate others as leaders of a specific job, program, or department. Deacons and their specific jobs are a case in point.
  - E. The deacon, department head, program leader, or whatever name he is given, is responsible for the environment in which others work with him, and under his direction.
  - F. The able leader creates conditions conducive to the effective work of his helpers.
- II. Effective leadership of any organization involves the following essentials: planning, analyzing, staffing, directing, controlling.**
- A. Planning
    - 1. Involves selecting objectives.
    - 2. Strategies, policies, programs, and procedures for achieving them, either for the entire enterprise or for any organized plan thereof.
      - a. Elders for the entire local congregation.
      - b. Deacons or department heads for any phase of activity under their direction.
    - 3. Planning is decision making.
    - 4. Planning involves selecting among alternatives.
    - 5. Planning cannot be separated from performance,

because all leaders plan, whether at top, middle, or bottom of the organizational structure.

**B. Organizing**

1. Involves establishment of a structure.
2. Every Christian leader, whether an elder or not, whether leading a large group or small, is involved in basically the same task.
  - a. Determine and list the activities required to achieve the predetermined goal, in part and in total.
  - b. Group these activities and assign such groups to those who can carry them out.

**C. Along with the activities, delegate such authority as is necessary for proper activity.**

**D. Make provision for a constant flow of information, from top to bottom of organizational structure, and from bottom board to top shingle.**

**E. Staffing**

1. Involves manning, and keeping manned, the positions provided for by organization structure.
2. Necessitates defining manpower requirements for the job to be done.
  - a. Includes inventorying, appraising, and selecting candidates for "positions".
  - b. Includes training or otherwise developing candidates and those already functioning to accomplish their tasks effectively.

#### F. Directing

1. Involves guiding and leading those in the group (church).
2. Methods include both word and example, but can be complex in nature.
3. Great leaders give those being led a keen appreciation of the church history, objectives, and policies.
4. Followers learn of organization structure, relationship of activities, relationship of personalities, their own duties, and authority.
5. Once followers are oriented, leaders have a continuing responsibility of clarifying the job at hand, and guiding toward improved performance, as well as motivating them to work with zeal and confidence.

#### G. Controlling

1. Measuring and correcting of activities of followers to assure that events conform to plans.
  - a. Titus 1:9, convict gainsayers.
  - b. Measures performance against goals and plans.
2. Plans are not self-achieving.
  - a. Carrying plans out for an entire church means prescribing the activities of members at designated times.

### III. Coordination, the essence of leadership

- A. Achievement of harmony of individual effort toward the

accomplishment of group goals is the purpose of good leadership.

- B. Each of the above functions of leadership is an exercise in coordination.
- C. Need for coordination
  - 1. The central task of the leader is to reconcile differences in approach, timing, effort, or interest, and to harmonize cooperative and individual goals.
  - 2. Best coordinations occur when individuals see how their jobs contribute to the dominant goals of the church as a whole.
    - a. Implies knowledge and understanding of church objectives.
    - b. Not just a few at the top, but everyone in the church.
    - c. Dominant goal of the church should be clearly defined and communicated to everyone concerned.
  - 3. Goals of each department should be designed to contribute the maximum to enterprise goals.

#### **IV. Evangelism**

##### **A. Principles of Coordination**

- 1. Principle of direct contact. Coordination must be achieved through interpersonal, vertical, and horizontal relationships of people in the church.
- 2. Principle of early planning. Coordination must be



achieved in the early planning and policy stages. After each department puts its plans into operation, it is almost impossible to unify and time events properly.

3. Principle of related factors. When two work together, each influences the other, and both are influenced by all persons in the total situation. People cooperate as a result of understanding one another's tasks.
4. Principles of continuous interchange of information — This cannot be overemphasized. Good coordination will attack problems as they arise, excellent coordination will anticipate them and prevent their occurrence.

#### B. Techniques of Coordination

1. Leaders, deacons, department heads perhaps most important single factor.
2. Careful attention to principles of organization will facilitate coordination of plans and goals.
3. Personal contact is perhaps the most effective means of achieving coordination.
4. Group meetings are effective for achieving coordination. It encourages members to integrate their effects to the total group effort.
5. Liaison men have been used effectively on a temporary basis, and in large organizational structure.

## — Lesson Five —

# Qualities and Principles of Christian Leadership

## I. People will follow true leadership.

- A. It is easier to follow someone else than it is to take the initiative to plan and lead someone else.
- B. People find security in following a true leader.
- C. The true leader:
  1. “Has the ability to stimulate others to follow a course which he is espousing.” — Conner
  2. “A true leader can see more and farther than others, and acts accordingly.” — Dobbins
  3. A leader is one who, when people are going around one corner, he is going around the next one.
  4. “The true leader is one who through invisible mental or spiritual power creates plans and causes them to materialize.” — Kizer
  5. “Leadership is now defined as a set of functions in contrast to its traditional concept of position of authority. Emphasis is shifting away from the notion that the leaders do it all.” — Knowles

## II. Qualities of a good leader:

A. Courage — 50 books and pamphlets place courage at the top of the list.

1. Titus 1:9,10 — *“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.”*

B. Intelligence — good judgment

1. Galatians 6:1 — *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.”*
2. Refuses to give way to fears, anxieties, emotional upsets, nervousness, suspicions, etc.
  - a. Answers these tyrants with confession, thanksgiving, childlike trust, and relaxation.
  - b. Practice Christian poise by turning such problems over to the Lord.
  - c. 1 Peter 5:7 — *“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”*
3. If troubles and worries persist, talk them over with some Christian more experienced than you, but with only one, not one after another.

## C. Vision.

1. Ability to create plans and to keep ahead, not behind, the congregation.
2. Ability to carry these plans to fruition.
3. Ability to see the consequence of an act before it is committed.

## D. Initiative.

1. Ability to commence new works and new ideas.
2. Not afraid of the new.

## E. Insight — big in spirit.

1. Too big to be hurt by other's words, actions or attitudes.
2. Only self-pity can do harm.
3. Antidote
  - a. Take criticisms as kindly intended suggestions.
  - b. Take slights as unintentional oversights.
  - c. Take harsh words or rebuffs as evidence of the person's upset condition or feeling of inferiority.

## F. Emphasize again: Guard your mental health.

1. Never give way to fear, anxieties, emotional upsets, nervousness, or suspicions.
2. Matthew 6:27-34 — *“Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of*

*the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*

3. These are self-imposed illnesses. Note Philippians 4:6,7 — *"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*
4. Peace comes from knowing God and letting Christ live in self. 2 Timothy 1:12 — *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed — for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."*

G. Keep your conscience free and healthy.

1. Confess your wrongs — right them.
2. Keep your heart pure.
3. When our conscience condemns us, we develop an ever worsening attitude.

#### H. Poise and self-confidence

1. Confidence, but not swaggering.
  - a. Gives others confidence as well as yourself.
  - b. You stand and walk as if on royal business, but God-fearing.
2. Gives a direct look and smile.
  - a. You look directly at the person or people you are addressing.
  - b. A smile portrays friendliness and understanding.
3. Self-control
  - a. You do not become ruffled or irritated when someone raises an objection, questions your authority, or changes the program without notifying you.
  - b. Simply assume that there might be valid objections or reasons for their action.
  - c. One assumption might be that the group is not ready for the new idea or action at this time, and that with further groundwork, it might be accepted.
4. Attractive appearance — you are always careful with

your grooming, for when you are at your best, you can forget yourself.

5. Relaxed, though alert in manner.
  - a. Don't twiddle with your tie, buttons, finger-comb your hair, jingle your money.
  - b. If you are nervous, hold firmly to a Bible to avoid these "not-at-ease" mannerisms.
6. Vitality
  - a. You are alive to everything that is going on.
  - b. You keep a meeting moving by not allowing discussions to sidetrack, talkers to monopolize, or a dull program to be carried through.

#### I. Sympathy

1. The ability to understand, help and appreciate the problems of others. Romans 12:10 — *"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."*
2. Given to hospitality. 1 Timothy 3:2 — *"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober; of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach."*

#### J. Energy

1. Energy to conceive and initiate plans.
2. Energy to put them into action.
3. Energy to follow them up to a successful conclusion.

**III. If these qualities are developed by Christian leaders, the next step is to develop some leadership principles. These principles will be flexible, not absolute, and will be usable regardless of changing and specialized conditions. I believe the following will apply to the church and its leaders.**

**A. Division of work.**

1. In business, this is the specialization which economists consider necessary to efficiency in the use of labor.
2. In the church, this is allowing for the different abilities of each Christian, and using them in areas for which they are most suited.
3. Matthew 25:15 — *“And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.”*

**B. Authority and Responsibility**

1. Both are closely related.
2. If a person has the responsibility for a certain job, of necessity, he must have the authority to do the things necessary to get the job done.
  - a. Not necessary to talk of buying brooms at business meeting — the fact that someone has charge of janitorial services implies that they have authority to purchase needed equipment.
  - b. Only when expenses become extraordinary to



the extreme should they become part of general business meetings of the church.

3. Authority comes from two sources:
  - a. "Official" — or having an office of leadership.
  - b. "Personal" — composed of intelligence, experience, moral worth, etc.
- C. Discipline — Respect for agreements which are directed at achieving desired goals — requires good leadership at all levels.
- D. Unity of Command — Leaders should speak publicly with one voice.
- E. Unity of Direction — Group goals should blend with over-all goals.
- F. Subordination of individual interests to general good.
  1. Try to negotiate differences.
  2. Be a good loser — cooperate with prevailing plans.
  3. Control your temper.
  4. Don't take self too seriously. Some brethren delight in puncturing balloons.
  5. Don't run away from problems as soon as you get a little objection. It does not mean you are through.
  6. Do not allow your personal gain to determine your decisions.
- G. Remuneration — monetary or otherwise, should be fair

and afford the maximum satisfaction to both leader and those being led.

