

Leadership

God's Strategy for the Church

EXALTING CHRIST PUBLISHING

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	The Church The Body Of Christ.	3
II.	Spiritual Gifts.	9
III.	Equipping The Saints.....	17
IV.	Disciplemaking.	23
V.	The Marks Of A True Disciple.....	27
VI.	Character: The Qualifications For Leadership.	31
VII.	Servanthood: A Biblical Philosophy Of Leadership.	39
VIII.	Leadership And A Mission Driven Church.....	43
IX.	Shepherding.....	47
X.	Ministry And Personal Character.	53
XI.	Christ-Glorifying, Gospel-Driven Prayer.	57
XII.	Ministry And Faith.	61
XIII.	Faith, Risk-Raking, and Christ-Exalting Ministry.....	63

THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST

I. THE CONCEPT AND MEANING OF THE CHURCH.

A. What It Is Not: A Human Institution (Matthew 16:18).

- 1. It is not operated on human principles by human power: "I will build My church."**
- 2. It is not operated on human strategy with human goals: "I will build My church."**
- 3. It is not an organization, a building or a liturgical ceremony (Ephesians 1:22-23).**
- 4. It is not operated primarily for human welfare, but for the glory of Christ (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14, 3:21).**

B. What It Is: A Divine Institution.

- 1. It is operated by divine strategy with divine goals (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-12).**
- 2. It is operated on divine principles by divine power (2 Corinthians 3:1-6, 4:7, 10:3-5; Ephesians 4:15-16; Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8).**
- 3. It is a body: A living organism with shared life organically united under the direction of its head (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 2:19).**

- 4. It is a new people: A new community and new humanity with a unique mission and destiny (Ephesians 2:14-15; John 17:16-18, 24; Revelation 5:1-14; Acts 8:1-3).**

The Greek term for 'church' is Εκκλησία. It originally meant an assembly, or a people called out to an assembly. In the New Testament, it is God's people whether assembled or not (Acts 8:1; Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Corinthians 10:32).

John MacArthur rightly points out that;

The Church is not: an aggregation but ... an agitating force; not ceremonialism but ... a new creation, a new community; not a denomination but ... a dynamic of a new life; not a ritual or routine but ... people reconciled to God and each other; not an organization but ... an organism with mutual life; not a mechanical system but ... a spiritual entity.

The Church is: People joined into a living community bound together by their union with Christ in His common life with a common purpose.

II. THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH IS TO MANIFEST CHRIST TO THE WORLD – IT IS CALLED:

A. To Manifest God's Presence On The Earth (Ephesians 2:21-22).

- 1. It is the place of God's power and glory (Ephesians 2:21-22).**
- 2. It is the visible manifestation of the invisible God (Ephesians 1:22-23).**

- 3. It is the place of corporate praise and worship (Hebrews 13:15; 1 Corinthians 14:21-23).**

B. To Demonstrate Christ's Fullness To The Earth.

The church is Christ's body. The metaphor emphasizes the church's role as an extension and demonstration of Jesus Christ.

- 1. It is an extension of the life of Jesus Christ - a continuation, in a sense through His people, of His incarnation (2 Corinthians 4:10-11; Colossians 2:19; Ephesians 4:16).**
- 2. It is to display the moral character and qualities of Christ on the earth.**
 - a. His virtues and excellencies (1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 1:22-23).
 - b. His love and unity (John 13:34-35, 17:21-26).
- 3. It is to demonstrate the authority and power of Christ (Ephesians 1:20-23).**
 - a. His power over spiritual death and the bondage of sin (Ephesians 1:20, 2:1).
 - b. His power over spiritual forces (Ephesians 1:21).
- 4. It is to witness of Christ (Acts 1:8; Philippians 2:15-16).**

The calling of the church is to declare in word and demonstrate in attitude and deed the character of Jesus Christ who lives within His people. We are to declare the reality of a life-changing encounter with a living Christ and to demonstrate that change by an unselfish love-filled life.

Ray Stedman

C. It Is To Glorify God And Christ On The Earth.

- 1. It is to praise His glory, grace, and wisdom (Ephesians 1:12, 14; 3:21).**
- 2. It is to magnify the supreme glory of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4-6).**

III. THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHURCH IS TO MINISTER ITS SPIRIT-GIVEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS (A MINISTERING BODY IS THE KEY).

A. The Design Of Gifts Is To Minister Christ's Presence Through His Church.

- 1. Spiritual gifts extend Christ's ministry on the earth. Notice the reference to Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:12b, 27.**
- 2. Spiritual gifts exhibit every aspect of Christ's person and glory (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:16; Colossians 2:19).**

The church is Christ's body; His fullness. It's designed to give a complete picture of Christ to the world. It can only do this corporately. Each individual only displays a partial aspect of Christ. However, when the totality of gifts are functioning then Christ in His fullness is demonstrated (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:16; Colossians 2:19). The challenge of leadership is to see every believer equipped and in ministry.

- a. Each gift is a part of the total supply of Christ (Ephesians 4:16).
- b. The totality of gifts manifest Christ's fullness (Ephesians 1:23).

B. The Deployment Of Gifts Is A Central Aspect Of Ministry.

- 1. The equipping of the saints is necessary for the fruitful mature exercise of gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13).**
- 2. An environment conducive to the ministry of gifts is to be a priority of leadership (Ephesians 4:16).**

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Spiritual gifts are God's provision for the dynamic operation of the church. Since the church is a divine institution, it must operate by a divine dynamic. This dynamic is SPIRITUAL GIFTS exercised by the power of the Holy Spirit. This study is for the purpose of defining and describing SPIRITUAL GIFTS; what they are, what they are not and why they are given.

I. THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

A. What They Are.

1. A supernatural capacity to minister.

Definition: A spiritual gift is a supernatural capacity (given at salvation) to minister with spiritual effectiveness in a specific area in the body of Christ.

2. A gift is given to each of us at salvation (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18; Ephesians 4:7-8).

3. Our spiritual gift is pre-determined by God (1 Corinthians 12:7, 18).

B. What They Are Not.

1. They are not natural talents.

- a. A talent is a natural ability that is with us prior to conversion (as singing, working with children, etc.).
- b. A spiritual gift is a Spirit given ability given at conversion. Gifts are often given to enhance or use a talent for spiritual edification, but they are not a talent. For example, the gift of exhortation would enhance singing.

2. Gifts are not sought or earned (1 Corinthians 12:7 11, 18), as is evident from the following terms used of gifts, all of which emphasize that they are a matter of grace.

- a. Χηαρισμα: Gifts are a result of grace, which is unmerited favor. *Gifts are according to grace* (1 Corinthians 12:4; 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:6).
- b. Δορεα: They are free - uncaused, freely given (Ephesians 4:7). The word in Ephesians 4:7 is the same as is used in John 15:25 which is translated "without a cause."
- c. Δομα: They are the result of something freely given (Ephesians 4:8).
- d. Μερισμος: They are the result of a distribution made from one to another (Hebrews 2:3-4).

II. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

A. There Is Diversity In The Body (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

- 1. There is a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit. The Spirit's provision is to each, but in a different way (1 Corinthians 12:4; Ephesians 4:7).**
- 2. There is a variety of ministries, but the same Lord (1 Corinthians 12:5).**

The Son decides what ministry He will use our gifts in. The Spirit gives the gift, but the Son decides how and where the gift will be used. (1 Corinthians 12:5; Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Timothy 1:12).

