LEADING THE STAFF OF CADIZ BAPTIST CHURCH,
CADIZ, KENTUCKY, INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE
TEAM-BASED MINISTRY

A Project
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Kevin Lynn Roberts
May 2012
APPROVAL SHEET

LEADING THE STAFF OF CADIZ BAPTIST CHURCH,
CADIZ, KENTUCKY, INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE
TEAM-BASED MINISTRY

Kevin Lynn Roberts

Read and Approved by:

__________________________________________
Paul H. Chitwood (Faculty Supervisor)

__________________________________________
Adam W. Greenway

Date______________________________
To Monique,

the love of my life,

and to Mikayla, Timmy, and Kelly,

true blessings from the Lord
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whom Were We Currently Reaching?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths of Cadiz Baptist Church</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses of Cadiz Baptist Church</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Outreach Plans</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions and Limitations</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. LEADERSHIP STYLE OF JESUS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Role Model</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as Servant</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Sacrificial Leader</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Team Leader</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Courageous Leader</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Compassionate and Caring Leader</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Leading as the Master Teacher</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Focused Leader</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as an Inspirational Leader</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus as a Leader Depending on His Father</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of Effective Teamwork</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synergistic Effect Because of the Team</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There Is an Improved Environment in the Workplace</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There Is Ripple Effect throughout the Organization</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing a Team</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are Some Important Elements for Every Team?</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are Some Important Qualities to Look for in a Potential Team Member?</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Characteristics Would Potentially Disqualify a Potential Team Member?</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are Important Elements to Include When Orienting a New Team Member?</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a Team</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Responsibilities of a Team Leader?</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Responsibilities for Team Members?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximizing Team Performance</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter | Page
------- | -----
What Are Some Hindrances to Effective Team Ministry? | 60
How Does One Overcome Hindrances to Effective Team Ministry? | 61
Common Denominators between Effective Secular Teamwork and Effective Team-based Ministry in the Local Church | 70
Productivity Is Important in Both Types of Teams | 70
Vision Is Important to Both | 71
Many of the Same Obstacles Hinder Both Types of Teams | 71
Leadership Is Vitally Important to Both Types of Teams | 72
The Ripple Effect Is Common to Both Types of Teams | 81
Staff Improvements | 82
Conclusion | 83
4. STAFF TEAM-BASED MINISTRY PROJECT | 84
5. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT | 112
Introduction | 112
Evaluation of the Project’s Purpose | 112
Evaluation of the Project’s Goals | 113
Strengths of the Project | 116
Weaknesses of the Project | 118
What I Would Do Differently | 119
Theological Reflections | 121
Personal Reflections | 122
General Conclusion | 123
BIBLIOGRAPHY | 126
# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Church growth pattern over the past five years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Church growth pattern over the past five years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Trigg County population breakdown</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 2006 average Sunday school attendance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Church membership additions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

Team ministry has been important to me for several years. In many ways it is in my blood. I grew up playing team sports and being a captain on my football and baseball teams in high school. I, however, have never been nearly as successful as I would like in leading a church staff to function effectively as a team. A desire to become a more effective staff leader is why this project was so important to me.

I am grateful for the opportunity to pursue this project with Jason Strickland and Mike Rose at Cadiz Baptist Church. We have all had a few bumps along the road, but we are better ministers, hopefully, for having spent eight years working together. Although I have recently left for a new place of service, I believe I learned some valuable lessons in working on this project with them.

I am also excited about new possibilities as I work with Eddie Turner, Tree Akers, and the rest of the staff at Northside Baptist Church. I believe exciting days are ahead! Tree and Eddie have already indicated a great desire to build team ministry as a staff at Northside. Although I have only been at Northside a few short months, we have already seen some fruit from our labor together.

I would be remiss if I did not stop to thank my parents for all of their support over the years. They truly taught me the ways of Christ from my earliest childhood days. Not only did they tell me about Christ, but they demonstrated what it meant to know
Christ and to follow him as their first priority. They continue to be two of my strongest supporters and most faithful prayer warriors.

Special thanks go to my wife, Monique. She has been with me every step of the way as I worked toward this degree. There are many times when I may have given up if it were not for her constant encouragement and support. Above every human being she deserves my thanks. She has supported me through thick and thin and allowed me time to work on my degree without complaint. I sincerely hope that this project is worth all of the sacrifices she has had to make for me to earn this degree. I pray that our very best years are the years ahead.

I am also very thankful to my children: Mikayla, Timmy, and Kelly. Mikayla has had to sacrifice time with her dad for nearly seven years so I could finish school. Timmy and Kelly have had to sacrifice time with me during the past year as I completed this project. You will never know how much daddy loves you! All of you hold a very special place in my heart.

Above all, I want to give thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, without whom I would be eternally lost, and nothing else that I do in this world would matter. He is truly the author and the finisher of my faith!

I would be remiss, as well, if I did not thank my typists, especially Marc Morin. Marc helped me finish this project, rather frantically, at the end. Thank you also to my fellow student, Reed Shepherd, who I frequently called for advice.

My hope and prayer is that as a result of doing this project I will be a better pastor and team leader. Ministry in the church is not about serving alone, but alongside others, who also have a passion to know and to serve our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
May the years ahead bear much fruit, partly as a result of lessons learned while completing this assignment.

To God be the glory!

Kevin Lynn Roberts

Elizabethtown, Kentucky

May 2012
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to lead the staff of the Cadiz Baptist Church into a more effective team-based ministry.

Goals

The project sought to accomplish three goals that served as the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to improve my own personal leadership skills. In order to be a more effective leader, one must begin with one’s own personal leadership development. Specific focus was given to improving personal and team leadership skills.

Goal number 2 was be to build the staff into a more effective team through regular, normally weekly, communication and mutual accountability. This practice would be a key for improving the quality of the staff’s ability, especially with the Minister of Youth and Children.

Goal number 3 was to develop a team spirit that goes beyond the staff meeting into the life of the congregation. This unity was to be demonstrated by the cohesion between the staff of well-planned weekly worship services and well-coordinated weekly ministry and special emphases.
Context

Cadiz Baptist Church is a wonderful, caring, supportive congregation. It is the most loving, patient, and mature congregation I have ever served as a pastor or staff member. It has had a reputation for being “snooty,” however. Part of that stemmed from being the largest church in a very small town (2,500 people). It was also the wealthiest church in our little community with the largest and most expensive buildings.

I believe we have made great strides to overcome our stereotype in the past several years, but we never became particularly strong in evangelism. Going back to 1983, Cadiz Baptist has baptized an average of slightly fewer than twelve people per year. Listed below are some statistics related to the growth pattern of the church over the past five years.¹ The church had been on an obvious plateau and experienced some decline.

Table 1. Church growth pattern over the past five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SS*</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wor. Atten.</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptisms</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Worship attendance figures are estimated. After having an usher count in one service and personally doing some counting I have determined that the worship attendance figures are somewhat inflated. Sunday School attendance numbers also reflect an average of about 35 people in two nursing homes.
During my first eight months (May to December 2003) at Cadiz Baptist we got off to a great start. We had 13 baptisms and 24 other additions during that time. We had a record attendance in VBS with 17 professions of faith. Four of these were baptized by our church. Others were either not ready for baptism yet or they were connected with other churches, in which case we contacted their pastors and/or their parents. We had over 400 in Sunday School on our first annual homecoming in October. We replaced a staff member who had resigned about the time the previous pastor did. We also began the G.O. ministry, a hybrid of the Southern Baptist outreach G.R.O.W., in August with nearly 100 people signed up to participate in regular outreach.²

²Jerry Tidwell, *Outreach Teams that Win: G.R.O.W.* (Nashville: LifeWay Church Resources, 1998). Instead of meeting every week, we meet twice per month. Thus we have a G team and an O team giving us the name G.O. The greatest benefit of G.O. is it gets a large number of people involved. In our G.O. ministry, we ask people to visit, call, pray, or prepare baked items that our teams take to prospects, write letters, take care of the children of people involved in G.O., or fix a meal for the G.O. workers.
During January and February we fell in attendance, partly because some of our senior adults go south to escape the cold weather. We did pick up our Sunday School attendance again in March with our first annual “March Madness” Sunday School campaign, combined with a 100 year celebration in our former sanctuary. We averaged 334 in Sunday School during our first three Sundays of March. Then we hit spring break weekend, and the fourth Sunday in March plummeted to 228 in attendance.

During the next several months I did not really push attendance. I was a little concerned about putting too much emphasis on numbers. We plateaued and declined a little during the summer. In August, however, Sunday School attendance picked up again with 300 or more in attendance each of the last four Sundays. School was getting back in session, and we temporarily picked up seven or eight people through our van ministry. Attendance was becoming a little more encouraging, though we did not have a significant number of baptisms. Then in September we averaged only 274 in Sunday School. In October we went down even more with 262 in average attendance. This attendance even included our homecoming Sunday, which had approximately 100 fewer (at 305) than the 403 we had the year before.

I began praying more specifically about this situation and felt led to begin a Sunday School task force. I had several ideas, but I was concerned about “buy in” from the congregation. I also wanted to get input from others who had a heart for Sunday School. We began meeting in February and talked about March Madness (which was coming up immediately) and future plans for increasing Sunday School attendance by introducing an enrollment campaign, starting some new classes, and working on some specific inreach plans to help encourage Sunday School classes to follow-up on
absentees. I also got with our outreach leader about re-starting the G.O. ministry. We had stopped the G.O. ministry for the winter. In May of 2005 we started G.O. again.

