

Roles of a Spiritual Leader

Leaders Equipping and Training #3

The Need to Expand Our Leadership Base

- Churches use many methods to attract people—good programs, worship, teaching, and fellowship groups
- All these are fine, but they will not have enduring traction, if the church is not continually expanding their base of leaders
- The church grows to the same proportion and capacity of its leadership base, both in quality and quantity
- Spiritual leadership is key to church growth and health

What is Leadership?

- “Leadership is mobilizing people through uncertainty that requires experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization or community. It requires learning new ways—changing attitudes, values, and behaviors—so people can make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in new environments. The sustainability of change depends on having the people with the problem internalize the change itself” (Heifetz and Linsky 2002, 13).

What is Spiritual Leadership?

- “Spiritual leadership is equipping people to grow so they can face their challenges. If people don’t grow, it’s not leadership. It’s management. A spiritual leader is one who influences people, an organization, or culture to be transformed. And that starts with our own transformation. If we don’t change, nothing changes. But if we participate in something changing, then we change. Leaders influence people to grow in order to accomplish a shared mission in the face of a changing world” (Bolsinger 2015, 42)

What is Spiritual Leadership?

- “Good spiritual leaders are fervent disciples of Jesus Christ, gifted by the Holy Spirit, with a passion to bring glory to God. They use their gift of leadership by taking initiative to focus, harmonize, and enhance the gifts of others for the sake of developing people and cultivating the kingdom of God” (Plueddemann 2009, 15)

Lead by Teaching and Applying the Bible

- **The words of Jesus:**
- ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to **obey** everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matt 28:19-20)
- ⁴⁷ As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into **practice**, I will show you what they are like. ⁴⁸ They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built (Lu 6:47-48)

Lead by Teaching and Applying the Bible

- The words of Paul:
- ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly **equipped for every good work** (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - Teaching—the whole counsel of God
 - Rebuking—pointing out error in belief/doctrine
 - Correcting—in terms of conduct
 - Training—actualizing faith in life

Lead by Example

- Spiritual leaders make disciples by example or modelling their faith
- They are not just teachers, facilitators, or messengers
- Disciples are formed not merely through the intake of correct information, but also through witnessing the life and choices of other disciples
- Most learning and training take place not through programmed teaching or courses but in meetings—talking about life, ministry, and overcoming challenges

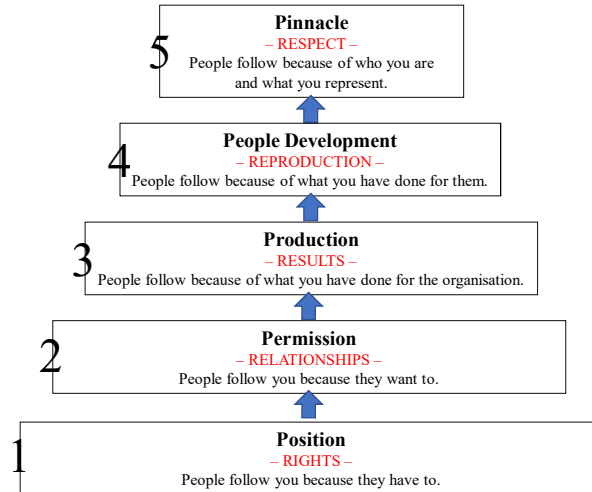
Lead by Example

- ¹⁵ Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to **imitate** me. ¹⁷ For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church (1 Cor 4:15-17)
- ¹ Follow my **example**, as I follow the example of Christ (1 Cor 11:1)
- ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into **practice**. And the God of peace will be with you (Phil 4:9)

Lead by Example

- ¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an **example** for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Tim 4:12)
- ¹⁰ You, however, know all about my teaching, **my way of life**, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹ persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them (2 Tim 3:10-11)

Overview of the 5 Levels of Leadership



Lead by Shepherding People

- Churches tend to view leadership today with a corporate mentality. As such, it is all too easy to assume that the elder's duties are similar to those of board members in a corporation
- This can lead to a perception of elders' meetings basically as a time for decision-making, with the senior pastor as the CEO, carrying out the directives of the board
- In this scenario, it is possible for elders to consider pastoral concern and care to be outside of their scope of responsibility and to belong instead to that of pastors

Lead by Shepherding People

- Such role distinctions are not taught in the NT. The terms “overseer,” “elder,” and “pastor” do not denote separable job responsibilities. Rather, they overlap considerably
- The term “**pastor**” (*poimen*) simply means shepherd, and derives from biblical times in which shepherds led, fed, protected, and disciplined their flock
- The term “**elder**” (*presbyter*) carries an overtone of maturity that qualifies a person for respect and for leadership responsibilities
- The term “**overseer**” (*episkopos*), sometimes translated as “bishop,” points to administrative and ruling functions that are not entirely absent from the other two labels

Lead by Shepherding People

- In fact, there are many passages in the NT, where the three terms come together with reference to the same office
- Take, for example, 1 Peter 5:1-2: “To the **elders** among you, I appeal as a fellow elder... ² Be **shepherds** (pastors) of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as **overseers**...”
- In that sense, elders or overseers serve as pastors
- The term or metaphor of “shepherd” connotes the responsibilities of **leading** (supervision), **feeding** (food and nourishment), **tending** (mending wounds), and **protecting** (from danger and predators) the flock

Lead by Delegating Responsibilities

- Jesus was always building his ministry for the time when his disciples would have to take over his work
- Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people” (Lu 5:10b)
- “The patience with which Jesus brought this out to his disciples reflects on his consideration for their ability to learn. He was never premature in his insistence on action. The first invitation to the disciples to follow him said nothing about going out and evangelizing the world, although this was his plan from the beginning” (Coleman 1993, 71)
- Look for people who are **FAT**—Faithful, Available, and Teachable

Lead by Delegating Responsibilities

- Consider Jesus’s method of delegation in the gospel accounts:
- Jesus called his first disciples to just follow him (Lu 5:1-11)
- Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.” ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him (Lu 5:10b-11)
- Jesus did not ask these early disciple to do much in the first year other than to observe him, but he reminded them they were to be “fishers of people” (Lu 5:10)
- He asked them to help his working by getting food, arranging for accommodations for the group, and baptized believers (e.g., Jn 4:2)

Lead by Delegating Responsibilities

- A few months later, he called the twelve apostles (Lu 6:13-16), but they still didn't do any evangelistic work
- As Jesus began his third tour of Galilee, he briefed the twelve and sent them out to local villages to do evangelism:
- ¹ When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick (Lu 9:1-2)
- In other word, delegation of responsibilities should be done measurably and progressively. But it must be done!

Lead by Multiplication

- Leaders must supervise workers after delegating them responsibilities
- ⁴⁰ The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher (Lu 6:40)
- It is imperative that leaders reproduce themselves to develop and continue the work of disciple-making
- When occupying a leadership role, we should always try to work ourselves out of the job
- Leaders must let go with full confidence in God and in the future:
- ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it (Matt 16:18)

Lead by Multiplication

- We must follow Christ's Great Commission:
- ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- We must pray for harvesters:
- ² He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field (Lu 10:2)

Lead by Multiplication

- A vital component of leadership is succession planning:
- "Our work is never finished until it has assured us its continuation in the lives of those redeemed by Jesus. The test of any work of disciple-making thus is not what is seen at the moment, or in the conference report, but in the effectiveness with which the work continues in the next generation" (Coleman 1993, 95)

Discussion Questions

- Why are Christians typically reluctant or resistant to taking leadership roles?
- What can ORPC do to effectively recruit and train DGLs and other ministry leaders?