- 3. There is a variety of effects, but the same God (1 Corinthians 12:6).**

The Father determines the amount of effectiveness and fruit that will result from each gift. He decides the extent that each gift will be useful (1 Corinthians 12:6).

B. There Is Productivity In The Body.

1. There is growth in the entire body when all the gifts are exercised (Ephesians 4:15-16).

All the gifts and functions are necessary for the growth and benefit of all the members of the body (1 Corinthians 12:15-18; Romans 12:4-6; Ephesians 4:7, 15-16).

2. There exists in the church a full breadth and scope of burdens and ministries that come from the exercise of all the varied gifts (Ephesians 4:12, 16; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

3. There is a full measure of spiritual effect and impact as each gift adds its part to the overall growth of the body (Ephesians 4:16).

C. There Is Unity In The Body.

1. Each gift makes a unique contribution so that unity is promoted (1 Corinthians 12:15-24).

- a. The inferiority of some is overcome, no one can say *I am not a part* (v. 16).
- b. The superiority of some is dealt with, no one can say to another *I have no need of you* (vv. 18, 21).
- c. The necessity of all is asserted (vv. 22-24).

2. Each gift is given its proper recognition as necessary to the body (1 Corinthians 12:25-27).

- a. We must recognize God's wisdom in constituting the body (v. 24).
- b. We must refuse to divide over differences (v. 25).
- c. We must respond in care to all (vv. 25-26).

THE CATEGORIES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (SEE CHART)

**SPIRITUAL GIFTS
CATEGORIZED BY REFERENCE**

1 Cor.12:8-10	1 Cor.12:29-30	1 Cor.13:1-8	Rom. 12:6-8	Eph. 4:11
1. Word of Wisdom				
2. Word of Knowledge		Knowledge		
3. Faith		Faith		
4. Healing	Healing			
5. Miracles	Miracles			
6. Prophecy	Prophets	Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophecy
7. Discerning of Spirits				
8. Tongues		Tongues		
9. Interpretation of Tongues				
10	Apostles			Apostles
11	Teachers		Teaching	
12	Helps			
13	Administration			
14		Giving	Giving	
15			Serving	
16			Exhortation	
17			Leading	
18			Mercy	
19				Evangelists
20				Pastor/Teachers

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

CATEGORIZED BY DESIGN

SUPPORT	SPEAKING	SERVING	SIGN
Ephesians 4:11-12	1 Peter 4:11	1 Peter 4:11	Hebrews 2:4 1 Corinthians 14:20

APOSTLES	WORD OF WISDOM	DISCERNING OF SPIRITS	HEALINGS
PROPHETS	WORD OF KNOWLEDGE	FAITH	MIRACLES
EVANGELISTS		HELPS	TONGUES
PASTOR/TEACHER	TEACHING	ADMINISTRATION	INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES
	EXHORTATION	GIVING	
		SERVING	
		LEADING	
		MERCY	

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

CATEGORIZED BY DURATION

TEMPORARY	PERMANENT
<i>Gave and Confirmed Revelation</i>	<i>Support ~ Speaking ~ Serving</i>
The Foundation of the Church	The Function of the Church
Apostles	Evangelists
Prophets	Pastor/Teacher
Word of Wisdom	
Word of Knowledge	Teaching
Faith	Helps
Healings	Administration
Miracles	Giving
Discerning of Spirits	Serving
Tongues	Leading
Interpretation of Tongues	Mercy

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

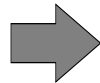
Ephesians 4:7-16

Implantation

A Grace Given
The Planting
Of Gift
Eph. 4:7



Involvement in Ministry



The
Provision
of
Gifted Men
Eph. 4:11

The Process
of
Equipping
Eph. 4:12a

The Placing
into
Ministry
Eph. 4:12 b, c



Impact



The Product
of a
Mature Body
Eph. 4:13-16

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

INTRODUCTION

I. THE AGENTS OF EQUIPPING ARE GIFTED MEN.

A. Apostles.

- 1. They had a unique commission. They laid the foundation of the church. They received and gave revelation, and then with unique authority, imposed it as the New Covenant on the entire church.**

They were specially commissioned to be the revelators and legislators of the will of God for the entire church (Ephesians 2:20-3:6). They were the revelators and legislators of the New Covenant (1 Corinthians 14:37-38), God's specially revealed word and will for the entire church. Their unique ministry was epoch-making and (as Moses and the prophets), was confirmed by signs and wonders (2 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:5, 13, 12:12).

- 2. They had unique authority (1 Corinthians 14:37-38; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).**

Definition: Apostles were men who received new revelation from God and acted as Christ's unique representatives for the authorization and imposition of this revelation upon the entire church. They were also God's agents for the inscripturation of the revelation in its final form in the New Testament. They paralleled Moses, and thus there are no successors (Ephesians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 3:13).

B. Prophets.

1. The ideas involved.

A prophet could either foretell or forthtell. In either case the truth was directly revealed from God and infallibly communicated. What made a prophet a prophet was not the manner or message preached, but the fact it had been personally and directly revealed to them by God (Exodus 4:15-17, 7:1-2; Numbers 12:6; 1 Corinthians 14:29-30).

2. There was a revelation of a message (1 Corinthians 14:30).

3. There was an infallible declaration of a message (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

DEFINITION: A prophet was a man who received direct revelation from God and who spoke it infallibly and authoritatively as God's spokesman. They worked in conjunction with the Apostles, in revealing the truth that established the new covenant. There was no prophetic ministry in the New Testament where the communication was mixed with error. The pattern is still the Old Testament model (Acts 2:16-18).

C. Evangelists.

Evangelists are itinerant preachers who proclaim the good news. They are also those within local churches who lead in evangelism and equip and train others to preach the gospel (Ephesians 4:11).

D. Pastor/Teachers (John 21:15-17).

1. Teacher – as teachers they feed the flock; their primary role is teaching (John 21:15-17).

2. Shepherd – as shepherds they tend and care for the flock.

DEFINITION: A Pastor/Teacher is a man gifted to protect, guide, lead and feed the flock of God so as to bring them to maturity and usefulness. His primary ministry is to feed the flock through a preaching and teaching ministry (2 Timothy 4:1-3).

II. THE ASSIGNMENT OF EQUIPPING IS CLEARLY STATED.

A. The Meaning Of Equip Has To Do With Overall Preparation.

There are three words used in the New Testament with reference to growth and maturity, of which the word *equip* (in Ephesians 4:11-12) is one.

1. Maturity, Τελειος: This speaks of maturity as a relatively full measure of character.

In general it refers to the attaining of a consistent degree of strength, character, or mental power that is within a person's reach (Hebrews 5:14; Colossians 1:28-29; Ephesians 4:12; Philippians 3:12, 15). Its basic idea means to bring through completely; to accomplish. It is a word for maturity that always speaks of maturity in a relative sense.

2. Ηολοκληροσ: This speaks of maturity as possessing wholeness - of being well-rounded, having all the necessary parts and aspects of character (James 1:4).

3. Καταρτιζο: This is maturity as an aptitude and qualification for an action.

This is the word used in Ephesians 4:12. The root word in Greek is where we get the English word for an artisan, or a craftsman. That is someone who works with his hands to make or build things. Its meaning is "getting someone or something ready for action or outfitting someone to handle a task assigned" (Matthew 4:21; Hebrews 13:20-21). It stresses not only having all the parts for completeness, but also the adaptation and aptitude of the parts for the ends which they were designed to serve.

