DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE

PURCHASE AREA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

BENTON, KENTUCKY

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A Project

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by

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APPROVAL SHEET

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PREFACE

The year 2012 marks the twentieth year of full-time Christian ministry for me. In my first pastorate, I learned the value of belonging to a Southern Baptist Association. My first church was Bethlehem Baptist, located in rural western Kentucky. Bethlehem was a small rural congregation with limited finances and assets. Through the help of the West Union Baptist Association, Bethlehem received resources and cooperation from other churches to assist in many endeavors. The association helped provide ministries that Bethlehem could not accomplish on her own. I am thankful for West Union Baptist Association and then Director of Missions, Wayne Newby, who strengthened the ministry at Bethlehem.

During the past twenty years, and through several associations, I have served as committee member, chairperson, moderator, and Director of Missions. Currently, I serve as assistant treasurer for Purchase Area Baptist Association. These various associational positions have taught me the important role of the Southern Baptist association in the church.

Though many things have changed in Southern Baptist life, I am convinced there still remains a role for the local association. While we are living in a new day in which the Southern Baptist association can still provide a valuable presence in the ministry of churches. I hope this project provides enlightenment to others as it has to me.

This focused project on developing a leadership team is a journey that has taken several years. I am appreciative of those wonderful people who have helped me along the way. I am thankful for a host of godly professors such as Thom Rainer, Charles Lawless, the late John Dever, Larry Purcell, Jeff Walters and J. D. Payne, who have challenged and encouraged me to do my best.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to develop a new associational model of leadership for the Purchase Area Baptist Association (PABA), Benton, Kentucky. The Purchase Area Baptist Association consists of eleven Southern Baptist Churches in the Kentucky counties of Calloway, Graves, and Marshall. The association is affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Goals

This project sought to accomplish four goals. The first goal was to enlist and gather members of the leadership team. As the Director of Missions, I felt a great responsibility to provide direction for the enlistment of the team. Rather than accepting volunteers gathered at an executive board meeting, the Director of Missions selected the team. Prayerful consideration was given for the candidates of the team. Each candidate was approached and asked to pray about being a member of the leadership team.

The second goal was to provide training for the members of the leadership team selected above. All team members needed to be trained in order to know the expectations and responsibilities of the position. The leadership team examined the importance of vision, the role of servant leadership, communication, planning, and setting goals. The training was not to be completely in a lecture format. Lectures were given and input received from the leadership team. This input was received from the experience of ministry of the leadership team. One pastor has served for twenty-six years at his present position. His pastoral experience provided significant knowledge for the leadership team to evaluate.

There was training in spiritual discipline. While understanding the basics of developing teams is important, the team does not need to overlook being led by the Spirit of God. Special attention was given to our walk with Christ. The leadership team met weekly to spend time in prayer. A team member gave a prayer devotional for each leadership team meeting, and time was spent praying for God's leadership for the member congregations of PABA and the leadership team.

The third goal was to lead the team in an associational ministry project for PABA. Before the existence of PABA, many of the PABA churches were not affiliated with any association. These churches had been without an association for so long that they had been alienated and detached from associational ministry. The non-participation with a local association has caused the local churches of the PABA mission projects to decrease. This goal provided a strategy and opportunity for the churches to work together.

The first step in meeting the third goal was to establish a series of meetings with the leadership team to determine what the churches of the PABA are currently doing in the areas of missions and evangelism. This evaluation provided direction for the leadership team. In this goal, I emphasized that the churches may accomplish more together than working alone. Some of PABA congregations are very small and are interested in working with larger congregations that have more resources. The resources, such as Bible Studies, Vacation Bible School materials, and books, can be shared with smaller congregations. The sharing of resources saves money for the smaller congregations and for the larger congregations it is a great stewardship of their resources by making them available to other congregations. The leadership team worked to provide mission opportunities and emphasis for evangelism locally.

The fourth goal was to develop my skills in mentoring and training the leadership team. l concentrated on learning concepts that enabled the team to become better servants for the PABA. I focused my attention on applying these concepts to the

leadership team. During the fifteen-week project, the leadership team evaluated me. This evaluation prompted feedback and provide information on performance.

<div align="center">**Context**</div>

Purchase Area Baptist Association is located in the Western part of Kentucky. PABA serves churches in Region 1 of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Region 1 would be considered a rural area in the landscape of Kentucky.

Purchase Area

The Purchase Area Baptist Association was organized on January 18, 2007. Since Purchase Area is a small association, a different model of an association from the traditional model must be considered. Most associations maintain the traditional model, which includes a paid staff and standing committees. Many associational budgets are consumed with staff salaries, which does not allow for many ministry opportunities. Since Purchase Area Baptist Association is very small and has limited resources we must have a different model. The purpose of this project is to develop a new associational model of leadership for the Purchase Area Baptist Association in Benton, Kentucky.

Benton, Kentucky is in the western region of the state. The Purchase Area derives its name from the Jackson Purchase. United States President Andrew Jackson purchased land from the Chickasaw Indians in 1818.[1] Kentuckians have called this area "the Purchase" for many generations.[2] The Jackson Purchase consists of 8 counties: Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Marshall, and McCracken.

The Purchase Area Baptist Association is interested in working with the

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[1]Encyclopedia of Kentucky, "Geographical Configuration" (New York: Somerset, 1987), 127.

[2]Berry F. Craig, "The Jackson Purchase Considers Secession: The 1861 Mayfield Convention," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 99, no. 9 (Autumn 2001): 339.

churches in the Jackson Purchase and with the three existing associations in the Purchase Area. Our overall goal is to further God's kingdom. It is our desire to share Jesus Christ with our region and around the world. God has blessed the Purchase Area region with many churches and we believe that we can accomplish any task with God's leading.

Though the region of the Purchase Area is very rural, it has been productive in Southern Baptist life. For Kentucky Baptists, the Jackson Purchase has been well known for its Baptist roots. H. Boyce Taylor was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Murray, Kentucky, from 1897-1932. He instituted a missions budget program for the church. Wendell Holmes Rone writes in *The Encyclopedia of Southern Baptist*,

> As early as 1900 the Murray church, through his leadership, adopted the budget plan of finance which was adopted by other churches. . . . Taylor's budget plan was the background of the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program adopted in 1925.[3]

Blood River Baptist Association

For many years, Zion's Cause had been aligned with the Blood River Baptist Association. Blood River has been a very strong association and still has a presence in the community. Blood River is very missions minded and has a great commitment to the Great Commission. Their current Director of Missions is one of the hardest working ministers that I know.

The Blood River Baptist Association has some very strong theological views of Landmarkism in its Constitution and By-laws. The association does not allow women messengers to any of their meetings. Women are also not allowed to make any reports from the platform area; they must make their reports from the floor. The issue concerning women has caused problems for the Blood River Baptist Association. Zion's Cause Baptist Church's two attempts to change the Constitution and By-laws and allow

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[3]Wendell Holmes Rone, "Taylor, Harvey Boyce, Sr.," in the *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, 2 (Nashville: Broadman, 1958), 1346.

women to be messengers was defeated on both occasions.

Additionally, the Blood River Baptist Association does not seat messengers from an associational church that has begun to receive members from different denominations that have been immersed. The baptism issue has caused churches to withdraw from the Blood River Baptist Association. These two issues began to lay the foundation for a new association. Each year churches would withdraw from the Blood River Baptist Association and become an at-large church. An at-large church is a Kentucky Baptist church that does not have a membership in an association. The numbers of these "at-large" churches increase each year in the Jackson Purchase. Presently, another association in the Jackson Purchase has removed a church for similar reasons previously. Many of the churches that withdrew from Blood River Baptist Association have joined Purchase Area Baptist Association.

Purchase Area Baptist Association

A group of pastors began to discuss the possibility of starting a new association for Southern Baptist churches that do not belong to any Southern Baptist Association of the Jackson Purchase. A pastor sent a letter to these churches. The pastor wanted to see if there was any interest in starting a new association. The results were very positive. Immediately, a nucleus of churches began to form the new association, including Poplar Spring Baptist Church, Ferguson Springs Baptist Church, and Zion's Cause Baptist Church.

The pastor from Poplar Spring Baptist Church, the pastor from Ferguson Springs Baptist Church, and this writer from Zion's Cause Baptist Church met with the Kentucky Baptist Convention to discuss the possibility of starting a new association. We wanted to be understood as a credible association. Our identity is that we are a fellowship of Southern Baptist churches working together for the Kingdom of God. The mission of the association is to glorify God in a fellowship of churches and to minister as a servant team empowered by Jesus Christ.

Beginning a new association raises concerns about our identity. It is important to establish an identity with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. The Kentucky Baptist Convention gave us guidelines for a new association to be accepted. They welcomed us and shared their goals for the coming years. The Kentucky Baptist Convention began an emphasis of connecting to churches and associations in 2005. For the past five years, Kentucky Baptists have been involved in winning people to Christ, strengthening our churches, and developing leaders in our churches. Purchase Area Baptist Association wants to be identified with this goal.

The information was shared with the church bodies. As pastor of Zion's Cause Baptist Church, I shared with the church about the new association. The congregation of Zion's Cause immediately voiced interest in the development of the Purchase Area Baptist Association. The church strongly approved my involvement in the new association. Zion's Cause made it clear that our buildings could to be used to help promote the new association.

Zion's Cause Baptist Church hosted a number of meetings for the churches that wanted to be involved, including: Poplar Spring Baptist Church, Ferguson Springs Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Calvert City, First Baptist Church of Benton, Elm Grove Baptist Church, Hilltop Baptist Church, South Marshall Baptist Church, Aurora Baptist Church, Community Fellowship Baptist Church, Hardmoney Baptist Church, and Westside Baptist Church. Zion's Cause has also hosted meetings for the new association, the officers, and committees. Purchase Area Baptist Association elected officers in order to open a checking account and file for non-profit organization status. The campus of Zion's Cause Baptist Church was designated as the mailing address and felt led by the Lord to provide resources and facilities for the new association.

During this time, Zion's Cause encouraged me to participate more in the Purchase Area Baptist Association. In 2007, I was elected to serve as the Assistant Director of Missions. I shared with the Purchase Area Baptist Association my intentions

of developing the model for our leadership team. The association affirmed my intentions and in 2009, Purchase Area Baptist Association PABA elected me to become the Director of Missions.

Rationale

The first Baptist Association formed in 1707 in Philadelphia in America. This association was formed to help churches cooperate in missions, educational causes, and benevolence. Associations have been very beneficial to the local church. Paul Stripling wrote, "The advent of the association was the most important polity element in Baptist solidarity and denominational development."[4]

Three hundred years later, associations are scattered across the American landscape. The Southern Baptist Convention has almost 1,300 associations. Many have a Director of Missions to manage the association. Other areas have Regional Strategists to manage the activities of a number of associations. PABA is interested in a leadership team to direct the association.

The question that faces an association today is, how effective can an association be with limited resources? The association can be very effective for the ministries of the churches it serves. Many churches of the Purchase Area Baptist Association have had a strong tradition in belonging to associations. However, because those churches have recently withdrawn over different issues, they have acted independently rather than trying to cooperate with other churches. This action hinders smaller churches because of the lack of resources to do missions and evangelism.

Currently, there are eleven churches in the PABA; four of them are small churches with worship attendance of twenty to fifty people. These small churches have very limited resources and need help. The other eight churches of PABA have

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[4]Paul Stripling, *Turning Points in the History of Baptist Associations in America* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), 3.

substantial resources and are willing to share with the others. Purchase Area Baptist Association can help combine the resources of the churches and enhance the ministry opportunities in our region.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this project was to develop a new model of associational leadership. The leadership team is responsible for gathering information from the associational churches. In keeping with the goals of this project, research focused upon: (1) measuring the understanding that churches have for an association; (2) determining the benefit of having an association; (3) determining the enthusiasm for helping churches of an associational leadership team; (4) determining the level of participation from the churches.

The method for evaluating the aforementioned areas was through a pre-test and post-test questionnaire style format. The leadership team reviewed the perception of the churches in the pre-test. After the project, the team looked at any possible perception changes viewed by the team leaders or churches. The pre-test allowed for the understanding and evaluation of the churches concerning the work of the association. The post-test was designed to give insight into the positive effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals, including the perception of the leadership team.

Definitions

The following words and phrases from this project need to be properly defined. The first term is Baptist Association. Albert McClellan explains a Baptist Association as "a way of consolidating the interests and work of many Baptist churches scattered over a geographical expanse."[5] It is a group of Southern Baptist churches working together in areas of missions and evangelism.

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[5]Albert McClellan, *Meet Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman, 1978), 69.

The second term is leadership team. A leadership team is a selected group of individuals that lead an association. This group was diverse in age. Kenneth Gangel writes, "They must be composed of competent individuals, but the attitudinal and philosophical differences between singular and multiple leadership are enormous."[6] In the leadership team for PABA, I served as the Vision Leader. In some areas this leadership team was viewed as singular leadership in order to complete the project.

The third term is Vision Leader. George Cladis defines a Vision Leader as someone who "receives and articulates the vision."[7] The involvement of Vision Leader was critical to the progress of the team. The PABA leadership team reported to the Vision Leader.

The fourth term is Spiritual Disciplines. Richard Foster defines Spiritual Disciplines as an "inward and spiritual reality" that affect the Christian walk for Christ.[8] The leadership team focused on the importance of growing spiritually in this project. Tasks were given but opportunity for spiritual development was sought.

Limitations and Delimitations

The length of the project was fifteen weeks. I was not able to see the full term results of the training of the leadership team due to the short duration of the project. Evaluation was made and documented on the progress of the development of the leadership team and short-term results of the training were documented. The delimitations were the size and composition of the team. Since Purchase Area Baptist Association consists of eleven churches, I requested a representative from each church.

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[6]Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 11-12.

[7]George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 58.

[8]Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1988), 3.

This provided a voice from each church in our Association. The representative could be a pastor, staff member, lay person, or a church member. I did not restrict the makeup of the team because I was interested in researching different perceptions.

Conclusion

Developing a leadership team is a major need for the Purchase Area Baptist Association. Financially, it may be the only way for us to survive, given the fact that we lack the large numbers to assist us that are enjoyed by other associations. We needed to seek a new direction for PABA, and this model provides that opportunity. This new model can be developed further in other associations.

In chapter 2, the biblical principles for developing a leadership team are reviewed. The Old and New Testament provide examples for study and emulation. Biblical instruction lays the footing for the development of the PABA leadership team.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES
CONCERNING A LEADERSHIP
TEAM MODEL

Chapter 1 provided the rationale for the project and purpose of the leadership

team for the Purchase Area Baptist Association, or PABA. This chapter addresses the

biblical and theological principles found in Scripture for such a project. Though the

Bible is rich with leadership teachings, this writer has selected four from which to glean

greater depth.

First, God provides a glimpse of the world's first leadership team in Genesis.

Next, the Bible's second book, Exodus, details solid leadership team principles in the

account of Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro. The last Old Testament example is

Nehemiah, who was given the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Finally, the

leadership style of Jesus Christ is examined, with particular attention given to the

recruitment and sending forth of His disciples.