Attendance continued to plateau with another slight decline through the next several months. At this point I began looking more fervently for a Sunday School director. Our last director moved in 2004, but I did not sense a real urgency for three reasons: 1) I wanted to make sure we got the right person, not just fill an empty slot; 2) our previous director had an excellent team in place that kept the organization running rather smoothly; 3) I had led most of the special promotions and outreach emphases when we had a director. As we continued through 2005, however, the need for a new director became evident. In the fall of 2005 we finally found a new director. He was certainly worth the wait. He immediately formed a team in addition to the workers already in place, and we seemed to be off to a great start. Attendance in Sunday School and worship continued on a gradual decline during 2006, however.

**Demographics**

Trigg County, Kentucky, is a small community with an estimated population of 13,794 in 2006. The 2011 projected population was 14,976. That represented a 6 to 7 percent growth for the next five years or a little more than 1 percent per year. A population breakdown by age is given in Figure 2.³

There was a fairly balanced mix of adults in Trigg County. The largest population groups are adults from ages 35 through 64. This age group also represents the largest area of growth. There was also, however, a large group of 25 through 34 year

olds. Fifty-three percent of the population was made up of adults from ages 25 through 64.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>2006 Estimate</th>
<th>2006 Percent</th>
<th>2011 Projected</th>
<th>2011 Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5 yrs</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>1,588</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>1,457</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>1,949</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>2,009</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>2,018</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>2,306</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>1,918</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>2,264</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85&lt;</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age:</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Trigg County population breakdown

**Whom Were We Currently Reaching?**

Cadiz Baptist Church was currently reaching younger to median senior citizens, ages fifty-five to seventy-five better than anyone else. This demographic is reflected in Figure 3, based upon divisions of current Sunday School classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Number Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 54</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 69</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 and up</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. 2006 average SS attendance
Additions to church membership in the last five years reflected a weakness in the area of children and youth outreach, with greater strengths in reaching older adults, as seen in Figure 4. One of my passions was to increase our ability to reach younger families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Number of Additions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 50</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 75</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Church membership additions

When I came to Cadiz, I sensed a need to strengthen our children’s ministry. For this reason, when we hired a full-time youth minister in November of 2003, we gave him the responsibility of children’s ministry. The previous associate pastor was responsible for youth and senior adults. Because our senior adult ministry functions quite well without a staff representative, I felt we should focus more on our children. This arrangement helped us to provide some new ministries for children without hurting our senior adult ministry. The most recent addition was an Upward Basketball ministry, starting in January of 2007. Our associate pastor of youth and children worked hard to implement this ministry, and he received solid support from the community.

**Strengths of Cadiz Baptist Church**

One of the strengths of Cadiz Baptist Church was that it was a loving and
mature congregation. People did not always agree, but the vast majority got along. Business meetings were generally times of celebration and encouragement rather than tension and conflict. There was an issue over whether to begin a weekday preschool that stirred some dissension in 2004. That issue was later brought off the table, but emotions still ran high on both sides. In January of 2007 we voted to improve our sound system and add a video projection system. This proposal also met some strong vocal resistance. Both the preschool and video/sound projection systems, however, passed by a large majority, and only a few are still upset about either vote.

Next, Cadiz Baptist had a strong group of younger, active retirees. Many of these men and women were spiritually seasoned saints and willing workers. What was particularly significant about this group was the number of senior adult men who were involved.

Cadiz Baptist is also willing to try new types of outreach and growth ideas. During my first three years we started a new outreach ministry, homecoming Sunday, March Madness Sunday School emphasis, a couples retreat, a men’s retreat, and a Sunday School conference. The church supported them all well. We are in the process of starting “Upward Basketball.” Some of this willingness to change has begun to wane recently as evidenced by the vote to purchase and install a video projection system for the sanctuary and to begin a preschool. This willingness will be further tested in 2007, and considerable changes are being discussed concerning our music and worship ministry.

Finally, Cadiz Baptist had a relatively strong and consistent emphasis on outreach. I will cover this strength under “Current Outreach Plans” in a later section.
Weaknesses of Cadiz Baptist Church

One of the weaknesses was that we did not have an effective discipleship process. We had a few excellent groups that had been meeting during recent years, and we were currently in the process of adding new classes on Wednesday evenings during the summer. In recent years, we had also had a youth discipleship group meeting on different occasions, but as a whole, we needed to do a better job of helping children, youth, and younger to median adults grow spiritually.

Next, we did not have a high percentage of active young families. In some ways our attendance reflected our community. On the other hand, it is very disconcerting to know that more than 60 percent of our average adult Sunday School attendance was over 55 years old. If I included our two nursing home Sunday School classes, the percentage would be even higher. This truth was especially disheartening after reading a recent study of 14,301 churches, which says that “congregations in which more than 40% of their regular participants are over 60 are very unlikely to grow.”

Finally, the ministerial staff did not gel as well as we could. I will include more about this challenge in my rationale for the project. As a pastor, I am mostly proactive, both goal- and relationship-oriented. The youth minister (full-time) is relationship-oriented and goes the extra mile to reach out to people. He admittedly needed to improve on organization and follow through. He is working on these areas of need.

The music minister (part-time) is mostly traditional. He is a strong leader of hymn singing and an excellent musician, but he does not enjoy some of the more

---

Stetzer, Know Your Community.
contemporary options. He has been at the church for twenty years. The music had left some of our youth and younger to median adults frustrated, while most of the seniors enjoy our current worship blend.

**Current Outreach Plans**

The church was not particularly successful regarding outreach, but it was not for lack of effort from our outreach leader and a few others. The church tried many things, including special events and ongoing ministries, strong Sunday School emphases, and our G.O. ministry. We started G.O. about four months after I first came. We had nearly 100 people (1/3 of our entire SS attendance) involved. Yet enthusiasm waned. We were down to about 50 people involved during our last semester. Fifty participants was still enough to follow-up on all of our prospects and many absentees, but it was a little discouraging after starting with 100. The participation in the G.O. ministry overall was very good. The results, however, were rather discouraging. The people were also becoming weary about what they perceived as a lack of good prospects to contact.

In 2006 we started an Upward Basketball ministry. There was currently no Upward program in our county. Cadiz Baptist was also the only church in the county that had a gymnasium. The gym was not in great condition, but with a few minor modifications it became adequate. In our first season we had 106 children signed up with sixteen teams. There was a wonderful community response to this ministry.

**Rationale**

My reason for doing this project was to help our staff become a more effective team. A stronger team-based ministry was to be beneficial to both our youth and music
ministries. As we improved in teamwork, our communication and cooperation would help us become more effective in all areas of ministry. Both of our staff ministers were gifted in their own right. If we could begin working together more effectively as a team, Cadiz Baptist Church could truly grow into a more balanced and healthy congregation and become a better instrument for reaching others with the gospel.

As a leader of our staff and ultimately of Cadiz Baptist Church, I needed to become more effective as a staff leader in order to motivate and facilitate a more effective staff ministry. Our staff, with God’s help, had the ability. We needed to work harder on the execution. I doubted that we were always on the same page. This project would force us to meet together more often and have clearer communication. The nature of the project would also force me to spend time getting to know them better, not only as staff members but as Christian brothers.

In order for these improvements to be made, I would need to improve my leadership abilities. I had some abilities for leadership, but leadership was not my strongest gift. What I did have is a passion for improvement. The effectiveness of our staff and the health of our church would hopefully benefit as I continue working to become a better leader.

Out of my own growth I planned to help our staff become more effective in their personal areas of ministry. My hope, from this project, was that we could function together as a powerful, effective, and unified team. As we began growing individually in our personal responsibilities and together as a unit, the results hopefully would be synergistic.
Definitions and Limitations

A few definitions that might be helpful at this point are included below.

_Leadership._ To borrow a definition from John Maxell, the “true measure of leadership is influence.”\(^5\) In becoming a more effective team leader, my hope was to be a stronger, yet more positive, influence in the lives of our staff ministry team, resulting in a positive effect upon the Cadiz Baptist Church.

_Team Ministry._ Team ministry in this project will refer to two or more individuals focusing on common team goals, using the necessary resources of time, materials, space, and money needed to accomplish and then sustain the goal.\(^6\) Our hope was to develop and demonstrate a synergy where the sum of the parts is greater than the individual ministry parts. In this team ministry the pastor may have the final word, but everyone had the opportunity to freely share ideas. Ideas were to be considered based on their own merit, not simply because they were initiated by the pastor or a staff minister or another source.

_Staff Ministers._ The staff ministers were the Associate Pastor of Youth and Children and the Minister of Music. Although the secretarial staff and facilities manager were vitally important employees, they were not a part of the scope of this project.

_Limitations._ One of the limitations to keep in mind is that church staff leadership is an ongoing responsibility. It did not begin at the onset of this project nor was it to end after its completion. Another limitation is it can be difficult to measure


objectively the effectiveness of human relationships. A third limitation is seeing all of the results desired in a fifteen-week time frame. I had hoped to see the beginning of it, but significant change took much longer to evaluate accurately.

Delimitations. One delimitation to this study was the use of the ministerial staff only and not the support staff. Although the support staff was a valuable part of the ministry at the church, I felt it was best to limit this study to the Minister of Children and Youth and the Minister of Music.

