

BUILDING  
LEADERS

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# BUILDING LEADERS

BLUEPRINTS FOR DEVELOPING  
LEADERSHIP AT EVERY LEVEL  
OF YOUR CHURCH

AUBREY MALPHURS

AND

WILL MANCINI

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# Introduction

Pastor Jeff had just finished having breakfast with Bill Smith at the Pancake House. Walking out the front door, the pastor shook hands with Bill, his church board member. Then he put his hand on Bill's shoulder and wished him and his family God's best as they relocated to another city. Though smiling on the outside, Pastor Jeff was hurting on the inside.

A little more than seven years ago, Bill, his wife, and their two children had moved into the area and begun attending Grace Community Church. Previously Bill had attended an evangelical seminary for one year before deciding that God was leading him to pursue a career in corporate America. He believed that God could use him more effectively working *with* a pastor than *as* a pastor. Bill became an active member of Grace Community Church and was the key person on the pulpit committee that pursued Jeff as the next pastor of the church. Later, when Jeff outlined his Great Commission vision for the church, Bill was most supportive. Jeff was convinced that God had gifted Bill as a significant leader who had an uncanny ability to make wise decisions, especially in difficult situations. *No wonder his company transferred him to a key position in another state on the East Coast, Jeff mused. God willing, this man has all the potential to become the company's CEO someday.*

Here's why the parting outside the restaurant was so painful. Jeff knew that Bill was not only the key leader on the board but the only leader. The other four board members meant well but simply weren't strong leaders. Completely unaware of what leadership should entail, they believed their primary purpose was to keep everybody who was a part of Grace Community happy. In their minds, the church was one big family and their mission was to take care of it. That was the board's

concept of leadership. During Bill's five-year tenure on the board, God used him to cast a significant vision for making some vital changes at the ninety-year-old church. As a result, ten new families joined the previously struggling, plateaued congregation.

Now Pastor Jeff felt frustrated because he had depended on Bill's leadership on the board to get things done. Bill's departure would create a leadership vacuum that no one was likely to fill. Without strong, capable leadership, Jeff's plans for the church would never come to fruition. He had hoped to see some of the congregation's younger men become passionate, godly leaders, but so far they expressed little to no interest. And Jeff realized that, though trained well at seminary in the areas of biblical languages, theology, Bible, and church history, he had learned little about developing leaders. His seminary viewed the pastor as more of an in-house scholar than a leader, and it didn't take Jeff long to realize that, as they say in the South, "That dog won't hunt!"

Though he had thoroughly enjoyed his time in school and had done well, as a pastor, Jeff quickly discovered that he was only partly prepared for leading a church. True, a pastor must have a good knowledge of the Scriptures and the ability to communicate them to lead a church, but successful pastoring requires more, much more, than that. Jeff had come to realize that he desperately needed to raise up some leaders around him. With no training in leadership development, however, he didn't know where to start. The only book he found with any substance on the topic talked about the importance of training leaders but didn't tell how or relate Scripture to the process. Another used Scripture but focused on developing leaders at the pastoral level, not throughout the church. It seemed that everybody was talking about leadership development, but nobody—at least in his circles—was doing it, not even the megachurches.

## **The Leadership Challenge**

Both inside and outside the church, many people have recognized the need for developing leaders. In a *Fortune* magazine article, Marshall Loeb reports on a gathering of world business leaders, "What worried them the most was not production or profits or competition, but this: Where have all the leaders gone?"<sup>1</sup> "USA Today Snapshots" reports, "Top executives' worries about developing future leaders has become the hottest topic at business meetings." In 2002 the percentage of meetings in which leadership was addressed rose to 62 percent compared to 54 percent in 2001.<sup>2</sup>

Commenting on the shifting role of the CEO, a recent article in *Fast Company* relates, “Perhaps more than anything, the CEO of today is a teacher, working tirelessly to grow the skills and aptitudes of the company’s contributors. The job of the CEO is simply to create more CEOs. . . .”<sup>3</sup>

James Bolt, the founder of Executive Development Associates, observes, “The dearth of leadership is apparent throughout society. No matter where we turn, we see the severe lack of faith in the leadership of our schools, religious organizations, and governments.”<sup>4</sup> We find it interesting that Bolt, a corporate consultant, has observed the lack of leadership in religious as well as other organizations.