Genesis: History's First Leadership Team

From the very beginning, the Bible asserts the importance of cooperative

leadership. In creation, God presented Himself to the world and proclaimed, "Let Us

make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen 1:26).[1] Paul R. House

describes this verse as "a potentially odd comment in a monotheistic creation account."[2]

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[1]All Scripture texts throughout this project are from the New American Standard Bible.

[2]Paul R. House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1998), 61.

In making this definitive statement regarding the creation of man, the God of the universe is not only referencing Himself, but affirming a leadership team approach, a joint effort, by revealing that He is Three in One. Kyle M. Yates affirms that the creation of mankind becomes a theological benchmark for the concept of teamwork.[3] The revelation elaborates on the relationship of the Trinity. While the Godhead are not named specifically, the theological meaning of the Trinity is understood, giving an intradivine conversation, a plurality within the Godhead.[4] One is able to identify a team concept— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit affirming the image of man.

Therefore, the practical application established in Genesis 1 is that God was in agreement with Himself in the creation of man. Furthermore, this agreement led God to see that His creation needed a caretaker, the end result being the creation of man. God formed mankind in such a way that he could not reach a full potential without someone else; man could only be complete within the midst of other personalities, as he did not function at full capacity when left alone. Pat Macmillan correctly observed that the early design of community with others is woven throughout the entire fabric of Scripture.[5] The power of agreement saturates God's Word.

Based upon the Trinity's affirmation as witnessed in the Genesis account of creation, the fundamental assumption behind the Purchase Area Baptist Association's leadership team is that churches can do more cooperatively than they can do alone. The cooperation is basic at the outset. The agreement is a guideline.

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[3]Kyle M. Yates, *The Creation-Genesis 1:1-2:25*, The Wycliffe Bible Commentary (Nashville: Southwestern, 1962), 4.

[4]Kenneth A. Matthews, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1a (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 121.

[5]Pat Macmillan, *Building a Powerful Ministry Team* (Atlanta: Team Resources, 1984), 87.

Moses and Jethro: Framework for a Leadership Team

While the early chapters of the book of Exodus highlight God's power and miraculous liberation of His people from Egyptian bondage, the later chapters describe the travails of those same people and the labor and fatigue experienced by their leader, Moses. Modern readers see a leader who was overwhelmed, a man caught between his God and his people; simply put, the dilemma was placing Moses in the position of doing the work of many. In effect, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. notes that Moses' inefficient process was exhausting both himself and his people.[6]

In Exodus 18:17-27, Jethro, finding Moses inundated with the problems of Israel, advised his son-in-law to delegate responsibility, and further detailed a plan to him. Verse 21 notes Jethro instructing Moses to make divisions among the people and appoint leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. "Jethro is depicted as an efficiency expert who wisely suggests a modification in Israel's leadership structure (vv. 17-23) which Moses adopted with divine permission," states Kaiser.[7] While Moses would remain as the people's representative to God, the selected leaders would report to, and be under the authority of, Moses (Exod 18:19).

Two verses later the passage includes, "Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." Thankfully, the Exodus writer gave a list of qualifications from the narrative. Availability and willingness have often become the litmus test for modern day church committees when choosing workers. Not so with Jethro. The first set of qualifications set forth through Jethro provided the basis for the tasks that were before them. Kaiser states that the qualifications were for "capable men, [men with a native aptitude for judging]."[8]

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[6]Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Exodus*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 413.

[7]Ibid., 412.

[8]Ibid., 413.

Jethro knew the importance of selecting able, competent, and discerning men, but equal to this was his second counsel to choose leaders who fear God. These leaders would exercise reverence, honor, and awe for the Lord God; their tasks would be wrapped thoroughly with their love and adoration for God. Fearing God provided an accountability factor; He was watching as each obligation was manifested with reverence and esteem.

The third qualification for Moses' team was to be "men of truth," carrying the idea of honesty, genuineness, and fidelity. Their character would reflect this idea; it would be evidenced without the necessity of the men exchanging vows. The testimony of their lives stood favorably in front of all the people of Israel. Finally, Moses was instructed to choose men who hated covetousness. Kaiser interprets this as "men who hated dishonest gain."[9]

In developing an associational leadership team, the overriding imperative is to place individuals showing the ability and capacity to fill the expected role, the "able" men to which Jethro referred. These individuals must exhibit the ability to deal with the issues of the association, and an inclination to do so in a competent manner. Able men and women placed in a position of leadership are more adequately equipped to exercise wisdom and discernment; this qualification is vital to the success of any leadership team. All members must also realize that God is watching as they are working in their capacity. They are accountable to the association for each action and deed; they are also accountable, individually and collectively, unto God. The "men of truth" caveat allows team members to earn the respect of the association, leading in turn to the ability to openly share goals and proceed with a proposed plan. Team members must exemplify a covetous-free demeanor in all areas of life. An individual with a coveting nature may be successful in hiding what is within the heart, but at what expense? Greed, avarice, and

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[9]Ibid.

jealousy are not character traits that please God. Neither are they pleasing to man.

Moses did not need leaders who were swayed with bribes, possessions, or political

agendas. The importance of this virtue is obvious; hidden and dishonest motives must

never get a foothold. When these endowments are noted in the character of the

leadership team, the association can be confident that its best interests are being served.

It must be noted that God allowed Moses to be educated by a good man, Jethro.

Kaiser maintains, "The Great Jehovah did not disdain to permit his prophet to be taught

the wisdom and intelligence of a good man, though he was not of the commonwealth of

Israel."[10] God can use anyone to teach His people certain principles, whether the teacher

be secular or religious. In this situation with Moses, God allowed someone who was not

an Israelite to teach His leader some important lessons on how to fulfill his position. In

no way does this lessen the foremost precept of God-led guidance, but it does show other

avenues of grasping God's will in a matter.

Nehemiah: Utilization of a Leadership Team

The book of Nehemiah provides a protracted example of team building as

Nehemiah rises to the occasion and demonstrates what God's people can accomplish

when they are led by one who is spiritually attuned to God. This Old Testament

character was the man of the hour as he brought restoration to a ruined city. H. G. M.

Williamson believes that when reading the book of Nehemiah, one is reading the

memoirs of the book's namesake.[11]

Nehemiah was God-inspired to record the events of his life to give believers

evidence that God fulfills His promise to Abraham and His people. In Jewish history it is

known as the post-exilic period; God's people have returned home after the seventy years

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[10]Ibid.

[11]H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 16
(Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 165.

of captivity in Babylon. While it was a joyous time in the life of God's people, it was distressing to find the landscape in dire need of repair. The life events of Nehemiah provide modern readers with a team approach to handling practical matters within the ministry of the church.

Nehemiah learned of the conditions within Jerusalem through his brother, Hanani (Neh 1:2), and was left feeling sorrowful and distraught. John F. Walvoord states, "The report instantly depressed Nehemiah."[12] The city of Jerusalem was significant in the life of the Israelites, and the grievous conditions found there would have saddened even the most dispassionate Jew. Without a city, their heritage was in jeopardy and vulnerable to enemy attacks. The situation held an air of immediacy; the people were disgraced,[13] and Nehemiah was greatly troubled.

Upon hearing the report, Nehemiah spent time weeping for his homeland, (Neh 1:4) and came to the realization that he must be an instrument for change. The first step for Nehemiah was to take the news of his city personally. Rather than see the problems as insurmountable, he was moved to fast. Walvoord expresses that fasting was the evidence of "one's distraught condition."[14] Williamson writes, "Fasting was added to intercession as an effective means of strengthening the force of a prayer."[15] Nehemiah's troubled emotions moved him to tears, then into the action of fasting. This fasting shows his passion for the situation, the spiritual repentance of his nature, and the enhancement of his prayers to God. Adopting a "whatever it takes" attitude, Nehemiah's initial step of leadership was not to look for quick solutions, but to be diligent in seeking the face of

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[12]John F. Walvoord, et al., *An Exposition of the Scripture.* The Bible Knowledge Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983), 58.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid., 62.

[15]Williamson, *Nehemiah, Ezra*, 172.

God. He became fully accessible to God. Nehemiah saw the overwhelming situation and trusted God. He was a man of prominence but, realizing his limitations, sought the God of his forefathers in the matter.

The principle here is seeking first the counsel of God; Nehemiah fully grasped this standard. Neither did he turn to the king's wise men nor the current trends of the day, but sought his God immediately, personally, and directly. While fasting is not a favored practice in most modern settings, one could learn from the formidable strength of such an act. Christian leaders should urgently spend time preparing their hearts to meet and commune with God. Nehemiah recognized this and took action; centuries later, one can do no less.

The evidence of Nehemiah's prayer life is abundant. Mervin Breneman notes that there are nine prayers chronicled throughout the book.[16] Nehemiah worded his first prayer with God's promises and confession of sins. He began by reminding God of the promises made to His people. Breneman writes, "Nehemiah knew God would keep His promise of mercy, faithfulness, and forgiveness after judgment had come upon Israel."[17] He did not turn a deaf ear to the sins of the present but admitted the sins of the people and his sin before God.

As a leader, Nehemiah included himself as a transgressor of God's law. He associated himself with God's people. Breneman states, "Leaders must not consider themselves superior to others; admission of fault will not ruin effectiveness."[18] Nehemiah identified himself as a part of the problem and was not detached from it. Personal responsibility, both for himself and his people, was a bold first step as Nehemiah viewed

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[16]Mervin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, The New American Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993), 170. The nine prayers are recorded in Nehemiah 1:5; 2:4; 4:4-5; 5:19; 6:14; 13:14; 13:22; 13:19; and 13:31.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid., 172.

the sorry state of affairs in Jerusalem. His burden was considerable as he assessed the situation, and prayer became his tool for success.

This project will give the leadership team ample opportunities to deepen their walk with Christ through prayer. Breneman reminds his readers "that we can always begin again in our relationship with God if we return to Him in humility."[19] This principle is the promise of forgiveness. Nehemiah was assured of God's forgiveness, and he knew the people must be serious in their pleas for God's help. "Seek ye first . . . God" thus became the rule for Nehemiah and should become the axiom by which any leadership team should be judged.

In chapter 2, Nehemiah is willing to be a participant in the solution to the problem besetting the Jewish people. He made a decision to effect change and to share his heart's burden with the king, the only person capable of honoring such a request. Nehemiah thought carefully and thoroughly of his situation and began to make a plan. According to Walvoord, "Obviously, Nehemiah had prepared for the moment he had prayed for."[20] He saw an opportunity to set the wheels in motion, and he acted; Nehemiah was intentional.

Leadership team members must analyze and evaluate their circumstances. Only then can they devise a plan accordingly. Team members will have constant awareness of their need to provide opportunities to serve, and must act and present themselves as a body committed to the task.

Nehemiah felt assured of God's presence and he also knew that the king had the resources to build the city. So, in chapter 2, he organizes a private fact-finding tour for all the leaders, careful not to disclose his intent to anyone. Nehemiah may have perceived the possibility of enemies and other conflicts; Bible readers recognize

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[19]Ibid., 173.

[20]Walvoord, et al., *An Exposition of Scripture*, 95.

Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem as known enemies of Nehemiah. Nehemiah might have suspected others from within.

Any effort in developing a leadership team will likely meet with confrontation, whether from within or without, from known sources or unsuspected ones. It may appear as a mere divergent set of ideas or a totally encompassing crisis. Vigilance will be expected as the team stands on full alert.

The element of timing became a matter of urgency as Nehemiah met with the king and the leaders of Israel. His timing within the situation was both careful and appropriate; a success at this stage of planning can ignite enthusiasm and passion for completing the task at hand. Breneman gives this writer material to ponder as he writes,

> Nehemiah was able to discern the proper time to present the building project, and he knew how to motivate the leaders and people. He used four incentives: (1) He identified with the people as he spoke of 'the trouble we are in.' (2) He stressed the seriousness of the situation. A leader must be realistic and honestly assess the facts. People will have confidence in such a leader. (3) Nehemiah was committed to definite action. (4) He used his personal testimony of God's grace to assure them of God's favor on the project.[21]

As the leadership team ponders these incentives, it will more readily be able to accomplish its tasks, and at the same time avoid pitfalls. Nehemiah recognized the disastrous nature of impending roadblocks; prudent timing kept him from publicizing too early the tasks at hand. Therefore, he completed the initial steps by himself and allowed the workers to focus on the actual process of rebuilding the wall.

Nehemiah had already invested countless hours in the preliminaries of the project, paving the road for what loomed ahead. In Nehemiah 1:17, he challenged the Jewish leaders, and, based upon his testimony, the people responded. Jerusalem was in ruin, certainly; but just as sure was a glimmer of hope shining within the despair and rubble that was Jerusalem.

Ever faithful to give God credit, in verse 18 he declares, "The hand of my God

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[21]Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 182.

has been favorable to me." In developing a leadership team, the hand of God must be felt. The eye of faith must see the hand of God at work. Nehemiah was moved to turn his vision into reality;[22] the leaders surrounding him caught the vision and responded. This affirmation was surely an encouragement. Williamson believed that "the people's united and eager response to his words must have been taken by Nehemiah as a further confirmation of his vocation."[23] As Christians might say, "We believe it is a God thing." Nehemiah may have heartily agreed with this modern truism as he saw the citizenry catch the vision.

The leaders in Jerusalem took ownership of the vision, affirming in verse 18, "Let us arise and build." The vision was accepted, without alteration, as God's plan for their city. With God in charge, a leadership team must be in assent with one another in its vision. The team may have to move between several voices of dissent, but eventually must come to an agreement of its vision. At this point the team may move to the implementation of plans.

Nehemiah faced conflict in the rebuilding project, both from within and without. In verse 2:19, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem make themselves known. These men attempted to stop the work from progressing. Possibly, the message of Nehemiah's intentions caused more than the usual talk among the people. Rebuilding was going to take place, this was not ordinary news for most people. As happens in such circumstances, the message spread quickly to enemy headquarters.

Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem came together as a team to work their evil plan. "They used every demoralizing technique they knew, beginning with ridicule and the suggestion that they were rebels," writes Walvoord.[24] Most people find it difficult, if not

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[22]Ibid.

[23]Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 191.

[24]Walvoord, et al., *An Exposition of Scripture*, 121.

impossible, to successfully complete a task when facing ridicule. Breneman affirms this all-too-human characteristic by writing, "Ridicule is especially hard to endure when the recipients are in the minority."[25]

This conflict was the first barrier that Nehemiah faced. He counteracted by proclaiming the promise of God. He further told them that, basically, it was not any of their business because they were pagans. As they continued to profess their belief in God, Nehemiah refuted all such proclamations, saying they did not have any claim (Neh 2:20).

In verse 20 Nehemiah was dealing with the taunts of the wicked, encouraging the laborers, and reducing stress wherever it was found. He made sure to address the situation because of the major impact that ridicule had on the people. To keep the work progressing, all attention was given to alleviating conflicts that had the potential to impede momentum. He knew that stopping the progress could prove fatal to the project.