B. The Method Of Equipping Centers On Preaching The Word Of God And On Admonition.

There are two primary tasks that must remain central in ministry; preaching the Word and admonition with a shepherd's heart (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 20:20, 27, 32; Colossians 1:28).

III. THE AIM OF EQUIPPING IS TO DEPLOY PEOPLE IN MINISTRIES.

A. Mutual Ministry That Builds The Body (Ephesians 4:12, 16).

B. It Is The Priority Of Leaders (Colossians 1:29; Acts 6; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

C. The Mature Ministry Of Each Gift, Supplying Nurture (Necessary For Growth) To The Body (Ephesians 4:16).

IV. THE AIM OF EQUIPPING IS ALSO TO BRING TO MATURITY IN FOUR AREAS (Ephesians 4:13-15).

- A. There Is A Comprehension Of The Glory Of The Person And Work Of Christ: "The Unity Of The Faith."**
- B. There Is A Communion With Christ: "A Knowledge Of The Son Of God."**
- C. There Is The Character Of Christ: "To A Mature Man, A Measure Of The Stature."**
- D. There Is Communication In Christ-Like Love, The Same As Christ: "Speaking The Truth In Love."**

DISCIPLEMAKING

I. THE PRIORITY OF MAKING DISCIPLES.

A. It Was Christ's Emphasis In Ministry: It Is What Christ Did (Mark 3:14).

1. It is the essence of ministry: Disciplemaking is His and our main emphasis (Matthew 28:19-20).

- a. There is a power given: "All Authority."
- b. There is a purpose and priority: "Go!"
- c. There is a process: "Make Disciples."
- d. There is a promise: "I am with you."

2. A disciple is someone who becomes like His master (Luke 6:40).

3. A disciple is a description of a true believer (Matthew 16:24; John 10:27).

B. Christ's Example In Ministry Is That He Focused On Disciplemaking: It Was His Preplanned Strategy.

1. He selected key men.

- a. It was necessary to minister on a broadened basis (Matthew 9:36-39; John 17:18).
- b. They were agents to carry out this work (John 17:4-8).
- c. He prayed over them and planned to be with them (Mark 3:14).

2. He selected normal men.

- a. They had normal human weaknesses.
- b. They were all different: There was no mold!
- c. They were men whose dominant characteristics were a hunger for Christ and a teachable spirit (John 1:35-51).

C. The Apostles' Example In Ministry Was Disciplemaking.

- 1. They instructed (Acts 2:42).**
- 2. They modeled: They were beaten, threatened and jailed, yet preached and rejoiced.**
- 3. They reproduced (Acts 14:23).**

II. THE PROCESS OF MAKING DISCIPLES (Matthew 28:19-20).

A. The Initial Phase: Salvation.

- 1. Evangelism.**
- 2. Baptism: It brings closure to evangelism (Acts 2:41, 8:12).**

B. The Development Phase.

- 1. Teach and equip (2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:11-12).**
- 2. Observe: Hold accountable and admonish (Colossians 1:28-29; John 8:32-34).**

C. The Final Product.

- 1. Know His word in wisdom and understanding (Colossians 1:9-11).**
- 2. Reproducers who make disciples themselves (John 15:8).**

THE MARKS OF A TRUE DISCIPLE

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE (Luke 14:25-27).

A. The Situation That Requires Them (v. 25).

- 1. The selfish interest of the multitudes.**
- 2. The superficial response of many.**

B. There Is A Subordination Of All Personal Relationships To Him: The First Mark (v. 26).

- 1. The startling imagery of hate.**
- 2. The supreme loyalty is to Christ (Matthew 2:21; Luke 6:46).**
- 3. The standard of the Apostles (Acts 4:24-28).**

C. There Is A Sacrifice On Behalf Of Others: The Second Mark (v. 27).

- 1. The cross involves costly ministry for others not our personal trials.**
- 2. The cross as modeled by Jesus.**

II. THE DEMAND FOR THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE (Luke 14:28-35).

A. The Magnitude Of The Task Requires Them (vv. 28-33).

- 1. The obstacles which require wholeheartedness are known by Christ.**
- 2. The builder knows what it involves.**
- 3. The battle has been set.**

B. The Meaninglessness Of Our Life Apart From Discipleship: The Illustration Of Salt.

- 1. Our purpose is simplified: A seasoning influence for Christ.**
- 2. Our danger is clear (Matthew 5:13).**

A Definition Of Disciplemaking:

The process by which a Christian with a life worth emulating commits himself over an extended period of time to a few committed individuals who have been won to Christ to aid and guide their growth to maturity and equip them to reproduce themselves in a third spiritual generation.

Allan Hadidion

The Marks Of A Potential Disciple:

- a. A Christian.
- b. A teachable spirit.
- c. A heart for God.

- d. A faithful track record.
- e. An ability to keep a time commitment.
- f. An obedient life.

III. THE DEPLOYMENT INTO MINISTRY OF THOSE WHO DISPLAY THE MARKS OF A TRUE DISCIPLE.

A. They Have Had An Impartation Of A Perspective And Philosophy Of Life.

- 1. A vision of multiplication (Matthew 9:36-38; John 17:18).**
- 2. A life lived by faith in God (Matthew 21:18-21).**
- 3. A life that places a priority on eternal values.**
 - a. The right view towards money (Luke 12:13-21).
 - b. The right view towards people (Luke 16:1-13).

B. They Have Learned The Priority Of The Delegation Of Responsibilities.

- 1. There is first an exposure to and a learning of Christ where there is not yet any responsibility given.**
- 2. There is limited experience, so only minimal responsibilities are given.**

This proves a persons faithfulness in tasks, errands, etc. The disciples were told to put the people in groups, then distributed the fish, etc.

3. There is initial evangelism and preaching responsibilities (Luke 9:1, 10, 37-41).

4. There is the full responsibility in preaching and ministry (Luke 10:1, 17-20).

C. They Have Seen The Necessity Of Reproduction

1.

2.

3.

CHARACTER: THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The character qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 are the aspects of maturity which must be present for a man to be qualified to be an Elder. They also give us a standard of character for any who desire to be effective in ministry. The man or the woman is the ministry. That is, the character of a person will, in large measure, determine the lasting spiritual influence of a person.

I. GENERAL TESTIMONY AND MATURITY.

Above Reproach (Ανεπιλαμπτος).

The word is a compound which means "not apprehended; that which cannot be laid hold of; or not open to censure." It does not mean to be perfect or without sin. To be above reproach is to have no aspect of character where you can characteristically be faulted.

Evaluation: Is there anything about you that someone could bring accusation against you and support it?

II. PERSONAL LIFE.

A. Temperate (Ναπηαλιον).

The word basically means "sober, not intoxicated." In the spiritual and ethical realm it is spiritual alertness and watchfulness (1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8). It is a sensitivity to staying on track spiritually, not allowing anything that would distract spiritual progress.

Evaluation: Are you easily sidetracked from spiritual progress and ministry. Are you careful to not allow anything in your life to distract you from spiritual growth and effectiveness?

B. Prudent (Σοπηανος).

This word conveys the idea of being "sound-minded" (Mark 5:15; 2 Corinthians 5:13)

Evaluation: Do you have a levelheaded, objective outlook on life and problems, or are you subject to excessive moodiness and tend to over react?