Research Methodology

A central component to this project was a fifteen-week series of meetings with the staff discussing and implementing improvements in our respective areas of ministry as well as working together. We were to begin the study with a survey of our individual personalities and attitudes about various aspects of team ministry. We would conclude the fifteen weeks with a survey of the staff again to note what changes had been made. I also took a study group of five to seven people from the congregation and surveyed them concerning the effectiveness of the staff working together as a team.

Near the beginning of the project I gave the ministerial staff the book Breakout Churches. This resource served as a tool to challenge us in ministry. As the project continued, I provided additional information to the staff that was more specifically related to team ministry. I would then follow up in our team meetings by asking for feedback related to the information we have read. I gave the staff my suggestions and

7Thom Rainer, Breakout Churches (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).
took notes on their ideas as we considered them prayerfully and were to seek ways to implement plans in a way that was helpful to each other and to the congregation.

**Conclusion**

My hope in the doing of this project was to become more effective as a team leader and to help the staff become more effective as a team. As a result, my desire was to see a positive ripple effect that would benefit all of Cadiz Baptist Church.
CHAPTER 2
LEADERSHIP STYLE OF JESUS

The project limited scriptural study to the leadership of Jesus for two reasons. First, there are far too many Scriptures on leadership to include all of them in a treatise of this type. Next, the greatest leader in all of history is Jesus Christ. If one is to limit oneself to a portion of Scripture then why not use the greatest leader of all? He also deals with a variety of people from different backgrounds with different personalities.

Jesus as a Role Model

Jesus Christ is the greatest leader who ever walked on earth. Every committed follower of Jesus would agree with that statement. Many nominal Christians would concur. Even many adherents to other faiths would admit that Jesus was a leader like few others. If one is going to be an effective leader of a church he must model his style of leadership after the one who the church considers to be the both the world’s greatest leader and the one who founded the church.

One of the greatest aspects of Jesus’ leadership is that he perfectly personified what he taught others to do. His life was always consistent with his message. He always did what he told others they must do. Not only did he teach others to serve, he was the ultimate servant. He did not just tell his disciples to evangelize; he did it. When the world tried to make him an earthly king, as they did after the feeding of the five thousand, he withdrew. He never performed a miracle or even gave a powerful sermon in
order to win the applause of men or to stroke his own ego. He never took advantage of others, even though he had ample opportunity and ability to do so. Too often in our world, even in the church, leaders preach one thing yet practice another. Too often the credibility of the Christian leader is discredited by the way he lives. Who he is in the public spotlight is a far cry from who he is in private. Not so with Jesus. He was a living, breathing example of what he taught.

Jesus did not just give his followers a set of principles by which to live, he lived them personally, daily, and perfectly. Paul tells us that our attitude should be “the same as that of Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5). Paul presented Jesus as the “ultimate model” for Christians to follow “the supreme example of the humble, self-sacrificing, self-giving service that Paul has just been urging the Philippians to practice in their relations one toward another.”

Jesus told his followers on numerous occasions, in every one of the Gospels, to “follow me” (Matt 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; 16:24; 19:21; Mark 2:14; 8:34; 10:21; Luke 5:27; 9:23, 59, 61; 18:22; John 1:43; 10:27; 12:26; 13:36; 21:19, 21:22). He said it to fishermen, a tax collector, a wealthy young ruler, and a man who was about to bury his father. He offered specific challenges to specific individuals at specific times and places; he also offered a general plea to “anyone who would come after” him (Mark 8:34).

When Jesus said, “follow me,” he meant, “come and be my disciple.” As George Buttrick observes, “Rabbinical discipleship demanded intimate, daily contact

________________________

with the teacher.” According to Leon Morris, “This call clearly points to a lasting association; Jesus is not inviting them to a pleasant stroll along the seashore, but inviting them to discipleship; there is the thought of personal attachment.”

At one point the mother of James and John came with them to Jesus with a request for seats of honor in the kingdom. Jesus replied to them, “Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?” (Matt 20:22). In the Old Testament the cup refers to sufferings and sometimes to the wrath of God (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17, 22; Jer 25:15-16). Morris explains, “all four Gospels use the term when they are recording what Jesus said of his sufferings in Gethsemane and at the time of his arrest (Matt 26:39, Mark 14:36, Luke 22:42, John 18:11).” Jesus clearly says, “I am about to drink this cup.” He asked James and John if they could do the same. Either they misunderstood what “drinking the cup” entailed or, like Peter promising never to deny Christ, they were much too overconfident and answered hastily. In either case, they were not yet ready. One day, however, they would drink it. The point is, Jesus did not call these or any other disciples to do anything he was unwilling to do. One day the disciples would drink from the cup of suffering, but Jesus would do so first. Christian leaders today must follow the example of Jesus. A pastor should not ask his members or his staff to work any harder or sacrifice any more to follow God than he is willing to do himself.

---

2George A. Buttrick, Matthew, in vol. 7 of The Interpreter’s Bible (New York, Abingdon, 1971), 276.


4Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture is taken from the New International Version (2005).


One important question in considering the leadership of Jesus is, “What made his leadership so great?” Christians would quickly agree that he was the greatest role model who ever walked the planet. What specific leadership principles did he demonstrate that could be transferable to others today? Modeling appropriate behavior is certainly one principle, but how did Jesus flesh this out in daily living? This brief treatise explores a handful of Jesus’ leadership characteristics rather succinctly. More traits and qualities could have been chosen and more Bible passages demonstrating his teaching could be discussed. For the purpose of this project, however, several of Jesus’ leadership traits will be given specific attention.

**Jesus as Servant**

The most surprising element of Jesus’ leadership may be his call to servanthood. Jesus challenged a common assumption in his day. Pushing and shoving to get to the head table was natural. It was how young Pharisees got ahead. Sitting up front meant one had arrived at the top. The world still views leadership in this manner. Those who want to get ahead must aggressively climb upward. Many times, this power grasping is even done at the expense of those around them. Tragically, this selfish manipulation is even done by some pastors and denominational leaders pushing their ways into positions of power. Jesus’ style of leadership is a refreshing change. For example, on one occasion, Jesus called his disciples together and told them, “those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among

---

you must be your servant” (Mark 10:42-43). Manz declares this call to humble service “one of the more striking passages from Jesus’ teachings related to leadership. In fact, it turns leadership upside down.” Prior to the coming of Jesus the word “humility” had a negative connotation. It carried the idea of being unfit and of little worth. Jesus elevated the idea of humility by both his words and his life. Jesus continues in this same passage to tell his disciples that “whoever wants to be first must be slave of all” (Mark 10:44). A true Christian leader must willingly forfeit his personal rights for the good of others. According to John Grassmic, Jesus finds “that there is nothing in the business of lording it over people which deserves the name of leadership at all.”

This challenge by Jesus is but one of the many times Jesus addressed the subject of service. In Matthew’s Gospel he declared, “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt 20:26b-28). Not only does one have to put others before himself, he must become as a slave. Southern Baptist Greek scholar A. T. Robertson called this view of leadership, “A complete reversal of popular opinion then and now.” He continued to say that the idea of servant here may carry the idea of moving so quickly, in order to


Jesus was the ultimate servant leader. He did not come for the purpose of "lording it over others," but rather he came in humility (Phil 2:5-10). The literary form of the beautiful Philippians chapter two passage leads many to believe that Paul was quoting an early Christian hymn. But as Homer Kent observes, Paul was quite capable of a highly poetic style (1 Cor 13), and may well have been its original author. Regardless of its origin, this passage speaks powerfully to the servant heart of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus came to the earth for the purpose of sacrificing his life on a cross for others. According to Melick, "The dramatic distance Jesus traveled from the ‘form of God’ to ‘the death of the cross reveals the servant mind that each believer was to have.'" Jesus also approached each day with that same sacrificial love. Even the night before his crucifixion, while his disciples were busy arguing over who was the greatest, he took a towel and a basin of water and washed his disciples’ feet (John 13:15). Jesus knew his disciples were preoccupied with other thoughts, so he used a simple towel and basin to get the disciples’ attention. After he got their attention, he could teach them again about the powerful principle of service. Leaders today can learn from this example. Many times they continue pounding information at those they try to lead, but they forget to lead by example, especially when it comes to taking the role of servant.

---


15 Melick, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, 99.

Jesus instilled into his disciples that the greatest among his followers should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. He continues by telling his disciples that even he takes a servant’s approach with them (Luke 22:26-27). Jesus not only taught that, he lived it. Leading through serving may be the most important, yet most misunderstood, aspect of leadership that Jesus communicated.

**Jesus as a Sacrificial Leader**

Related to Jesus’ idea of service is his call to sacrificial leadership. Jesus demonstrated this call both clearly and personally as he gave up all the trappings of heaven to be born as a humble child (Phil 2:5-8). He made the ultimate sacrifice as he gave his life on a cross for the sins of the world. This sacrifice was not given in some robotic fashion, void of all emotion. The agony of this decision might be best seen in Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane. Luke tells us that “his sweat was like drops of blood” falling to the ground as he poured out his heart to the Father (Luke 22:44). Albert Barnes says,

> The word here rendered great drops does not mean drops gently falling on the ground, but rather thick and clammy masses of gore, pressed by inward agony through the skin, and, mixing with the sweat, falling thus to the ground. It has been doubted, by some, whether the sacred writer meant to say that there was actually blood in this sweat, or only that the sweat was in the form of great drops. The natural meaning is, doubtless, that the blood was mingled with his sweat; that it fell profusely—falling masses of gore; that it was pressed out by his inward anguish; and that this was caused in some way in view of his approaching death.  