Finally, the need for leadership is evidenced in a powerful way in the church as it struggles to transition into the twenty-first century. George Barna comments on the church’s need for leaders:

I have reached several conclusions regarding the future of the Christian Church in America. The central conclusion is that the American church is dying due to a lack of strong leadership. In this time of unprecedented opportunity and plentiful resources, the church is actually losing influence. The primary reason is the lack of leadership. Nothing is more important than leadership.<sup>5</sup>

Needless to say, Pastor Jeff isn’t alone. In the real world he has lots of company. One example is Lewis Cooper, who accepted the call to pastor Faith Temple Baptist Church in Irving, Texas, just outside of Dallas. He discovered that like so many other small churches sprinkled all across North America, Faith Temple’s leadership was aging and the church’s growth had plateaued. In discussing this situation, Pastor Lewis said he was convinced that the key to revitalizing his church was the development of the church’s leadership, both old and new. “We have a critical need for trained leadership,” he said. “That will determine whether or not we have a future.”

Another example of a church in need of leadership is Lake Pointe Church located in Rockwall, Texas. In contrast to Faith Temple Baptist, Lake Pointe Church is experiencing phenomenal growth under the leadership of its pastor, Steve Stroope. Growing at 20 to 30 percent annually, Lake Pointe averages between five and six thousand people per weekend. So what is Lake Pointe’s greatest challenge? “Leadership,” answers Pastor Karl Shackelford, one of the assistant pastors whom Pastor Steve has tasked with leadership development. Large churches like this one attract leaders and emerging leaders who need to be developed. Pastor Karl says, “We’re convinced that Lake Pointe needs to raise up and train more leaders.”

It is noteworthy that both Faith Temple Baptist and Lake Pointe have caught the dream and are implementing the vision. My (Aubrey's) work with these two churches has greatly influenced this book. In the chapters that follow, you will discover some of what they have done to implement their training processes.

## **A Leadership Development Crisis**

Though various books on Christian leadership appeared back in the 1990s, not much has changed in church organizations. Today some experts argue that the problem is a general lack of people with leadership ability—we just don't have as many leaders as we used to. Our experience as church trainers and consultants, as well as Aubrey's involvement in seminary education over the past twenty years, has shown us that we have many potential leaders, but we're not developing them. And it's this failure in development that has precipitated the leadership crisis in our world in general and the church in particular. Our leaders don't know how to train other leaders. Bolt has observed the same in the corporate world: "I contend that this leadership crisis is in reality a *leadership development* crisis. It is this development crisis that leads me to agree that our leaders are 'missing in action.'"<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps the clearest biblical illustration of a leadership-development crisis is found in Exodus 18. Moses is leading the people of Israel, numbering more than one million,<sup>7</sup> out of Egypt toward the Promised Land. As they navigate the treacherous desert wilderness, Moses, the exodus point man, finds himself as the primary "go to" guy for all of the disputes among the massive caravan. The natural result is an unsustainable leadership structure for God's people. From sunrise to sundown men, women, and children end up standing in the blazing desert sun just to get a few minutes with their pastor. Moses himself becomes the bottleneck in the process of fostering a God-honoring community among one million people. During this journey, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, visits and observes Moses in action. After witnessing this organizational nightmare, Jethro comments, "You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone" (18:18).

This makes Jethro one of the first church consultants. He advises Moses to find capable men within the community to whom he can delegate responsibility for decision making. Specifically he instructs Moses to divide the group into tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands. Moses recognizes the wisdom of this and builds a sustainable infrastructure of leaders. Note that, within the great body of the Israelites, God had

already provided people capable of leadership. The missing piece was not the people but the process. In fact, in several short verses, Jethro gives Moses a miniblueprint for leadership development, including leadership qualifications (v. 21a), role descriptions (vv. 19b, 22), an organizational chart (v. 21b), and a training strategy (v. 22). Based on the ratios in verse 21, and assuming that there were one million Jews on the journey, God had provided 131,000 potential leaders for Moses to enlist. This translates to one leader for every 7.6 people. Again, this clearly illustrates that the primary leadership issue in an organization may not be the lack of leaders but the lack of a development process to discover and deploy them.

Though many churches have awakened to the need to develop godly, competent leadership and are talking about it, few are doing anything about it. There are several reasons for this. (If your ministry is struggling in the area of leadership development, take the audit in appendix A to discover why.) The primary reason is that many churches don't know how to develop leaders. Few have informal leadership development programs in place. Fewer still have established formal, intentional systems for developing leaders throughout the organization. While many churches want and desperately need such a development process, they don't know how to pull it off.