C. Respectable (Κοσμιον).

To be respectable is to be orderly and well arranged in every facet of life. It is a word used of a woman's dress, well ordered house, decorated tombstones and well trimmed lamps (1 Timothy 2:10; Matthew 12:44, 23:29, 25:7). Home, dress, business, etc., are in order and give good appearance and representation to others.

Evaluation: Is your life well ordered and arranged, or is there disarray, procrastination and neglect in the day in day out business of life?

D. Not Addicted To Wine (Παροινοσ).

The idea is that of a person who is not "long beside wine." It refers to a quality of character that is not dependent on or dominated by any external influence. There is no bondage or dependence on anything but Christ. Today the issue may extend to tobacco, drugs, food, etc.

Evaluation: Do you find yourself dependent on alcohol, cigarettes or anything else, or do you turn to Christ in time of weakness?

E. Not Pugnacious (Πλεκτεσ).

A pugnacious person is one who is "a bruiser, ready for a blow." It is someone who suddenly, sometimes at the slightest provocation, flies off the handle and strikes out at someone. It is an easily irritated and upset person with a short fuse.

Evaluation: Do you have a tendency to lash out at others either verbally or physically?

F. Gentle (Επιεικε).

The gentle person is one who is "seemly, equitable, suitable, fair." It is probably best described as "reasonableness." It is a quality of a person who knows when to be flexible and yield even when he is in the right. It is a willingness to listen and yield out of a sense of fairness when personal rights could still be demanded (James 3:17; Acts 24:4; 1 Peter 2:18).

Evaluation: Would you say you are, generally speaking, willing to listen with a yielding and fair approach in your dealings with people?

G. Uncontentious (Αμαχηον).

The verb means "to fight, used of armed combatants, or those who engaged in hand to hand struggle." A contentious person has an argumentative, quarrelsome attitude. They insist on getting the last word in and proving their own supposed superiority (Titus 3:9; 2 Timothy 2:24).

Evaluation: Do you tend to be an argumentative, quarrelsome person if things do not go your way?

H. Not Self-Willed (Αυτηαδε).

The word is a compound consisting of "self" and "please." It is a person who is a self-pleaser, interested only in advancing his own interests. He insists on having his own way. He has trouble being supportive unless he is in complete agreement. He does not convey a team spirit or a sense of loyalty.

Evaluation: Do you insist on and seek your own interests first, or the interest of others?

I. Not Quick Tempered (Οργιλοσ).

A person who is quick tempered is someone who is "prone to anger." It is an anger (orge), which with reference to God is an abiding internal attitude of displeasure, or vengeance. With man it is someone who quickly hold a grudge or harbors embittered, ill feelings.

Evaluation: Do you deal with ill feelings in a biblical way, or do you quickly hold grudges and harbor ill feelings?

J. Loving What Is Good (Πηιλαγατηος).

This is a quality, which not only appreciates goodness in others, but finds pleasure and enjoyment in doing good to others as well. A good person uses his time, efforts, possessions, influence, etc. for the benefit and blessing of others (Romans 12:20-21; Matthew 7:9-11).

Evaluation: Do you have the tendency to use your resources to bring benefit and blessing to others. Are you a sharing kind of person, or do you keep too tight a fist on your resources?

K. Just (Δικαιοσ).

A just person is someone who seeks to be right and fair. They can be counted on to do the right thing. They will not be partial, or show favoritism, nor will they violate their principles under pressure.

Evaluation: Do you have a tendency to act based on what God says is right, or are you easily influenced in your actions by pressure from men?

L. Devout (Ηοσιοσ).

The meaning of devout is "undefiled by sin or uncontaminated." A devout person is one whose attitude does not condone, or accept evil. He abstains even from the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). On the positive side, it is an attitude that respects and holds in high regard the things valued by scripture.

Evaluation: Do you abstain from sin in your activity, but in your attitude you convey that you would partake if you could? Is your devotion to the Lord such that not only inactivity, but in attitude you do not condone sin?

M. Self-Controlled (Εγκρατες).

Self-control is "having power over, over mastering, curbing, restraining" ones self. It is a strength of character given by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:23) that enables a person to master his impulses and drives and channels them to the right use. The foremost evidence of it is in the control of the tongue (James 3:1).

Evaluation: Would you say your general conscious effort is to allow the Holy Spirit to control your speech, impulses and drives?

III. SOCIAL LIFE.

A. Hospitable (Πηλοξενος).

The Greek word for hospitable means "lover of strangers." An hospitable person is someone who uses his home to reach out to people in need of love and encouragement. It is an attitude that ministers, sometimes in inconvenience, without complaint as it extends warmth to people through his home and resources (Luke 14:12-14).

Evaluation: Do you tend to extend yourself and your home only to your friends, or do you receive new people as well, and that without complaint?

B. Free From The Love Of Money (Απηλαργυρος).

The person free from the love of money is basically contented with what he has. He has a biblically balanced perspective on money and material things. He does not allow the making of money to distract him from his ministry, or walk with God. He knows that true values are eternal, not the temporal things of this life (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Evaluation: Would those closest to you say you are basically contented with what you have, or does money easily sidetrack you from spiritual priorities?

C. Good Reputation In The World (Μαρτυριαν Καλον).

Good comes from a word which is "pleasing, beautiful, commendable, admirable." It was that which had harmonious completeness, balance and proportion. A good testimony is a life that first of all is balanced, not extreme or eccentric. Secondly, it is a life where nothing unethical or questionable is done in the eyes of the world.

Evaluation: Are there any associations or acquaintances that would question your reputation for any reason?

IV. FAMILY LIFE.

A. Husband Of One Wife (Μιασ Γυναικος Ανδρα).

Literally it says, "a one woman man." The stress is on the quality of the man's relationship to his wife. He is loyal to his wife. He is not flirtatious. He is happily married and satisfied (contented) with his wife.

Evaluation: Is your marriage stable and growing? Are you contented with your wife, and are you careful not to relate to other women in a way that could be misinterpreted?

B. Good Home Manager (Καλος Προισταμενον).

To manage involves the idea of preside, govern or superintend. It is a watchfulness over the condition of the home in all areas; spiritual, financial, social, etc. A good manager does not dominate (John 12:14-17), he delegates responsibilities and involves the whole family, especially the wife, in the decision making process. If he has children, he disciplines and instructs them with dignity, not humiliating them or causing them to be embittered (Ephesians 6:4).

Evaluation: Do you manage your household affairs in a commendable way, or is there chaos and disorder in your home?

C. Children Under Control (ΤΕΚΝΑ ΗΥΠΟΤΑΓΕ).

Children who are under control are children who have a respect for authority and demonstrate it through a basically obedient attitude. If they are older, they are not accused of rebellion and dissipation (Titus 1:6). That is, they are not unrestrained and insubordinate.

Evaluation: Do your children show a respect for authority; not only yours, but others as well?

V. MINISTRY LIFE.

A. Not A New Convert (ΝΕΟΠΗΥΤΟΣ).

A new convert is someone "newly planted." It is a person who has not accumulated enough Christian experience, both in victory and defeat, to remain sound minded. A novice is marked by the fact that he thinks too highly of himself (the word conceited means, "to wrap in midst"). He often loses perspective and is either filled with pride or has a critical judgmental spirit in relation to others.

Evaluation: Are you aware of your need for continual growth and experience, or are you not teachable from others with more experience?