Chapter 3 details how Nehemiah divided the work and delegated team leaders. Though one does not read of him physically working in this chapter, he had become the overseer of a project that was broad and comprehensive in scope with a vast crew of workers. The project was proceeding; however, conflict resurfaced once again.

By the next chapter, Sanballat and other enemies, out of frustration from the work's progress, devised another plan of verbal and physical abuse. Finding their verbal attacks failing, Sanballat and Tobiah broadened their strategy to include a plan of battle. (Neh 4:7) Nehemiah dealt with the attack plan and changed his procedures to offset that of the enemy. Security became an issue, and the workers did not feel protected. Fear was palpable. Breneman writes, "Nehemiah took definite action. He had to sacrifice some labor from rebuilding the wall but it was necessary."[26] The laborers responded, but

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[25]Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 182.

[26]Ibid., 196.

only after Nehemiah took the initiative of providing confidence so that the workers could deal with their fears.

Nehemiah's plan was adjusted to include the addition of guards to safeguard the workers in the face of Sanballat's threats of attack (Neh 4:13). This alteration was two-fold. First, it provided security for the frightened workers; second, it allowed work to continue.

Nehemiah exhibited resilience as a leader and changed his plans. He saw the importance of being adaptable. His former plan was going to fail if he did not make adjustments. Upon seeing the fear in his workers, he changed, thereby ensuring continued progress. Without the ability and willingness to adjust his plan, Nehemiah might well have seen the rebuilding cease at that point. Nehemiah exercised what leaders today know to be a desirable trait, that of flexibility.

Even casual readers see the leadership that Nehemiah provided to his team of leaders, praying for God's guidance at every juncture. The crucial point to be made once again is that whatever a leadership team chooses to do, it must be saturated in all ways with prayer. Frequently, people will be committed to prayer at the beginning of a venture; then, as God's direction is felt, the prayers become less fervent and devoid of passion. The prayers may become less frequent or even stop. The prayer life of Nehemiah is one to be imitated; his confidence and faithfulness was displayed as he continually prayed. The people needed to see his boldness.

In Nehemiah 5, other issues began to arise, including internal difficulties.[27] Cries of extortion were heard throughout the midst of the people. The rich leaders were coercing their fellow brothers to mortgage their houses and lands in order to pay ever-higher taxes. Children were sold into slavery as a result of these unpaid debts. The sorrow and mourning disturbed Nehemiah. Deploring such actions, he became angry and

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[27]Ibid., 199.

confronted the leaders for their evil actions. In challenging them, he demanded that they change their practice; the leaders agreed. This action would gain momentum for the rebuilding of the wall. He had succeeded in motivating the people to continue. According to Andres Knowles, "He reminds people that they are fighting for their homes and families. . . . and that God, the greatest fighter of all is on their side."[28]

Threats continued into chapter 6. This time, the enemies hire people within the walls of Jerusalem to sabotage the progress (Neh 6:10-12). A new element had been added; Nehemiah experienced inner turmoil orchestrated from outer conflict. Those involved in the plot attempted to make Nehemiah sin by sleeping in the temple. After listening to the request, Nehemiah had spiritual discernment that it was misinformation.

At the conclusion of chapter 6, Nehemiah and the people completed the project; the wall was finished in 52 days (Neh 6:15). They actualized what seemed to be impossible. The unexpected challenges forced Nehemiah to keep a prayerful state of mind. His team leaders had to depend upon each other for support and security. The fulfillment of the rebuilding of the wall would be a blessing to Israel and its future for hundreds of years. Nehemiah's leadership example before the people of his day was one to be heeded; that example endures into the twenty-first century.

Jesus Christ: Exemplar for Leadership Development

The importance of being in God's will when developing a leadership team has been demonstrated with the Old Testament example of Nehemiah. In the New Testament, this same principle is seen in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Setting the standard for a prayerful life, Jesus put together a team of men who would change the world, teaching them to be leaders by using the principles He taught them.

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[28]Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2001), 205.

Jesus demonstrated submission to the Father's will, characterizing His commitment, by spending time with the Father in prayer. Even though He was God, the Son consistently talked to the Father. In one sense it would seem to be a contradiction for Jesus to spend so much time in prayer. In John 4:34, however, Jesus disclosed, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work." Jesus was unwavering in His desire to commune with the Father and to do His will. Before the selection of the twelve disciples, He spent the night in prayer (Luke 6:12). G. Campbell Morgan offers,

> He went and communed with God through the lifelong night, before He indicated the twelve. Our Lord beginning in his organization, the whole night was spent in fellowship, holy fellowship; yes, I dare say it, happy fellowship, free fellowship, unbroken fellowship with God.[29]

A leadership team must spend a significant amount of time in prayer, as evidenced by the life of Jesus. In order for any team, or partakers within the team, to determine God's will, prayer must be utilized. The Father must be sought.

Herschel H. Hobbs renders this idea by writing, "The phrase 'continued all night' was used by medical examiners to express the whole night vigil of a physician at the bedside of a patient."[30] It is difficult to wrap one's mind around this point. Emphasis is given to the importance of knowledge and wisdom in making decisions, but the primary component of this process should be prayer. In developing leadership teams, this component gives God the opportunity to show His will as to how the team directs their efforts.

Jesus chose His men after a night in prayer. As Morgan puts it, "He chose the men after communion with God. It was a choice of infinite wisdom."[31] Matthew 10

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[29]G. Campbell Morgan, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1931), 87.

[30]Herschel H. Hobbs, *An Exposition of The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966), 114.

[31]Morgan, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 87.

provides the names of those whom He selected, the group of men who would follow Jesus Christ and receive His training, eventually becoming leaders in the work for His Kingdom.

The followers from which Jesus made his selection may have been large, as the Bible attests to great numbers who gathered around Him, but in the end it was to become the Twelve. As they accompanied Jesus, they were watchful; for three years they received instruction and training that would ultimately prepare them to revolutionize the world. Immediately, questions are raised: Why did He choose twelve? What was His process of selection? What qualifications were deemed important to Him? Would formal education be helpful, or become a hindrance? Was the background of these men an issue? Jesus provides some practical points to His selection of the disciples, providing readers an insight into the selection process. Studying His approach helps the reader to ascertain valuable concepts.

Jesus called out His men in a day when true spiritual, godly leaders were not on the landscape of Israel. These twelve men would attempt to reach God's chosen people. Parenthetically, why did He embrace the number twelve? According to the study of Numerology, each number has a theological significance in Scripture, and to the trained scholar, numeric relationships exist in the Holy Word. Michael Wilkins states, "The number 12 has obvious salvation-historical significance, corresponding with the sons of Jacob, from whom the tribes of Israel descended."[32] The dynamics for Jesus selecting twelve was a historical model for Israel; it was a number that would resonate with believers as they recognized Him as the world's Messiah.[33] Few leaders today would read into this that Jesus advocated for a preset number of individuals when organizing a team or committee; but Jesus determined the number and names after communing with God. That is the key.

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[32]Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 87.

[33]Ibid.

The choosing of the twelve by Jesus had ramifications for not only the present, but for the future as well. G. Campbell Morgan comments,

> As the King stood in the midst of the twelve, He looked at them at the immediate present; but He also looked with those clear, far-seeing eyes into the near decades; and still further He looked down all the centuries; and speaking to the first apostles. He delivered a charge, which in its comprehensiveness and finality is applicable to the whole movement of His enterprise, until His second advent.[34]

Jesus knew the future. His message of hope would never change; methodologies come and go, but the message remains unchanged over the centuries. Even Christ recognized that abiding principles would face changing conditions, which, in turn, would necessitate the changing of methods.[35]

The fact that Jesus called uneducated men deserves earnest examination. What kinds of people are able to metamorphose the world? In the Old Testament example, Nehemiah chose men who feared God (Neh 7:2). Scripture is quiet about much of the background of these men, although one learns that these were working men. Jesus had a different agenda, one that was to expand His kingdom here on this earth. Robert E. Coleman suggests, "His concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitude would follow."[36]

The chosen men were only a small group of twelve, and their number included several who were uneducated (Acts 4:13). Some might have marveled why Jesus did not extend the call of discipleship to men of note, such as Nicodemus or Jairus—men who were respected in their society and given to esteem among their peers. This was of little consequence to Jesus, as He looked at individuals many would have overlooked, or felt to be unworthy.

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[34]G. Campbell Morgan, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1929), 103.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1963), 27.

When recruiting for a leadership team, all possibilities must be examined when searching for prospective team members; a team could easily overlook an individual who might be the best person to serve. In associational circles, it is customary to look to a pastor, staff person, or executive board member as a potential candidate for a position of leadership; unfortunately, the worthiest candidate may not fit into any of these categories. Jesus enlisted men that the Jewish community would have never dreamed the Messiah would use. Coleman speaks to this when he writes that these men "represented an average cross section of society in their day."[37] The disciples found themselves in the position of inaugurating a new age into the world; they would be reaching people across racial, national, gender, economic, and other barriers of social structure. Donald Hagner declares, "Twelve are the core of a new movement representing the new era and new activity of God."[38] The disciples would move into a far-reaching direction with the gospel.

After the call, Jesus trained His men for the task ahead (Matt 10:1); then He empowered them, after which they were sent forth in His name. This new team was given authority by their leader, Christ Jesus. They would serve as the core of leadership for other believers, enabling new workers around them.

A reader of Matthew's gospel finds a detailed narrative of what the disciples are to carry with them, and to whom they are to minister (Matt 10:5-23). Jesus gave a theological task to these men. Hagner comments,

> The fact that Jesus came initially to Israel and only to Israel underlined the faithfulness of God to His covenant promises, the continuity of His purposes, and also the truth that the church and not the synagogue, was to be under- stood as the true Israel; and Jewish Christians, although they are united by faith with gentile believers, have in no way believed in or become part of something alien to Israel's hope. Jesus is first and foremost Israel's Savior; Israel is saved in and through the church.[39]

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[37]Ibid., 29.

[38]Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33a (Waco, TX: Word, 1993), 267.

[39]Ibid., 271.

Christ directed the disciples to their own countrymen in the beginning. Later, they would go into the Gentile areas with the gospel. Once again, just like Nehemiah, Christ recognized the importance of flexibility. The disciples were to reach the lost sheep of Israel (Matt 10:5). This task would change as they learned more from the Savior. Instruction continued; in the end, Christ directed His disciples to reach the world (Matt 28:19-20). After the resurrection, their target audience would see considerable change at the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15). Simon Peter would share that the Good News must be presented to the Gentiles. Once again, a leadership team must learn that the horizons of ministry can enlarge itself from time to time.

Jesus modeled His expectations in Matthew 9:35. He demonstrated by example to His followers what they would be doing. Robert Coleman believes that the disciples only watched Jesus for the first year of their travels.[40]

Jesus also influenced his disciples as He taught in the synagogue. For example, Peter and John went to the temple to pray (Acts 3); these two disciples emulated the pattern of their Master while engaging in God's work. Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom, leading one to recall Simon Peter as he stood on the day of Pentecost, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom (Acts 2:14-47). Once again, Jesus demonstrated by example the work His team was to do.

Finally, Jesus models "healing every sickness" in Matthew 9:35; an action interspersed throughout the gospels. In the book of Acts, Peter and John changed a man's life forever by taking time to minister; they were on their way to pray, but were unable to overlook an opportunity to witness for Jesus Christ. Peter and John changed a man's life forever by taking the time to minister; they were on their way to pray, but were unable to overlook an opportunity to witness about their Savior. Peter and John were taught by the Master, lived their lives as examples of His instruction, and in the process,

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[40]Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 80.

accomplished much gain for the kingdom of God. In this case, their actions spoke louder than any words; an opportunity presented itself, and they readily responded. Their effectiveness as servants of the Lord was a direct result of their obedience to the teachings of Christ.

Later in His ministry, Jesus assigned specific tasks to seventy followers. G. Campbell Morgan affirmed that this mission was a planned campaign, and there was a reason for the new method.[41] Jesus worked with two groups: the disciples and the seventy. While some people may have a problem working with two groups, a leadership team principle presents itself: be prepared that the initial goal broadens. Jesus needed more help, leading to a call for additional followers to participate. Morgan agrees that Jesus saw the abundance of the harvest and called in more laborers.[42]

The seventy were sent forth, and Jesus rejoiced in the results (Luke 10:21). Robert Stein believes the reason Jesus rejoiced was because there was a strong emphasis on the realization of God's kingdom.[43] This effort accomplished a gathering of the harvest. Was there a leadership principle at work here? Yes, Jesus rejoices in results! As a leader, recognition is given for a successful outcome. Taking time to give thanks to God is beneficial. It will provide enthusiasm to complete the remainder of the task and may inspire new ones, as well.

After a time of rejoicing, Jesus continued instructing His followers (Luke 10:23). "The disciples witnessed a unique event," declares Stein.[44] Prophets and kings had expected this event, but it was not the kingdom they had perceived. Jesus was

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[41]Morgan, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 135.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 313.

[44]Ibid.

ushering in a new age, changing the course. Stein explains that the upheaval was severe because it was not being presented to the wise and powerful, but to those who had the faith of a little child.[45] Jesus set forth His kingdom into this world with His ministry, the calling and sending forth of the twelve, and of the seventy. The world was on the brink of transformation by virtue of this Man and His teams.

Conclusion

God elected to work through teams from the onset of time. Furthermore, He chose people to fulfill His sovereign will in this world, and as a result, humanity witnessed miraculous results. Moses, God's man at a crucial juncture in time, reaped the benefits of wise counsel from his father-in-law as he took a team approach in leading the children of Israel toward the Promised Land. Nehemiah furthered the use of teamwork and witnessed success as he carefully, earnestly, and intentionally bathed each step of work in prayer to God. In Jesus, one sees the perfect paradigm of prayer. Christ called out his disciples, trained them in all ways to do His work, and sent them forth, praying continually. Today's church recognizes the launch of the Great Commission and still prays for the plenteous harvest of souls.

Any leadership team can do no less than continue in prayer as the members struggle to accomplish their task. It must become their trademark. The learning of leadership principles requires research into the theories of developing such a team. Chapter 3 provides constructive principles of implementation required for development of the leadership team.

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[45]Ibid., 314.

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CHAPTER 3

PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING AND
LEADING AS A TEAM

Chapter 2 demonstrated the biblical significance of team building by
presenting the Old Testament examples of the Triune God, Moses, and Nehemiah.
Further instances of teamwork were presented from the New Testament as evidenced by
the instructions given by Jesus Christ to His disciples. Presently, the focus moves from
the biblical precedent of teams to the development of a team and its underlying
principles. A strong foundation of theory is crucial to the organization and development
of the leadership team. Consequently, the research of theory will aid in the strategy of
team development.

After extended reading, lengthy analysis, and a winnowing process, it became
necessary to determine those issues that apply best to the specifics of this project.
Therefore, this chapter addresses six principles judged to be of foremost benefit for
working and leading in a team environment: (1) shared vision, (2) understanding team
goals; (3) shared responsibility; (4) maintaining good communication; (5) evaluation of
process; and (6) leading the team.