Leadership training today has yet to become a priority for most Christian organizations, and we're convinced that until all this changes, they as well as the rest of the world will continue to flounder in the sea of change that has ushered in the twenty-first century.

I (Aubrey) have written books on the importance of a church's core values, mission, vision, and strategy, as well as on church planting and revitalization. If a ministry doesn't have strong leaders at every level to implement these vital concepts, however, the church, whether small or large, will not prosper. The statements and strategies are only tools. The key to ministry is and always has been competent, godly leadership.

The solution to the leadership crisis is to do a much better job of leadership development—not the preparation of better senior pastors or church staffs alone but development of committed leaders at every level within the organization. A godly senior pastor and an excellent staff can accomplish only so much. The church's aim should be to train as many leaders as possible and to have competent leadership at every level of ministry. Perhaps the ideal is one leader for every 7.6 people as in Israel's case.

The ultimate test of a leader isn't the magnitude of his or her ministry but whether that leader trains other leaders who can sustain the church or parachurch organization when he or she is no longer present. The true test is the leadership legacy that the pastor leaves behind. You

can honor leaders by inscribing their names on plaques on the side of a building, but the greater honor is to see their ministries continue long after the leaders have left them, showing that they've succeeded in developing the next generation of Christ-like leadership throughout the church.

Not many church leaders would disagree with this goal, but few know how to accomplish it, to make it become a living, breathing reality in their ministries. That is what this book is about. Its purpose is to challenge leaders and to guide them in the process of developing other leaders at every level of the ministry. These new leaders will in turn minister to and develop leaders at the same level and beyond.

## **What the Church Needs**

We need a radical change in the typical twenty-first-century pastor's church-leadership paradigm, especially if the pastor attended a classical seminary or is an older person. Pastoral ministry certainly includes the central responsibilities of teaching and preaching the Bible, but far too many pastors stop there. Leading a church in today's and tomorrow's world involves training leaders who will develop other leaders to carry the ministry torch to the third and fourth generations. The danger is that some denominational executives and pastors will continue to believe that a single initiative program, such as preaching the Bible or pastoral care, accomplishes the ministry. Our churches need the mind-set of the military, which has made leadership development a part of their leaders' daily lives and an essential path to success.

We need a leadership-training process that leaders with this new perspective can use to fulfill their dream. This book will present such a leadership development process, providing leaders with a universal format that applies to all churches no matter their size, location, or ethnicity. The goal of this book is to help leaders walk their unique ministry organization through this process to arrive at their unique ministry product or model, ensuring that they touch all the necessary bases. This is important because it's doubtful that one product or final model will be precisely like another, because each church's culture—its leaders, teams, values, mission, ministry location, and the people it seeks to train (its ministry core and context)—is not like any other. Consequently, while leaders may learn from someone else's model, they would be wise not to copy it in its entirety. Instead, they must ask, *What are these models doing that would fit our ministry context and would really help us?* The product must be endemic to the ministry community. In most churches this does not happen.

## **Developing Training Churches**

By introducing a new ministry paradigm, this book instructs pastors in how to intentionally develop leaders at every level, regardless of the church's size. However, it doesn't stop there. It calls for the development of churches that can provide the necessary context in which this training can best take place. This training church model is similar to the medical model of the teaching hospital. While all hospitals do a certain amount of training, some hospitals are designated teaching hospitals. They purpose not only to treat diseases but to train those who treat diseases. Everyone knows this up front, including the medical personnel who train there and those who train them, as well as the patients who come to the training hospital. People who frequent these hospitals are used to seeing medical personnel, such as doctors, nurses, and technicians, walking the halls with a student, intern, or resident in tow. It's a common, everyday occurrence to see certain medical personnel lecturing, modeling, observing, and evaluating those in training. This training model produces excellent, well-trained personnel for the entire medical profession. Obviously, if we stopped training medical personnel and eliminated teaching hospitals, we would jeopardize the health care of our nation. But have we not already jeopardized the spiritual health of our churches by failing to train ministry leaders?