B. Able To Teach (ΔΙΔΑΚΤΙΚΟΣ).

Able to teach is the capacity to communicate the Word of God. It involves not only the mechanic of communicating orderly and clearly, but also the manner. Truth is not to be conveyed in a proud, know it all spirit. Paul associates it with not being quarrelsome, but being patient and gentle, even with those who oppose the truth (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

Evaluation: Are you reasonable able to communicate the Word of God in an edifying, clear and loving manner?

C. Hold Fast The Faithful Word (Αντιχηομενον Του Πιστου Λογου).

Holding fast the Word first involves a sound knowledge and understanding of the doctrines of scripture. Then it involves a personal conviction of the significance and truth of scripture. This enables the person to deal clearly and effectively with error.

Evaluation: Do you possess a reasonable good grasp of major Bible doctrines, enough to refute a heretic?

SERVANTHOOD: A BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP

I. THE CALL FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP.

A. The Nature Of Leadership.

1. Secular ideas:

A leader is a person who has the ability to get others to do what they don't want to do and like it.

Henry Truman

There are only three kinds of people in the world, those that are movable, those that are immovable, and those that move them.

L. Hing Chang (old Chinese leader)

A leader is a man who knows the road, who can keep ahead and who can pull others after him.

Dr. John Mott

In each of the above statements about leadership there is a common thread. In each case there is a person who influences others to accomplish a goal.

2. Biblical ideas:

Spiritual leadership, while having some similarity to secular leadership, differs in central principles. It is leadership on a different plane.

Spiritual leadership is a matter of superior spiritual power.

Sanders

A leader is a person who is able to influence others spiritually only because the Spirit is able to work in and through him to a greater degree than in those whom he leads.

Sanders

Biblical leadership involves a spiritually empowered person who influences people to accomplish spiritual (Christ's) goals and objectives (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

B. The Need For Leadership.

- 1. The dynamic of teacher/pupil reproduction (Luke 6:40).**
- 2. The relationship of leader to the lead.**

"A group of people will never rise above the level of the character and strength of its leadership."

II. THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

A. The Wrong Concept: This Sees Leadership As A Position Of Superiority. Therefore, There Must Be A Conviction Of The Need To Deal With Pride.

- 1. There is a concern for reputation as exemplified by religious leaders (Matthew 23:1-23).**
 - a. They are authority figures only (vv. 2-3).
 - b. They are aloof and unavailable (v. 4).
 - c. The applause of men is sought (vv. 5-7).
 - d. Their abasement is inevitable (vv. 11-13).

2. There is a concern for domination as exemplified by civil leaders (Matthew 20:17-28).

- a. A preoccupation with self that disregards Jesus' interests (vv. 17-19).
- b. A political power play to gain control (vv. 20-21).
 - (1) The mother's involvement.
 - (2) The mother's influence.
- c. A power exercised over people was the desire (vv. 25-28).

This is the world's way: either a condescending rule, or a dictator's control.

B. The Right Concept: This Sees Leadership As A Place That Gives Opportunity To Serve (Matthew 20:26-28). There Must Be A Commitment To Put To Death Self Interest For Christ's Glory.

1. The meaning of servanthood.

- a. The activity involved.
- b. The availability and attitude involved.

2. The marks of a servant.

- a. First, integrity: Character, not accomplishments is central.

Character is what God knows you to be, reputation is what people think you are. Character is reality. Reputation is sometimes just rumor (1 Timothy 5:24-25).
- b. Second, availability: Personal and practical involvement is the measure of it.

This is a commitment to others that manifests itself by being accessible – a willingness to be involved, especially when it requires sacrifice (1 Thessalonians 2:5-12).

- c. Third, humility: John 13:1-17; Philippians 2:5-12.

Humility, as seen in Christ, involves a voluntary self-emptying of rights, and an unselfishness which considers the welfare of others in spite of our own need. It also involves refraining from self-assertion when accomplishments and abilities are not made known and a readiness to serve others in the most menial task as though it were an opportunity for great honor.

LEADERSHIP AND A MISSION-DRIVEN, WORLD-IMPACTING CHURCH (Acts 11:19-30).

INTRODUCTION

THERE ARE SEVEN MARKS OF A LEADERSHIP IN A MISSION-DRIVEN CHURCH.

I. THERE IS A PURSUIT OF DISCIPLEMAKING THROUGH EVANGELISM.

A. They Understood That A True Believer Is Also A Follower And A Disciple.

B. There Is A Reference That Disciples Are Christians (v. 26).

C. They Are Interchangeable With The Church (v. 26 a, b).

D. The Issue Is, Either You Are A Disciple Or You Lose Your Soul (Matthew 16:24-26).

NOTE: Discipleship emphasizes what the true believer is; not how he becomes a Christian. It is the characteristic feature of all true Christians; a follower of Christ (John 10:27).

II. THERE IS THE PROVIDENTIAL CONTROL OF CHRIST WHICH RESULTS IN CONVERSIONS AND THE ESTABLISHING OF THE CHURCH (v. 19).

A. The Spread Of The Gospel Was The Result Of Persecution (v. 19a).

B. There Was Spontaneous Sharing And Evangelism In A Non-Formal Setting.

III. THERE ARE PEOPLE OF ORDINARY ABILITY WHO ARE USED IN AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY (v. 20a).

A. They Were Sent By God, Not Man, Since There Was No Official Sanction By The Church.

B. They Were Common Men; Not Men Of Renown - No Names Are Given.

C. There Was A Sense Of A Divine Mandate That Grippped Them.

D. They Were Men Who Possessed A Pioneering Spirit Of Faith; Who Were Self-Motivated, Spirit-Driven Men.

E. They Were Men Who Were Previously Faithful In A Local Church.

Some (from the persecuted Jerusalem church) of them (v.20).

IV. THERE IS A PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST (v. 20b).

A. The Content Of Preaching Was Christ: The Lord Jesus In His Glorious Person And Work Is Preached.

B. The Condition Of Salvation Is Clear And Simple:

- Belief: Rest in Christ only.
- Turn: A radical/revolutionary change in purpose and perspective.

V. THERE IS THE POWER OF GOD RELEASED SO THAT MANY ARE BEING SAVED AND BECOME DISCIPLES. The Hand Of The Lord (v. 21b).

A. He Prepares People To Receive The Word.

B. He Provides Assistance To Workers To Bear Witness To Christ.

C. He Pierces The Heart. He Makes Christ Irresistible.

VI. THERE IS THE PREPARATION AND TRAINING OF OTHERS IN ORDER TO MULTIPLY AND EXPAND THE MINISTRY IN THE WORLD (vv. 22-26).

A. There Is Instruction In The Great Doctrines Of The Faith.

- 1. It was the pattern of Christ.**
- 2. It was the priority of the Apostles.**

B. There Is Exhortation In Preaching And Teaching (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

- 1. The necessity of encouragement is assumed.**
- 2. The nature of encouragement is seen.**

VII. THERE IS PARTNERING IN CHRIST'S KINGDOM WITH A WORLD MIND-SET (vv. 27-30).

A. There Is A Making Known Of The Needs And Ministries Of Others Before The Church (vv. 27-29a).

B. There Is A Mind-Set Toward Possessions That Is A By-Product Of A Personal Relationship With Christ (vv. 29-30).

- 1. They had a stewardship mind set.**
- 2. They had a singleness of focus.**

C. There is A Ministry Characterized By Generosity (v. 30).

- 1. Their attitude toward money resulted in radical generosity.**
- 2. Their assets were at Christ's disposal (Acts 2:44-45).**
 - a. The emphasis is on giving things that cost.
 - b. The essential/precious things were not held onto.