On the cross, Jesus not only suffered physical agony, he also faced great pain internally. He bore the weight of sin for the entire world when “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21). The prophet Isaiah tells us that the Lord “laid on him, the iniquity of us all.”

---

closer to God one gets the more repulsive sin is to that person. According to Wayne Grudem, Jesus “hated sin with his entire being. The thought of evil, of sin, contradicted everything in his character . . . . Yet in obedience to the Father and out of love for us Jesus bore the sins of the world.”

Jesus faced this terrible agony of the cross alone. As Wayne Grudem observes, it was bad enough that he was abandoned by his disciples, “but far worse than desertion, even by his closest of human friends, was the fact that Jesus was deprived of the closeness to the Father” whom he had been united with from eternity past.

Most difficult of all may have been personally bearing the wrath of the Father upon himself. Darrel Bock notes, “As Jesus bore the guilt of our sins alone, God the Father, the mighty Creator, the Lord of the universe, poured out on Jesus the fury of his wrath: Jesus became the object of the intense hatred of sin and vengeance against sin which God had patiently stored up since the beginning of the world” (Rom 3:25-26).

Jesus taught his disciples to live sacrificially with both actions and words. He told his disciples that if anyone wanted to be his follower, they, too would have to deny themselves and take up their own crosses (Luke 9:23). Darrel Bock writes, “For a Christian to bear a cross in sacrificial living would ultimately end with a martyr’s death. What Jesus said to his disciples in Luke 9:23, he said to the multitude. Luke’s introduction of this statement . . . ‘Then he said to

---

18Ibid., 574.
20Ibid.
them all’ (Luke 9:23a) signals the universal reach’ of Jesus’ invitation.\textsuperscript{21} For every follower of Jesus, at the very least, it would revolutionize their living. According to Joel Green, discipleship “requires a basic shift of orientation as we realign ourselves with God’s will through a humble renunciation of our own agenda.”\textsuperscript{22} For too many, Christianity is seen as a tool for health and wealth, forgetting that some have lost their wealth and even their lives for the cause of Christ. Too often Christian leaders have forsaken this bedrock principle. They want the glory of Christ without the cross of Christ. Some who have experienced success, as man measures it, have even become arrogant and prideful. Their egos have been further inflated as they are paraded as role models at denominational meetings, or given the larger and more desirable churches to pastor, or admired as heroes by many watching television. Some have even become wealthy while pleading for money from widows on fixed incomes. This selfish manipulation is one of the travesties in the church today. Surely such leadership is foreign to the teaching of Jesus.

**Jesus as a Team Leader**

In one sense, Jesus did not need a team in order to accomplish his mission. He did not need other people to help him live a perfect, sinless life. No one else could die on the cross in his place. No one else could teach like he taught. No one else could go to the heavenly Father for him to gain insight and power. In another sense, however, Jesus needed a team absolutely. After his resurrection, Jesus would ascend to his heavenly Father. No longer would he be physically present in this world. If his message were to be carried out, it would have to be by his followers. Knowing the importance of this

mission, Jesus poured his life into twelve men. He ate with them, shared his heart with them, traveled with them, and even lived with them for over three years. He modeled before his disciples what he taught and he taught what he modeled, so that they too could one day take his message to the world. Bock asserts that there were times when Jesus “must have felt more like a parent than a leader of a messianic movement.” Knowing that one day his physical presence would no longer be with them, he never gave up on these men. Visionaries, like Jesus, understand that there will come a time when followers must become leaders. In order for the cause to successfully continue, they must carry the torch forward.24

If a Christian leader is going to follow the example of Jesus, he too must pour his life into others. It will not always be easy. It was not easy, even for Jesus. Sometimes it will even fill one with heartache, as it did Jesus. One of his disciples betrayed him. The others abandoned him during his greatest hour of need. Modern leaders face similar risks when investing their lives in others. Still the leader who wants to follow the supreme example has no other option if he is to be consistent with the Lord’s model. Despite the risk, leaders cannot lead in a vacuum. A leader is more like a player/coach on a basketball team than he is a professional golfer or singles tennis player. The golfer and tennis player must only motivate themselves.25 They are not dependent on others. The player/coach on a basketball team must do more than excel himself; he


25Ibid., 211.
must motivate the other players to give their best. If he is going to make a difference, it must be through involvement with a team.

Mark tells us that Jesus “appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons” (Mark 3:15). Jesus lived in constant and close association with his disciples. Leaders cannot be content to simply lead from a distance. They must also lead from close proximity. Leading from close proximity can be much more frustrating than leading from afar. A leader has to get involved with people’s personalities, issues, and struggles. This involvement can be uncomfortable and painful, even dangerous and messy! It can, however, also be much more rewarding as you see your life and work multiplied through those in whom you have invested your life. If a pastor fails in this area, though he is a tremendous organizer and orator extraordinaire, he has missed one of the most vital aspects of leadership responsibility.

Wilkes correctly concludes that “Jesus’ ministry on earth is a striking example of an important leadership principle: Mission continues when people are captured by it, equipped to do it, and ‘teamed’ to carry it on.” Here is another important principle for team leadership. Pastors, staff, and church members come and go, but the ministry of the gospel goes on. The more pastors can equip their staff and lay leaders, the healthier their churches will be and the more effective the pastors will be for future ministry (Matt 10:1-5, Mark 3:14-15; 6:6-13; Luke 9:1-6; John 6:5-13).

---


27 Ibid., 77.

Jesus as a Courageous Leader

Jesus was the kindest and gentlest man who ever lived. He was also the strongest and most courageous. He stood toe to toe against the religious establishment knowing that by offending the Pharisees and Sadducees he was signing his own death warrant. He rebuked his own disciples when necessary. Jesus even made a whip, overturned the tables of the money changers, then threw them out of the temple (John 2:15). R. C. H. Lenski observes this was no “gradual and gentle correction,” but rather a bold and decisive confrontation.\(^{29}\) Filled with zeal for his father’s house, Jesus applied the whip first to the men and then to the sheep and oxen.\(^ {30}\) Some have trouble seeing the Lord Jesus being angry, but as Lenski argues, “Spineless love is hardly love.”\(^ {31}\)

Luke tells us that Jesus “chose to put himself in the way of danger, and even to go into scenes which he knew would end in his death”\(^ {32}\) (Luke 9:51). He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on Sunday as the people shouted “Hosanna.” Later that same week, he allowed his enemies to arrest him in the garden knowing that it would lead to his crucifixion. The most courageous act of all was when he willingly gave himself to be crucified for the sins of the world. Not only did he take on the physical suffering, he bore the weight of the world’s sin. He never flinched from his purpose, even though it demanded of him more than any other human ever would or could do. He never worried or panicked. He never made decisions based on fear. One reason why Jesus could be so

\(^{29}\)R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John’s Gospel* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1942), 205.

\(^{30}\)Ibid., 206.


courageous was because of his total dependence on his heavenly Father. He knew that his mission for coming to earth was for the purpose of dying for the world (John 10:15). He also knew that no human being could take his life until the time set by his Father had arrived. He once told his disciples, “No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again” (John 10:18a). Because Jesus lived in complete dependence upon his Father, he did not worry about the threats of his enemies. He knew that his Father had given him a purpose to fulfill and no one could prevent him from fulfilling that purpose. He understood that better than anyone who lived before him, or since. He knew that did not make life easy, but it did give a peace that the world could not understand.

The pastor who will be faithful to the calling of Jesus must strike this balance. On the one hand, he must be kind, compassionate, and gentle. On the other hand, he must act boldly as the situation demands. Pastors must follow Jesus’ example in caring for the flock as shepherds. This ministry is primarily done with gentle patience and understanding, but sometimes it is with boldness and correction. Pastors must also guard their flocks from false teachers who would seek to take advantage of the church through words and actions that run in contradiction to Scripture. Sometimes these deceptions are obvious, at other times they are subtle. They may come from the secular world or from leaders in the religious or even Christian community. The Bible declares that Satan himself comes as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14).

The most difficult challenges for most pastors often will come from within their own local churches. Like Simon Peter trying to prevent Jesus from going to the cross (Matt 16:22), even well meaning people will sometimes have an agenda that
contradicts with God’s agenda. Pastors must learn to be bold and strong while remaining
gentle and kind. This balance can be an exceedingly difficult challenge. Boldness
without gentleness is too harsh. Gentleness without boldness can be too soft or weak.
The Christian leader must strike the proper balance. One must follow the advice of
James (Jas 1:5) and pray for wisdom as he pursues this course.

Jesus as a Compassionate and Caring Leader

Matthew 9:36 tells us that when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Even
though many in the crowd misunderstood Jesus and only wanted to follow him in order to get their temporary wishes met, Jesus still loved and cared for them. His heart was broken because he knew many would never become genuine followers (Matt 23:37, Luke 13:34). One reason why Jesus felt such deep compassion was because of the poor leadership Israel experienced, despite the fact that many claimed to be expert guides.33

Jesus knew his ultimate mission was to die on a cross for the sins of the world. He also knew his primary reason for coming was to meet eternal, spiritual needs, rather than simply the physical and temporal; yet he still cared about the most basic needs of people even when they were temporal. One of the clearest expressions of this concern was in the feeding of the five thousand. The background for this miracle begins when Jesus, moved by compassion, healed the sick that were present that day (Matt 14:14). Then, rather than sending the crowd away, he fed the entire multitude with one little boy’s lunch. Jesus also fed four thousand. Matthew describes it like this: “Jesus called his disciples to him and said, ‘I have compassion for these people; they have already been

with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way’” (Matt 15:32). According to John MacArthur, the New Testament word translated “compassion” is *splanchnizomai*. It literally means “to be moved in one’s inward parts, in the bowels or viscera, which the ancients considered the seat of the emotions.” All the other references to this verb are in the third person, but here Jesus speaks in first person.