If the medical community works this hard at training leaders who work on people's bodies, shouldn't the church work just as hard at training leaders who care for people's eternal souls? Though not all churches could be training churches, many should aspire to this end whether they are traditional or contemporary, seeker-driven or purpose-driven. These training churches could produce highly qualified leaders, not only for their own churches but also for others that don't have the necessary personnel to be a teaching ministry. Potentially all could benefit.

## **A Personal Passion for the Church**

We have a passion for the church of Jesus Christ and the training of Christ-centered leadership. We, along with many others, believe that Christ's church is the hope of the world and that its leadership is the future of the church. Aubrey has pastored three churches and consulted with and trained people in many others. Thus he realizes the awesome potential of Christ's church. In his last two churches, he made it a practice to invite seminarians to work with him as staff and pastoral apprentices. His purpose was not only to share the ministry load but to

use these opportunities as teaching ministries to train and coach future leaders of the church. While he believes that he served these churches well, his greatest contribution was in the training and shaping of the new leaders.

Will has served in various church staff roles and has focused on leadership development. He now works as a coach and consultant to churches in the areas of leadership development, strategy, and communications.

While we believe that Matthew 16:18 assures us that the church will not die off, we bemoan the present state of the church. Consequently it's our dream that early in the twenty-first century we'll see a great number of strong teaching churches, either planted or developed, that train competent, godly leaders for a significant Christ-centered ministry. We suspect that there are others, many others, who share this vision. This book is an attempt to enlist them and others in the cause and accomplish our dream.

Seeing similarities between the process of building a house and building a leadership-development process for the church, we have organized the parts of this book around a building metaphor.

Part 1 covers the preparation needed for developing leaders and explains why a church needs to build its leadership house. The first chapter is foundational and defines and explains the importance of developing leaders. Chapter 2 examines various reasons churches don't develop leaders. Chapter 3 addresses the kind of heart needed for leadership development.

In part 2 we deal with the practices for developing leaders—the biblical-theological principles that are integral to the leadership training process. These are similar to the architectural principles that direct a builder's decisions while building a house. Chapter 4 discusses the leadership lessons we can learn from the Savior in the Gospels, and chapter 5 looks at what we can learn from the metaphors that he used for leadership. Chapter 6 takes the next step and looks at what we can learn from the early church in Acts and the Epistles about developing leaders.

Part 3 explores our process for developing leaders that parallels moving from the builder's blueprints to the actual house. In chapter 7 we discuss the personnel who are needed for the leadership construction team. Then in chapters 8, 9, and 10 we explain the actual leadership-development process. Chapter 11 is a guide for repairing and improving your completed development process, and chapter 12 addresses the creation of a leadership culture in the church.

Part 4 concludes the process by describing some models. And the material in the appendices will help the reader use effectively the information in the chapters.

Leaders can approach this book in several ways.

- If you're a senior pastor or the point person of a parachurch ministry, you would be wise to work your way through this material with your key leaders, such as the staff and the board.
- If you're a consultant or pastor leading a church through revitalization, you should work through it with your leaders.
- If you're a lay leader who wants to influence your church toward leadership development, you should read the book first. Then, as you talk with your pastor or other key leaders, you can address specific ways in which the book may be helpful (as well as buy them a copy!).
- If you're a church planter, you have an easier job, because in most cases there is no one you have to convince of the need for leadership development or this process. You can simply include this process as a part of your church-planting strategy, either in the conception or development stage.
- If you're a leadership or personal development coach, you will want to pay particular attention to the questions in and at the end of the chapters as you work through the book.
- If you're a seminary professor, you may find it most instructive to assign this process as a project for your students. Divide them into teams and ask them to find a church in your area that will serve as a real-life lab for the project. Ask these emerging leaders, "If this were your church, what would a leadership-development process look like and how would you implement it?"
- Finally, this is the second book in a series of three companion books on leadership. The first is *Being Leaders* by Aubrey. In it he lays a foundation for this book. In the third book, *Leading the Leader*, he provides a definition of leadership.

Now, let the adventure begin.

Part 1

# Pouring the Proper Foundation

*Preparation for Developing Leaders*

# 1

## Leaders, Who Needs Them?

### *The Importance of Developing Leaders*

It's possible that our introduction left you with a sense that no one is developing leaders. This isn't the case. Though the majority of churches are not training new leaders, vestiges of leadership development do show up here and there. For example, some churches are recruiting and training leaders for their children's ministries. Others have done the same with their youth ministries and still others with staff leadership development. We believe, however, that few churches are addressing leadership development at every level of the church.