SHEPHERDING

Shepherding is essential to healthy spiritual development. Christ's objective for His people is not that they are merely kept, but that they mature into Christ-likeness. Therefore, our objective is not simply maintaining or growing a ministry, but maturing people. This involves learning the skills and the work of shepherding.

I. THE CALL FOR SHEPHERDS.

To be a shepherd is a high calling and privilege. God referred to the kings of Judah as shepherds. The Messiah Himself was referred to as a shepherd who would care for Israel. Most significant is the fact that God refers to Himself as a shepherd in the New Testament (John 10:11). There is no higher calling than to be a shepherd of God's people.

A. The Pattern Of Scripture.

1. God is a Shepherd (Psalms 23, 80:1).

God's shepherding of Israel involved personal provision, protection and guidance. It was an overall caring for Israel in the face of her enemies (Ezekiel 34: 11; Isaiah 40:10, 11).

2. Jesus is a Shepherd (John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25).

The emphasis in Jesus' shepherding is His genuine concern. He cares for His people even to the point of laying down His life. Jesus contrasts a true shepherd from a hireling by the willingness to sacrifice. A hireling will not give up his own comfort and well-being for his sheep, but a true shepherd will (John 10:10-15).

B. The Priority In Scripture.

As people involved in ministry, we have been given the care of God's people. We are, therefore, to care for them as Christ would. This is our responsibility. We too must learn to shepherd His sheep, or we are not fulfilling our responsibility.

1. The challenge of Christ (Matthew 9:36-38).

- a. Recognize the detriment of sheep without a shepherd

They are distressed: The word (Σκυλλο) is in the perfect tense and means that without shepherds, sheep are in a permanent state of being distressed. The word actually means to vex, trouble, flay or even lacerate. People without shepherds are constantly objects of harassment from the enemy. Sheep without a shepherd are taken as spoil by their problems, pressures and enemies.

They are downcast: The word (Πιπτο) is also a perfect tense. Sheep without shepherds are in a permanent state of being downcast. The word literally means "*thrown down or to hurl*" (Matthew 27:5). Shepherdless sheep are constantly being thrown down and abused.

- b. Realize the need for true shepherds

Jesus says we are to supplicate out of great necessity that God will raise up shepherds. It means to request out of recognition of great need and lack (Luke 7:12; Acts 4:31; Romans 10:1; James 5:16).

2. The commission of Christ (John 21:15-17).

- a. Tend (feed) My lambs (v.15).
- b. Shepherd My sheep (v. 16).
- c. Tend (feed) My sheep (v. 17).

The word in verses 15 and 17 means simply to feed. In fact, it comes from a word used of herbs and grass. The word used in verse 16 is the usual term for shepherd. It has a wider and larger meaning. It involves "the whole office of the shepherd: the guiding, guarding, and enfolding of the flock, as well as, the finding of nourishment for it."

3. The command of Paul and Peter (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3).

Shepherding is connected with the oversight of the flock. In other words, the oversight of a ministry must be done with the heart and activity of a true shepherd. Peter elaborates on this Overseer/Shepherd perspective.

- a. Must be done willingly (1 Peter 5:2).
- b. Must be done not for money or prestige, etc. (1 Peter 5:2).
- c. Must be done whole heartedly (1 Peter 5:2b).
- d. Must not be done with severity or force (1 Peter 5:3).
- e. Must be done with a view to modeling.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SHEPHERD.

A. The Characteristics Of Unwise Shepherds.

1. They do not seek the Lord (Jeremiah 10:21).

They do not cultivate their walk with the Lord. They fail to deal with sin quickly and keep their spiritual accounts current.

2. They feed themselves not the sheep (Ezekiel 34:1-2).

3. They use force and severity (Ezekiel 34:4b).

4. They do not have pity, compassion for their sheep (Zechariah 11:5).

5. They have turned to their own way (Isaiah 56:11).

- 6. They leave the flock (Ezekiel 34:6).**
- 7. They do not show care for or attend to the sheep (Jeremiah 23:1-2; Ezekiel 34:4).**
- 8. They do not sustain the ones who are standing (Zechariah 11:16).**

B. The Characteristics Of A True Shepherd.

The characteristics of a shepherd can be summarized in four broad categories. A shepherd tends, keeps, cares for and leads his flock (Isaiah 40:11). These four characteristics manifest themselves in many different ways. Each one is absolutely essential to a true shepherding ministry.

1. He feeds his flock.

- a. Feeds them knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:15).
- b. Gives them abundant nourishment and life (John 10:9-10).
- c. Feeding the flock is the heart of shepherding (John 21:15, 17).
- d. Feeds them abundantly and richly (Ezekiel 34:13-15).

2. He keeps his flock.

- a. He seeks and searches for the lost and wayward sheep (Ezekiel 34:11, 16; Matthew 18:12; Luke 15:41).
- b. He gathers the flock together (Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 23:3).

3. He cares for his flock.

- a. He strengthens the sick (Ezekiel 34:16).
- b. He binds up the broken (Ezekiel 34:16).

- c. He comforts them (Psalm 23:4).
- d. He carries the lambs (Isaiah 40:11; Psalm 28:9).
- e. He knows them personally (John 10:3-4).
- f. He protects from enemies (John 10:12-13; Acts 20:28).
- g. He sacrifices for them (John 10:11-15).

The true measure of a shepherd's heart is his willingness to make sacrifice for his sheep. He is willing to give his time, his comforts, even his life for the sheep.

4. He leads his flock.

- a. He leads to rest (Ezekiel 34:15).
- b. He leads to nourishment and refreshment (Psalm 23:2).
- c. He leads safely without fear (Psalm 78:52-53).
- d. He leads gently (Isaiah 40:11).
- e. He leads them personally (John 10:3-4).
- f. He guides into righteous living (Psalm 23:3).

III. THE CONDUCT OF A SHEPHERD.

A. David's Example (Psalm 78:70-72).

- 1. Involves integrity.**
- 2. Involves skill.**

B. Paul's Example (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

- 1. He did not use force or dominate.**
- 2. He was gentle.**
- 3. He was involved personally among you (2:7a).**
- 4. He nurtured and cared for them (2:7b).**

There was a self-emptying service given by Paul. There was no thought of return of favors. Young children usually show little or no appreciation for what is done for them. The rewards are totally in the benefit and help it brings to them.

- 5. He had a personal affection (2:8-9).**
- 6. He made personal sacrifices (2:8b).**
 - a. He gave himself.
 - b. He labored: weariness, exhaustion.
 - c. He endured hardship as He labored in difficulty.
- 7. He modeled. Lived purposefully and intentionally (2:10-12).**

MINISTRY AND PERSONAL CHARACTER

I. THE METHOD FOR DEVELOPING CHARACTER: WHAT DOES CHARACTER INVOLVE? (Ephesians 4:13-14).

A. A Comprehension Of The Truth Is The Basis Of It: The Unity Of The Faith (v. 13). This Is The Objective Truth And Teaching Of The Word.

- 1. A knowledge of God's mind and will in the teachings of Scripture (Colossians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:18).**
- 2. The body of truth (Jude 3): A knowledge of the great doctrines of Scripture including the doctrines of grace.**

B. Communion With Christ Is The Essence Of It: A Knowledge Of The Son Of God; This Is The Subjective Personal Knowledge Of Christ.