One of the most moving accounts of Jesus’ compassion is seen in his relationship with Mary and Martha after the death of their brother Lazarus in John chapter eleven. Jesus had a special relationship with this family (John 11:5), yet he deliberately delayed his coming in order that the people might see a greater miracle (John 11:15). Even though Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead he was still so touched with compassion that he wept at the tomb. John tells us simply that, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). This verse is the shortest verse in the Bible, yet one of the most intensely personal.

Matthew relates another demonstration of Jesus compassion when two blind men sitting by the roadside heard that Jesus was going by and they cried out to him for healing. The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but not Jesus. He stopped and asked them a simple question: “What do you want me to do for you?” When they asked Jesus to heal their blindness, Matthew reports that he “had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him” (Matt 20:30-34). According to Morris, in the New Testament, when the verb translated “had

---


“compassion” is used, it is always used to describe the attitude of Jesus or it is used “by Jesus in his parables; it is particularly associated with him.”

Mark tells about an instance when a leper told Jesus that if he was willing he could heal him. What was Jesus’ response? “Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’” (Mark 1:41).

One of the most touching demonstrations of the compassion of Jesus was on the cross where he commits the care of his mother, Mary, to his beloved disciple (John 19:26-27). Even in the middle of his excruciating pain, Jesus was thinking about others.

On another occasion, a woman with a bleeding condition approached Jesus in desperation while he was on his way to heal the dying son of Jairus, a synagogue ruler, and a man of significant social standing in the community. Most leaders would have never noticed the woman nor taken time for her even if they had. After all, he had a “more important” mission at hand. Her condition was not life threatening and she was of low social and economic status in the community. She definitely did not have the influence that the synagogue ruler possessed. Jesus was also surrounded by people who were crowding against him and, from a human perspective, he was in a race against time. In fact, while Jesus stopped to heal the woman, the son of Jairus was pronounced dead. In an act of great compassion Jesus took time to recognize the impoverished woman, not only healing her of a physical condition but a spiritual one as well (Mark 5:22-36); then he immediately turned back to Jairus and brought his son to life.

While Jesus was physically present on the earth, he could not be everywhere at every time, yet he took specific actions, in specific places, to meet specific needs. Morris

---

36Ibid., 238-39.
says, in doing this, he showed both his disciples and those who would later become followers that “even the Son of God—especially the Son of God—has time for people who hurt.”

One should not be fooled into thinking that Jesus cared more about man’s physical and temporal needs than he did the eternal and the spiritual. Too many liberal churches have missed the primary purpose of Jesus’ redemptive work on the cross by neglecting eternal salvation and emphasizing a social gospel. One must conclude, however, from even a casual reading of the New Testament, that Jesus also cared about the physical and emotional needs of human beings.

Scripture passage after Scripture passage points out that Jesus truly was a man of compassion. His leadership with his disciples and his many acts of mercy consistently declare this truth. Too often today’s leaders are so focused on themselves that they cannot care for others. At other times, they care more about results than they do about people. Other leaders seem to be harsh and judgmental by nature or they try to speak to the spiritual need without addressing the obvious physical needs. Every leader can take lessons from Jesus’ model of compassion and every Christian leader must.

**Jesus Leading as the Master Teacher**

One of the most common references to Jesus was as a rabbi or teacher. The Gospel of Matthew alone has ten references to Jesus as teacher (Matt 8:19; 9:11; 12:38; 17:24; 19:16; 22:16; 24; 36; 23:10; 26:18). Nicodemus, a great teacher in Israel, recognizes Jesus’ authority in John 3, When he says, “we know you are a teacher who has come from God” (John 3:2). He knows that many of the common folk acknowledge Jesus as a teacher sent

37Ibid., 122.
from heaven, but Nicodemus is not simply acknowledging their belief, he is admitting his

own.\textsuperscript{38} In many cases Jesus’ enemies even refer to him as a teacher (Matt 8:19; 9:11; 12:38; 17:24; Mark 12:14). Matthew 5-7 is commonly known as the “Sermon on the Mount.” No one ever taught like Jesus. The final statement in Matthew 7 tells us that “when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority and not as their teachers of the law” (Matt 7:29). The crowd was amazed at Jesus’ teaching because it truly was amazing. Jesus, however, did not teach in order to astound the crowd with his eloquence, but rather to call them to a change in lifestyle as radically obedient followers of God.\textsuperscript{39}

The Jews had heard many sermons before from their rabbis who taught in the synagogues. Robertson says they tended to be both dull and dry dissertations on “every conceivable problem in the history of mankind. The scribes quoted the rabbis before them and were afraid to express an idea without bolstering it up by some predecessor.”\textsuperscript{40} Leon Morris states that “it was widely accepted that there had been a golden age early in the history of the race and since then history had been all downhill. Those closer to the golden times might be expected to have the rights of it when any dispute arose.”\textsuperscript{41} Jesus ignored the scribal wisdom of his day, speaking with a freshness lacking by his contemporaries.\textsuperscript{42} He was anything but dry and the furthest thing from dull. When he

\textsuperscript{38}Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John’s Gospel, 230.


\textsuperscript{40}Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, Matt 7:29.


\textsuperscript{42}Ibid.
spoke, it came with an “authority of truth” a “reality and freshness of the morning light, and the power of God’s Spirit.”

When Jesus came to his hometown of Nazareth the people there were also amazed at his teaching (Luke 4:22). How could the son of Joseph be such a skilled communicator? They were impressed with his “gracious words.” They were amazed that one who had grown up in their little town of Nazareth could communicate in such a way. Luke goes on to tell his readers that the people were “astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power” (Luke 4:31-32). Jesus’ final instructions given to his disciples in what is commonly known as the Great Commission, told them to make disciples of all nations “teaching them to obey everything” he had commanded. From the beginning of his ministry until the end Jesus was a master teacher.

Teaching remains an essential priority for the church. Those who follow the example of Jesus must teach others in the ways of Christ. This instruction is not simply information for information’s sake, but rather teaching for life change. One cannot be content with simply learning what Jesus taught, he must put it into practice. Jesus was not impressed with the great learning of the scribes and Pharisees of his day; in fact, they received his sharpest rebukes. James reminds his readers not only to be hearers of the word, but doers of it (James 1:22). Jesus concluded the Sermon on the Mount with a parable contrasting those who only hear from those who both hear and heed the truth. Christian pastors, teachers, and other leaders in the church today must do the same. Teaching must be

---

43 Ibid.


done for the purpose of transformation; it cannot simply be for the dissemination of information. This instruction must also be balanced by the fact that many who hear the truth will not choose to change. The refusal of the hearer does not alter the mission of the teacher. Like Jesus, leaders today must call people to follow the plan and purpose of God.

**Jesus as a Focused Leader**

When Jesus was only twelve years old, his parents found him in the temple demonstrating his profound knowledge before Israel’s teachers. When his parents told him how worried they were when they saw he was missing, Jesus asked them why they were searching for him. “ Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49) was his reply. Green argues that Jesus was “under divine compulsion” to align himself with his father’s purposes even if it appeared to “compromise his relationship with his parents.”

Years later when he formally launched his ministry, he had a clear vision including a strategic three-year plan involving the selection and development of twelve followers and an evangelism strategy that moved in concentric circles outward, first to Jerusalem, then to Judea, then to Samaria, and finally to the outermost parts of the earth.

Matthew declares that Jesus would regularly explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and be crucified. Peter would have none of it. On one occasion he even took Jesus aside to rebuke him, “Never, Lord!” said Peter. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus responded to his outspoken disciple with some very strong words, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things

---


of God, but the things of men” (Matt 6:21-23). While interpreters may be divided on whether Jesus was literally calling Peter the devil or simply calling him an adversary the very fact that Jesus used the word “Satan” speaks to his unwavering commitment to do the Father’s will. The cross was so central to the focus of Jesus that to suggest anything otherwise was to be a tool in the hands of the enemy. Jesus refused to give a moment’s consideration to Peter’s suggestion. Nothing could deter him from doing the Father’s will.

Luke also speaks to Jesus’ focus when he tells us that, “as the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51). A. T. Robertson writes that Jesus had a “fixedness of purpose in the face of difficulty and danger.” Later in the same Gospel, Jesus says, “I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!” (Luke 13:33). The leadership of Jesus was one of divine focus. No one, nor anything, could deter him from his mission of the cross.

**Jesus as an Inspirational Leader**

Jesus gave people a vision larger than themselves. He told his disciples to follow him and he would make them fishers of men. They immediately put down their nets and followed him (Matt 4:20). The disciples willingly left their families and their careers to follow an itinerant preacher. Peter, Andrew, James and John left their nets and their boats. Matthew left a lucrative tax business. Peter was right when he told Jesus, “We have left everything to follow you!” (Matt 19:27). Yet there was something so

---


compelling about Jesus that not one of them, save Judas, had regrets, and only he near the end.