1. Remuneration can be in fellowship.
2. Remuneration can be in joy and happiness over a job well done.

H. Order — “a place for everyone and everyone in their place.”

1. Principle of organization.
2. 1 Corinthians 14:33-40 — *“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing let them ask their husbands at home — for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.”*

I. Initiative — thinking out and execution of a plan — good leaders will sacrifice personal vanity to allow those being led to exercise initiative.

- J. Equity — loyalty and devotion both to those leading you, and those you are leading.
- K. Informed — Keep up with trends and developments in the church. Subscribes to, and reads brotherhood papers, magazines. Attends lectureships. Good mixer.
- L. As much as possible, always secure both sides of a problem.
- M. Never betray a confidence.
- N. Assume your rightful responsibility for failure as well as success.
- O. Be alert to opportunities to improve those you lead.
- P. Develop and maintain a global view of Christianity.

## Service

*for the Almighty in the name of  
Jesus our Lord and His Son.*

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— Lesson Six —

# Problems of Leadership

- I. Leadership is dealing with people. Some types of people are:**
- A. Non-conformist**
    - 1. Characterized as non-dependable, unstable, frequently extreme in dress, speech or mannerisms.
    - 2. Expresses dissatisfaction and sees wrong in whatever is done.
    - 3. Always takes the opposite view.
  - B. Dominating type**
    - 1. Easily angered when things do not go his way.
    - 2. Loves to argue — resents superiors, elders.
    - 3. Cannot cooperate with those on his level.
  - C. Perfectionist**
    - 1. Impatient with those who are plain human.
    - 2. Reluctant to share his good ideas.
    - 3. Usually very serious and overly critical.
  - D. Action Type**
    - 1. The enthusiast.
    - 2. Very optimistic, quick to promise what he knows he won't do.
    - 3. Enthusiastic in speech, but frequently an absentee.

**E. Cracked pot**

1. The one with a hobby, repetitious stories or experiences.
2. Immature, often frustrated.
3. Talks when should be listening.

**F. Closed mind**

1. Against anything new, any new concept, idea, or innovation for his program of work.
2. Objects to sound ideas because the denominations do it that way.
3. Suppression of progressive thinking for the betterment, development and growth of a church is among the most poignant consequences of human failures.

**II. There are many hazards by which the leadership of God's people can be destroyed. Most of these come from within the leadership itself — and are caused by selecting men and women for work assignments of leadership who have one of the following characteristics:**

- A. Self centered — Acts 20:28-30 — *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves.”*

- B. Love of authority or power — 3 John 9 — *“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.”*
- C. Emotional instability — easily angered or discouraged.
- D. Obsessive fears — not being liked — being discriminated against.
- E. Worry — problems with children, finances, etc.
- F. Inferiority complex — Don’t feel qualified — can’t take criticism.
- G. Tendency to rationalize — quickly does what he wants and then finds a reason for doing it.
- H. Satisfied with past success — living in past accomplishments.
- I. Knows all the answers — even before he has the full knowledge of the problem.
- J. Fails to analyze self in plans of leadership.
- K. 2 Corinthians 13 :5 — *“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”*

### **III. Spiritual Underdevelopment**

- A. Spiritual dwarfism — Hebrews 5:12-6:1 — *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat. For every one that useth*

*milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God."*

- B. Maturity is nearing perfection.
- C. Must realize that leadership and maturity go hand in hand.
- D. Some of the characteristics of immaturity are:
  - 1. Rationalization — excuse making.
  - 2. Showing off — seeking attention.
  - 3. Resentment against authority.
  - 4. Refusing to face conditions as they are.
  - 5. Inconsistency in conduct.
  - 6. Selfishness.
  - 7. Avoids hard tasks, work.
  - 8. Jealousy.
  - 9. Hero worship — develops "crushes."
  - 10. Indecision.

#### **IV. Common problems leadership face: Suggested solutions**

- A. Inferiority Complex.
  - 1. Give him recognition for past accomplishments — small though they be.

2. Give him/her a job that they can easily do.
  3. Give them a job with an experienced person, with the idea that it is easy.
  4. Give opportunity for training.
  5. Give him the understanding that all the leaders or group has conferred this confidence to do the job — not just one person.
  6. Have a personal conference with him.
  7. Give him some books on instilling self confidence.
  8. Let him know that we have been and are praying for him.
  9. Be specific in your task for him.
- B. Problem with the leader who will not train — does not seek to improve himself.
1. Discuss with all the leaders and then consult with him.
    - a. Find out why he won't train.
    - b. This gives opportunity to analyze him.
  2. Show what the training program can do, and get him to see that it is needed.
  3. Pray with and for him.
  4. Remove possible reasons:
    - a. Indifference
    - b. Sitting with other leaders frightens him.



5. If all else fails, this leader should step down for the good of the church.
- C. Problem of the absent or tardy worker who never calls to let you know.
1. Talk to the person and find out the reason.
  2. Have someone tell the absentee what he missed.
  3. Have a friend to go by to remind or pick him up.
  4. Have a substitute prepared ahead of time.
  5. Use post cards as a reminder.
- D. Lack of vision or sense of responsibility.
1. Broaden outlook in any way you can with visual aids, program of work, outline, or any other method.
  2. Have outside speakers to speak on related subjects to his area of work.
  3. Help them bear their responsibility to God, their group, and the church.
  4. Show current, present day examples.
- E. Persons who always want sympathy.
1. Cause is desire for attention.
  2. If they are in the leadership, you may have to accept their resignation.
- F. Worker who is inconsistent in his Christian living.
1. Do not talk to them by yourself.
  2. Approach the problem tactfully without being blunt.

3. Pray with them.
4. Use Bible illustrations to point up the problem.
5. Use personal examples.
6. Get someone that they look up to, or admire, to talk to them.
7. Show them that they are robbing self, family, church, and God.

**V. There are three problems often found within those serving in leadership capacity.**

- A. Inadequacy — we can find members, but finding one to do the job is hard.
- B. Unreliable — Late, absentee. Promises to do the job but doesn't.
- C. Instability — Never follows through. Can't hold out.

**VI. Thoughts Worth Remembering.**

- A. The church that has leaders has problems. Leaders do not come out of clouds, but out of crowds. I wouldn't have selected Simon Peter to be a leader in the church, much less an elder, because if he found an unreliable worker he might cut off his ear (head?).
- B. In leadership there is loneliness.
- C. Jesus did not say, "Understand me, and I will make you fishers of men," but He said, "Follow me."
- D. If you don't want to lead, or feel you are not the type, encourage others that have the ability.

- E. "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen" — Harry Truman.
- F. President Truman had this inscription on his desk in the oval office: "The buck stops here."
- G. When you assign someone a responsibility, don't just assume they will do it.
- H. The church should increase its efforts at developing leaders in the congregation by having qualified men and women to conduct annual training schools. Elders should attend as many training schools as possible at other congregations and our Christian schools.

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— Lesson Seven —

# Vision in Church Leadership

- I. *“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”* While the prophet who said this had revelation from God in mind, the application of this statement as we understand the meaning of “vision” today means that no institution can long exist without vision. This is certainly true concerning church leaders.
- A. Definition of vision: “The ability to arrive at a position of unusual discernment or spiritual foresight in spiritual matters.” — J.B. White.
- B. The need for vision is demonstrated by:
1. Increase in numbers in churches of Christ (approximately 3,000,000).
  2. Growth in local church.
  3. Changes in environment from rural to urban.
  4. Increase of financial ability of average Christian.
  5. Increase in education of average Christian — standards of leadership in past years are no longer adequate.
  6. Churches need bold, vigorous, courageous, imaginative, wise and discerning leadership.

- C. Jesus is the head of the church and therefore has primary leadership (Ephesians 1:20-23). He has given delegated leadership to elders (Acts 20:28), and then responsibility is passed to each member (Matthew 5:16; 28:18-20).
1. Elders are to supervise — hence they must exercise supervision over the congregation.
  2. Elders must be ahead of the congregation in matters of spiritual understanding, and a desire for an expanding, vigorous program of work.
- D. The church leadership must train to possess and use vision.
1. Every leader must be capable of organizing, directing, inspiring, and leading.
  2. Training may come through the study of:
    - a. First, the Word of God, to establish true foundations.
    - b. Books and magazines on leadership and ideas of leadership.
      - (1) Thomas L. Campbell — **Christian Leadership.**
      - (2) Cleon Lyles — **Bigger men for Better Churches.**
      - (3) L. B. Wilson — **Congregational Development**
      - (4) B. W. Grimsley — **The Church and its Elders.**

(5) Charles F. Stovall — **Training for Greater Service.**

- c. College and church courses.
  - d. Observing great leaders of congregations with progressive work.
- E. Church leadership must possess vision to lead in long-range planning.
- 1. Minds are constantly reaching out to “*spy out the land*” to be taken over in the months and years to come.
    - a. Leadership with vision implies a multiple horizon of planning — week to week, and 5-10-20 years in advance.
    - b. “Logical planning encompasses a period of time in the future necessary to foresee, through a series of actions, the fulfillment of commitments involved in a decision.”
    - c. One can readily grasp the logic of planning far enough in the future to foresee, as well as possible, the attainment of group goals.
    - d. Planning periods may be longer or shorter, depending on the extent to which flexibility can be built into the plan. Various plans call for various planning periods.
    - e. Short-range plans must be made with reference to long range goals.