- 1. Knowing Christ: It is not abstract, but a personal experience of Christ (John 17:3).**
- 2. His power (2 Corinthians 17:7-9; Philippians 3:10).**
- 3. His sufferings (Colossians 1:24; Philippians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4).**
- 4. Abiding/obeying (John 15:1-8).**

C. The Character Of Christ Is The Measure Of It: A Measure Of The Stature Of Christ.

1. **Mature** (τελειος) (**Philippians 3:12-15**).
2. **Complete** (ολοκερος) (**James 1:4**).
3. **Measure of stature** (ελικιασ).

II. THE MAIN AREA OF NEGLECT IN THE PERSONAL LIFE IS CHARACTER: WHAT IS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING CHARACTER?

A. It Requires Guarding (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 4:16).

1. **Guard** - προσεχηο; **to turn your mind to, attend to, care and provide for. To apply oneself, to devote thought and effort to. "To heed the word" (2 Peter 1:19).**
2. **Pay attention to yourself** - επεχηο; **to have hold of yourself.**

B. It Requires An Undistracted Ministry Pursuit (1 Timothy 4:15).

1. **Take pains with your ministry** - μελετα (**1 Timothy 4:15**); **to devise (Acts 4:25), to carefully attend to something. A hireling is not concerned about sheep (John 10:13).**
2. **Be absorbed. Literally it is, "be in these things."**

It means to live in these things as the air you breathe. They are at the center, they are not peripheral. This includes balancing your marriage and family life – which is part of what you are to model.

- 3. Discipline - γυμναδζο (1 Timothy 4:8); to exercise vigorously, to strive earnestly in body or mind (Hebrews 5:14).**

C. It Results In A Mature, Effective Ministry (1 Timothy 4:15).

- 1. There is progress that is evident to people. The term progress is προσκοπε; which means to advance by laboring with toil.**

The word was used of lengthening something out by hammering, or of the forging of metals. The word, in general, meant to advance by labor. The emphasis is on the fatigue and weariness that comes from labor (Matthew 11:28).

- 2. It benefits others spiritual growth (Acts 20:28; 2 Corinthians 6:5).**

D. It Makes A Man A Vessel Useful To The Master (2 Timothy 2:21).

- 1. Useful translates the term, ευχρηστοσ, that refers, broadly speaking, to something that is easy to make use of.**

It is used of something that has experienced a mellowing of all that was harsh. It therefore was used of something fit for use, manageable, mild, or pleasant. It is used of a mild wine, and of Christ's 'easy' yoke (Matthew 11:29). A person mature in Christ-like character is of much use to God.

- 2. Prepared – ετοιμαδζο (2 Timothy 2:21); to be readied, prepared.**

CHRIST-GLORIFYING, GOSPEL-DRIVEN PRAYER, John 14:8-15

INTRODUCTION

A. The Circumstances And Occasion.

He is leaving them. He is leaving the entire work to them (John 13:33). It would have appeared to outsiders as a colossal mistake, a massive tactical error!

B. His Concern Is That They Are Fruitful! He Is Concerned That The Church Grows, The World Is Impacted And God Is Glorified Through These Men.

C. He Connects The Spread Of The Gospel And Ministry To Christ-Centered Gospel-Driven Prayer. He Is Teaching On How To Pray Specifically For Fruit In Ministry.

I. THE PERSON WHO PRAYS HAS SEEN AND IS GRIPPED BY CHRIST'S GLORY AS CO-EQUAL IN MAJESTY TO THE FATHER (vv. 8-11).

A. The Deficient View Of Christ That Hinders Ministry (vv. 8-9).

- 1. The request that betrays ignorance (v. 8).**
- 2. The response that asserts His glory (v. 9).**

B. The Declaration By Christ Of His Majestic Glory (vv. 10-11).

- 1. He asserts His unity of being with the Father, a shared interpenetration of nature (John 10:30).**
- 2. He appeals to His unequalled works to prove it (John 10:37-38). He creates and He controls nature (He calmed the sea).**

II. THERE IS A PERSUASION THAT CHRIST CAN WORK IN A GREATER WAY THROUGH YOU IN MINISTRY TO ACCOMPLISH THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL (vv. 12-13).

A. The Reach And Extent Of The Greater Works Is Beyond What Christ Did (v. 12).

1. What it can't mean.

It can't mean we will be greater in love, humility, proclamation, or even miracles.

2. What it does mean.

The key is in the phrase; "I go to the Father." His going is not a mere spacial relocation. It involves His return to the father by means of His crucifixion and exaltation.

B. The Result Of His Exaltation To The Right Hand Of God And The Pouring Out Of The Spirit Is That Greater Works Will Be Accomplished.

- 1. He was exalted as the sin-bearing, death-conquering, Spirit-sending Lord by whom He works in the world (Acts 2:29-33).**

Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. (Acts 2:29-33)

- 2. He extends His glory by power of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 2:14, 3:17-18, 4:4, 6).**
- 3. He exercises His authority to move men and remove obstacles (Matthew 28:18-20).**
- 4. He enables others and works through them to continue His work (v. 13).**

Notice Christ says, "I will do it" (v. 14). This is the one of those few places where He says He answers prayer. He answers it for He is the one who builds His church.

III. THERE IS A PURSUIT IN PRAYER OF THE EXALTING OF CHRIST AND THE GLORY OF GOD THROUGH THE MINISTRY GOD HAS GIVEN US (vv. 13-15).

A. It Is A Specific Focus Prayer For The Ministry Works He Would Have Us Do And The Workers To Do Them.

He is encouraging us to plead for direction in ministry (2 Samuel 5:17-25), resources, ministry workers (Matthew 9:36-38), church leadership (Luke 6:12-13), and manifestations of His power in conversions.

B. It Seeks God's Glory Through Christ (John 12:23-24, 31-32).

1. His name is all He is and all He has done.

2. The Father is glorified in His Son.

Glory refers to that which someone possesses or has done that makes them worthy of regard, renown, and reputation.

C. It Sets Its Confidence In Christ, Not Ourselves Or Men. I Will Do It.

D. Its Supreme Compelling Is Our Love For Christ's Name And Glory (v. 15).

A love for His glory and name, compels us to prayer and obey His commands above all.

Prayer is the walkie-talkie for warfare, not a domestic intercom for increasing our conveniences. Piper, *Missions*, p. 41

All our libraries and studies are mere emptiness compared with our closets. We grow and work mighty and we prevail in private prayer. Spurgeon, p. 43

In due time a weeping intercessor will become the rejoicing winner of souls. Luther, *Lectures*, p. 47

Satan cares nothing for our prayerless work, our prayerless study, or our prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray. Samuel Chadwick

As it is the business of tailors to make clothes and of cobblers to mend shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray. Luther

It would be wholly monstrous for a man to be highest in office and lowest in soul, first in station and last in life. Bernard

MINISTRY AND FAITH

I. THE DEMAND FOR FAITH.

A. Progress In The Christian Life Is Based Upon It.

- 1. The negative emphasis.**
- 2. The positive emphasis.**

B. It Pleases God (Hebrews 11:6).

- 1. The prerequisite.**
- 2. The persistence.**

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF FAITH IN SCRIPTURE.