Jesus told the woman at the well that he had water to drink that she knew nothing about. She put down her bucket and then went to get her friends. People tend to work harder on projects when they understand the significance of their work to the entire project.\(^{50}\) Jesus offered a woman who had been caught in adultery a new lease on life. He also gave sight to the blind and made the lame to walk and fed thousands of people with one little boy’s lunch. He never sought the applause of men, but he thought and spoke and acted in such a way that people could not help but be astounded.

When Jesus concluded what we now call the “Sermon on the Mount,” Matthew tells us that the “crowds were “amazed at his teaching” (Matt 7:28). A. T. Robertson declares that “they listened spell-bound to the end and were left amazed.”\(^{51}\) Even to those who only nominally believe in Christ, the Sermon on the Mount remains as a pinnacle of moral and ethical teaching, challenging all who dare to read and seek to apply it.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Jesus’ leadership was his ability to take ordinary men and transform them into extraordinary servant leaders carrying out his mission. His followers were unimpressive by the world’s standards. When the religious leaders observed the disciples of Jesus after he ascended into heaven they recalled that they were “unschooled and ordinary men,” yet they “took note that these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).


Jesus encountered challenge after challenge boldly with unwavering confidence in his heavenly Father. He stood toe to toe with Satan in the desert, he challenged the system of the first century religious establishment, he faced “impending betrayal, arrest, trial and crucifixion,” yet, in spite of these overwhelming challenges, he always communicated a certainty that God’s ultimate plan would be accomplished.\(^5^2\)

Jesus instilled in his followers such confidence and sense of purpose that they too would be willing to die for its cause, even in the face of fierce opposition with their leader gone. Incredible numbers of people came to see the healings and hear the teachings of Jesus. All four gospels tell us that on one occasion about five thousand men came to hear Jesus’ teaching (Matt 14:21; Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14; John 6:10). Matthew tells us that this count did not even include the women and children (Matt 14:21). Matthew also tells us that early in Jesus’ ministry “news about him spread all over Syria” and “large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him” (Matt 4:24-25).

Incredible numbers of people are still being inspired by Jesus’ teaching today. Christian leaders still have his message. It is the message of Christ. But too often those who do inspire do so only for temporary gain. Jesus always pointed to the eternal. He even avoided the crowd when he saw that they wanted to make him an earthly king (John 6:15). He was the most inspiring leader who ever lived, but he never used this charismatic ability for personal advantage. Jesus always directed his followers toward the purpose of his Father and the kingdom of God. Christian leaders who hope to inspire others today must have the same motive and mission in the forefront of their hearts and minds.

minds. Their agendas must never be simply for personal or selfish advancement, but always for the gospel of Christ and the purpose and plan of God.

**Jesus as a Leader Depending on His Father**

One might think that Jesus, being God, would not need to pray like the average Christian does; but Jesus knew that everything he did was dependent on his relationship with his Father. On one occasion, Jesus told his disciples that he could do nothing without his Father’s help (John 5:19). Jesus made a habit of carving out time to be alone in prayer (Matt 14:23; Matt 26:36). On the night before he chose his disciples, Jesus spent the entire night praying (Luke 6:12-13). The night before Jesus went to the cross, he took his disciples into the garden and spent a significant amount of time agonizing in prayer (John 18).

Of all the things Jesus’ disciples could have asked him, they asked him to teach them to pray. The Bible does not specifically tell us that the disciples asked Jesus for power to heal the sick (though it may be implied in Luke 17:19), raise the dead, read people’s thoughts, or even to amaze the crowd with their teaching. They did, however, clearly ask Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1).

Too often, when followers of Jesus do not get immediate answers to their prayers, they stop praying. Jesus addressed that when he “told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1). Jesus understood better than anyone the importance of depending on God in order to do anything of eternal consequence. He made sure to pass this message on to his followers. Many Christian leaders today try doing their ministry apart from Christ rather than depending on Christ, or they make up their own plans and ask God to give them a little extra help. Leaders in
churches today must get back to Jesus’ principle of depending on God. Many secular leaders and even some in the church believe that “God helps those who help themselves.” Many are lay people leading influential committees and making motions in business meetings and act as though they believe this quotation comes directly from Scripture. Sadly, it is miles away from the biblical truth.

The greatest danger in obtaining a degree in evangelism and church growth may be that somehow it will be easy to depend upon one’s learning more than on the power of the Holy Spirit to see God work. Another more subtle, but equally tragic danger, is the fact that church growth, however one defines it, becomes more important than obedience to God. A third concern is that the pastor, in his effort to become a better leader, forgets that Jesus said a lot more about following than leading. Before he knows it, he has traded in his shepherd’s staff for a cell phone, his prayer closet for a computer, and his passion for obeying Jesus for a larger, numerically growing, more “successful” ministry.

The genuine Christian leader must get back to emphasizing the believer’s dependence on Christ. As the pastor and the congregation do this, power will once again reign in the pulpit and the pew. The leadership style of Jesus must be followed by the Christian leader. Even secular leaders can benefit from his teaching. When people begin to not only respect his teachings, but also put them into practice, the church will be revolutionized and the business world will be a much better place to work, grow, and serve.

Not only must the Christian leader depend on Jesus, he must make it his primary aim to please Jesus. One life goal matters more than all the others—to hear the
Lord one day say, “Well done good and faithful servant.” No other amount of success in
the world, or even in the church, will matter without that. All of the wounds that resulted
from humanly perceived failures will not matter either. All that will matter is this—was
Christ pleased with one’s life? Did he follow Christ passionately, persistently, and
completely?

The leadership of Jesus is the ultimate example for every follower of Christ to
observe as he leads others. The pastor must be particularly sensitive to the model of
Jesus as he leads his staff.
CHAPTER 3
PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM

In this chapter theoretical and sociological support is given based upon a study of both Christian and secular material in the field of leadership including the benefits of effective teamwork, how to choose a quality team, developing a team, and some common denominators between effective secular teams and local church teams. The application of the principles in this chapter should help the church staff to improve in significant ways.

Benefits of Effective Teamwork

There are several benefits to effective teamwork including a synergism among team members, improved working environment, and healthy ripple effect throughout the organization. These are discussed below.

Synergistic Effect Because of the Team

The sum of the parts is greater than the individual parts. Pat MacMillan says that “Synergy is the state in which the output is greater than the sum of the parts…The roots of this word are found with the classical Greek word ‘synergos,’ which means ‘working together.’ ”¹ John Maxwell says that “nothing of significance was ever achieved by an individual acting alone. Look below the surface and you will find that all

seemingly solo acts are really team efforts.”

If one is going to invest many hours working toward the improvement of team ministry he or she must be confident that team ministry is actually beneficial. The Bible itself speaks to the benefits of teamwork. “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!” (Eccl 4:9). The third chapter of Nehemiah describes in detail how the people of Judah stood shoulder to shoulder building the wall. The book of Acts is a powerful New Testament example of how the church worked together in service to God (Acts 1:14; 2:1, 6, 44, 46; 4:24; 5:12; 6:2; 14:27; 20:7).

Leaders outside of the church have understood the benefits of effective teamwork as well. Jack Welch, Fortune Magazine’s manager of the century in 2000 and former CEO of General Electric declares, “GE’s all about finding and building great people.” Welch goes on to state, “We build great people, who then build great products and services.” Katzenbach and Smith contend that “a team remains the most flexible and the most powerful unit of performance, learning and change in any organization.” Former president Lyndon Johnson had an interesting take on teamwork. He once said, “There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by

---


4Ibid., 157.

ourselves.”

Even Albert Einstein once said that, “Many times a day I realized how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received.”

In the business world, GE’s Salisbury Plant increased productivity 250 percent compared to traditional plants producing the same products. Motorola claims that in the early 1970’s productivity was increased by 30 percent and turnover was reduced by 25 percent due to a team approach. General Mills introduced a team strategy to their cereal plant and productivity rose by 40 percent. From 1994-1998 Boeing Aircraft cut production time for a C-17 by 80 percent largely as a result of successful team implementation.

Teamwork also increases the productivity of individuals. Being part of an effective team ministry does not mean a lack of accountability or progress toward individual goals. Successful teamwork includes clear and challenging personal goals and encouragement toward reaching them. Supervisors are not intimidators, but positive motivators and encouragers, giving team members input into personal and team goals. This emphasis provides a healthy work environment motivating team members to do their best rather than simply doing enough to get by.

Arguably the most notable example of teamwork in modern Christian ministry is the Billy Graham evangelistic team. Neither Cliff Barrows, George Beverly Shea, nor

---


7Ibid., 3.

Graham himself would have achieved what God has blessed them to achieve outside of the other cooperating members of the team. There are technically better preachers than Graham, better worship leaders than Cliff Barrows, and better singers than George Beverly Shea. When placed in roles together, however, they make a ministry team that has been unsurpassed in modern times.

When one has a team to work with, one can concentrate on his or her strengths rather than trying to do a multitude of tasks well. Kerry Walls, a member of John Maxwell’s INJOY team, once said “Spinning more plates doesn’t increase your talent—it increases your likelihood of dropping a plate.”

**There Is an Improved Environment in the Workplace**

The nature of healthy teamwork values cooperation and removes intimidation. Each member’s input is considered valuable. Individual ideas are considered based on their merit rather than the title or position held by the initiator of it. Managers do not send out memos demanding that their personal whims be carried out regardless of their benefit to the team. Rather, the best ideas are taken from the group and then implemented. Choosing ideas based on their merit rather than on a team member’s position is a definite morale booster to both the individual team members and the group.