- f. All plans, both long-range, and short-range, must be flexible:
  - (1) The more flexibility can be built into plans, the less the danger of failures incurred by unexpected events.
  - (2) The cost of flexibility should be weighed against the risks involved in future commitments (bus programs, etc.).
- 2. Questions that every church leader will ask as he plans for the future of the congregation, or his department (remember that departmental plans must add to the long range plans of the church as a whole).
  - a. Where do we stand now?
  - b. Where are we going?
  - c. How shall we get there?
  - d. What are some of the obstacles to be overcome?
  - e. How can we measure our progress? How long will it take us to reach our goals?
- 3. Some objectives need to be in terms of 5, 10, 20 years, perhaps longer.
  - a. Bible School plans.
  - b. Mission Work.
  - c. Benevolent Work.
  - d. Building programs.

**II. Planning presupposes the existence of alternatives, and there are few decisions for which some kind of alternatives do not exist.**

- A. Planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it.
- B. Planning bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go.
- C. Planning makes it possible for things to occur which would not otherwise happen.
- D. Planning is an intellectual process, the conscious determination of courses of action, the basing of decisions on purpose, facts, and considered estimates.

**III. Planning can be understood through four major aspects: contribution to objectives, primacy of planning, pervasiveness of planning, and efficiency of plans.**

- A. Contribution to objectives.
  - 1. The purpose of every plan and all derivative plans is to facilitate the accomplishment of congregational objectives.
  - 2. Without plans, action must become merely random activity, producing nothing but chaos (see 1 Corinthians 15:33).
- B. Primacy of planning.
  - 1. Planning logically precedes coordinated action.
  - 2. Control involves keeping activities on course.
  - 3. Acts 20:17-35.



- C. Pervasiveness of planning: Planning is a function of every church leader, although the character and breadth of planning will vary with his authority and the nature of policies and plans outlined by those who are leading him.
- D. Efficiency of plans: The efficiency of a plan is measured by the amount it contributes to objectives and goals, as offset by the costs and other unsought consequences required to formulate and operate it.
- E. Planning implies possibility thinking. We will have more to say about this in later lessons. For the present time, consider the following Scriptures:
  - 1. Matthew 5:13-16.
  - 2. Matthew 7:7-12.
  - 3. Matthew 14:22-33.
  - 4. Matthew 17:20.
  - 5. John 15:1-8.
  - 6. Philippians 4:13.

— Lesson Eight —

# Vision in Church Leadership

(continued)

- I. Vision implies understanding of the work of a Christian leader.**
- A. Too many have a very limited concept of Christian leadership.
  - B. Simply to “lead in prayer, conduct services, etc.”
  - C. The Christian leader must see the great issues facing God’s people.
    - 1. Must see clearly the dangers of sin.
    - 2. Must evaluate carefully things to be seen, heard, and experienced that will infiltrate into the thinking and behavior of the congregation.
    - 3. Must realize that even small compromises with truth or purity may be pitfalls.
    - 4. A complacent leader can never be an efficient one.
  - D. The Christian leader must recognize the great power of righteousness.
    - 1. Church people, in spite of their human limitations, are the light of the world, Matthew 5:14.

2. Righteousness, though not as obvious, is as powerful as sin.
  3. To be a Christian leader is to desire to lead God's people to love righteousness for righteousness' sake.
- E. The Christian leader must recognize the gravity of Christian responsibility.
1. Must be alive to the responsibilities and opportunities of Christianity.
  2. Must strive to harness the energies, talents, education, financial resources of the local congregation: (1) against sin and (2) for righteousness.
  3. Must have imagination enough to see local Christians, with all their limitations, deployed across the community as great servants of the Lord.
  4. "Called for service, called to serve, called to be servants" is found 1600 times in the New Testament (about 4 times as much as love, 5 times as much as faith).
- F. Must recognize the beauty, honor, and privilege of being Christians.
1. "Elect race" — 1 Peter 2:9 — *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."*
  2. "Heirs of God" — Romans 8:17 — *"And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;"*

*if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*”

3. Living example of Christ. Hebrews 13:7 — *“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”*
4. 1 Timothy 4:2 — *“Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”*
5. Must envision everyone he sees as a potential saint, Christian, and active member of the church.

## **II. To be a great Christian leader, one must understand the basic congregational function — what the work of the Lord is in terms of the local church.**

- A. First great cooperative effort or enterprise is that of evangelism.
  1. Local program of evangelism must be vigorously directed. Enthusiasm from the pulpit is contagious.
  2. Local preachers be selected, directed, encouraged, and strengthened by dynamic local leadership.
  3. Gospel meetings are planned, advertised, and vigorously carried out.
  4. Personal evangelism classes and cottage meetings are encouraged.
  5. Newspapers, radio stations and television are all utilized to evangelize the local community.
- B. Constant edification of the church itself. Ephesians

4:11,12 — *“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.”*

1. No Biblical command for non-Christians to meet with the church.
  2. Through classes, midweek services, social occasions, and pulpit preaching, the local church is edified.
  3. Every rightful device will be used to aid congregational spiritual growth.
- C. Worship is the third great cooperative enterprise of the congregation.
1. Must be planned — 1 Corinthians 14:23-41 — *“If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God and report that God is in you of a truth. How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But*

*if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."*

2. Should be evaluated often.
  - a. How can formality and listlessness be overcome?
  - b. How can sincere worship be instilled?
- D. Benevolence, relieving distress of the needy, is the fourth great cooperative.

1. How can this best be done?
2. What methods should be used?
3. How can we use benevolence programs to teach the gospel?

**III. Must understand people with whom the leaders deal. The Christian leader does not necessarily lead in dollars, in construction of buildings, in providing books and supplies, but leads people.**

**A. Leads in the acquisition of knowledge.**

1. Knowledge is the basis of action — each leader must know where to go and how to get there.
2. Making knowledge an integral part of an individual is not easy.
3. The Christian must be persuaded to feel, and to do His will, as well as know it.
4. Ours is a battle for minds and hearts: 2 Corinthians 10:4,5 — *“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”*
5. Weapons in this warfare are words, ideas, ideals, and feelings.

**B. Leads in working with the affections of the people.**

1. Considers what people like and do not like, even

though likes and dislikes are not always a criterion of what is right or best.

2. Seeks to inspire love for truth, honor, and integrity.
  3. Must find the answer to how to motivate love, courage, and meekness.
- C. Leads in dealing with attitudes, a very important function.
1. Attitudes toward right and wrong, toward people who are needy, proud, or haughty.
  2. Attitudes are created by words, feelings, and attitudes of others, therefore the Christian leader must control his own feelings and attitudes in order to influence the attitudes of others.
- D. Leads in dealing with the habits of people.
1. Strives to instill uplifting, desirable ones, and eliminate destructive ones.
  2. Deals with the will of the people.
  3. Watches over souls as one that will give an account for his oversight.
  4. Even though he deals with some negative factors, he cannot become negative.
  5. Prejudice, bitter feelings, false conceptions, anger, pride, have no part in the Christian leader's life.
- E. Deals with people, must know people, especially those whom he is leading.



1. What resources are found in this particular group?  
— a resource file is helpful here.
  - a. Some can teach.
  - b. Some can visit.
  - c. Some are better in handling finances, building programs, etc.
  - d. Make job assignments, use proper talents for particular jobs.
2. Must plan for continual in-service training for further development of these resources.
3. Must know the negative limitations of the group being led.
  - a. In terms of Christianity, which of my group are being led into sensual living?
  - b. Is there a troublemaker or gossip in the group?
  - c. Who can best influence those with such limitations for good?
4. Must know human nature, and natural tendencies of different ages.
  - a. Spot fundamental behavior, treat most negative incidents as trivial and passing.
  - b. Try to treat all tragedies as incidents, and never treat an incident as a tragedy.
5. Leaders must maintain close contact with those being led.

- a. People will respond when they know they are appreciated.
- b. People in the church must have a sense of belonging.
- c. Easy for a leader to build a barrier between himself and the group being led. Takes a conscious and continual effort to keep these barriers torn down.
- d. Warm personal communications must continually flow back and forth.

## — Lesson Nine —

# Threefold Vision

- I. Upward vision — what does God expect of me as a leader.**
- A. 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-12. Biblically speaking, if I become an elder, I must be:
1. Positive: blameless, temperate, self-controlled, sober-minded, orderly, hospitable, gentle, just, holy, head of house.
  2. Negative: not a brawler, not a striker, not greedy, not self-willed, not soon angry, not contentious, not disorderly.
- B. 1 Timothy 3:8-13. If I become a deacon:
1. Positive: sober-minded, sound in doctrine, of honest report, full of wisdom, life shows the fruits of the inward dwelling of the Spirit, full of faith, able to teach and work with others, head of house.
  2. Negative: not double-tongued, not a drinker, not greedy.
  3. Deacon is from “diakonos” meaning servant — not a boss, but an administrative assistant to the elders — proves self in this manner.
- C. All elders’ and deacons’ wives must meet certain characteristics, or qualifications (see above texts):

1. Positive: recognize seriousness of Christian life and responsibility of being a church leader's wife (grave); sober minded, faithful in all things.
    - a. Encouragers of their husbands.
    - b. Able to control their tongues.
    - c. Teachers of the younger women, examples to the younger women.
  2. Negative: not false accusers, non-drinkers, not slanderers.
- D. If neither elder nor deacon, my life must be growing toward maturity in Christ.
1. Timothy 3:1.
  2. Galatians 6:1,2.
  3. Galatians 6:6,9,10.
  4. Ephesians 14:14-16.
  5. In view of these and other scriptures, there is no way that I can say that these marks of leadership belong only to the elders or deacons, and that I as a Christian do not need to grow up in Christ, nor develop these characteristics in my life. By letting their "light shine," all Christians are leaders and as Christians, will be striving to grow up in Christ to act like adults and be strong. *"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things"* (1 Corinthians 13:11; 16:13).