We sense that many pastors across North America and beyond understand the need to develop leaders at all levels of the church. Like construction managers, they want to know how they can build a total leadership-development process. Before we jump to the how of leadership development, we need to lay a foundation by defining our terms and articulating the needs, like wise builders who lay a strong foundation before erecting the superstructure. What are we talking about? What is leadership, and what does it mean to develop leaders? Just as important, why develop leaders?

### **The Meaning of Leadership**

It's rare to attend a church conference in the early twenty-first century and not hear some mention of leadership development. It's become the

hot topic at many leadership gatherings. At these events few are surprised when the main speaker or several speakers use in some way the terms *leader*, *leadership*, and *leadership development*. They've almost become a mantra that turns heads and grabs people's attention.

When we attend such events, however, we find ourselves asking, *What does this speaker mean by these terms?* Are all of the speakers talking about the same thing? If someone asked the various speakers to define these terms, would their definitions agree?

We define a Christian leader as *a servant who uses his or her credibility and capabilities to influence people in a particular context to pursue their God-given direction*. Let's look at this definition. (For an expanded explanation, see Aubrey Malphurs's *Being Leaders*, the first in this three-volume series on leadership.)

### ***Servant***

First, a Christian leader is a servant. The message sprinkled throughout the New Testament is that Christian leadership is all about servanthood (Matt. 20:25–28; Mark 10:41–45; John 13:1–17; Phil. 2:5–8). The Savior was very clear about this in Matthew 20:25–28 where he defines servant leadership as the humble service to others based on our love for them. “Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you’” (v. 25). Jesus is teaching his disciples that servant leaders lead humbly. The emphasis is on the leader's humility, not his or her ego.

In verses 26–28 Jesus continues his teaching and says, “Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Next, Jesus tells them and us what servants do. The essence of leadership is service, not status. It's the kind of service that involves the giving of self, not taking for oneself. It's selfless, not selfish.

Finally, Jesus states that his purpose in coming was not to be served but to serve others, to give his life for others. Leadership isn't all about us. It's all about other people. We're not to lead for what we can get out of it but for what others, followers, can get out of it that will glorify God.

In John 13:1–17 the Savior adds the basis for our service—our love for the leaders we develop. In verse 1 John says that Jesus showed his disciples “the full extent of his love” and he explains this with the foot-washing account in the following verses.

We know that prior to this event the disciples had continued to argue over who was the greatest (Luke 22:24–30). Though it was the custom of

the day to wash people's feet when they entered a home, apparently, on this occasion, no slave was available to perform this duty for Jesus and the disciples, so they reclined around the table with dirty feet. None was willing to wash the others' feet. Perhaps to do so would have lost them the argument and been an admission that one was inferior to another.

So Jesus washed their feet. He did it because of his overwhelming love for them. And the point is that we best develop leaders whom we love. Our love for them helps us, when they disappoint us, to take up the towel rather than throw in the towel, as we might prefer.

### ***Credibility***

The key to a leader's ability to influence people is his or her credibility. Leaders can't lead without it. When a leader attempts to influence a person, that potential follower engages in a conscious and unconscious evaluation of the leader's credibility. The degree to which the individual grants the leader credibility is the degree to which that leader can influence him or her.

This raises the question of how one gains credibility. Can you purchase a credibility kit in the local bookstore? There are at least three sources of credibility. One is the leader's character. Godly leaders are people of good character. People follow leaders who are in pursuit of godliness (1 Tim. 4:8) and holiness (Romans 6). First Timothy 3:1–12 and Titus 1:6–9 identify certain required character qualities of pastoral leaders.

Another source of credibility is competence. Competence is the leader's grasp of what he or she is doing and the skills to do it well. Finally, the clarity of the leader's direction contributes to his or her credibility. Leaders don't vaguely affect followers; they infect them with God's direction. This involves a biblical mission and vision. Leaders who know where they're going (mission) and can help their people visualize it (vision) will attract followers.

These three sources of credibility may not be equally weighted in importance, depending on the ministry context. Each is capable of building the leader's credibility and all three together have a huge impact for winning followers for Christ's kingdom and cause.