A. The Substance Of Faith (Hebrews 11:1).

- 1. The subjective element.**
- 2. The objective element.**

B. The Specifics Of Faith.

C. The Foundation Of Faith.

III. THE DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH: ABRAHAM.

A. The Circumstances Involved (Romans 4; Hebrews 11).

- 1. The external impossibilities.**
- 2. The internal deficiencies.**

B. The Characteristics Of Faith Involves:

- 1. The reaffirmation and recognition of specific promises.**
- 2. The recognition of God's ability to fulfill the promise.**
- 3. A reliance on God, His power and promises.**

C. The Consequences Of Faith.

FAITH, RISK-TAKING, AND CHRIST-EXALTING MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

A young man, beginning his work with the Coast Guard, was called upon to take part in a dangerous assignment. A violent storm had risen and they were to rescue a boat and its crew. As they went out, the young man cried out to the Captain, "we will never come back." The captain, above the storm, cried back, "we don't have to come back, but we do have to go out."

I. GOD'S PART IN FAITH, RISK-TAKING AND CHRIST-EXALTING MINISTRY.

A. He Has Purposed That His Son Will Be Known And Glorified Among All Peoples.

He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6).

B. He Has Revealed His Plan And Purpose For The Church In The World Which Assures Its Success (Matthew 16:15-18, 28:18-20).

He, said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Matthew 16:15-18).

C. He Initiates And Directs Us Into Our Part Of His Plan (Psalm 32:8, 25:12; Acts 16:9-10, 18:9-11; 2 Timothy 1:13).

- 1. He puts us into the specific ministry that He has purposed to accomplish through us (1 Timothy 1:12; Romans 15:18)**
- 2. He makes us aware of needs that cause us to have a concern for His name (Nehemiah 1:1-3).**
- 3. He makes us burdened to act to do what we can for His glory (Nehemiah 1:4-11, 2:12; Romans 15:9-12, 18-24). For the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy (Romans 15:9).**
- 4. He plants persistent desires, longings, and burdens (Psalm 37:4; Romans 15:23-24).**
- 5. He guides how, where, and when to step out in a ministry.**

They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak a word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. (Acts 16:6-10).

D. He Supplies The Needed Workers And Resources In Response To Prayer (Nehemiah 2:1-10; Psalm 31:10; Philippians 4:19).

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:36-38).

ILL: J. Hudson Taylor said there are three phases to God's work. Impossible, difficult and done.

II. OUR PART IN FAITH, RISK-TAKING AND CHRIST-EXALTING MINISTRY.

A. We Earnestly Seek That Christ Will Be Exalted And Glorified By Our Ministry (John 14:11-15).

- 1. We put our trust in His power and wisdom.**
- 2. We pursue His glory.**
- 3. We persevere in prayer about the works He has for us.**

B. We Exercise God-Pleasing Faith.

- 1. Faith is the instrument and means by which God moves in power to work in and through us for His own purpose and glory (Matthew 13:58, 21:22; Hebrews 11:32-34).**

And Jesus answered them and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea.' it will happen. And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive. (Matthew 21:21-22).

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell Gideon, Bararak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment (Hebrews 11:32-36).

2. The nature of God-pleasing faith.

- a. It is an attitude that trusts and casts itself on the reliability of God and the specific promises of His purposes for the world (Matthew 16:18; Luke 24:44-49; Romans 4:20-21).

*Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins **would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations**, beginning from Jerusalem." You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:44-49).*

Our work especially requires faith. If we fail in faith, we had better not have undertaken it; and unless we obtain faith commensurate with the service, we shall soon grow weary of it. It is proven by all observation that success in the Lord's service is very generally in proportion to faith. It certainly is not in proportion to ability, nor does it always run parallel with a display of zeal; but it is invariably according to the measure of faith, for this is a law of the Kingdom without exception, "According to your faith be it unto you." It is essential, then, that we should have faith if we are to be useful, and that we should have great faith if we are to be greatly useful. For many other reasons besides usefulness, – namely, even for our being

able to hold our own against the enemies of the truth, and for ability to stand against the temptations that surround our office, – it is imperative upon us that we should have abundant confidence in the living God. We, above all men, need the mountain-moving faith, by which, in the old time, men of God "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

C.H. Spurgeon, *An All-Around Ministry*, pp. 3-4

- b. It is an activity that steps out in a specific activity with some element of risk. Faith is not completed as genuine faith until there is action (James 2:22). We call the biblical account of the apostles ministry, "the book of Acts." They acted in faith to the revelation of Christ that the gospel would be preached and disciples made among all peoples (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:45-47).

Moses faced a test of the impossible when Israel reached the Red Sea. On one side lay the impassible range of Baal Zephon, on the other side an impassable waste of sand. Before them lay the impassable Red Sea, behind them the invincible army of Pharaoh. He found himself shut up with a dismayed and complaining horde in a perfect cul-de-sac. In this unexpected and shattering experience the morale of the nation dropped below zero. "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" they moaned. But Moses the man of faith stayed himself on God. His order of the day sounded like sheer fantasy to the demoralized Israelites, but in point of fact it was a demonstration of superb leadership. "Fear not!" he cried when there was every reason to fear. "Stand still!" when Pharaoh was rapidly overtaking them, and to stand still meant death. "See the salvation of the Lord," which seemed a very long distance away (Exodus 14:11-13). In this sublime declaration of faith, Moses passed the test of the impossible situation with first-class honors, and he was gloriously vindicated by God. His sanguine prediction came true: "The Egyptians whom ye have seen today ye shall see no more for ever." They saw the salvation of God and the total destruction of their enemies. The bracing lesson is that God

delights to shut people up to Himself and then, in response to their trust, display His power and grace in doing the impossible.

Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, pp. 122-123

C. We Expect God To Reveal An "Area Of Ministry" Based On Scriptural Priorities Where We Must Step Out In Faith And Take Risks Beyond Our Resources, Etc. (Acts 16:9-10; Romans 15:18-24).

In relationship, ministry faith is directed toward a specific task that requires God's intervention for its accomplishment. It is trusting God to do what is beyond human resources in order to accomplish and carry out a work for His glory. It is based on the revelation of God's purpose and plan in the world.

To initiate is an important function of the office of a leader. Some have more gift for conserving gains than for initiating new ventures; more gift for achieving order than for generating ardor. The true leader must have venturesomeness as well as vision. He must be an initiator rather than a mere conserver. Most of us prefer to play safe, but Paul did not play safe. He constantly took carefully and prayerfully calculated risks. Robert Louis Stevenson indicated the attitude of safety, security and prudence as "that dismal fungus." Hudson Taylor did not play safe. The tremendous steps of faith which he took with monotonous regularity were denounced as wildcat schemes. But that did not deter him, and today history is on his side. The greatest achievements in the history of the church and of missions have been outcome of some leader in touch with God taking courageous, carefully calculated risks.

J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, pp. 116-117

D. Earnestly Pray For Men And Resources (Matthew 9:36-38).

From my distress I called upon the Lord; The Lord answered me and set me in a large place, the Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me? (Psalm 118:5-6).

Call is what you have to learn. You heard it. Don't just sit there by yourself or off to one side and hang your head, and shake it and gnaw your knuckles and worry and look for a way out, nothing on your mind except how bad you feel, how you hurt, what a poor guy you are. Get up, you lazy scamp! Down on your knees! Up with your hands and eyes toward heaven! Use a psalm or the Lord's prayer to cry out your distress to the Lord.

Luther, *A Theology*, p. _____

Webster's defines scamp as: *An unscrupulous and often mischievous person; rascal; rogue; scalawag. A playful, mischievous, or naughty young person; upstart.*