- E. I will understand that God can do great things through me through effective leadership.
    - 1. In face of failure, Philippians 4:13.
    - 2. When opposed by powerful forces, Romans 8:37.
    - 3. When resources seem limited, 1 Corinthians 3:23.
  - F. The Christian leader will never forget that God still works today and that His people work together and with, as well as for, the Lord!
  - G. This upward vision should create great optimism. As a whole, the leader need not fail.
  - H. Must be maintained by constant prayer.
- II. Inward vision: success of the congregation depends to a great extent upon the understanding that exists among the leaders who work together. Must have unity, love, loyalty, confidence, and tolerance.**
- A. Strive for balance in the leadership.
    - 1. Drive and enthusiasm vs. caution, thoughtfulness.
    - 2. Idealistic vs. practical personalities.
    - 3. Should never number men of extreme tendencies, views, or philosophies among the leadership without a balance of the philosophy at the opposite extreme. Extremists make poor leaders.
    - 4. Church leadership should avoid the appearance of evil and the spirit of striving.
  - B. Leadership should have well-defined rules of procedure by which they will be guided.

1. How will we inform the congregation? Which confidences are to be kept on file and not to be revealed?
  2. How are minority matters to be evaluated?
  3. Unanimous decisions are powerful, but not always possible — elders should debate and make the decision privately, then speak publicly with one voice.
- C. Leadership will well understand the place of wives.
1. Wives are of tremendous worth in encouragement and understanding.
  2. Assist many ways in the work of church leaders — leader without wife's help is only half a leader.
  3. Should know they are not to be told everything, and above all, should know they are never to repeat what they are told.
  4. Should know the role of women in the church and use their great talents within the parameters God has directed (1 Timothy 2:9-15; Titus 2:4; Acts 18:26; 1 Corinthians 14:23, compare 14:34,35).
- D. Leadership will be aware of the need of constantly grooming new leaders.
1. Look among the promising young men for leadership assignments.
  2. Must have sufficient maturity to shoulder the responsibilities of leadership.
  3. Possibly look among deacons for new elders (1 Timothy 3).

- E. A leader with effective inward vision must be objective enough to see the devastation of sin in the leadership.
  - 1. Jealousies, envyings, suspicions, pride, etc., must not occur.
  - 2. A sincere spirit of Christ and readiness to listen, willingness to forego personal desire plus prayer will eliminate such.
- F. A leader with effective inward vision can properly evaluate himself.
  - 1. Some things he can do well, others not so well.
  - 2. If another can more effectively do a particular job, he should "*esteem the other better than himself*" and not covet the work.
  - 3. He will learn to relate himself harmoniously to the entire group.
- G. The leadership with effective inward vision will see the need for, and plan for, continuous growth.
  - 1. Papers, books, training courses to improve self spiritually. Wants to improve the group he is leading, so encourages others to grow in grace and knowledge.
  - 2. Encourages young men to more training to qualify themselves for church offices.
  - 3. Strives for continued growth through constant exercise.

### **III. Outward Vision**

#### **A. To People:**

1. Each community is composed of many who are living without Christ or hope.
2. The leader believes the lost can be saved.
3. Courage, imagination, and boldness necessary to save the lost.
4. Communities composed of (church is a part of the community):
  - a. Lost, strayed, complacent, indifferent, those engrossed in own lives to exclusion of Christ; those involved in sensual living, or those near the brink of sensual living, lonely, discouraged, despondent.
  - b. Those who are faithful, those who have potential to be developed, those who have talents to be used; some saints who are lonely and just need someone to care.
  - c. Vision both positive and negative.
5. Where are talents, how can they be used?
6. Who are potential trouble makers, can they be guided into constructive rather than destructive contributions?
  - a. Benevolent program — helping to reduce suffering by a good ministry to the needy.
  - b. Church needs to be known and respected throughout the community.
7. Advertisements.



8. Spiritual impressions given by the work and worship of the church in the community.
  - a. Constant flow of ideas between leaders and those being led — leaders are approachable.

B. To Activities:

1. Evangelistic — must have strong evangelistic program (Philippians 4:13; Matthew 28:18-20).
  - a. Spot checks of mission spots are desirable.
  - b. Mission work must not be haphazard, but should be a planned campaign.
  - c. Vision prompts careful investigation of the man and the field, and constant information of the work being done being disseminated to the congregation.
  - d. Letters and reports should be flowing both ways.
  - e. Missionaries should have complete assurance of local support and plans.
  - f. 20-30 wage earners can employ full-time missionary.
  - g. 2,000,000 Christians should have a minimum of 10,000 missionaries.
  - h. Missionary support should be as long as needed to permanently implant the work. Should there be definite cutoff period?
2. How shall we evangelize? What methods shall we use? It takes vision to decide.

3. Edification — each congregation should have many activities that will build and strengthen the congregation.
  - a. Bible School — it must have careful attention.
  - b. Teacher selection and training must be carefully supervised.
  - c. Leadership that is complacent when only about 60% of the membership is enrolled in Bible classes is in a precarious position.
  - d. Improving the Bible School takes systematic work, organization, tedious detailed planning, and laborious follow-up, as well as optimism, tact, and patience.
  - e. Youth leadership — outlets for youths' social needs, opportunities for participation in worship, and other church activities must be provided.
  - f. Attention to social needs of all members can prevent many losses.
    - (1) Coffee breaks with members in secular work.
    - (2) Lunch hours spent together; in office, shop, or restaurant are profitable.
    - (3) Intra-congregational visitation should be encouraged, especially among sick, aged, or shut-ins.
4. Worship — must not become stereotyped, but mean-

ingful, inspiring, and uplifting. However, not ostentatious and entertaining (1 Corinthians 14:40).

- a. Building — simplicity, reverence, worshipful atmosphere — clean, well-preserved song books available, neatly arranged.
  - b. Quietness should prevail.
  - c. Singing — fervent, meaningful, training programs (continuous).
  - d. Singing groups gain respect for the church.
  - e. Prayers — fervent, uplifting — perhaps a training session for prayer leaders.
  - f. Leaders with proper vision will prayerfully discuss and make plans for continued improvement of worship services.
5. Benevolent activity — God's people should be foremost.
- a. 74% of homeless children in U.S. in denominational homes; 14% in state homes; 1-1/2% in homes supported by churches of Christ. Total cost approximately 1.5 million dollars per year or approximately 50 cents per member per year.
  - b. 200,000 children living in foster home — we care for very few.
  - c. At least 150,000 babies born out of wedlock annually. We still care for very few of these and their mothers.

- d. Elderly, invalid, emergency relief.
- e. Transient aid — should we help all, none, or some?
- f. Questions for testing benevolence:
  - (1) Does the method violate N. T. teaching?
  - (2) Does the method get the job done?
  - (3) Is the method economically worthwhile?
  - (4) Are there other and better methods that are not being used?

**The saddest commentary of all is the 100,000 pre-born children killed every year in America. Since abortion became legal, over 1 million babies have been killed since Row vs. Wade!**

## — Lesson Ten —

# Possibility Thinking

- I. **People start anew when they renew their thinking — “*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind*” — Ephesians 4:23).**
- A. Are you limping along when you could be walking strong, whimpering when you could be whistling, crying when you could be laughing?
  - B. Are you being defeated by your problems, facing frustrations that are discouraging you, heartaches that are depressing you?
  - C. Are you bored with life, tired of living, lacking zest and excitement?
  - D. Are you watching somebody make a great success of opportunity which you turned down?
  - E. Are you one who says, “Oh, I prefer a small church, the fellowship is so much more intimate”?
  - F. Are you one who walks by empty pews, and says, “Oh, I wish there was some way to get those people to attend church”?
  - G. Are you one whose projects and dreams straggle when they could be thriving, shrink when they could be growing, fail when they could succeed?
  - H. If any of the above is true with you, then the principles

of this lesson, if applied to your life, can change your thinking and your life.

## **II. There are two basic types of thinkers in the world — impossibility thinkers and possibility thinkers.**

### **A. Impossibility thinkers.**

1. These always look at the negative — satisfied with the situation as it is — “Don’t rock the boat,” fellows.
2. Such is an easy way just to “occupy the eldership.” It is much easier to find reasons why something won’t work than it is to visualize and motivate the congregation in ways things might work.
3. These often react to positive suggestions with a sweeping, unstudied, assortment of reasons as to why something cannot be done or why it is a bad idea. Some frequently heard are: “That has been tried here and it failed!”, “that won’t work here”, and “that will cost too much.”
4. If the first thing that is asked about a needed project in a business meeting is, “How much will it cost?”, it may mean that faith in God and in the congregation is weak.
5. This is not to say that projects are not to be first studied and great research made on them. Many worthy projects have failed for the lack of this. But the first thing to determine by the eldership is, “Is this project needed for developing spiritual growth and promoting the local congregation to go forward?” This is

the easy part. But once this is determined, the danger of failure lies in little research being done and having adequate discovery session on the best way to motivate the church on reaching goals.

- a. But never to have sessions of “possibility clinics” and allow the congregation to languish is to suffer from mental and spiritual debility.
  - b. Problem imaginers. *“There is a lion in the streets.”*
  - c. Perpetual failure predictors — “It can’t be done here.”
6. Chronic negative attitude produces doubt, stimulates fear, and generates a mental climate of pessimism and fatigue.
  7. Some are worry creators, optimism deflators, confidence squelchers.
- B. Possibility thinkers.
1. Resemble the hummingbird — looks for and finds honey in the most unlikely places.
  2. Faced with a mountain — don’t quit.
    - a. Climb over.
    - b. Find a way through.
    - c. Tunnel underneath.
    - d. Become prospectors. Gold is found in mountains.