According to Susan Heathfield, a team-oriented environment gives team members the opportunity to contribute to the overall success of the organization. While each person still has a specific job function, he or she is unified with other team members

---

There Is a Ripple Effect throughout The Organization

In the words of Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson, “Traditional team processes represent a paradigm of anemic preparation. With little or no guidance team members are expected to figure out how to discuss tough issues, deal with peer problems and often strive for excellence under less than adequate leadership.” The healthy team process, however, helps the team to work out that process together. As members of the organization see that their input truly is valuable the positive morale spreads through the entire organization. Steve Harper, in his book, The Ripple Effect, gives three simple ripple rules: “(1) Ripples can be caused by even the smallest pebbles; (2) ripples bounce back to us; (3) ripples continue long after we can no longer see them.”

Choosing a Team

What Are Some Important Elements for Every Effective Team?

According to Jack Connel, seven characteristics of team building and teamwork are shared values, complementary skills, well defined working approach, meaningful purpose, clear performance goals, mutual accountability, and small

---


numbers. These are essential elements to any team. In their book, *The Wisdom of Teams*, Katzenbach and Smith state that “the single most powerful engine for teams is a clear and compelling performance challenge. Without a performance imperative little else matters.” On the other end of the spectrum, if one’s primary goal is simply to become a team, Katzenback and Smith conclude that this approach is “the least likely way to deliver performance.” Katzenback and Smith additionally state that the team leader is “seldom the primary determinant of team performance.” Rather, it is the commitment of the seven principles listed above.

Carl Lafasto and Carl Larson collected 15,000 assessments of team members from their teammates asking individuals two specific questions: (1) what strengths does this person bring to the team, and (2) what might this individual do to contribute more effectively to the team’s success? Analysis of these responses yielded six factors that separated effective team members from ineffective ones. These six factors fell into two broader groups: working knowledge and teamwork. The first group, working knowledge, consisted of two factors: experience and problem solving ability. The second group, teamwork, was made up of four factors: openness, supportiveness, action orientation, and personal style.

The experienced team member was described by the respondents as one who

---

14 Ibid., xviii.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 LaFasto and Larson, *When Teams Work Best*, 4-5.
knows the business and has a clear vision, has a wealth of knowledge, sound judgment, good business sense, an understanding of job, and pulls the pieces together into the big picture. The problem solvers are proactive in problem resolution; constructive participants in team discussions, try to keep people together and focused, provide “thorough understanding of the key issues to the team,” and present “fact-based solutions very effectively.”

Team members who made the grade under “working knowledge” must also possess certain relational skills described under the “teamwork” heading. They were those who were open and straightforward, willing to bring up issues, even delicate ones, and they freely gave their opinions and feedback. Those who were “supportive” were dedicated to the team’s success, worked behind the scenes to help the team, were always willing to help out, listened well to the ideas of others, and worked well with others.

Supportiveness does not mean passiveness, but rather an active participation for the good of the team. This term describes a team member who is “action oriented,” “rises to the challenge,” is “achievement oriented,” “reacts positively to immediate needs,” “constantly has ideas to help the team” succeed, is an energetic worker, a fast learner, a good personal organizer, and “has courage to confront issues.” Team members who exhibit a positive personal style are experienced motivators of people; exhibit a “positive energy, new ideas, and lots of creativity,” get “along well with others,” and they are well liked and friendly.”

18Ibid., 6-7.
19Ibid., 4-23.
LaFasto and Larson went on to gather information on 35,000 working relationships asking the question: “What behaviors are most important in a relationship?” Regardless of whether the relationship was with a peer or supervisor the result was the same. The two factors reported as most important were “openness” and “supportiveness.” The most difficult relationship challenge listed was dealing with conflict.

In Pat MacMillan’s book *The Performance Factor*, he lists six factors that consistently help teams to perform exceptionally: (1) common purpose, (2) crystal clear roles, (3) accepted leadership, (4) effective processes, and (5) excellent communication. According to MacMillan, “A clear, common, compelling task that is important to the individual team members is the single biggest factor in team success. All the team workshops in the world pale to insignificance in comparison to a clear and challenging task or goal.” In order to help teams be aligned with a common goal the team mission must be clear and understandable, relevant to the needs and interests of team members, significantly important to each member of the team, achievable in the opinion of the team members, and urgent to each team member. Alignment cannot be coerced or mandated by the team leader. In order to succeed each team member must take personal ownership of the team’s purpose.

---

20 Ibid., 41.
21 Ibid., 43.
23 Ibid., 44.
24 Ibid., 48-50.
After agreeing on a common purpose, the team must “creatively divide the task and then cooperate like mad.” In order for teams to succeed their roles must be clear, complete, compatible, complimentary, and consensual.25

Team leaders must give the team members guidelines and constraints. If they do not the team will waste time defining structure rather than focusing on its purpose. Effective leadership influences the team toward the accomplishment of its purpose.

**What Are Some Important Qualities to Look for in a Prospective Team Member?**

Katzenbach and Smith maintain that teams must have complementary skills and that three categories of skills are important: “(1) technical and functional, (2) problem-solving, and (3) interpersonal.” They additionally state that “far too many leaders emphasize selection, believing that without ‘just the right set of people at the start,’ an effective team will not be possible. Yet with the exception of some functional or technical skills, most people can develop needed skills after joining the team.”26 In choosing a team, Katzenbach and Smith advise selecting members based on their skills and their skill potential rather than personality and paying attention to first impressions made by prospective members.27

Other factors to remember when considering a potential staff member are agreement in doctrine, vision, and willingness of a staff member to follow the leadership of the pastor. Still-other factors would include work ethic and moral character. Paul

25Ibid., 88.
26Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*, 120.
27Ibid., 120-21.
Powell says work ethic is important. Some specific questions should be asked. Is he or she neat or sloppy? How does he or she carry himself or herself? How does he or she treat others? Is he or she kind and courteous? Does he or she have a love for people? What is his or her vision for ministry and does it fit the church? How does he or she fit in with your personal style of leadership? Will he or she be a good fit for the pastor’s leadership style? Does he or she pay off debts? Does he or she tithe? Can he or she work with people of various ages? Other qualities to consider are character, administrative skills, vision, and work ethic. If he or she is single or in a second marriage, will the congregation accept his or her marital status? If he is a minister of music, what style of music does he prefer? Is it a good fit for your church? Does it follow the direction in which the pastor and church want to go? How will the new staff member fit with the pastor, the church, and other staff members? What type of church government does the new staff member prefer?

Some feel that all staff members are equally called by the church and should be free to set their own work schedule, determine their own program, and stay at the church until they feel called elsewhere. Others believe the staff serves under the leadership of the pastor and if they do not share his philosophy of ministry or respect his leadership they should leave. A pastor and a church need to know the answers to these questions before they call a staff member.28

What Characteristics Would Potentially Disqualify a Potential Team Member?

When it comes to hiring staff members one of the most common mistakes is hiring the best person available at the time without considering how he or she will fit on the team. Larry Osborne, pastor of North Coast Church, warns, “far better to have a long-term vacancy than have a long-term cancer on the team.” John Maxwell indicates that some people do not want to be part of the team. They may not want to change and grow. Others may have agendas that are different than the goals of the team. Others still may want to be part of the team, but they may not have the capability of contributing to the team.

Brent Storms, president of Orchard Group Church Planting, has considered more than 1,000 candidates for open positions in ministry. He has screened and interviewed hundreds and has hired more than 30 people for ministry positions. Lessons he has learned include talking to the candidate’s direct supervisor. At the same time, he knows that just because a person performs well in one setting does not mean he will perform well in another. Specific questions should be asked related to the particular position in mind. Jack Connell, quoting a business executive in his church who has made dozens of critical hiring decisions and built many highly successful teams, states that, when it comes to hiring, the mantra he follows is simply this: “‘Never settle.’

29Larry Osborne, Sticky Teams (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 58.


When I'm going through a hiring decision, I always ask, ‘Jack, are you settling?’.”

If there are internal reservations about someone or a nagging sense that this is not a good match and those responsible for the search process recommend him anyway, they may be “settling.” If a prospective staff member has a personality quirk that is irritating, or if he or she makes a sarcastic comment that is bothersome, or if his or her talent level is rated at a “7” when the church really is looking for a “9,” the pastor and committee who nevertheless recommend the person may in fact be “settling.”

What Are Important Elements to Include When Orienting a New Team Member?

According to William G. Caldwell, a new church staff member should be introduced to other staff members and be told how the church operates through various channels of leadership and/or committees. A pastor needs to be sure that a new staff member understands specific personnel policies such as office hours, vacation time, and sick leave. He also needs to see if the new staff member has questions about his or her job description. He should also introduce the new team member to key leaders in the church and community to whom he or she has not yet been introduced.

If staff evaluations will be done, the pastor and/or personnel committee should make sure that the new staff member understands the criteria by which he or she will be evaluated.

---


33 Ibid.

evaluated. If the new staff member is young and inexperienced, he or she may need help setting up a basic household, getting a checking account in place, and may need others to help make sure that he or she has enough furniture to get started. The pastor should check back with him or her periodically during the next several months to see how the adjustment is working. Furthermore, if part of a new staff member’s responsibility is visiting the hospital and/or nursing home, the pastor can take him or her on his initial visit to introduce him or her to staff and current patients to ease the transition into this role.