#### **Credibility Factors**

---

Character

Competence

Clarity of direction

---

## ***Capabilities***

Leaders have special abilities or capabilities for leadership. They may be God-given abilities, such as spiritual gifts (an example is the gift of leadership in Rom. 12:8), a passion for leadership, or a temperament that favors leadership in certain situations. A leader also can develop leadership capabilities. For example, he or she can develop godly character, leadership knowledge, and various skills for leadership. Often both God-given abilities and developed abilities combine to forge exceptional leaders who can make a significant difference for the cause of Christ.

## ***Influence***

Leaders exert an influence on people. Leaders are doers, and what they do is influence. The leader's influence is the consistent impact that he or she has on people whom God uses to turn nonfollowers into followers of Christ. This is transformational leadership that the Holy Spirit uses to transform people into fully functioning followers of Christ. This leadership exists in relationships; it is all about people. Without people, there is no leadership.

If you wish to discover your leadership style—how you influence others—take the Leadership Style Inventory, which you will find in the appendices of *Being Leaders*, the companion volume to this book.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Context***

Leaders always lead in a particular context. Contrary to what many people believe, there is no superleader who can lead all people in all situations, no matter what the circumstances or the time. God gives leaders certain abilities that fit one particular context but not another. For example, some pastors lead small churches well but not large churches. Others lead large churches better than small churches. Some are church planters while others are church revitalizers. Some lead best in a rural context, and others lead best in an urban or suburban context.

## ***Impact on Followers***

Finally, leaders influence their followers to pursue their God-given direction. That direction is twofold, consisting of the followers' mission and vision. The followers' mission also is twofold. It's made up of their personal mission based on their gifts, talents, and temperament, and the

mission of the organization they serve. The followers' vision is twofold as well. It's made up of their personal vision and their ministry's vision.<sup>2</sup>

## What Is Leadership Development?

What do we mean when we add the term *development* to *leadership*? What is leadership development? We define leadership development as *the intentional process of helping established and emerging leaders at every level of ministry to assess and develop their Christian character and to acquire, reinforce, and refine their ministry knowledge and skills*. We'll expand on this in chapters 8–10.

This definition is based on a major assumption, that people in general and leaders in particular can be developed. A debate exists among some researchers on whether leaders can be developed. Some argue that leaders are born, not made. Others argue that they're developed, and still others believe that both are true.<sup>3</sup>

Based on my (Aubrey's) work with students at Dallas Seminary and pastors outside the seminary, I'm convinced that the last view is correct. Some leaders, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Margaret Thatcher, and Ross Perot, come into this world with natural gifts to lead in certain contexts. We call them born leaders. God also gives certain believers the leadership gift, as we saw in Romans 12:8, when they come to faith. We might call them "born-again leaders." Regardless, as we observed in our definition of a leader, people's character, knowledge, and skills can be developed, some more than others, according to their natural abilities and gifting. Consequently, though we are not born with equal leadership ability or natural leadership gifts, all of us can to some extent develop as leaders (though some are better followers than leaders). Otherwise, implementing a program of leadership development wouldn't make sense.

In 1 Timothy 4:14–15 the words of the apostle Paul to his young protégé Timothy speak well to the reality that leaders can and must *develop*: "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you. . . . Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all" (NASB). Timothy is exhorted to display personal development with "these things." In the context of verses 6–14, "these things" include character, knowledge, skills, and spiritual gifts, all as facets of leadership.

## The Importance of Leadership Development

Few debate the importance of training leaders. There are at least five reasons that this is so.

### ***Jesus Modeled the Priority of Leadership Development: There Is No Plan B!***

Leadership development was at the core of Jesus' ministry. If we could catch a glimpse of his ministry priorities, his development of the Twelve would have been at or near the top. Initially, the Savior ministered single-handedly, confining his miracles to a limited area and teaching basic spiritual truths. As the ministry grew over time and his followers multiplied, he selected and began to focus on a few of them—the Twelve. Even while his ministry was attracting large numbers of people, Jesus gave himself to his disciples, not the crowd. Toward the end of his ministry, the Savior poured his life into the Twelve because he knew that they, not the crowd, would make a difference in the first-century world that, in turn, would affect the rest of time. We wouldn't have the privilege of knowing and serving Christ today had it not been for the daring leadership and ministry of his disciples in the first century.