A Team Must Share a Common Vision

A strong sense of mission and purpose must motivate the leadership team.
Understanding the purpose of an organization's existence is pertinent to achievement,
thus the leadership team must share a common vision. This sharing of vision is
mandatory for the success of the Purchase Area Baptist Association (PABA). Proverbs
29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained. . ." Without vision,
people do not have direction or importance. Henry Klopp points out that "vision doesn't

come from a committee it comes from God."[1] This point needs to be remembered in the process of developing vision. In reference to vision, the author states, "It is initiated by a leader and confirmed or affirmed by those around him-or her.[2] For any team, lack of vision will cause a lack of productivity. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner make a strong case for vision by concluding that "without vision, little could happen. All enterprises . . . begin with imagination and with the belief that what's merely an image can one day become real."[3]

In understanding vision, one must understand what vision is not. Vision is not achieving previous achievements. What has worked in the past might not conform to the present. A leadership team must develop a vision centered on the current need of the organization. While learning from the past is essential, it is possible, even probable, that present day ministry needs were never previously addressed.

Therefore, what is vision? George Cladis says that "uniting people around a cause" adequately serve the purpose of the vision for this project. Cladis claims vision "is like a drawstring that pulls the organization together and focuses it on its particular mission."[4] Although often used interchangeably vision and mission are not synonyms. Kennth O. Gangel states, "Mission describes why your ministry or organization was founded, what it is supposed to do. Vision describes where it will go in the future."[5] Vision is the recognition of where one is now and perception of where one will be in the future.

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[1]Henry Klopp, *The Ministry Playbook* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 140.

[2]Ibid.

[3]James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 93.

[4]George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 55.

[5]Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 251.

A clear vision provides direction. An organization may not completely know how it is going to accomplish a task, but the vision must be in place; it will be the focal point of any endeavor. Cladis affirms that the vision must order the work of the team, and it is the responsibility of the team to keep the vision alive.[6]

Keeping the vision viable through the work of the team may become more burdensome as the process continues, and changes emerge. Maintaining a workable vision is part of the price of leadership. Team members should recognize the fluidity of vision and its accompanying goals. Consequently, a visionary leader must be flexible and open to transition, as suggested by Robert D. Dale.[7] The leadership team must recognize and acknowledge this.

Furthermore, the team may experience difficulties in relating to the vision since each person becomes part of the team with preconceived ideas and experiences. Inflated egos, personal agendas, and spiritual immaturity may be present. Whatever the scenario, there will likely be a need for discussion and compromise in deciding upon a workable vision. What one person may see as best, another may view as shortsighted or unreachable. The need of relating to the vision continues throughout the process of this project especially as the vision is fine-tuned. It could become a critical point for the team. Dale points out that the differences of opinion of the vision may stress relationships to breaking points.[8] While this may seem a little melodramatic, the team cannot shrug off the importance of working toward a clear, acceptable vision.

Maintaining a clear focus can yield abundant benefits. "Vision is a powerful asset for the leaders," Dale writes.[9] It renders a target, inspires a goal(s), and encourages

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[6]Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church*, 61.

[7]Robert D. Dale, *Keeping the Dream Alive* (Nashville: Broadman, 1988), 22.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid., 14.

momentum. A leadership team can become passionate and energetic with an appropriate

vision, hopefully translating their zeal into action.

The benefit of vision will provide continuity for the life and work of the

leadership team. Kouzes and Posner refer to the benefit of vision as a "long-term

payoff," a continued boom in the life and work of the leadership.[10] The end result will

"help people deal with any short-term setbacks that they might experience" and help

them understand that early problems are to be expected.[11]

A Team Must Understand Team Goals

The first step in understanding team goals is to see the importance of clear

focus. An unfocused camera will undoubtedly take a useless picture; the analogy can

apply to the leadership team: an unfocused team will flounder aimlessly rather than

sharpen their attention. The results would be less than satisfying. Dave Francis and Dan

Young specify that a team must ask, "What are we here to do?"[12] This is a question

designed to create discussion for the leadership team and aid in sharpening the team's

focus. With a sharp, unambiguous focus, the team will be in a better position to set its

goals. Members will know that the overriding scope of the goals is to help the

associational churches to be able to do more Kingdom work in this world for Jesus

Christ; but the major work will be in creating specific goals to accomplish this task.

Discussion of the goals may cause the leadership team to sort through an array

of ideas, which may or may not be pertinent to focus. The leadership team must evaluate

the ideas and determine what will be effective. In determining what is effective, Ervin F.

Henkelmann and Stephen J. Carter state, "Having an idea about what might work is not

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[10]Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 140.

[11]Ibid., 141.

[12]Dave Francis and Don Young, *Improving Work Groups: A Practical Manual for Team Building* (La Jolla, CA: University Associates, 1979), 8.

the same as knowing what has worked."[13] Knowledge plays a significant role in focus, and the knowledge present in a leadership team will assuredly be diverse. The resulting variance can be beneficial, or it can be a hindrance. The leadership team hopefully reminds themselves that they are there for a reason rather than trying to satisfy personal agendas.

As the leadership team navigates through its task, the members must distinguish between an efficient or competent team, and one that is effective and produces the desired outcome. Although similar, these words are not the same. Efficiency gets the job done with the least amount of wasted time and resources, but effectiveness also takes into consideration subjective elements such as worthiness, desirability, and truthfulness. The members could view themselves as effective upon completion of a required purpose; while task fulfillment is commendable, there may still be hurdles if the team was not effective. Peter Drucker suggests that an efficient executive is doing things right, but an effective executive focuses on doing the right things.[14] While Drucker's findings are applied to the business world, his thoughts are applicable in the context of this research. Drucker pinpoints what he defines as five habits or practices of an effective executive:

> 1. Effective executives know where their time goes. 2. Effective executives focus on outward contributions. 3. Effective executives build on strengths. 4. Effective executives concentrate on the few major areas where superior performance will produce outstanding results. 5. Effective executives make effective decisions.[15]

Frequently, success is critiqued in terms of efficiency. This zeal for expediency only deals with the process, whereas effectiveness conforms to achievement, and that is where

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[13]Ervin F. Henkelmann and Stephen J. Carter, *How to Develop a Team Ministry and Make it Work* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1985), 37

[14]Peter Drucker, *The Effective Executive* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 23.

[15]Ibid., 23-24.

its attention should be placed.

When the leadership team understands its purpose, it must set the goals for the association. In 1981, George Doran presented the S.M.A.R.T. method for goal setting.[16] It has since become a classic model and is worthy of note in this instance. S stands for specific.[17] Goals can often be too inclusive and widespread. The team needs to give attention to the process of abbreviating and simplifying; for this to happen, the members may spend considerable time generating goals specific enough for their purpose. When goals are too vague or expansive, they tend to be overwhelming, causing the team to become paralyzed and unable to function. Broadly stated goals can also meet with problems of accountability since objectives that are too generic or ill-defined are difficult to gauge. Generalized goals do not produce measureable results or benchmarks; clear and precise goals, on the other hand, are attainable and measureable, which advances this discussion to Doran's second method in goal setting.

M stands for measureable.[18] Goals must be measureable. If not, they cannot be manageable. The leadership team must be able to look from point A to point B in order to measure the progress of the goal. While some goals are far reaching, others can and should be full of short scope. Short-term measurements can give a sense of accomplishment when team members notice the progress of their goal. The small measurable accomplishments can give satisfaction and momentum in the project. With calculable, measureable goals the team will completely establish criteria that have to be met. This criteria keeps the team focused and on track for the projected goals

A stands for attainable.[19] Goals must be reachable; reaching goals may require

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[16]George T. Doran, "There's a S.M.A.R.T. Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives," *Management Review* 70 (1981): 35-36.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

dividing or separating into smaller parts in order to be attainable. A team can have brainstorming sessions and come away with ambitious and grandiose ideas, but find that such affected goals do not meet with reality. They should stretch the limits of their capabilities, but not reach into the realm of impossibility. Though failure is encountered from time to time, an action-oriented team reaching for an attainable goal spells the beginning of success.

R stands for relevant.[20] If the team members are not able to give full and meaningful reasons for why they are considering a particular goal, it is probably not relevant. Any goal must be germane to the present environment and pertinent to the task. Yesterday's goal may be out of touch with today's association. In order to make a difference, the established goals must have the highest impact possible, which will surely mean they are of the utmost relevancy.

T stands for timely.[21] The leadership team must give consideration to the importance of time in their goal setting. Implementing a timetable with each goal may be paramount to keeping a team focused. Deadlines need to be set for the completion of the goal. Without the time element, team members can lose momentum and goals can disappear.

That all the individuals on the leadership team fully understand and appreciate the goals they have established cannot be overstated. In addressing this point, Gangel gives voice to the issue by saying, "when members of a ministry team do not understand the corporate goals they cannot successfully move toward them."[22] He further gives direction for the leadership team by suggesting that they identify personal needs that

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[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 309.

require evaluation.[23] The leader of the team must evaluate the personal needs of each team member. He or she can accomplish this task by asking for prayer requests and evaluating the personal prayer needs of participants. Gangel states, "The key to serving on a team is to sublimate those concerns for the good of the team."[24] In understanding goals, a leadership team must look at many examples as they move to accomplish these goals.

A Team Must Initiate Shared Responsibility

The leadership team, whether finding their goals and tasks to be sundry and many or singular and specific, would do well to commence with a sharing of responsibility among the members. If one member shoulders too much or too little, the team suffers. This section reflects upon the areas of cooperation, collaboration, team approach, the principles of leading and following, and the influence of shared responsibility.

An effective leadership team requires cooperation among its members. George Cladis states, "People today hunger for authentic relationships." [25] The leadership team must be in agreement that they are a part of something that is going to bring a positive impact for the churches of an association. Nowadays, time is a precious commodity, and people do not want their time wasted in trivial meetings. The leader of the leadership team must be honest and truthful with the team. When the team perceives truthfulness and honesty, meetings can progress and the process of cooperation persists.

As mentioned earlier, the team must be in agreement. In order for them to be in agreement the team must know each other. Kouzes and Posner state, "Leaders make it a point to provide team members with opportunities to associate and intermingle."[26] The

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church*, 115.

[26]Kouzes and Posner, *Leadership Challenge*, 140.

team leader must create an environment for the team to get to know one another. If a person has attended a seminar or conference, often the leader accords the attendee an opportunity to introduce himself to the large group or to a small number of people within the group. Though the obvious reasoning here is the issuance of information, this exercise provides the additional asset of boosting relationships among the team. Some individuals may quickly point out reluctance or distaste for this type of activity, but usually agree to its benefits. The leadership team needs to have the same feelings regarding exercises to promote relationships among the members

Kouzes and Posner assert that another strategy for promoting cooperation is "to promote long term payoffs."[27] In the process of accomplishing goals, setbacks will happen; this will usually lead to a waning of enthusiasm, or worse, a loss of momentum. A refocusing on the team's vision and its resultant benefits can enhance the cooperation when momentum is lost.

When setbacks occur, the leadership team acknowledges a breakdown in the process of accomplishing the goal. The acknowledgement brings discussion of the breakdown. Critical thinking comes into play as the team evaluates the breakdown. The evaluation may lead to an atmosphere of denial or objection. As team members struggle to accept the results, they should be certain in their knowledge that unaccepted criticism can fester. Team members who cannot accept criticism will not promote cooperation; instead they may create a climate of discord and strife. The leader must keep his members focused on completing the goals. The issue here is not an individual team member, but the breakdown. If all members are sharing responsibility, the team moves past the hurdle.

While cooperation is vital to a leadership team, collaboration is another key component in shared responsibility. Collaboration is working together to achieve a goal. George Cladis states, "People need to be valued, involved, respected, and afforded a

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[27]Ibid.

sense of dignity as they collaborate to accomplish something meaningful."[28] Cladis further comments,

> Team Ministry has a solid and biblical and theological foundation that, in most cases, sets it above Lone Ranger heroics as the most meaningful way to serve in the church. A team that learns how to discern spiritual gifts of the individual team members and how to have members work together, pray hard, and share information and energy in order to move toward a sharply defined mission, vision, or cause, is an extremely powerful unit of ministry.[29]

When a team meets, the individual members bring their background, ideas, and values to the table. Each member will receive a welcoming recognition for his or her input. Attention and consideration in all discussions is obligatory. The level of respect can only strengthen the bonds of trust for the leadership team. John Baldoni remarks, "Develop and reinforce the bond of trust that must exist between leader and follower."[30] The bond of trust enables the individual to work and function as part of the team.

Flexibility must be present when team members are collaborating. Staunch, rigid decorum may prevent some members from participating. This adamant and unbending style seldom works.

Appreciating and adhering to a team approach can be a substantial tool for the leadership team. The people involved would first recognize the necessity of leadership team meetings. These meetings should progress so as to encourage its members and accord them the opportunities to analyze concepts, freely share pertinent data, thoroughly discuss goals, and assimilate information. Ample time constraints should allow for all members to give and receive input. John Baldoni believes that by permitting sufficient discussion time "teams and individuals take ownership and make it happen."[31] Taking

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[28]Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church*, 115.

[29]Ibid., 88.

[30]John Baldoni, *Great Communication Secrets of Great Leaders* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2003), 46.

[31]Ibid., 50.

ownership increases the momentum toward achieving goals.

Another element of understanding the team approach is accountability. Each individual leadership team member must be accountable to the team as it completes the appointed task. Accountability cannot totally fall on the shoulders of the leader; everyone has his or her place at the accountability table. While accountability seems like a negative term, it can used in positive ways. Cladis notes, "Group accountability either helps team members not pulling their weight to get on board and unite with the team or results in their departure."[32] Accountability gives enthusiasm to the team after completion of certain tasks. Also, accountability provides clarity about the responsibilities of each leadership team member and shares the expectations of the team's progress and ultimate task fulfillment.

Any discourse of shared responsibility would include the principles of leading and following within the team, and they are applicable in this situation. Building trust forms the cornerstone of these principles. According to Kouzes and Posner, "individuals who are unable to trust other people often fail to become successful leaders or even noteworthy followers"[33] A lack of trust demobilizes any leadership team. Additionally, Kouzes and Posner comment,

> What happens when people do not trust each other? They will ignore, disguise, and distort facts, ideas, conclusions, and feelings they believe will increase their vulnerability to others. Not surprisingly, the likelihood of misunderstanding and misinterpretation will increase. When you don't trust someone you resist them influencing you. You are suspicious and unreceptive to their proposal and goals, suggestions for reaching these goals and their definition of criteria and methods for evaluating progress.[34]

The behavior of the leadership team leader is critical in establishing trusting relationships. Kouzes and Posner believe that the leader's behavior determines the level

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[32]Cladis, *Leading the Team Based Church*, 115.

[33]Kouzes and Posner, *Leadership Challenge*, 146.