**III. Possibility thinkers have trained themselves to look for the greatest possibilities in all areas of life. They have or can do the following:**

- A. Overcome inferiority complexes and learn to live confidently.
- B. Learn to listen to new ideas and evaluate them carefully.
- C. Spot opportunities and seize them courageously.
- D. Welcome challenging problems and solve them creatively.
- E. Face personal tragedies with equanimity and, if possible, use them constructively.

**IV. Possibilities thinkers have left some of the following as monuments behind them:**

- A. Successful marriages and happy families.
- B. Profitable businesses and great institutions.
- C. Lifesaving drugs and surgical procedures.
- D. Skyscrapers that stab steeply above the skyline.
- E. Satellites that sail silently through the soundless sea of space.
- F. Laughing children in homes made happy through the power of God's love.
- G. Congregations of the Lord's church that are thriving in what was once a sea of difficulty.

**V. I would rather attempt to do something great and fail, than to do nothing and succeed.**



- A. Philippians 4:13
- B. John 15:1-8
- C. I Corinthians 3:12-15

**VI. Knowing that Christ has all power and authority in heaven and earth (Matthew 28:19,20), and that He has promised to be with me always, even to the end of the age, and knowing that “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Philippians 4:13), I can and must become a possibility thinker.**

- A. The “impossibility thinker” can become a “possibility thinker”.
- B. The points to be mentioned in making that change must be followed “religiously”. When we follow these points, we will change our thinking.
- C. When our thinking is changed, everything about us changes. Read Proverbs 23:7; Matthew 5:8,28; 6:21; Luke 6:45; and Acts 8:37.

**VII. Eight steps to possibility thinking.**

- A. Remove your disadvantage complex. Build strong self confidence and you are on your way. Lack of confidence is caused by offering excuses. Any or all of the following could be only your excuse:
  1. I’m too old.
  2. I’m handicapped.
  3. I don’t have the time, money, or energy.
  4. I’m from a bad background.

5. I'm from a broken home. I had an unhappy childhood.
  6. I don't know the right people.
  7. My skin is not the right color.
  8. I have a poor education.
  9. My wife and I like to travel.
- B. What hinders so much is not saying I can't, but saying the church can't either and become a stumbling block to others' progress.
- C. Develop the habit of recognizing and responding to the smallest trickle of positivism that might leak into your mind.
1. One candle can be seen for miles on a dark night. I know, I have nearly 3,000 hours of flying time.
  2. Stars shine brighter at other works than here. No, maybe just too much "light pollution" here to see them, must let positivism shine until our life is filled with "cans" instead of "can'ts".
- D. Begin each day with a positive seed thought and hold it there.
1. Shields for the spirit:
    - a. Luke 1:37
    - b. Mark 10:27
    - c. Matthew 19:26
    - d. Luke 18:27

- e. Mark 9:23
  - f. Mark 14:36
  - g. Matthew 17:20
2. Positive thoughts are like spiritual vitamins — they will give you new vigor and that “all is well” feeling.
- E. Expose the brain to a constant positive diet.
- 1. If you want something worthwhile to come out of the mind, you must put something worthwhile into it.
  - 2. Cultivate the art of being discriminatory in what you hear, see, read, say, and watch on TV, or even think about (read Philippians 4:8).
  - 3. Stop listening to impossibility thinkers.
- F. Give yourself an in-depth possibility thinking treatment once per week at least.
- 1. Jews were commanded to keep the Sabbath day for a day of rest and worship.
  - 2. God designed us so that our spiritual inspiration tank needs refilling at least once per week. Better if we fill it once daily. Generate a “seed thought” of faith and hang on to it.
- G. Talk yourself into possibility thinking.
- 1. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
  - 2. Tell yourself (out loud) that you are happy, joyful, full of faith, hope, love, and high achievements.

- a. I can do great things.
  - b. I have great possibilities deep inside me.
  - c. I have possibilities that haven't been born yet.
  - d. I'm really a wonderful person when Christ lives in me.
  - e. I've been too self-critical.
  - f. I've been my own worst enemy.
  - g. I'm a child of God. God loves me.
  - h. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
3. Someone is sure to object that this is an unscriptural practice.
- a. Romans 12:1-2 tells us to think soberly about ourselves. It doesn't say or mean to demean or downgrade ourselves. The same apostle who wrote that also wrote Philippians 4:13.
  - b. Matthew 19:19 — man who has low image of himself will have a low image of his neighbor also.
- H. Use prayer power.
- 1. Ask God to help you become a possibility thinker.
  - 2. Make your prayers affirmative, not negative.
- I. Have a personality checkup.
- 1. Begin with a physical checkup. Our bodies are

God's temple, we must try to keep them in shape for Him to dwell with us.

2. Have a spiritual checkup.
  - a. How healthy is your religion?
  - b. Wholesome religion builds up a person's sense of dignity.
  - c. When a man walks straight, clean, upright, with marvelous confidence in God, he is glorifying God.
  - d. Healthy Christianity sets men free from guilts, fears, worries, and anxieties.
  - e. Matthew 5:13,14 — Real Christianity tells us that we really can be somebody.

### **VIII. Some early possibility thinkers.**

There were some rough, unschooled fishermen who made their living on the shores of the sea of Galilee. Probably not one of them ever had any ideas or dreams beyond making one more fishing trip, catching a lot of fish, and making another payment on their boat, or mending their nets, or being able to pay taxes to a government that they found very oppressive. Another individual came by one day, a homeless man, who wandered about the countryside in search of disciples. He stopped by these fishermen, and said: *"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."* Jesus was his name.

When they became discouraged, Jesus told them that they were the *"salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world."* They were like a *"city set on a hill."* These fishermen learned that with Christ they truly could be someone and do something.

These were some of the first possibility thinkers. When the eleven of them were commissioned to go into all the world, and teach the gospel to all nations, they did not quail at the task. They simply began teaching. They knew that if they started their tasks, God was more than equal to the balance of the work. Let us not become "Impossibility Thinkers," always nourishing the negative and being "against it". Let us be "Possibility Thinkers," always knowing that it is God who opens the doors for us when we are leading others in His work. At Jesus' word, Peter was enabled to walk on water. He began to sink only when he took his eyes off Jesus and became fearful of the storm about him (Matthew 14:28).

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— Lesson Eleven —

# Goals and Opportunities

- I. Just finished talking about possibility thinking, how can it work for us?**
- A. Pick a goal.**
1. Set goals for achievements.
  2. May appear unrealistic.
  3. Nothing is impossible until we stop setting goals.
  4. Viktor F. Frankel, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Vienna, says: “The greatest drive in the human heart demanding fulfillment is a sense of meaning in living. Not the will to pleasure, but the will to reach goals is absolutely essential — goals give meaning to living.
  5. Goals are absolutely necessary to motivate us and essential to keep us going forward.
- B. Visualize a variety of possible ways to reach your goal.**
1. At least three, and preferably many more ways to reach the goal before you plunge.
  2. Draft a possibility list.
- C. Excommunicate fear from your thinking.**
1. Don't let fear push you down.

2. No person is ever totally immune from fear.
  3. It is amazing what fears can rise — fear of failure is most common.
  4. “Not failure, but low aim is a crime” James Russel Lowell.
- D. Visualize yourself getting started.
1. The odds are great that if you begin, you will achieve.
  2. It usually requires very little to begin something big.
  3. Begin by putting your idea on paper.
- E. Visualize goals beyond your goals.
1. Never be caught like Alexander, who wept because there were no more worlds to conquer.
  2. Without challenge and achievement, we are living as dead men.
  3. Greatest frustration of all is to find you have arrived, you are a success, and “there are no more worlds to conquer”.
  4. When you catch up with your goals, you are in trouble.

## **II. How can you spot opportunities in the 21st century? Haven't all the great things been done already?**

- A. Look to the future — not to the past. “The best things are yet to be” — Have you left God in the past? You haven't out run God yet. He is still out there in the future.



1. Be inspired by history, not trapped by it.
  2. Anything can be improved that man has made.
  3. The days of big opportunities are not past.
  4. We have equipment that our forerunners did not have, how will we exploit it?
- B. Work for something that most people agree “would be wonderful” if it could be done.
1. Today’s accomplishments were yesterday’s impossibilities.
  2. Impossible things are happening every day.
- C. Expect obstacles; remember that every obstacle is an opportunity.
1. Things are either stumbling blocks or stepping stones.
  2. The perils of prosperity are often more dangerous than the perils of poverty.
  3. Instead of wailing about what has been lost, make the most of what has been left.
- D. Expect problems. Every problem is an opportunity.
1. Success is in finding a need and filling it.
  2. A need is simply an unresolved problem.
  3. Problems give opportunities to use new ideas.
- E. Search in the castaway areas of life.

1. Christ chose to dine with publicans and harlots, those considered as castaways by the rest of the Jews.
  2. Almost everyone is an opportunity for someone.
- F. Once you have spotted an opportunity, give the idea a chance, but don't plunge recklessly ahead without asking sensible questions.
1. Conduct a feasibility study.
  2. Challenge all positive ideas by asking success-spotting questions.
  3. The following items can kill any idea if they are the "number one" considerations:
    - a. What will it cost?
    - b. That has not been our policy to do that.
    - c. That's too time consuming for us.
    - d. We tried that here and it failed.
  4. The following are success-spotting questions: These must be answered affirmatively by those who lack knowledge in these areas before an idea can proceed beyond the vision stage.
    - a. Would this fill a vital human need?
      - (1) The secret of success is to find a need and fill it.
      - (2) How many people will benefit by it?
    - b. Will this inspire people?