Although Jesus focused on the Twelve, he spent even more intentional time with three of the disciples—Peter, James, and John.<sup>4</sup> Why did Jesus choose to do this? Perhaps the answer is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians, written years after Jesus' ascension. In Galatians 2:9 Paul explains that these same three men—Peter, James, and John—are “reputed to be pillars” of the church. This further demonstrates that Jesus' intention with the Twelve was to build leadership for the church at large.

Jesus' example serves as a challenge for those of us who desire to take our ministries into the twenty-first century. More megachurches exist today than at any other time in the history of North America, and they draw a crowd. If church pastors aren't careful, they'll become enamored with the crowd. They and their congregations can fall into the subtle trap of measuring their success by the size of the crowd. Jesus' example teaches us, however, that the ministry payoff is not the size of the ministry—the crowd—but the size of the leader's trainees—the core. Success comes in our training a core of competent, godly leaders at every level of the ministry who will take the ministry well into the twenty-first century, long after we've been forgotten.

***The Quality of Leadership Affects the Quality of the Ministry:  
The Speed of the Leader Is the Speed of the Team***

The quality of the leadership affects the quality of the ministry. One leader correctly observes that everything rises or falls on leadership. As the ministry's leadership goes, so goes the organization, and the quality of any ministry is in direct proportion to the quality of its leadership. Thus leadership is the key element of ministry, a vital ingredient for success. If a ministry isn't doing well, then much of the time the problem can be traced in some way to leadership or its lack.

This truth surfaces repeatedly throughout the Scriptures. For example, a careful reading of the books of 1 and 2 Kings teaches that the success of Israel's kings and, consequently, the nation depended on the kings' allegiance and obedience to God's law and finally to God himself. God prospered the nation in relation to how its leaders led the people in obedience to the Mosaic law and the teachings of the prophets. When the kings abandoned God's direction, the nation paid a severe price.

Also, the Savior suggests the importance of leaders to a ministry when he alludes to the condition of sheep who are without a shepherd in Matthew 9:35–36. He was traveling through various towns and villages, ministering to the people. In verse 36 Matthew writes, "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Jesus' intent here isn't to instruct his disciples on the principles of good leadership in the kingdom. Nevertheless, the sheep-shepherd analogy indirectly demonstrates the importance of the shepherd's leadership to his flock. Without him, the sheep are in dire straits.

Some church ministries are in difficulty because their leaders struggle spiritually, much as in the days of Israel's kings. Most ministries stumble because they have no trained, competent leadership in place. With either scenario, the church loses. Because the church is only as good as its leadership, it becomes imperative that churches in the early twenty-first century raise up and train a new generation of leaders who will make a significant difference in our world for the Savior.

***Leaders Expand Ministry by Making More Leaders: The  
Growth Curve Is the Leadership Curve***

It takes leaders to make more leaders. The job of the leader isn't just to enlist more followers but to recruit and equip more and better leaders. It's the leaders' responsibility to develop other leaders. People fall into one of two categories—they're either leaders or followers. Fol-

lowers don't develop leaders; they follow them. It's leaders who develop other leaders. If they don't do it, it won't get done. God didn't insist that leaders build megachurches. While there is nothing wrong with being a large church, it's God's job to build the church (Matt. 16:18). Building churches is on his job description, not ours. However, it's our job to build leaders—competent, godly leaders. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul commands Timothy to train leaders. This is the principle of leadership multiplication: leaders training leaders who, in turn, train other leaders throughout the ministry.

Failure to train emerging leaders puts the future of any ministry in serious jeopardy. Train other leaders, and the ministry sustains itself into the second and third generations. Bill Hybels goes so far as to say, "I think leaders are at their best when they are raising up leaders around them."<sup>5</sup> Based on 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul would agree with Hybels.

Since the job of the leader is to make more leaders, every leader in a ministry must be a leader-maker. This applies especially to those in leadership staff positions. Thus a requisite for hiring staff is their desire to develop leaders as well as accomplish ministry tasks. And if it is a requisite for hiring, then it would be a requisite for evaluation as well. Here's the question: Are you developing leaders? If so, where are they? Show me your leaders in training.

Every leader must ask, *What happens to the work if God should suddenly take me home or direct me elsewhere?* The mark of good leaders is that they continually develop leaders at every level of the ministry who will take the organization well into the future. It is essential to groom more than one or two leaders, because God will direct some of them to other ministries beyond your own. The downside of this is that you'll lose some good leaders. The upside is that you'll have an indirect impact on other ministries, potentially all over the world.