[34]Ibid., 147.

of trust within the group.[35] Trust is not an issue for more mundane tasks, but changes quickly when a new concept or questionable point arises; the value of trust becomes apparent. When there is trust, there is openness to the task. Leadership team members respond more honestly and candidly when they perceive trust.

This openness influences the shared responsibility of team members. They can feel empowered by the realization that others hear their voice and it counts for something; with this realization comes an increased effectiveness among teams. Kouzes and Posner show a study on the difference of power distribution given among teams. Their research revealed that where employees where given power and the ability to influence the results, high performances resulted.[36] The study goes on to show poor performances where employers, either by intention or by oversight, disallowed their employees the chance to share in the responsibility of the institution.[37]

A Team Must Maintain Good Communication

Though listening receives praise as a fundamental communication skill, the leadership team must assume the burden of maintaining accurate and effective exchanges of information and ideas. A collapse of teamwork at this point can result in a waste of precious time and in the extreme, effect serious harm to the team's efforts. A disruption in communication prevents teamwork in all areas. According to Kenneth Gangel, "We can't stay too busy to stay in touch."[38]

A leadership team member engulfs himself or herself in a task and can easily forget to communicate with the team on important breakthroughs. Gangel also mentions

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[35]Ibid., 150.

[36]Ibid., 164.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 134.

that it is crucial for team members to stay in touch with one another, thus ensuring that they are moving in the right direction.[39] Sometimes it is easy to be side tracked. How beneficial it is to simply contact a leadership team member and discuss what is happening. When the leadership team stays in touch, there are opportunities for new ideas and better solutions to emerge.

Leadership team members engage themselves in various areas of communication due to its essentiality. Aubrey Malphurs asserts, "Poor communication from the leadership to those in the organization that, in turn, invites a lack of trust is a warning signal."[40] Weekly meetings are routine for leadership teams, but there must also be communication between those meetings. Gangel affirms this idea of communication between meetings.[41] It is highly probable to find that a team member could misinterpret a point of a presentation, or through absenteeism, miss the information altogether. A give and take discussion between the member and his team would be in order. Any misunderstandings or confusion would need addressing prior to the next meeting; otherwise, advancement by the team is hampered.

The importance of agendas cannot be overemphasized. It is worth the added effort of generating proposed topics ahead of time in order to promote a smoother meeting with less interruption and down time. The meeting finishes with little accomplishment due to the lack of proper preparation. Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin affirm that meetings should cover a set of reasonably standard topics that give evidence of advance planning, thus promoting the flow of communication.[42]

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[39]Ibid., 311-12.

[40]Aubrey Malphurs, *Value Driven Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 83.

[41]Gangel, *Team Leadership for Christian Ministry*, 311.

[42]Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 147.

The leadership team must not simply hear and follow along with the leader, but fully comprehend and fathom the information and direction given by that leader. Baldoni uses the term "brief back," in which the leader encourages the team to restate briefly what they have learned and their grasp of its implications.[43] While "brief back" seems as a task in redundancy, the benefits outweigh the amount of time taken from the meeting. After all, a breakdown in communication usually traces itself to ambiguous points, distorted phrases, or perhaps one misinterpreted word.

Team meetings provide a time for issues of clarification. Obviously, this is the ideal venue for further explanations, but additional thoughts and questions invariably arise after adjournment. It may become necessary for members to discuss and analyze in a manner far removed from the meeting site. In today's wireless world, little effort is required to connect team members. The use of phones and computers, with their accompanying features, allow communication in ways earlier generations never experienced. Individuals must note, however, that even modern technology such as conference calling, texting, e-mailing, videoing, and Skype still require proper procedures and record keeping. Though not difficult, members should take sufficient time to keep appropriate notes of all communication. Team members may forget details, misinterpret a comment, or simply ignore the information. If precise and accurate records are an ongoing requirement of the team, the members need not fear a lapse of the communication process in this area.

Though the act of communicating is simply the giving and receiving of data, whether verbal or nonverbal, the dynamics of this give and take can spell the difference between communication that is smooth, conciliatory, and effective and communications bordering in distasteful and stressful. The dynamics of communication are openly displayed in the process of interviewing. Not only does the team work collectively to

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[43]Baldoni, *Great Communication Secrets of Great Leaders*, 166.

understand and accomplish the task, but individual members must work singularly to develop appropriate listing and responding skills. It is a near certainty that problems will occur if the leadership team is not prepared to deal with the issues that arise in this context. Rubin and Rubin offer the following on this subject:

> Responsive interviewing can be nerve-racking. During an interview you have to figure out not only what people are saying, but also what they mean, and then work out an appropriate, thought-provoking follow up question. To handle the fear that you will not be able to think fast enough on your feet to do good interviews or that you might lose track of what you intended to ask, some qualitative researchers prepare conversational guides, protocols, jottings, questions, matrices/checklists or outlines that give guidance on what main questions to ask and of whom.[44]

Questioning can be a frustrating task when a leadership team member does not comprehend what the individual or individuals are saying. Team members need to develop and hone their listening skills; as these skills become sharper, sorting through information becomes easier. They will more easily focus on the main points of discussion, encouraging further elaboration. As team members establish a general direction of conversation, their questions become more specific. The more questions asked, the clearer the responses will become.

The previously mentioned conversational guide may be of tremendous help; conversely, the team must remember that it is only a guide, not the Bible. If the collaboration has a smooth flow and is progressing in a positive way, do not worry about the location of the guide; it is a tool to use only if needed. Rubin and Rubin encourage the idea that the questioning period be seen as an opportunity to be educated and caution against asking prearranged questions.[45] The leadership team should remember that most question and answer periods are not train wrecks; hopefully, they will provide occasions to interact in such a way to learn more, see deeper, and perceive better.

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[44]Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 146-47.

[45]Ibid., 147.

Human beings love praise, both for themselves and others; it builds self-esteem and confidence. Positive reinforcement is a tool in the arsenal of creating good communication skills. It has the ability to strengthen the team in its work and sustain members as they labor toward the completion of the task. Praise carries the potential of changing a situation for the better; each member of the leadership team should be aware of this weighty skill.

It is important to tell an individual or team about a great job each is doing, but directness and timeliness are key. James M. Jenks and John M. Kelley state, "Secondhand praise carries far less force than direct expressions of expression or attitude."[46] The leader needs to affirm each completed task and give praise to the leadership team in a way that is honest, clear, and suitable. Positive reinforcement prevents apathy and stagnation within the team.

In quite an elementary way, positive reinforcement boils down to encouragement. "It is not enough to encourage with words alone. Actions must be wed to affirmations," wrote J. D. Payne.[47] The leadership team must feel that they are making a difference and positive reinforcement gives the team proof of that difference.

As people communicate, it is inevitable that conflicts, both small and great, will appear. Thus conflict management becomes a matter of urgency as the team continues to maintain effective communication. Payne states, "It is important to remember that how the team members respond to conflict is critical to both the overall health of the team and to the fulfillment of their mission."[48] Struggles and strife can quickly destroy what has taken hours or weeks to create. Kenneth Gangel observes that

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[46]James M. Jenks and John M. Kelly, *Don't Do, Delegate* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1985), 60.

[47]J. D. Payne, *The Barnabas Factors* (Smyrna, DE: Missional, 2008), 110.

[48]Ibid., 117.

conflict is inevitable, especially when the people involved are emotionally charged due to the interest in their task.[49] Popular opinion suggests that individuals avoid conflict due to its negative connotation, but Gangel sees no inherent destructive or constructive element.[50] Warren Bennis expands this idea:

> People see things differently. For example, marketing sees products differently from the way their designers do, or a Princeton graduate has a different perception of life from a retired colonel. Where one sits determines where one stands. In these general areas, the manager is apt to rush about, trying to encourage workers to learn, insisting that they be honest, and literally intervening in conflicts. The leader, on the other hand, has already created an environment in which opportunity, honesty, and a kind of automatic mediation device exists.[51]

When members appreciate the fact that all people see things differently, the team progresses in its resolution of the conflict. They offer latitude to dissenting or confusing views. In the end, positive results can occur. Looking for the win-win solution can provide avenues to solving conflict. The leadership team must be proactive in the ways of diplomacy and negotiation. Confrontation is a stage in the process of resolution, but Gangel reiterates that the issue, not the person, is to be the object of the confrontation.[52] These simple ideas can smooth out a situation before it reaches a critical level.

A Team Must Evaluate Process

As the leadership team continues its work toward completion of the task(s), members should continually monitor the entire process. The value placed on communication and collaboration come into play as the team reviews the lessons learned, like its successes and failures.[53] The content of these learned lessons reinforces the

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[49]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 188.

[50]Ibid., 189.

[51]Warren Bennis, *Why Leaders Can't Lead* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 158.

[52]Ibid., 190.

[53]Kouzes and Posner, *Leadership Challenge*, 76.

project when evaluated. The focus is no longer on where the team is headed, but how they get to the final destination. The deliberation on the "how" as opposed to the "where" gives further development and refinement to the team.

The ultimate question may finally be "Can we do it better?" Certainly, this motivating question guides the team on its journey. Lessons learned provide insight in the process of evaluation, but the team should not shelve this process until final completion. According to Kouzes and Posner, "If you wait until everything is perfect, you will never launch a new product or make an improvement. The window of opportunity can close very quickly."[54] Teachable moments arise with the team; it should then be a matter of immediacy to seize every moment and use it to aid in evaluating the team's process.

Socialization becomes a valuable asset to the team as the evaluation process culminates. Members will have learned new information and at the same time integrated it with norms, values, behaviors, and social skills appropriate to their positions on the team. This exercise unifies the team.

A Team Must Have a Leader

The greater emphasis of this chapter relates to the principles of working together as a team; barely veiled, though, are several responsibilities pertaining solely to the team leader, the helmsman ultimately accountable for the team's results. Kouzes and Posner express their guiding principles for the team leader: he or she will challenge the process, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart.[55] It should be understood and accepted that success is never a sure thing. A spiritually mature leader will acknowledge and accede that all teams bring varying unknown issues to the table.

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[54]Ibid., 74.

[55]Ibid., 14.

Of course, a leader would not accept a team doomed to fail; rather, he would be dauntless in all efforts, while realizing that any team issues can affect final results.

In challenging the process, the team leader finds opportunities that can, if accepted, change the way the process proceeds. As Kouzes and Posner write, "Leaders seek and accept challenging opportunities to test their abilities."[56] The leader may find success as he experiments with different theories and adopts the leadership posture praised by Payne: "One of the true characteristics of great leaders is to take calculated risks."[57] The leader may be required to assert his confidence and assurance with the team, but the efforts made in challenging the process can be beneficial.

The team leader has the responsibility of motivating and leading others to act. Gangel calls this empowering.[58] The leader delegates certain powers to members of the team. This action allows members of the team to take responsibility and exercise accountability. The leader serves as a mentor, but the team completes the work. The leader strengthens the team. Kouzes and Posner think that when one strengthens others, the level of influence also strengthens the mentor.[59]

This influence helps leaders to model the way for the team. Regardless of the time during which the team has interacted together, there will be peaks and valleys. Times of achievement provide learning experiences in leader modeling as successfully as times of failure and frustration. The leader sets the tone and the example via "leading by doing."[60] Modeling, for the leader, will become an exercise in discernment as he

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[56]Ibid., 29.

[57]Payne, *The Barnabas Factors*, 90.

[58]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 199.

[59]Kouzes and Posner, *Leadership Challenge*, 165.

[60]Ibid., 189.

assesses each situation. He must remember, too, that visibility is the key; he must remain available and approachable. The best leader is the one who models actively and willingly, even in distasteful circumstances. Kouzes and Posner provide a summation of modeling:

> Modeling is the way leaders make their visions tangible. It is the bricks and mortar, nails and lumber, carpeting and furniture, electrical outlets and placement of windows, and all of the hundreds of other details that go into realizing the architect's model of a new home. It is the countless lines of code, electrical subroutines, and the like that enable the computer software to produce the desired word processing output. It is the evidence, fingers on the glass, footprints on the floor that tells us that the leaders have done something.[61]

Lastly, the leader "encourages the heart."[62] He is a cheerleader for the leadership team. The leader will recognize when to push the team, as well as when to remain silent. Encouraging and celebrating individual achievements come naturally enough and are appropriate, but not at the expense of, or with greater zeal than, the combined efforts of the group.[63] Tasks become mountainous and nerves wear thin, so the leader must constantly fuse eagerness and enthusiasm into the project. Encouragement will be a regular feature of the leader's interaction with the team. In interviews with church planters, Payne found that the all-encompassing idea shared by these individuals who are investing their lives in ministry to others is that people need to be valued.[64] This value transcends any boundary or measure of man. Jesus Christ, the Great Modeler, illustrated His unfathomable value for every person as He led a sinless life and died a martyr's death. As the team leader lives in God's grace, he should find that he can do no less than see value in the team members and act accordingly.

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[61]Ibid., 190.

[62]Ibid., 259.

[63]Ibid., 260.

[64]Payne, *The Barnabas Factors*, 106.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 presented the basics for developing a leadership team. Each team member must be committed to completing the items outlined in the chapter. Dedication to these tasks helps ensure the success of the leadership team. As they continue to work together, they must also regularly evaluate their progress, both individually and collectively. This evaluation can be critical at times, but it provides guidance and direction for the team.

In chapter 4, the implementation of the project is described. Lessons plans for the fifteen weeks are given. Evaluation from the leadership team is also given.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Leadership team development for the Purchase Area Baptist Association in

Benton, Kentucky began on September 21, 2011. The project lasted fifteen consecutive

weeks, concluding on December 28, 2011. The project consisted of one week of

preparation and recruitment, twelve weeks of training for the leadership team, and two

weeks of analysis by the participants.

Lesson Plans

Week 1: Preparation and
Pre-Project Survey

The Purchase Area Baptist Association (PABA) is comprised of eleven

churches in far western Kentucky. As the Director of Missions, I requested a

representative from each congregation to serve in this project. Eight of the eleven

churches committed to participation.

A pre-project survey (see Appendix 1) was distributed to the eight churches in

an associational meeting in order to determine the attitude toward, and needs of, the

Purchase Area Baptist Association. The survey was designed in such a way as to offer

the churches of PABA an opportunity to give voice to their perception of the association

and provide input on its future direction. Additionally, survey participants provided their

age group, how long they had been a Christian, and their level of education.

The results of the survey revealed that the churches struggled in knowing what

the association does. There was evidence that the churches had a grasp of the

association's purpose, however, there was an appreciable lack of understanding as to the

actual work done by the association. Respondents could not adequately identify areas where the association was meeting needs.

Week 2

The first class for the leadership team was September 28, 2011. Each participant agreed to attend weekly seminars for the duration of the project. After discussion of time constraints by the team members, we decided to alternate the seminar days on a weekly basis. An e-mail reminder was the approved technique of reminding participants of the day and time of each meeting.