- (1) Human beings are attracted in great numbers to the institutions, ideas, leaders and projects that inspire and uplift the human heart and spirit.
  - (2) Beauty is practical because beauty inspires.
  - (3) There is nothing more practical or realistic than wholesome life — a wholesome life demands beauty in sound and sight.
- c. Can this project be done in an excellent or outstanding way?
- (1) Excellence is one key to success.
  - (2) Excellence succeeds because excellence attracts attention.
  - (3) Big for bigness' sake is dangerous — the key word is excellence.
  - (4) An idea that is both highly attractive and practical seldom fails.
- d. Is this really different? Is this the first time it has been done? Does it have a pace setting potential?
- (1) Youth needs.
  - (2) Senior citizen care.
  - (3) Classroom environment.
  - (4) Marriage and divorce ministry.
  - (5) Think, think, think. Many other needs are

right in front of the church that are not being met or that could be met much better. Make them outstanding and successful.

(6) Be a “pace-setter.”

### **III. There is a solution to every problem.**

- A. Problems make life interesting and worth living.
  - 1. The only place where people have no problems is the cemetery.
  - 2. You can protect yourself from problems by living a cautious life, but you may die of sheer boredom.
- B. Expect problems.
  - 1. Don't let problems panic you.
  - 2. You are the only person who can give you the tough talk about problems that you need. Don't be a baby, grow up — be a man (1 Corinthians 16:13).
  - 3. Anticipate the problems that you might reasonably expect and in so doing, you will anticipate many answers.
- C. Put your problem in its proper perspective.
  - 1. Natural inclination to exaggerate — avoid it.
  - 2. Guard against the temptation to exaggerate the seriousness, longevity and intensity of your problems.
- D. Welcome problems; they are real stimulators to success.
  - 1. Problems challenge and motivate real Christian leaders.

2. Every problem can strengthen us.
  3. Problems are guidelines, not stop signs.
  4. Every time one door closes, another door opens.
- E. Every problem is another opportunity, every adversity hides a possibility.
- F. Draw up a possible solution list.
1. Refuse to accept defeat.
  2. Be inventive in your thinking.
  3. Be resourceful — the only limit to our possibilities is the Scripture — anything that can be done scripturally is a possible solution to our problems.
- G. Use your problem creatively — what you do with your problem is far more important than what your problem does to you.
1. Personal soundness is a way of reacting to problems, not an absence of problems.
  2. Profit from your problems. Capitalize on your crises, and draw dividends from your difficulties.
- H. Cultivate a sense of humor — the greatest asset a man can have is the ability to draw humor from himself and his problems.
- I. Let your problem lead you closer to God.
1. No problem leaves you where it found you.
  2. Read aloud: “I will be a different person when this problem is past. I will be a wiser, stronger, more

patient person, or I will be sour, cynical, bitter, disillusioned, and angry. It all depends on what I do with this problem. Each problem can make me a better person or a worse person. It can bring me closer to God, or it can drive me away from God. It can build my faith, or it can shatter my faith. It all depends on my attitude. I intend to be a better person when this problem leaves me than I was when it met me.”

3. Got a problem? Turn to God and He can show you how to reap dividends from your difficulties. Research the problems of the following:
  - a. Moses
  - b. Joshua
  - c. Ezekiel
  - d. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
  - e. Paul
  - f. Peter
  - g. The early churches (see Revelation 2 and 3).
  - h. Your local congregation

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— Lesson Twelve —

# Deacons, Administrative Assistants

- I. **The title, or rather the descriptive phrase describing such men, is very indicative of the things expected of them.**
- A. “Deacon” is used only four times in the KJV.
  - B. The Greek word “diakonos” is used some 28 times.
    - 1. 18 times it is translated “minister.”
    - 2. 6 times it is translated “servant.”
    - 3. 4 times it is translated “deacon.”
  - C. The word “diakonia” is used 34 times in reference by the “diakonos”.
    - 1. 3 times — “ministering.”
    - 2. 5 times — “ministration.”
    - 3. 1 time — “serving.”
    - 4. 2 times — “service.”
  - D. In every instance where the word is used, regardless of the form, the idea of “service” adheres to it.
- II. **The word translated “deacon,” “servant,” “minister,” “attendant” is not a religious word.**

- A. In Matthew 22:13 a king commanded his “servant”.
- B. In John 2:5, Mary spoke to the “servants”.
- C. These were not slaves, or bondsmen who sustain a permanent servile relation to another; if so, the Greek word “doulos” would have been used.
- D. Rulers of nations are “ministers” (Romans 13:4).
- E. In Romans 15:8, Jesus Christ has been made a “minister” of the circumcision for the truth of God.
- F. The devil has “ministers” (1 Corinthians 11:15).
- G. Gospel preachers are said to be “ministers”.
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 3:5
  - 2. Ephesians 3:7
  - 3. Colossians 4:7 — Tychicus was both a “diakonos” and a “doulos”.
  - 4. 1 Thessalonians 3:2 — Timothy was God’s minister.
  - 5. 1 Timothy 4:6.
  - 6. These servants are under authority of another.

### **III. There is an “official” sense of the word: 1 Timothy 3:8.**

- A. Philippians 1:1.
- B. Thayer — “One who, by virtue of the office assigned him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use.”
  - 1. Romans 16: 1 — “A woman to whom the care of either poor or sick women was entrusted” (Thayer).



2. One sense in which any person can be a deacon (Matthew 23:11).

C. Paul states that there is an “office” in the church that is the office of a deacon, and gives qualifications for this office (1 Timothy 3:8).

**IV. Before we look at the work of deacons, we need to look at the qualifications that are given in the Bible. While these qualifications are not as numerous as those for elders, they are sufficient to show that a deacon’s work is important. Deacons are to possess these qualities “in like manner” as the elders.**

A. Grave.

1. Thayer — august, venerable, reverent; to be venerated for character, honorable.

2. Our word “grave” means “sedate and dignified, solemn.”

3. It is the opposite of frivolous, silly, foolish, flighty.

B. Not double-tongued.

1. Greek — “not saying the same thing twice.”

2. Has come to mean saying one thing and meaning another, or saying one thing to one person, and another thing to another, with intent to deceive.

3. Not “two-faced”.

4. Truthful and dependable.

C. Not given to much wine.

1. Science of pasteurization not learned for many years after this.
  2. Wine was the natural drink with meals.
  3. Warned against excessive use.
  4. No suggestion that one might drink a little wine in the manner that wines are used and looked at today and still be all right. Nothing should cast a shadow on one's character.
  5. On account of the example set, it would be foolish to select a man as a deacon who drinks occasionally, and especially argue that he can do so without hurting his Christian influence.
- D. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
1. Must not be covetous, or lovers of money.
  2. Greed tempts men to divert funds to their own use.
  3. Greed often prompts stinginess.
- E. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
1. Not required to teach, but being qualified to teach as many of them were.
    - a. Stephen, Acts 6, 7.
    - b. Philip, Acts 8.
  2. Sound in the faith — prevents the use of unscriptural methods to attain their ends. **IMPORTANT!**
- F. Husband of one wife.

1. Same qualification as that of elders.
  2. Demands two things:
    - a. Must be married.
    - b. Must be married to one wife.
- G. Rules well his own house.
1. Old enough to have children.
  2. His children are not necessarily old enough to be Christians.
  3. Must be the head of his household.
    - a. Must make decisions and then abide by them.
    - b. Must assume responsibility of discipline in the home.
- H. Of good report (Acts 6:3).
1. Blameless.
  2. Well-known in the community and favorably known to those who know him.
  3. Not just a negative thing — “No one knows anything bad,” but “Does anyone know anything good” about him?
- I. Full of the Holy Spirit.
1. Not in miraculous sense — that has been done away.
  2. Gives evidence of Spirit’s dwelling within by showing the fruits of the Spirit in his life.
- J. Full of wisdom.

1. Competent and capable of carrying on the work of the church in an intelligent manner.
  2. Be known for sane, sensible, sound judgments when solving the problems of life.
- V. There are some definite dangers to avoid when talking about deacons and their work.**
- A. Treating the office too lightly.
1. Elders are overseers — some think that if we have good elders, the deacon can be of little importance.
  2. If God ordained a job, office, or anything else, we must not relegate that job, office, or what have you, to something second-rate.
  3. Men should be measured as carefully for deacons as for elders. This is a good proving ground for the eldership.
- B. Second danger is putting the office of deacon on a par with that of elder.
1. In some business meetings, it would be impossible for a stranger to tell them apart.
  2. Must never forget that elders are overseers, deacons are servants, serving under the direction of the elders.
- C. Third danger, appointment of men too young, both in years and in the church.
1. Some appoint new converts in order to encourage them to be faithful. Should be grounded in the faith.

2. Conservatively say that deacons should be mature men, sound in the faith, and faithful in their responsibilities. "Let them be proved."

## **VI. Place and work of deacons in the church — their relationship to the elders.**

### **A. Under the oversight of the elders.**

1. "Diakonos" — one who executes the commands of another.
2. Authority necessary to the doing of that work which they are given to do, but no more.
3. Responsibility for making congregational decisions belongs to the elders.

### **B. Deacons may counsel with the elders, and recommend various courses of action to them.**

1. A deacon has very valuable firsthand knowledge in his area of work, his field of service, and can advise elders with reference to the future course of that work.
  - a. May advise spending more money in that particular sphere of activity.
  - b. May advise curtailing expenditures in that part of the congregation's activity.
2. When they have made their recommendations and given their reasons to them, that is as far as their authority goes. The elders must make the final decision.

**C. Material activities.**

1. Popular but erroneous idea is that the deacons are in charge of the physical and material affairs, and the elders in charge of the spiritual. Elders may assign them buildings and grounds.
2. Deacons may have discussion meetings of their work, with no elders or preachers present, not to make decisions that they are not authorized to make, but to consider the work assigned them by the elders, and devise plans for accomplishing that work.
3. Preachers and staff may meet in the same manner.
4. Elders, deacons, and preachers may meet jointly, and should do so, at least periodically, so that all are informed as to the direction and progress of the church.