### ***Leadership Development Recognizes the Value of People: All Processes Are Discipleship Processes***

Another reason it's imperative that we train leaders is that leadership development recognizes the value of people. Our ministry's leaders are the ministry's most important assets. Not to develop them while involving them in ministry is to use and ultimately to abuse them. This is most often the result of an unbalanced, task-dominated ministry.

There are several potential contributing factors to task-dominated ministry. Each factor can be described more easily with a personification.

- *Pragmatic Paul.* Paul constantly falls to the temptation to value people only for what they can do. When Paul meets a new attendee, he envisions the ministry position that person can fill as he shakes his or her hand. Paul's motives aren't bad; he just has a very complex role as a pastor and there are a lot of things that need to be done. Unfortunately, he values people primarily as cogs in the church machinery.
- *Taskmaster Tom.* Tom is a leadership trainer with a task-oriented temperament. People like Tom with driven personalities can easily run over others who have a much different temperament. While Tom's wiring as a trainer and leader in the church is good, it can easily eclipse the heart and relationship priorities in the ministry.
- *Grow-grow Joe.* Joe has an inordinate desire for explosive growth in his church. While it can be argued that a healthy church should be growing, Joe pursues growth at the risk of the church's spiritual health. The preoccupation with numbers leads Joe to keep his leaders and volunteers running in the red zone because "there are more people to be reached." Any burnout "casualties" along the way are justified by the greater evangelistic cause.

The problem with the task-dominated ministry is that it models a destructive rather than a constructive environment. In doing so, it inhibits an individual's growth and causes a high leadership turnover in the ministry. In short, it fails to value people and burns out the church's valuable assets. People like Paul, Tom, and Joe recruit leaders in every phase of the ministry and turn them loose with little or no preparation. If someone insists on training, they hand him or her a book of instructions or give the person a pep talk under the guise of vision casting. Then they expect the leader to thrive and are perplexed when he or she crashes. This is a frightening formula for disaster that fails to recognize people's assets as leaders.

If we ask our people to lead any ministry of the church, we're responsible to provide them with continual leadership training. If we can't do this, we have no business asking them to serve, doing both them and the ministry an injustice. Without ongoing training, our recruits will struggle and often fail, and the rest of the ministry will experience the effects in the resulting leadership vacuum. People are too important to be treated this way. When a training process is in place, we demonstrate powerfully the value we place on people and combat the "cogs in a machine" mind-set.

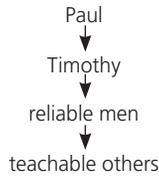
### ***Godly Protégés Are the Leader’s Ministry Legacy: The Gospel Is Always One Generation from Extinction***

Competent, Christ-honoring leaders are the seasoned leader’s ministry legacy. Whether leaders want to or not, they leave behind a legacy, and they should pause in their busyness and consider what kind of legacy it will be. At the end of our lives, we’ll discover that the best legacy we can leave our family and friends is our passion for the Savior. That’s an important part of forming our life’s personal mission statement. It affects both our family and ministry.

As far as our ministry is concerned, the challenge is to recruit and develop godly emerging leaders. This is our ministry legacy. When God takes us home, we want people to remember us for the number of godly, competent leaders who are in Christ-honoring ministries around the world because we made leadership development a priority in our busy ministry schedule. Paul’s ministry legacy is found in 2 Timothy 2:2: “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” It consists of Timothy, reliable men, and teachable others. Our burning desire as trainers and consultants is that our leadership legacy be like that of Paul.

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#### **2 Timothy 2:2**



We believe that most pastors as leaders know that they need to develop other leaders. So why are they about so many other things—important things—but not raising up and equipping a new generation of leaders? Regardless of the answer, we pray that articulating in this chapter some of the reasons for pursuing leadership development will fuel a greater passion to be about the business of training up the next generation of leaders.

### **Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. What is your definition of a leader?
2. Do you agree with our definition of a leader, given on page 20?  
If not, where do you differ and why?

3. What are some reasons you are interested in developing leaders in your ministry?
4. How many of the reasons in this chapter are yours? Which ones?
5. Which of your reasons differ from those we gave in this chapter?
6. Our desire is that this chapter add fuel to your passion to train leaders. Was this the case? If not, why not?
7. Do any of your reasons for wanting to equip leaders sound a little selfish and self-serving? If so, which ones?