The seminar began with a discussion on the difference between a mission statement and a vision statement, as the two concepts are often confusing. If the churches are not clear on mission and vision, the association suffers. Kenneth Gangel clarifies these concepts. In reference to chapter 3, Gangel states, "Mission describes why an organization exists; vision describes what the organization will do about its mission in the future."[1] As an association, PABA exists as a group of Southern Baptist churches cooperating together to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to reach the world with the gospel. The vision statement for PABA is to become a network for encouragement, inspiration, and information for pastors, and a channel through which the member churches will be challenged and better equipped to pursue the work of the Kingdom in meaningful, creative, and God-honoring ways. These two statements have a theme. For the mission statement, the theme is to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ; for the vision statement, it is to aid the member churches to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8).

Team participants reviewed the past, present, and future of PABA from the leadership team perspective. The leadership team reviewed the pre-project survey. Since

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[1]Kenneth O. Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 277.

PABA is a new association, a short history provided much-needed information for the leadership team to review. This information revealed areas where the association had been successful in the past and points of concern where success was lacking. Though PABA is still in its infancy stage, certain particulars were apparent. These particulars, both positive and negative, provided valuable data for the leadership as they began to engage in formulating a plan for the association.

In looking at the present, "Where are we going as an association?" was the question primarily on the minds of the leadership team. Team members have an ongoing realization that an evaluation of the present is essential to developing a plan for the future. Gangel comments,

> The evaluation step measures the degree of success or failure in our achievement of ministry objectives. What we learn from evaluation establishes the basis for changes in the organization which may result in re-identifying needs, re-clarifying objectives, and restructuring methods and ministries.[2]

Evaluation will be a continual process for the leadership team and a determining factor for the future of the association. The eventual state of the association pivots on dutiful evaluation, insightful interpretation of the results, and implementation of needed actions or corrections.

The initial seminar met with full participation and enthusiasm from all attendees. Members exhibited a sincere interest in the success of the new association and proffered suggestions on the needs and attitudes of the member churches. The meeting was closed in prayer.

Week 3

Week 3 dealt with the spiritual discipline of corporate prayer. Though a beginning and ending prayer would normally be expected at a Baptist gathering, it is recognized within the team membership that prayer is to be the established component in

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[2]Ibid., 373.

all actions taken by the association. The leadership team needs to seek the face of God in leading the churches of PABA. R. A. Torrey insists, "The one who wishes to succeed in the Christian life must lead a life of prayer."[3] The PABA leadership team has embraced Torrey's pronouncement as they pray for God's wisdom and seek His direction. Through speaking to missionaries, J. D. Payne makes an equally valid assertion: "When missionaries neglect communication with their heavenly Father, they are risking disaster."[4] The last result that a leadership team would desire is disaster. Praying individually and corporately as a leadership team, the leadership team minimizes the opportunity for disaster. The leadership team responded by asking the churches to have concerts of prayer for the association.

Team members learned the principle of praying more and saying less. This principle emphasizes that a leadership team member should spend ample time in prayer before making decisions on matters rather than succumbing to a quick-fix, answer according to their own understanding. Often, believers do not allow the Lord the opportunity to work in a situation because they have not consulted Him, or have not been patient enough in seeking His guidance. Matthew 7:7 provides a theological structure upon which all believers can depend. Members in attendance bore testimony to the ill fate of unoffered prayers.

The last segment of this seminar focused on praying for one another based on the framework found in Philippians 1:9-11 and James 5:16. The truth found in these passages nurtures a deeper dimension of relationships for the team as they work together. Knowing that someone cares enough to spend time praying for individual needs reinforces positive attitudes within the group, leading to positive actions.

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[3]R. A, Torrey, *The Power of Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), 54.

[4]J. D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys, and Hows of Global Church Planting* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009), 73.

As the meeting drew to its close, those in attendance reemphasized their reliance upon prayer and its revered status within the team. The process of any endeavor must be saturated in prayer to seek the Father's will. The leadership team responded by saying that many times prayer fell by the wayside because schedules were too busy. Their unifying prayer can be summarized by Payne: "I pray that prayer would not become something that is done now and then, but rather a vital piece of strategy upon all the other pieces rest."[5]

Week 4

Week 4 concentrated on understanding the role of servant leadership. This seminar began with a question, "What makes a person great?" Participants displayed ardent listening skills and spirited interaction, especially as a second question was presented, "What does the world call greatness?" The leadership team responded with comments ranging from modest, earnest statements to keen observations to animated, even vigorous gestures. Then, the final question of the introduction came, "What does Jesus call greatness?" Matthew 20:26 reminds us that Jesus said, "but whoever wishes to be great shall be your servant." The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gave a new perspective on greatness, a sobering and sometimes difficult truth.

This exercise led the leadership team into the main question, "What makes an association great?" The answer to this question is servant leadership, which led the group into further scrutiny. Gangel affirms that we should see ourselves as servants rather than lords once a person becomes a part of a ministry team.[6] Servant leadership focuses on serving rather than leading. When a person leads, he takes charge and controls the situation. In servant leadership, the focus is on serving. Servant leadership focuses on

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[5]Ibid., 75.

[6]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 362.

the need of the individual leadership team members. A member of the leadership team will review the needs of the team members first. Leith Anderson states, "Leaders are people with the same sickness, sins, and struggles as everyone else."[7] A leadership team member does not need to think about the areas where he or she can take charge and delegate, but, instead, where he or she can serve.

In this lesson, the leadership team laid bare their preconceived ideas about serving on the team. They saw the importance of serving one another, as well as serving the association. The principle of mutual submission provided clarification in this area. Rather than utilizing "the doing things my way" approach, the leadership team shares each team member's perspective and together formulates a method.

In sharing each team member's perspective, the team learned the important essentials of servant leadership, including love, empowerment, vision, humility, and trust.[8] The team that has learned these essentials will find the path of simultaneously leading and serving to be easier, more fulfilling, and pleasing to God.

Week 5

The lesson topic for week 5 was accountability. This lesson examined how God expects His leaders to be accountable to Him. In the Old Testament, Moses learned that God held him accountable when he struck the rock instead of speaking to the rock. (Numbers 20:10-12) As a result, Moses received judgment from God for his disobedience. The role of accountability is significant as it strengthens the administrative side of the team. The giving of reports reinforces accountability by establishing a record of what the leadership team member has been doing. It gives the opportunity to address

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[7]Leith Anderson, *Leadership that Works* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany, 1999), 150.

[8]Jane T. Waddell, "Servant Leadership Research Roundtable" August 2008 [on-line]; accessed 15 August 2011; available from http://regent.edu/acad/global/ publications/sl_proceedings/2006/waddell.pdf; Internet, 3-4.

activities and achievements of the team. Indirectly, it further focuses on the weaknesses and strengths of the selected task or tasks. The written report provides information that shows activity, or lack thereof, toward the completion of tasks; as a result, it can contribute to changes that need to be made. Written reports augment group and individual accountability.

In the lesson, discussion was held about the importance of review meetings as a route to greater accountability. These would be specially called meetings for the sole purpose of reviewing progress, which, in turn, measures performance. These meetings would give opportunities to adjust goals; for example, redefining a goal that is vague or too generalized. The goals of the project provide structure by which results are measured; therefore, they need to be specific and attainable. Due to innumerable factors, the project may not proceed as intended; these meetings can be the trigger needed to reevaluate or refocus where desired. Basically, the meetings monitor the progress and results of the team and its members; they are a vital tool for accountability.

On a personal note of accountability, I worked on developing my skills in mentoring and training the leadership team. I realized that in mentoring, or coaching, it is understood that the trainer must ask questions instead of giving a personal opinion concerning an issue. Through the process of asking questions, a mentor provides direction for those under him or her. This recognition gave me direction in completing my ministry goals.

Week 6

This lesson dealt with the dynamic of communication, beginning with communication breakdown. An interruption in communication within any group can be precipitated by a number of factors and must to be addressed as needed. Seven strategies were discussed based on an article titled "How to Avoid Communication Breakdown:" "1) Never Assume, 2) Avoid Unexplained Silence, 3) Avoid Talking out of Negative

Emotions, 4) Avoid Confusing Instructions, 5) Avoid Holding Back Your Energy, 6)

Stop Negating Eye Contact, and 7) Handle Wrong Tones." [9]

Discussion then transitioned to the value of sustained communication. A

pattern of regular, dependable flow of information allows individual freedom while still

requiring corporate accountability within the group. Modern technology affords the team

members opportunities for advice, notification, transfer, and dissemination with little

effort through the internet. Such a communication pattern serves as a bulletin board

(similar to instant messaging) for the leadership team, as members are able to post

messages to which other team members can respond. This provides the leadership team

the chance to communicate with each other as needed.

Lastly, the team members examined the structuring for communication.

Regardless of the quantity of communication, the quality of that give-and-take can be a

factor to the success of the project. Gangel presents eight strategies to accomplish this

task:

> 1) Avoid verbal instructions alone, 2) Use informal setting to facilitate dialogue, 3) Use careful planning before any group presentation, 4) Try to speak to small groups whenever possible, 5) Know the audience, 6) Know the subject matter as well, 7) Attempt to establish rapport with people, and 8) Be sincere. [10]

Week 7

Week 7 centered around the usefulness of proper planning. Discussion began

with the six foundations of the planning process, as outlined by Gangel in *Team*

Leadership in Christian Ministry:

> 1) Planning invests time; it does not spend it, 2) Planning requires careful attention to immediate choices, 3) Planning is cyclically based on evaluation, 4) Planning requires acting objectively toward goal realization, 5) Planning should allow for

[9]Patchwork, "How to Avoid Communication Breakdown" 23 Match 2007 [on-line]; accessed 29 August 2011; available from http://patchwork-st.blogspot.com/ 2007/03/how-to-avoid-communication-breakdown.html; Internet.

[10]Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, 413-14.

maximum participation 6) Planning increases in specificity as the event draws nearer.[11]

This discussion led to an examination of information sources, both external and internal. External information deals with demographics of a community or an area. Any changes in the demographics would be of interest to the leadership team. Internal information focuses on statistics of target groups. For example, information about a certain section of town, which includes residents' spending habits and so forth, would be considered internal information.

Once the leadership team identifies and researches its information sources, they proceed to planning assumptions. When thinking of assumption, one might think of hazarding a guess or making a stab in the dark. However, a planning assumption directly relates to the data received from the information sources. It compiles the data in such a way that the leadership team can make reliable assumptions about what will occur in the future.

The final topic on this week's agenda was attention to detail. The oft-quoted cliché of "getting lost in the details" is more than humorous; details provide a wealth of information, but should be used judiciously. Progress may be hindered when details are unfocused or too general in nature. An oppressive amount of details can be overwhelming. A leadership team in this predicament can find that they have too much information to assimilate. Also, details can be too long and arduous, causing the leadership team to become lost amidst a burden of information. At this point, the focus is lost. Lastly, the details can be given too soon. As a chef assembles the necessary ingredients to bake a pie, mixes them in order, slides it into the oven for the required number of minutes, at the precise temperature, he knows the process cannot be rushed or preliminary steps eliminated. Details accessed too quickly can provide the same unsatisfying results as the rushed pie.

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[11]Ibid., 291-92.

Week 8

 In week 8, the leadership team learned about the process of development. This provides the structure for achieving goals and evaluating them. When the team decides what the goals will be, they must agree upon the action plans, otherwise known as strategies for the goals. To help formulate the strategies, members reviewed Gangel's questions, "What exactly do we plan to do, and when, and who will take responsibility for it?"[12] Answering these three questions promotes clarity.

 Once the strategies are defined, the next step is implementation, which places the plan into action. Once the plan goes into action, the leadership team must evaluate the plan from time to time. This evaluation allows the leadership team to peruse valuable data. Corrections or additions/omissions may need to be considered at this point. Any corrections made at this juncture should be viewed in a positive way, moving another step forward. Ongoing review and analysis is vital to the completion of the goals.

 At the end of the lesson, an evangelistic opportunity was presented to the assembled team members. Participants were enthusiastic to the brief set of details given. Further information would be shared in the coming weeks.

Week 9

 The pre-project survey that was delivered to the participating eight churches in week 1 dominated the discussions for week 9, as participants were given the much-anticipated results. Eighty pre-project surveys were received. Question 1 sought how much understanding church members had of their local association, and there appeared to be a strong consensus of understanding among the respondents. Simply defined, the purpose of the association is to provide support and guidance to the local churches, and the results indicated a nearly unified agreement with this statement. Also seeing unanimity were responses indicating strong needs within the churches of the association

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 [12]Ibid., 294.

and the provision of needed resources to assist churches that have small ministry programs.

Some answers, however, were not as happily received. Only 15 percent felt that the association had a bright future, followed by 33 percent who qualified their answer more subtly, indicating their opinion that the association had a "possible" future. Almost as many, 30 percent, expressed serious doubts about the association's future, and a large number, 22 percent, failed to respond.

Sadly, these were not startling statistics. Most of the leadership team shared the same sentiments. It was obvious to the team that the association needed to set goals and plan strategies in regard to the future of PABA. Members firmly held to the belief that they could provide a structure in which associational needs could be addressed.

Another area of concern highlighted by the survey was obstacles facing the association, and whether or not the association can operate effectively in the face of those obstacles. There were three problem areas mentioned most often. They were communication to the churches, complacency in the churches, and consensus between the churches.

Survey notations revealed that many people felt a lack of communication toward their church. Information was not timely or not forthcoming at all. They expressed the desire to see a stronger connection with their church. For many, there was the need for shared resources.

At first glance, complacency may not generate the same negative connotation as a lack of communication. But, when people are self-satisfied, they may become immune to possible problems. Church members are busy people, and their churches are busy; so much busyness may produce lively activity, but possibly skim over deeper, more meaningful action.

After a long discussion, the leadership team felt that the association needed to focus on the pastors of the congregations. They agreed to consolidate their efforts on

meeting the needs of these men. Meeting the pastor's needs enhances the ministry of the church. The pastor receives help and the churches benefit from the leadership team assisting the pastor. Assisting the pastor provides encouragement for him and especially for the churches. A pastor excited about his association will share that excitement to the church he pastors.

Week 10

        This lesson gave ideas on how to create enthusiasm for the evangelistic event of helping needy families at Christmas planned for the association. Since this project was taking place around Christmas, I chose a Christmas emphasis on the evangelistic event. At Christmas, many churches help needy families in their community. They may provide groceries, gifts, and money to these families. The evangelistic event focused on Christmas projects that churches do every year, thereby providing an opportunity for churches to share the gospel to the recipients of their Christmas projects. Any project that a church undertakes, or needs that a church can meet, brings a witness for Jesus Christ by allowing a few moments to check on the spiritual condition of the family. This extra step provides a greater opportunity for God to work and to make a kingdom difference in someone's life.

        The energizing factor for the project was that we were carrying out the Great Commission that Jesus gave to the church. Jesus wants his followers to spread the gospel. A church uses Christmas, which is a time for giving, to witness for Christ. Another energizing factor is that Christ would be glorified in this event. Sharing Christ brings honor and glory to Christ. Christ is exalted when we take the opportunity to witness for Him.