**VII. Duties of Deacons.****A. From the meaning of the word:**

1. Serve under the direction of others.
2. Same word used for Jesus, apostles, gospel preachers, and all Christians.

**B. From the example in Acts 6:1-6.**

1. Feed the hungry, care for the sick, clothe the destitute, and help all who need and deserve the help of the church.
2. Take care of the property of the church and keep it in good condition.

3. May be necessary to change assignments of certain deacons.
  - a. Some may not fit in certain areas, who will work well in others.
  - b. Each deacon should be assigned some specific duties, and have the responsibility for seeing that it is done.
4. May be necessary to ask a deacon to resign for various reasons.
  - a. Elders have that right.
  - b. If the deacon becomes troublesome and disgruntled at this step, probably should never have been appointed in the first place, or at least he is showing that the elders are right in their judgment for asking him to resign (James 4:6,10).

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— Lesson Thirteen —

# Followship — The Essence of Leadership

- I. **In order to be a successful leader, one must be a successful follower.**
  - A. Absolutely imperative that the true leader be a follower of Christ.
    1. God has always demanded that His people make a choice (1 Kings 18:21).
    2. “Follow me” is the first call of Christ (Matthew 4:19).
    3. Not always an easy task (Matthew 16:24).
    4. Christ suffered and left us an example that we should follow Him (1 Peter 2:21).
    5. Following Christ means that we will place His kingdom first in our lives (Matthew 6:24-34).
  - B. Also imperative that we be followers of those who are more experienced, and who have gone before us, blazing the trail.
    1. Paul wrote much about following him and his fellow workers.
      - a. 1 Corinthians 4:16



- b. 1 Corinthians 11:1
- c. Philippians 3:17
- d. 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- e. 1 Thessalonians 2:14

2. From these scriptures we draw the conclusion that whoever refuses to follow Christ, the church, and the leaders of the church when they are leading in the right direction cannot be an acceptable Christian.

a. Argument — my opinion is just as good as theirs.

b. Perhaps, but consider the following scriptures:

- (1) Matthew 23:12
- (2) Luke 22:24-27
- (3) Romans 12:3,10,16
- (4) 1 Corinthians 3:18
- (5) 1 Corinthians 13:4
- (6) James 4:6,10
- (7) 1 Peter 5:3-6

C. As a follower, I may recommend, suggest, and counsel, but I must realize that I am a follower, and follow humbly in the direction set by the Christian leaders for me.

**II. As a follower, I have certain responsibilities and duties to the elders (leaders) of my local congregation.**

- A. Hebrews 13:17 — obey the elders.
1. The word obey has the following meanings:
    - a. “To execute the commands of.”
    - b. “To be ruled or controlled by; to follow the guidance of”.
  2. If scriptural elders are to rule, members are to obey.
  3. If elders have as one of their duties to guide and control those whom they oversee, so it is the duty of those overseen to be guided and controlled.
  4. This is a way of rebellion.
    - a. Dislike of the law of the land, disobedience.
    - b. Dislike parental discipline, disobey parents.
    - c. Same spirit that causes unrest and rebellion all across the nation has infested the church in far too many cases.
- B. The next phrase concerning my followship advances this idea of obedience: Hebrews 13:17 — Submit to them.
1. This word has been defined in the following manner:
    - a. “To leave or commit to the discretion of judgment of another.”
    - b. “To yield, resign, or surrender to power, will, or authority.”
  2. Any church that will not submit to the elders it appoints has no business appointing elders.

- a. Certainly the elders are not to rule in an arbitrary, capricious manner.
  - b. Can a man be humble, as Christ and the apostles commanded, and still love preeminence, as did Diotrephes (3 John 9-10)?
  - c. The elders of God's church will not act as "lords," but examples (1 Peter 5:1-3).
3. Elders cannot legislate matters of faith — the Word of God is our authority for that.
  4. In matters of policy and administration is where their decisions are to be made.
    - a. Preacher:
      - (1) Selection, tenure, etc.
      - (2) While respecting the preacher as a trained specialist, yet offer suggestions and guidance when necessary as he feeds the flock. The young preacher has much to learn from the elders, but the elders must remember that he is also trained to do something that, generally speaking, they can't do as well. The older experienced preacher should be counselled often by the elders for input and advice.
    - b. Programs of various types to meet needs of the church:
      - (1) Evangelism

- (2) Edification
  - (3) Worship
  - (4) Benevolence
5. Just as we must submit to the laws of the government under which we live, so must we submit to the decisions of the elders of the local congregation.
- a. Disobey laws of the United States, cannot be a recipient of the blessings of being a citizen.
  - b. Disobey the decisions of the elders, and refuse to submit to them, we are rebels against God, and cannot expect to be a recipient of the blessings from God.
  - c. Read Numbers 16:1-50.
    - (1) God not only punished the rebels, but all those who sympathized with them.
    - (2) Also punished those who complained because of the punishment meted out to the others.
- C. 1 Thessalonians 5:12 — “Know the Elders.”
- 1. Means more than just knowing who they are, and that they are elders.
  - 2. It has the meaning of “duly regarding” them — to acknowledge and respect them.
  - 3. When we have no respect for the elders and give no heed to their judgments, we show that we have no respect for God’s word.

**D. Esteem the elders — 1 Thessalonians 5:13.**

1. Elders that rule well are to be counted worthy of double honor (1 Timothy 5:17). Pay them for full-time work.
2. We must not receive an accusation against them unless there are two or three witnesses to testify against them (1 Timothy 5:17-19: see also Deuteronomy 19:15).
3. Esteem them highly.
4. If we have this kind of feeling for them we will not find it unpleasant to submit to their judgment.
5. In all these we are presupposing that the elders are qualified.
6. Where one man pits his judgment against the judgment of an entire congregation, it is most likely that the one man is the one out of step.

“The church is not a democracy. It is an absolute monarchy with Christ on the throne. While elders are not kings, they have nevertheless, been duly authorized to expedite the work of the church as Christ commands. Elders make decisions for church action. While wise elders will lead, rather than drive, neither is the congregation to press its will upon the elders contrary to the elders’ decisions for expediting that work. The church must oppose every effort of the eldership to legislate new laws, but it is to encourage every effort of the elders to expedite the work as revealed. It is one thing to disagree with the wisdom of the eld-

ers' decisions, and an altogether different thing to oppose such decisions. It becomes apparent that only qualified elders should ever be appointed. God is not mocked, we reap what we sow. If we are not to speak evil of any man, how much more the eldership. It is a grave thing to speak disrespectfully of an elder, or to in any way ridicule him. Let preachers take note." (Edward C. Wharton, **The Church of Christ**, page 47).

## — Lesson Fourteen —

**Sound Doctrine**

- I. **There is a slow drift into worldliness that, if left unchecked, can destroy any church.**
  - A. Drift starts when some who are afraid to condemn sin, will not stand up for truth.
  - B. Drift is caused by lack of Bible knowledge, by studying what some have said about the Bible, instead of studying the Bible itself.
    1. The drift of the church into the dark ages was a gradual thing, caused by admitting people into the fellowship of the church who were not converted to Christ, but who were baptized because it was the socially acceptable thing to do.
    2. Our drift today is caused by being too concerned about numbers, more than Christianity. Numbers are important. God wants His house filled, but filled with Christians who are concerned about their growth along the patterns God wants.
  - C. As a result, many elderships in this country have become concerned with seven “B’s”: Buildings, Bulletins, Budgets, Buffets, Births, Betrothals and Burials.
    1. Out of many four hour meetings the great majority of time is spent discussing material things while 5% is

- spent discussing spiritual opportunities facing the church.
2. In such instances the local work often winds up as a compromise between promotional efforts of the preacher, and caution and suspicion of the eldership.
  3. Don't rock the boat is the prevalent attitude.
- D. Our primary concern should be the seven "B's": Biblical, Belief, Broadcasts, Baptism, Behavior, Benevolence and Brotherhood.
1. Most of the work of the church can be condensed under these seven headings.
  2. We need serious reminders at times as to just what we should be doing as church work.
- E. The Bible must remain the supreme authority.
1. Scriptures must decide matters of doctrine.
  2. In matters of opinion, we must have liberty.
  3. In all things there must be overwhelming love.
- F. The Bible is inerrant, infallible, and verbally inspired.
1. New Testament is our law of faith and practice.
  2. Old Testament is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.
    - a. When Christian leadership forgets this principle, anarchy and apostasy result.
    - b. Apostasy always comes from within.



- G. The “pastor system” has become tolerated, even though we preach against it constantly. Much of the elders’ work is demanded of the preacher.

## **II. It takes strong men to keep the doctrine pure.**

- A. Leaders who are not strong spiritually have allowed many practices to take place that are unscriptural and wrong.
  - 1. Charismatic movement — jargon speaking, emotionalism, entertaining, and sentimental religion.
  - 2. Basing Christianity on sensational personal experiences with Jesus. Claiming to have had a direct revelation that not only will not stand objective investigation, but also ignores God’s word in the Bible (1 Corinthians 13).
  - 3. When doctrine is minimized or ignored for a number of contribution promoting programs, apostasy has occurred.

# Questions for Class Discussion

1. Have a few hundred church leaders ever determined the destiny of a nation? When? How? What are the possibilities that their leadership could be imitated now? Admittedly, world conditions are not exactly the same, yet are we prepared to say that the possibility to change a nation is confined to the first century? How about the changes brought about in the fifteenth century? the nineteenth century?
2. If the overall education level is increasing, why is there a shortage of church leadership?
3. Should longer term elders have no more consideration on matters than "rookie" elders? Could a problem arise here? How should this matter best be handled?
4. Are older deacons out of place in the congregation?
5. Would a grouchy, always anti, complaining elder (old or young) be disqualified from serving? If so, how could this best be handled?
6. When should a man retire the office of elder or deacon?
7. Must an elder be the chairman of the meeting when deacons are asked to sit in on a business meeting to help solve a problem in the church? What about an occasion where an elder (or elders) is invited to sit in on the deacons' business meeting?