        The last energizing factor is that any believer can participate. When it comes to evangelistic events, members often bow out and let the leadership complete the task. This evangelistic event does not require any major leadership skill and is adaptable to

most church situations. Any church member can feel comfortable enough to join the event.

Week 11

In this lesson, the leadership team discussed how to launch the project properly. The first place to publicize the event is from the pulpit, always a powerful avenue of promoting, boosting, and advocating to believers. The pastors then begin sharing these events to their respective congregations, steadfast in their belief of providing this opportunity of reaching more people for Christ in the local community.

Christians more readily respond at Christmas time, buoyed by a desire to bring joy and cheer to others. The evangelistic event brings a deeper joy for believers because it makes an eternal difference in the life of the one who chooses Christ as Savior. Seeing someone receiving Christ benefits the believer in making a difference in this world.

The leadership affirmed the evangelistic event. Rather than giving a cookie cutter approach to ministry, the team felt that each church could groom their event in a way suitable to their own needs. The leadership team expressed their feelings that each church needs to be able to use their own creativity in this event.

Week 12

Training for the evangelistic event focused on organizing certain elements for each church to follow. In the evangelistic event, a church needed to provide information about the church for those families selected. Any information about the church would help the family to learn about the church. Also, the information could be supplemented verbally as well. If a church offers an active children's ministry, the various programs needed to be explained. Most of these families have children, so this provides an opportunity to invite the children to church. The church can explain the reason for helping these needy families. Sharing the love of Christ is the reason for their actions of kindness and generosity from the church. I taught the leadership team that a church must

include the presentation of Christ; otherwise the church serves as a social agency of welfare. One member of the leadership team voiced some opposition to this point. He felt that church had a silent witness in any effort in the community. Rather than building an argument in my defense, I shared that there is a silent witness in responding to the needs of the community, and there would be a greater witness by taking opportunity to share the gospel. The leadership team member nodded in approval.

The leadership team learned about asking the recipients if they had personal or family needs about which the church could pray for them. Many of these families needing help have lost a job or had health concerns to be addressed in prayer.

The last item that the leadership team dealt with was the gospel presentation. The families were to be asked if the family knew Christ as their Savior. For the leadership, I proposed using the F.A.I.T.H. strategy or the Roman Road. The leadership team thought that these two choices would be acceptable. I closed the lesson in prayer asking for the Lord to be with us in this evangelistic opportunity.

Week 13

Further discussion was made this week as the churches finalized decisions for the time and place of their individual evangelistic event. Since Christmas time is hectic in most all churches, it was decided that the individual congregations should choose what time frame would be the best to work into their church's calendar. Based on the fact that I have served the association as their Director of Mission for the last two years, the team felt more comfortable with having me as the correspondent to the churches and disseminating the information.

After assisting these families, the churches were responsible for follow-up in whatever way appeared suited to the situation. A phone call is never out of place, and takes minimal time and effort. Depending on the situation, a home visit from the church may express a deeper level of care. The goal was to show these families the love of Christ as expressed by a loving church.

At this point, I found this team to be enthusiastic and willing to help in numerous and varied ways. There are also limitations that need to be considered as we work together in the future. Most of the leadership team members are full-time pastors, which puts time constraints on their busy schedules. Working with these team members has drawn us closer in our spiritual journey as we strive to fulfill Christ's commission to His people.

Week 14

The lesson plan was a review of the project's last thirteen weeks. As we analyzed each meeting, we noted the progress made and any instances of regression. Chief among my results was the realization that enthusiasm was increasing in the association. This excitement presented itself in several ways. Trying to develop a leadership team made us notice and understand on a deeper level that we care about the ministries of the PABA. The level of activity increased between the members of the leadership team; they were now meeting with other team members in order to plan and share ideas. These meetings brought more information and encouragement to our weekly lessons. Best of all, the leadership team began to develop their vision for PABA.

Week 15

On week 15, I distributed the post-seminar survey. I discussed the questions with them and asked them to return the surveys in the same week. It was a brief meeting.

Conclusion

Over the fifteen weeks, a project to develop a leadership team for the Purchase Area Baptist Association in Benton, Kentucky was implemented. This project consisted of meeting and training the leadership team on specific topics. Over the course of fifteen weeks, I personally met with the leadership team and listened as they commented about and appraised this project. This ministry project, as it unfolded, provided a new level of ministry experience for me.

Throughout the course of this project, the leadership team and the survey results offered many suggestions. After hearing their words, seeing their expressions after evaluation of the pre-project and post-project survey increased my level of optimism to develop the leadership team. Once I observed the leadership team's eagerness and enthusiasm, it dissolved any sense of uncertainty that I had. The leadership team, expressing themselves from their ministry perspective, brought new ideas to the table and these ideas began to formulate into new goals for the group. This project united the members with deeper ties as relationships developed and grew. The team created a strong bond, taking pleasure in one another's mutual commitment to the association. Initially, I was leading this group as its Director of Mission; gradually, my role became smaller as the project advanced and the leadership team assumed ownership.

Chapter 5 discusses in detail the methods for possible improvements in future development of the leadership team. This fifteen-week project laid a foundation upon which the leadership team can erect the framework for the association's mission and vision.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

It is reasonable and prudent to evaluate the purpose, goals, strengths, and

weaknesses of the project. Theologically and personally, it is most critical to reflect upon

the value of this research. This chapter presents the results of the project as well as

instruction learned along the way, with the hope that this information will be useful in the

planning, preparation, and implementation of future development of the leadership team

of the Purchase Area Baptist Association (PABA).

Evaluation of Project Goals

The first goal was to enlist and gather members of the leadership team. As

Director of Missions, it was my responsibility to provide direction for the enlistment of

the team. I recruited eight men to be part of the leadership team. These candidates had

previous involvement with the association, and they responded favorably to becoming

part of the leadership team. This task was not difficult to accomplish.

The second goal was to provide training for the selected team members. Team

members committed time and talents in order to learn the expectations and

responsibilities of the team. They spent twelve weeks examining the importance of

vision, the role of servant leadership, communication, planning, and goal setting. A

lecture format was central to the training, but trainee input and discussion was

encouraged. In completion of the second goal, I focused on the spiritual discipline of

prayer, both individual and corporate. Special attention was given to each member's walk

with Christ. Considerable time was allotted each week for team members to pray for, and with, one another.

The third goal was to lead the team in an associational ministry project for PABA. The ministry project was an evangelistic undertaking at Christmas. The general consensus was that the holiday season provided the perfect backdrop for the team's project. They foresaw how each congregation could tailor the event around the ongoing ministry of their church, preventing needless conflicts and making use of the inherent goodwill of church members during the holidays. The never-wavering focus of the event was to present the gospel to those in need at Christmas time.

As an example, Zion's Cause assisted the project as we helped two families within the local community. Both families had called the church with requests for assistance. Appointments were scheduled, and two members of the church staff met individually with each family. A preliminary assessment was conducted of the families' situations at the initial meeting. As the dialogue progressed, and awkwardness decreased, the families were informed of the worship services and ongoing ministries of the church. Though the family members professed to be Christians, they admitted to irregularity in church attendance. In addition to material assistance, they were offered spiritual guidance and prayer. The staff asked for specific prayer requests, and the families readily responded. Scheduling conflicts prevented follow-up with one of the families, but there has been an open channel of communication with the other family. They have not attended any services as of yet, but have maintained an approachable attitude with the church.

The fourth goal was to develop my skills in mentoring and training the leadership team. I read the book *Coaching 101: Discover the Power of Coaching* by Robert Logan. I learned the usefulness and significance of asking pertinent questions of my team. A mentor is focused on asking questions in order to align the respondents to the task at hand. I had already determined that this concept would be advantageous in focusing the team members, but noticed the added value of how asking questions

sharpened my own attention to the task. Using the technique of focused questioning helped the team set a course for the association.

The leadership team evaluated me as a mentor. They agreed that one of my strengths in this area was developing strong relationships with the leadership team. They even questioned the viability of the association without the presence of cooperation among the partner churches. The team indicated appreciation for my approach, which allowed for input, member interaction, and flexibility. Team members felt that they were always respected, even in stressful discussions. Their respect was directed toward each other and toward me as their mentor.

Pre-Project Questionnaire

One of the first steps in achieving the project goals was to collect information. The purpose of the project was to develop a leadership team for the PABA. In order to understand the perception of an association better, a pre-project and post-project questionnaire was given during the project. The pre-project questionnaire provided questions that focused on the attitude of the churches toward the association. It also provided information to aid the team as they (1) evaluated the current situation and (2) further developed their roles within the leadership team. The purpose of the post-project questionnaire was to determine the development of the role based on the first questionnaire. Several insights were learned, and these insights are addressed later in this chapter.

Eight churches participated and eighty questionnaires were completed. Thirty respondents were over 60 years of age, 16 were 51-60 years of age, 20 were 41-50 years of age, and 14 were between 30-40. No questionnaires were received from the 18-29 age group. When asked how long each person had been a Christian, 6 indicated 11-20 years and 74 answered 20 years and longer. In answering the question about the highest level of education, 25 graduated high school, 23 had attended college or technical school, 18 graduated college, and 14 had graduate level education.

The participants were asked seven questions regarding their perception of the

association, the format of which was short answer. Question 1 dealt with the purpose of the association. The general consensus among all respondents was that the association served the churches by providing support and guidance.

Question 2 was about obstacles that may prevent an association from being effective. Several obstacles became apparent. Lack of communication was mentioned most often as a contributor to an association becoming, or remaining, ineffective. Lack of communication from association to church or misdirection of information appeared to be the primary concerns in this area. A second obstacle was busyness. Churches were too busy with their own ministries to be involved in associational work. There was a veiled, but strong, sense among the respondents that the association did not need to create new, joint-venture projects while they were struggling to further ongoing ministries in their own churches. Basically, it appeared that the churches were asking for assistance on their current projects, as opposed to creating new ones within an associational setting, especially if the new project(s) did not receive full participation of all the churches. Other obstacles mentioned were non-activity by the association and discord among members.

Question 3 concerned the thoughts of today's association meeting the needs of older adults. The primary response to this question was a substantial showing of attendance of our associational meeting. The older generation felt they were well-informed of associational endeavors due to their attendance at these meetings. Also, they were more familiar with associational work in general. The responses did not indicate specific requests for senior adults, other than a continuance of information about the association and its work.

Question 4 dealt with how today's association could meet the needs of today's youth. Many were not aware of any activities for young people; others simply did not respond to this question. Those who responded were hopeful that opportunities would arise, eventually leading to ministries for the youth. Most noted were suggestions for events that would provide the youth an opportunity to work together in their community.

Question 5 challenged respondents to give suggestions for making improvements. One suggestion was to enlist more churches. Currently, the Kentucky Baptist Convention requires that an association have fifteen member churches in order to have voting privileges on the missions committee. The voting privileges are not important to the PABA, but to have full credibility as an association is the issue at hand.

A second suggestion focused on better communication in the association, for example, communicating the needs of smaller churches to see if there are any resources available to them. The sharing of resources could save smaller churches money, especially when these congregations are already struggling. Even a pairing of congregations was mentioned as a possible means to help these churches.

The last suggestion that seemed to be prevalent was the rotation of leadership. They affirmed this idea as a way of keeping the association fresh and meaningful to all members. The rotation allows representation from all the churches, and that was a positive response.

Question 6 dealt with making our association more effective. Many commented that their response in question 5 (improvements) would make the association more effective as well. There were suggestions directed toward specific churches taking the lead in spearheading certain events. Depending on the church and the location of the event, this suggestion allowed churches to be involved on a level reasonable for their size, while still shouldering part of the responsibility. Another suggestion was to create more surveys to identify ministry needs of the member churches.

Question 7 focused on the future of PABA. While many of the issues were previously noted, they included communication, church participation, congregational surveys, planning and organization, collaboration, and a need for additional churches. Admittedly, these issues are important, but not overwhelming. They need attention and consideration, delivered with perseverance and zeal. None of the team wishes to see the demise of the association; each member has committed himself to PABA and its future.

Basically, it comes down to fulfilling the Great Commission through mutual effort and partnership. If we stay focused on this, the future can remain bright and exciting.

Post-Project Questionnaire

The post-project questionnaire was comprised of seven questions. Question 1 dealt with the strengths of the project. This project addressed a very important issue in Baptist life: the role of the Baptist association. With the rapid changes in technology and communications, the future viability of the Baptist association will depend on creative leadership. This project will help associational leadership chart its future role in assisting local churches.

One of the strengths of this project is that it forged a deeper rapport and sense of brotherhood among members of the leadership team. Spending twelve weeks together, team members learned about the perspectives and dreams of other team members. Closer personal relationships developed. A new confidence emerged among team members; this confidence gave the team members a "can do" attitude. This project revived the hearts of certain pastors who were questioning the functionality of the association. By voicing their concerns, these pastors offered their input and, thankfully, their support of pursuing a course for the association.

Each congregation had the opportunity to participate and had a platform to voice their concerns. The voices of the churches provided an atmosphere of cooperation for this project. We never experienced negativity regarding the ultimate goal(s).

Question 2 dealt with the limitations of the project. One of the most obvious constraints the team noticed was the limited associational work experience of church members below the age of forty-five. This leaves a huge segment of the churches' population hindered by only a marginal knowledge and understanding of associational work. This makes it more difficult for them to offer informed opinions. Conversely, those who fall into the over forty-five category often have previous associational work experience, but it was from a time in their lives when they filled a much more active role

in Baptist life than they do today. I believe that this means associational leaders will have to be much more creative as they seek avenues to help these church members understand the value of associations.

Question 3 focused on the change of attitudes due to this project. The leadership team felt that attitudes had not changed very much. One of the reasons for the birth of PABA was to look at associational life from a different perspective, and it appears that the leadership team holds the same ideological perspectives that they did from the beginning.

Question 4 focused on the overall participation of churches to this project. It was a simple question: Has there been any change in participation due to this project? Members of the team definitely met more often and for longer periods of time, compared to meetings before the start of the project. In that particular area, there was a serious increase in participation. There had never been a series of meetings that involved attendance in such a small period of time. The team felt that the outgoing leadership worked at trying to keep members informed and focused heavily on building stronger relationships. The reason for this is that while we have lacked in direction, the outgoing leadership focused on building relationships to build a stronger support system for the pastors. They anticipated an awakening of the potential role of the association and perhaps an increase in its ability to marshal resources to assist member churches. This anticipation led to the belief that a more positive attitude will develop.

Question 5 focused on foreseeing any problems with the effectiveness of the leadership team. Though the team felt their model seemed to be effective, they foresaw the possibility of an organizational problem. Facing the challenge of responding to varied expectations of associational roles and responsibilities could be an additional problem. They felt that the key task will be to craft a new statement of their mission to member churches. They were united in their affirmation that a new statement could eliminate some future problems with effectiveness.

Team members began the discussion of potential problems with nervous anticipation. In the final analysis the team members were in total agreement that their problems were not insurmountable. With a proper attitude, unwavering commitment, and God's blessing, troublesome issues can be thwarted.