8. Are willing, qualified men easier or harder to find today? Why? What could be done?
9. What should be done by the other leaders if there is one trying to serve who is obviously not qualified? Remember that some disgruntled or prejudiced member can cause some to bring charges that one is not qualified whose charges are based solely on opinions. Can one be qualified for a church office and another be better qualified? In other words, do the qualifications consist of degrees whereby one can be minimally qualified and another be extremely qualified? Or can one be qualified at a small rural congregation and not be qualified at a large metropolitan congregation? Why or why not?
10. The shortage of church leaders, especially preachers, has been caused by members. Do you agree or disagree? Discuss.
11. Should a man compel his children to attend all the church services? How many? Which ones? On what basis do you give your answer?
12. Is a "man of a very few words" always the most desirable one for leadership?
13. If a man is very successful in business will he make a good elder? Why or why not? Any extenuating circumstances?
14. If one of the elders has more education and more time, should he be made the permanent chairman of the group?
15. In a matter of judgment, if all the elders cannot agree, should they just drop the project, or postpone the decision? What might be done when the project is thought by the

- majority of the elders to be scriptural and highly needed for the growth of the local congregation?
16. Should the elders inform a neighboring congregation when a troublemaker changes his membership over to them?
  17. If we have fewer-qualified men now than in apostolic times, what could be causing this shortage?
  18. Can organizations be used to perform the mission of the church? Be careful here!
  19. How best should a sister be treated who wants to “sit in” on the men’s business meeting.
  20. What response should be made to a sister who requests that the elders meet monthly with the women of the church?
  21. What is the application, if any, to this scripture: “Let the women keep silence in the churches” (1 Corinthians 14:34)? When and where does this apply?
  22. Define and make a list of church work that women can do. What are things she is not authorized to do? Support your answers by the scriptures.
  23. Discuss Paul’s admonition that a wife of a church leader must be “*faithful in all things.*”
  24. In what way are wives to submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22)? How can abuse be avoided here?
  25. What is the best response to someone who wants the minutes of the business meetings read to the congregation? In their meetings, can elders keep some discussion “off the record” because of its extremely sensitive content?

26. Should all or some of the eldership be reconfirmed every two years?
27. Organizations (institutions) higher than the local congregation.
28. Organizations or methods within the congregation.
29. The mission of the church covers three areas.
30. The mission of the individual Christian.
31. The difference in the two terms. "go" and "come."
32. More leisure time means more won to Christ? Or more negligence?
33. Leaders, doing their home work well, can make a congregation grow.
34. Who gets the credit? Who gives the increase? Who gets the glory?
35. Compare the obligation of the church's function in the area of benevolence today to that of the 1st century.
36. Elders nowadays must be aware of the professional beggar and how best to handle this situation.
37. If we are suffering, should we pray for ourselves?
38. A leader who will make regular counseling visits to shut-ins as well as the sick.
39. An elderly person's family should pay for the needs of the aged and infirm, not the church. What if they don't?
40. Will the trend toward earlier retirement and longer life spans affect the church? How?

41. Is a dysfunctional child, family, in a congregation a concern of the elders?
42. Should a successful program of benevolence in a sister congregation be considered? Should a study team be sent to thriving congregations for input on their home congregation?
43. What should a Christian's response be if asked to give a contribution to public charities? Why?
44. Discuss the brotherhood's slowness in restoring New Testament doctrine in the areas of benevolence and personal evangelism.
45. The reason for the assemblage of the saints is for spiritual food and oneness of purpose.
46. Should Christian education within the congregation be regularly assessed? How?
47. What is "church work"?
48. The talents and interests of the members should be considered by the leaders, then the major projects should be selected and started.
49. What about home classes on Sunday evening, or whenever, when an elder or a sound person assigned by an elder is not present?
50. Comforts (or distractions) of the worshipping members are an important concern toward edifying the body. Right? Wrong? Indifferent?
51. What set of circumstances prompted the beginning of

“preacher schools” in the brotherhood? Are other training schools necessary?

52. On matters of opinion and expediency the truth lies somewhere in between the liberal and conservative views.
53. The Bible is the supreme authority; it is inerrant, infallible and verbally inspired.
54. When a church falls away, the leaders are to blame.
55. What part does emotion play in religion?
56. Good leadership requires more courage than some men have.
57. In what situation would opposition to the elders be wholesome and healthy? How should or should not this be done?
58. All members should read and study certain religious papers. How can the church assist in this?
59. To be forewarned is to be forearmed on the issues.
60. Should the elders make an announcement to the congregation concerning Bible translations?
61. What causes a person to become too liberal, or so conservative that he leans toward legalism?
62. The power is in the Word and it works from the inside out.
63. Should elders insist on a trial sermon? What are the good points in this and also associated problems?
64. The congregation will never rise above its eldership.
65. Discussion: The fastest growing churches have experienced preachers with long tenure.

66. Preachers must be flexible enough to “fit in”. Into what? How much?
67. Counseling members of the church is a job God assigned to the elders.
68. Does every congregation that can afford one need to hire a preacher?
69. Should a written contract between the elders and preacher be considered?
70. Would paid elders be the answer to some important problems in the church?
71. Passive leadership inspires unscriptural connection procedures in the churches.
72. Generally, elders do not exercise the authority that God gave them over the congregation. True? False?
73. The terms: obey, submit, fellowship, dis-fellowship, offenses, admonish, fraternal closeness, gainsayer, unity, civil courts, constructive discipline, corrective discipline.
74. Withdrawal from a person cannot be effective if he has already withdrawn from us. True? False?
75. If husband and wife are having serious problems, should the elders know?
76. A dedicated congregation doesn’t have time to fight.
77. How does the “overly sensitive” (leader or member) cause problems?
78. Our mission efforts should be directed toward a pliable



people who are, at the same time, steadfast enough to perpetuate themselves.

79. Is it possible to have too many visitors to the mission field?
80. Nationals must be made to understand (by the missionary) that the function of the Christian in the church is a giving situation rather than a place to get something.
81. If a person is not winning souls already, he should not go to the mission field. True? False?
82. Native church leaders must go through a maturing process with proper guidance over a period of time.
83. What kind of questions should an eldership ask a missionary in proving that he is sound doctrinally, and that he will properly emphasize this in his work?
84. The eldership is a group of men who can (and must) operate as a unit.
85. One conscientiously obstinate elder can become the proverbial wolf and devour the sheep.
86. Since the "one man rule" system is more efficient (less time wasted on decisions, etc.) than any other, why can't the church be run like this? Is it some places?
87. Give an example of a person being given the responsibility on a job but not given the authority to properly expedite it.
88. Lack of proper delegation has been a weakness in the brotherhood.
89. We tend to have more problems with under-organization than over-organization.

90. Is committee work scriptural?
91. Would it be feasible, under certain conditions, to ask a preacher to submit a daily report to the eldership?
92. Should a certain amount of fellowship be included in a business meeting?
93. There are times when the elders need to meet alone either regularly or occasionally.
94. There must be a willingness in the leader's attitude toward letting others take hold and execute.
95. Are the deacons to take charge of money matters in the church?
96. How much of a voice does the preacher have in congregational affairs?
97. In reviewing qualifications and duties of elders (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5; Acts 20), are there any indications that he should be a liberal giver?
98. The average church member gives three percent of his earnings.
99. Are the times such that, in spite of good shepherding, members are becoming more materialistic or is it because of weak leadership? or what?
100. How do elders sometimes set an example of materialism?
101. You are face-to-face with a person who is asking for a cash gift from the church treasury. You have reason to suspect that he is a professional beggar. What qualifying questions do you ask him?

102. We should (or should not) always get the lowest price possible from workmen doing church building repairs. Are there qualifying factors in whether to hire “Christians only” for a church building project? Should we always trade at available Christians businesses? Why or why not? When?
103. A budget proposal that is “out of reach” does what kind of damage to the congregation?
104. Elderly Christian parents sometimes leave everything, including large sums of money, to unfaithful offspring and forget the church in their will entirely.

# You Are the Elders

## (Justify Your Answers)

Which in the list below do you think would be an elder's best response to the following items?

Listen  
Study  
Endure  
Consult  
Inspire  
Ignore  
Teach  
Immediate Action

1. When 20 percent of the members of my (the elder's) class are late.
2. When the person who led the prayer was not speaking loudly enough.
3. When the young people want to raise money for the church by having a car wash.
4. When the preacher has been reading his sermon to the congregation.
5. When critical old ladies correct my mannerisms.
6. When the brotherhood or brethren do not see things my way.
7. When I want more than anything to write all about what's wrong with the brotherhood.

8. When the devil activates me to dwell on personalities rather than the issues.
9. When the other elders say, "That's well and good, but, you know, we have tried that."
10. When another elder retires (or becomes disqualified) and still wants the honorary office.
11. When the worship is interrupted five times by babies — four times by the same one.
12. When the prospective convert with whom I am working takes a look at all of us and says, "I am better off outside the church."
13. When one of the Bible class teachers should be replaced but doesn't want to be.
14. When one of the Bible class teachers doesn't show on Sunday morning, or call prior.
15. When this one person (the wrong person) contributes more than his share to the class I am teaching.
16. When the preacher preaches Christ without preaching His church and His plan.
17. When some members of the congregation imply that there is a middle ground between truth and error on a clearly taught Bible subject.
18. When this new member insists that he has been speaking in tongues.
19. When a church leader gives only 3% of his income to the Lord.

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