Question 6 asked the team members to describe their personal thoughts before and after the project. There was unanimity among the members that they had gained a greater appreciation of the challenges that associational leaders face. This appreciation also extended to the important roles the association can provide in the work of the local church. I am pleased to note that most of the committee members felt they were closer to a full understanding of the association after this project. Their statements cast an even more positive light on the future of PABA.

Question 7 dealt with how the members were affected personally by the project. The members felt strongly that they had provided creative leadership and that their efforts had been met with success. The leadership felt more encouraged than ever about how the association could help the local church. And they are pleased that its success will not be based solely on past models, but on new and exciting standards.

Strengths of the Project

The development of a leadership team project for the PABA had several strengths that nurtured the spiritual health of the association. The timing for the project was impeccable for pastors of PABA looking for a new tool to assist their churches. Most of the pastors rallied to the leadership team meetings to listen and give their input at the appropriate time. Their interest in the association multiplied when the leadership team began to envision what could be done for the association. A sense of achievement emerged as the team met each week.

This project provided an opportunity to build stronger relationships between the churches. The associational meetings have always been well attended, and a sense of kinship existed. The weekly meetings of the project allowed the pastors to be together in

a non-threatening atmosphere. The leadership team shared prayer requests for their churches and committed to pray for each other as well.

Another strength of the project was a fuller understanding of the function of an association; surprisingly, a few members initially exhibited only a rudimentary comprehension of the associational role in the life of the local church; they lacked a full appreciation for the tasks filled by the association. They came to realize that the project could not be successful without complete support from every member; one or two energetic individuals were not sufficient to launch the project and maintain its viability. They realized that every hand was needed, working as partners. At times, it was overwhelming for the pastors as they put the concept of teamwork into practice. The leadership team members were engaged with the project at a time when their schedules were already full with congregational concerns. Serving on the leadership team increased their workload, but they steadfastly continued in the wake of tired feet, red eyes, and brain overload. The leadership team responded with a full agreement that for PABA to do well, there must be an investment of time and energy. To me, this understanding of the leadership team ensures stability for the future.

This project seemed to foster a sense of thankfulness and even gratitude from members of the local congregations. They expressed appreciation to me for the development of the leadership team. This appreciation was encouraging. These testimonies and affirmations were a shot of adrenaline to the leadership team, and to me as their mentor.

In 2012, there is an opportunity for PABA to strengthen on-going projects and to begin new mission opportunities. It was quickly noted that the pastors needed additional help from the association. This help was needed especially to target specific areas of ministry within the local congregations. The team felt that a better utilization of time would be working more closely with the pastors, as opposed to direct communication to the church body. This would allow discretion by the individual pastor as to the most

prudent course of action for a particular congregation. This communication would reciprocate a satisfaction from the churches, knowing that their pastors were benefiting from the leadership team.

Weaknesses of the Project

One of the weaknesses of this project, and of great disappointment to me, was a lack of total participation from all the churches within the association. My hopes and initial preparations were for full participation, but three of the churches chose to not participate, adopting a watchful eye from the sidelines. I felt that the voices of these churches were not heard and that their presence and input could make a difference for the association. The sense of camaraderie the team experienced may encourage those observing from the sidelines to participate in future associational events.

From the project itself, meeting for twelve straight weeks proved a little too ambitious. If I had scaled it back to eight weeks it would have probably been more beneficial. These team members are fully engaged in their ministry settings, which led to troublesome conflicts by the end of the project. Schedules interfered with some members of the team, necessitating changes of meeting dates and times. Though the stress mounted, I am pleased to note that the interest level stayed positive and never waned.

The survey was found to be one of the areas of weakness in the study. Once again, participation from the churches varied; the number of responses from churches ranged from extremely high to almost non-existent. It was a small test of patience to get responses back from a few churches. The information from the survey was shared in executive meetings, pastors' luncheons, and at the annual meeting, which had an attendance of 300. Extra copies of the survey were available at all of these events.

Understanding of the project was another weakness. Some anticipated that it would be a task-oriented project, and to a certain degree that was correct. Some were not as enthusiastic when we dealt with certain topics. They wanted to focus more on implementation of tasks rather than learning how to develop a team.

What I Would Do Differently

Overall, I am pleased with the project and what we were able to accomplish. It was much needed, and it has already shown benefits for the association. While I am satisfied with what I set out to accomplish, I can see areas in the project that could have been done differently. From the beginning, I struggled with narrowing the project. Initially, the project was too general in its scope, and I knew it had to become much more specific. I was trying to achieve a year's worth of projects in fifteen weeks. I made the final decision to work in two areas: developing a leadership team and utilizing that team in an evangelistic event. I could have chosen one of these areas, and that would have been sufficient for the project.

In developing the leadership team, I could have selected a book for our study. Each week, I gave a lecture on a specific topic. I enjoyed preparing and presenting each lecture, but I can see how a book for the team to study would have helped prepare the members for the weekly meetings. They could have read specified passages, formed questions or made notes, and been better prepared for a group discussion on the selected topic. An added benefit of using a book is that each team member would then have a new resource at his fingertips, one that he has studied and with which he is familiar. It could have been of benefit as a future resource tool for the association and also within the church setting.

Also, I thought if we had used a book I could have used members of the leadership team in teaching. They would have the material beforehand, have ample time to prepare, and tailor the lesson to their individual strengths as teacher and facilitator. In this scenario, I would have assumed the role of a coach or mentor, while allowing members of the leadership to focus on the specific topics. In this concept, the leadership would more certainly have a sense of ownership in developing the team. Though all members would be reading the book, at least one team member would be more knowledgeable on a specific topic for that week's study. A combined teaching approach

has value in this setting and should be considered in the future. I am satisfied with what I did in the project, but I think this concept could be just as effective.

The time of the year played a huge factor. This project went through the holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas. While having the evangelistic event during Christmas worked well, the seasonal festivities occupied much of our time. I think a winter to spring event could have worked better for the leadership team. There was a near-constant dialogue within the team about the busyness of the season. The project was completed satisfactorily, but not without stress due to timing.

The last thing I would have done differently concerns communication, mainly the use of media. We met formally and informally in meetings and other venues; I also used email for reminders, quick question and answer conversations, and dissemination of information between regular meetings. Looking back, I think the use of an online forum could have been advantageous. The forum would have promoted discussion on certain topics. When given a topic, it could be easily and quickly discussed by the team. When a new discussion or thread appeared, new ideas and suggestions could promptly be seen and considered.

Theological Reflections

During the course of this project, the Holy Spirit brought several theological impressions to mind. The leadership team reviewed spiritual and secular principles. These principles provided direction for the association, but we must not forget the role of the Holy Spirit in what we do. The leadership team must seek God continuously. God is the one that is at work in this world (John 6:44).

A leadership team can have the best intentions in the world, but God's will must be sought in all matters. Organizing, meeting, and preparing agendas are all important, but seeking God must be the top priority. When I began this project, I made the decision to keep prayer as my main concern. I determined that my prayers would be regular, persistent, and specific. I have found that in praying for this project, from its

beginning and stretching for fifteen weeks, I now pray even more eagerly for the success of the leadership team and its future (1 Thess 5:17).

As I sought the Lord, I learned more about the role of the leadership team, and the role of servant leadership became apparent. Jesus shared about greatness in Matthew 20:26-27. He pointed out that if Christians aspired to the position of chief, they must assume the role of a servant. Looking at the role of servant leadership for the leadership team, it really hit home in theological reflection. Often times, people do things out of having an agenda. It is the popular idea that one would invest time as long as one is rewarded to his or her satisfaction. The role of servant leadership does not have that type of agenda. The role of servant leadership is based on the belief that a person is to serve and help for someone else's benefit. Someone is in need, and a person may never be rewarded here on this earth for his or her contribution. Greatness is not measured in success, but in faithfulness to the call of God's work. This thought of only investing when one can receive a benefit sounds shallow, and few would admit to following this in their lives. But, unless the role of servant leadership is evaluated and allowed to take root and flourish in a Christian's life, that train of thought may take precedence over God's mandate of servant leadership. As Director of Missions, I am often reminded of Philippians 2:7, where Paul tells that Jesus came in the form of a servant to do His work in this world. When I think that my Savior assumed the role of a servant, I submit myself to the authority of Heaven and seek the servant role. The leadership team must do likewise.

I was also impressed by the strong sense of accountability that the leadership team established. In the project, the team studied where Moses disobeyed God when he struck the rock (Num 20:10-12). The Scriptures reveal that Moses disobeyed, and God judged him severely. Consequently, Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. God holds leaders to a higher standard of accountability than those who are being served. In a similar manner, the leadership team has accountability toward the churches of

PABA. The churches trust the leadership team to offer what strengthens the church, but most importantly the cause of Christ. Accountability forces people to take things seriously. Accountability kept the project moving, ultimately ending with success.

Personal Reflections

Baptist associations all across America face a critical challenge due to one word: relevancy. I usually hate that word because it carries so much "touchy feely" and "it's all about me" baggage. But the reality is that Baptist associations were created in a time when information flow and people flow was much more restricted than it is today. Baptist associations used to be the key mode in the Convention information loop. There is virtually no need in today's world to contact an association for information about state or national convention issues. So, if the association wants to be "relevant," it will need to determine the needs of its member churches and act accordingly. What Baptist associations used to do is not what they need to do now. PABA must redefine who it wants to be, lest it become a relic of the past. To that end, I proposed to develop a leadership team for the PABA.

Who we are at PABA is a voluntary association of Southern Baptist churches that have come together primarily based on a common perspective of how we are called to "do church." We share a very common theological foundation and a common desire to unite with other Southern Baptists. Our connection to each other is something that we must protect so that we do not lose this perspective. PABA can be a way to keep us connected.

Member churches of PABA are located throughout far western Kentucky. The varied locations and small sizes generally mean that we have limited time and resources because the church leadership carries a wide range of responsibilities, something that larger churches solve with larger staffs. I think this should suggest two things: first, we should plan meetings judiciously, since travel money and time are at a premium for pastors and members. Second, we need to focus on the kind of church circumstances we

are facing. The emphasis should be on helping ourselves to be successful as small churches.

On a personal note, this project has become a valuable instrument in my own ministry setting at Zion's Cause Baptist Church. The membership has experienced unprecedented growth recently, and I am excited to implement what I have learned about team leadership. I am currently looking at opportunities to develop team-led ministries at Zion's Cause as the church continues to expand its presence in Marshall and surrounding counties. This has the potential to be a model for sister churches and new church plants. What I learned in this project expands my understanding of leadership and mentoring.

Conclusion

In the overall evaluation of developing a leadership team, I view it to be a success. The leadership team has an unwavering interest in the success of PABA. The first reason for the success of the project was because of the timing. It is what the leadership team needed to do at the time.

Second, the attitude of the leadership team was still very positive at the end of the project. As noted next, progress was seen after the completion of the fifteen-week project. Even though we are in the developmental stages, we are charting a course for the association.

After this project the leadership team is making plans to redefine their role in effectively supporting the churches of PABA. Helping pastors lead their churches is their main focus. To me, this action by the leadership team shows the effectiveness of the project.

Formulated Steps for the Success of PABA

Step 1. A meeting will be scheduled with the pastors to determine the needs of their congregations.

Step 2. The leadership team will ask the PABA churches to begin an inventory of the assets they would be willing to lend to other associational churches. These assets might include: video-based Bible Study series (Beth Moore, Andy Stanley, etc); musicians that would be willing (with notice) to provide occasional music leadership; sheet music; VBS materials; children's and youth ministry materials, movies, etc. This allows churches to work within limited resources, yet it allows member churches to increase the quality and variety of their ministry efforts. It will also provide a means for pastors to guide their members toward real ministry, something even small churches need to encourage within their membership. The leadership team will compile this listing and make it available to the association on the web site. To gain access to these resources, member churches would make direct contact with the church(es) that have the resources they need.

Step 3. The leadership team will poll the pastors to determine what kind of leadership, training, or other assistance would be most helpful to them in their church context. The team believes the most effective work will be assisting pastors rather than church members. They think we need to help each other be successful small churches, rather than spend time trying to deconstruct a big-church program to fit our very different needs. Anytime we help a pastor lead and minister, we help his church. The leadership team believes this concept is also a good use of associational resources. Additionally, the leadership team will work to develop stronger pastor-to-pastor relationships.

Step 4. The leadership team will develop an electronic monthly information letter for pastors that highlight upcoming events, changes to available resources, and accounting for associational funds. Real-time issues could be handled through electronic contact with pastors rather than calling for a meeting.

Step 5. The leadership team will reassess, as needed. If steps 1-4 work, then

we are looking at the possibility of a PABA-wide mission effort, perhaps an eastern Kentucky trip. It would need a great deal of lead time so that we can gain pastor support and give participants time to develop their schedules. But again, the goal is to help the member churches fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX 1

PRE-PROJECT AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

The first part of the questionnaire focuses on attaining the interest, idea, and theory about the group participating in the leadership team project. This allows for statistical analysis and comparison of the pre and post project questionnaires.

1. Circle your appropriate age group.
   18-29   30-40   41-50   51-60   60+

2. How long have you been a Christian?
    0-5 years   6-10 years   11-20 years   20+ years

3. Highest Level of Education
   ☐ Graduate / Professional

   ☐ Four-Year College

   ☐ Some College / Technical

   ☐ High School Graduate

   ☐ Some High School

   ☐ Less than High School

4. What do you think is the purpose of the association?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. What do you think are some obstacles that keep associations from being effective?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. What do you think about today's association in meeting the needs of an older generation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What do you think about today's association in meeting the needs of today's youth?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Do you have any suggestions for making improvements to our association?

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. What do you think would make our association more effective?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. What do you think about the future of our association?

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 2

ADDITIONAL POST-PROJECT QUESTIONS
FOR THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

1.   What were the strengths of the project?

2.   What were the limitations of the project?

3.   What attitudes in regard to our association were changed due to the project?

4.   Is the overall participation of the churches different now than it was before the project?

5.   Do you foresee any problems with the effectiveness of the Leadership Team?

6.   How would you describe your personal thoughts before and after the project?

_____

_____

_____

7.   Have you been personally encouraged about the opportunities that the Leadership Team has tried to implement?

_____

_____

_____

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE
PURCHASE AREA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
BENTON, KENTUCKY

Charles Wayne Frazier, D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012
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This project sought to develop a leadership team for the Purchase Area Baptist Association, Benton, Kentucky. Chapter 1 describes a proposal for developing a leadership team, including the selection of members, training of these members to function as a team, and launching an evangelistic event. Chapter 2 examines the biblical and theological principles of leadership found in the Old and New Testaments. Chapter 3 explores the basic principles of establishing a leadership team. Developing a vision, nurturing communication skills, and scrutinizing the dynamics of shared responsibility are considered. Chapter 4 gives details of the actual implementation of the outreach project and the utilization of research instruments. Chapter 5 reviews the effectiveness of the project. The data is analyzed, the goals are recalled, and the process is evaluated.

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