Developing a Team

What Are the Responsibilities of a Team Leader?

From a study of 600 team leaders the following list of team leadership qualities emerged: (1) focus on the goal, (2) ensure a collaborative environment, (3) build confidence, (4) demonstrate sufficient technical know-how, (5) set priorities, and (6) manage performance.\(^\text{35}\) The first responsibility of the team leader is to clearly define the goal. Without clear direction, the team will not be able to succeed. The next challenge is to articulate goals in such a way that the goals inspire commitment. He must avoid compromising the team’s objective for “political issues.” He also must help team members see the significant part each of them plays in the achievement of the goal. Next, he is continually reinforcing objectives in fresh and inspiring ways. Finally, if it is necessary to adjust the team’s goals, he helps the team to understands the reasons behind.

\(^{35}\text{LaFasto and Larson, When Teams Work Best, 99.}\)
the adjustments.  

Next, the leader must ensure a collaborative environment by expecting it, holding team members accountable for unacceptable behavior, rewarding collaborative behaviors, and guiding the team in their problem solving efforts.  Christopher Guess claims that a leader of the team “should have a commitment to lead people as well as tasks” and “a desire to support and serve the team as well as lead from the front.” He needs to build confidence in each group member by helping the team achieve results, giving each team member necessary information and meaningful responsibilities, being positive, being impartial and fair, and expressing appreciation.

Howard Jones, chairman and CEO of Starbucks Coffee, once said about being positive,

Fear of failure drove me at first, but as I tackled each challenge, my anxiety was replaced with a growing sense of optimism. . . . Most people can achieve beyond their dreams if they insist upon it. I’d encourage everyone to dream big, lay your foundations well, absorb information like a sponge, and not be afraid to defy conventional wisdom. Just because it hasn’t been done before, doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try.

The next item on LaFasto and Larson’s list is setting priorities. A leader’s inability to set priorities is the second most frequent complaint by group members. (The only larger problem is the leader not being willing to speak to and resolve problems

36Ibid., 108.


40Ibid., 128.
related to poor job performance). In order to set clear priorities the team leader must give unwavering attention to one vitally important question: “What must be done to make the most systematic progress toward our goal?” In order for progress to take place the team leader and team members must agree together on the top priorities necessary for achieving the stated goal, the team leader must constantly communicate the priorities, he must not dilute the top priorities by adding too many secondary priorities, and if it is necessary to change priorities he helps the team understand why it is being done. Next the team leader must require the team to achieve results. This achievement is facilitated by making “performance expectations clear,” helping the team agree upon a set of values that guides their performance, aligning rewards and incentives with team goals, assessing the “collaborative feedback” of team members as well as what they achieve, giving “constructive feedback,” confronting and resolving performance issues, and recognizing and rewarding “superior performance.”

John Maxwell points out that most teams do not get better by accident. The natural tendency of a team is to move downward. Thus, every team needs a catalyst. Maxwell lists nine characteristics of a catalyst: intuition, communication, passion, talent, creativity, initiative, responsibility, generosity, and influence. One of the greatest examples of this persona in the modern sports era is Michael Jordan. He possessed the ability to raise his team to an entirely new level. Maxwell says that “catalysts are not consultants. They don’t recommend a course of action. They take responsibility for making it happen.”

41 Ibid, 135-47.
42 Maxwell, The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork, 73-84.
Maxwell has a simple suggestion for members who do not or cannot serve the team well—train them or trade them. The first option of course is to train them. Give them books to read. Send them to conferences. Give them new challenges. Spend time mentoring them. Most people will respond positively to these actions. If they still cannot or will not contribute to the team effectively then they must be replaced. If a weak link remains on a team, the stronger members identify the weak ones, or become less effective, and the stronger members question the leader’s ability.43

**What Are the Responsibilities for Team Members?**

Derek Stockley states that successful organizations have high employee engagement. Team members understand and execute their roles and responsibilities. Being unsure of one’s responsibilities directly affects one’s performance. Stockley asserts that when responsibilities are clarified a team member’s personal productivity will increase dramatically.44

One of the responsibilities of the team member is to be willing to do whatever it takes for the good of the team. A prime example of this is Cliff Barrows, song leader for evangelist Billy Graham. Barrows was a gifted preacher in his own right, so in the early years, when Billy invited him to join the team as a music leader, Barrows struggled with the decision. Eventually, after much prayer and consideration, he had peace that God was leading him to join the Graham team. He then went to Graham and said, “Bill,

---

43Ibid, 63-65.

you know the struggle we’ve had about joining your team . . . as long as you want us to, I’ll be content to be your song leader, carry your bag, go anywhere, do anything you want me to do.” Graham’s reply was, “May we serve together until the Lord returns, or until one of us is called home to heaven.”

Myra and Shelly observe, “Cliff’s response marked the beginning of a remarkable team, two men who recognized their strengths were complimentary rather than competitive. Together they could accomplish more than either could alone.” That cooperative spirit is what teams are about, and the results are synergistic. In order for that dynamic to be realized, each member must use his or her abilities for the betterment of the team. If Billy Graham’s team is one of the truly great examples in Christian ministry, and surely it is, the servant ministry of Cliff Barrows is exhibit A.

Business coach Vadim Kotelnikov claims, “The most valuable single factor that contributes towards high levels of excellence and quality in a team, stem from an individual team member's ability to work with others, i.e. his or her levels of cooperation and communication. These ‘social intelligence’ skills include the ability to persuade, negotiate, compromise and make others feel important.” Also, the New York Governor’s Office of Employee Relations has a simple list of team member responsibilities. It includes being enthusiastic and committed to the team’s overall

__________________________


46 Ibid.

purpose, being honest and keeping confidences, sharing knowledge and expertise, fulfilling responsibilities between meetings, and respecting the opinions and positions of others on the team, even when they disagree.\(^{48}\)

**Maximizing Team Performance**

In order to maximize team performance, Katzenbach and Smith recommended that at the outset of the team meetings the team needs to set down some clear guidelines for behavior. Some of the critical, early rules pertain to attendance, interruptions, confidentiality, follow-through, constructive confrontation, and being sure that everyone contributes to the team. Teams will benefit by setting some important and achievable goals that can be reached rather quickly. Accomplishing these goals together can help galvanize the team as a unit.\(^{49}\)

Another critical ingredient in team ministry is putting the performance of the team above individual preferences and recognizing one’s need for help. Team members also recognize that they do not have all the answers and they do not act as if they do not. Team players are not caught up in their own egos. Teams that establish purposes and goals that are relevant and meaningful build commitment and confidence in the individuals as well as the team. The team leader carries a difficult balance. He must lead the team in clarifying and accomplishing goals yet be careful that his suggestions do not come across as heavy handed orders and mandates. If he is not careful, the team loses


ownership in the process. Teams must seek to build the commitment and confidence of each individual as well as in the team as a whole."

LaFasto and Larson suggest the “connect model” as a “proven method for building effective team relationships.” The connect model emphasizes relationships as something you do “with” someone rather than “to” someone. The basics of the “connect model” are as follows:

1. Commit to the relationship. The connect model begins with the relationship before it deals with the issue at hand. Issues will be resolved one way or the other, but the relationship continues.

2. Optimize safety. After committing to the relationship the next goal is to make the other person feel safe, understanding his or her viewpoint.

3. Narrow the conversation to one issue in a non-threatening way. It could be a communication issue or a difference in approaches to a problem or another issue. The key word here is non-threatening. To facilitate this, use “I” and “we” language, rather than an accusatory “you.” For example, “I have been struggling with some issues we discussed in our last meeting” is much better than, “You offended me with what you said at our last meeting.”

4. Neutralized defensiveness. Consider language and approaches that might encourage defensiveness in advance and seek to avoid them. Ask the other team member before the conversation to stop you in the middle of the conversation if you begin using language that causes him or her to become defensive.

5. Explain and echo. Tell the other person what you have heard him or her say and how it makes you feel.

6. Change one behavior each. Here is where the team deals with specific issues. Ideally both team members will ask the other, “What can I do to improve the situation?”

7. Track it. Follow up is vitally important. In order to ensure that changes are being made, set some specific meeting times for checking up on progress.

---

50 Ibid., 139.
51 Ibid., 140.
52 LaFasto and Larson, When Teams Work Best, 50-59
What Are Some Hindrances to Effective Team Ministry?

Katzenbach and Smith list three hindrances to an effective team-based approach. One is lack of conviction. Some people work better as individuals than as a team. A second problem is a lack of desire to work with a team. They would prefer to work alone. Most objectors to teamwork find the “team approach too time consuming, too uncertain, or too risky.” The greatest problem may be a poor work ethic. If team members do not have a strong desire to improve their performances then team ministry will probably do more damage than good.\(^5\)

John Maxwell lists four hindrances to developing a team: ego, insincerity, naïveté, and temperament.\(^5\) George Barna lists several hindrances to effective team ministry. They include a desire for simplicity, a desire to control, personal egos, an imbalanced emphasis on efficiency, worshiping tradition, lack of training, lack of positive team models, an absence of vision, the traditional role of the pastor as a leader of the congregation rather than as a leader of leaders, and a church culture that does not support team leadership.\(^5\) Jim Wies mentions other potential problems in ministry teams including jealousy, selfish ambition, improper comparisons, and defensiveness.\(^5\)

Patrick Lencioni speaks to team ministry hindrances in his book *The Five* 

---


Dysfunctions of a Team. Here he lists five problem areas for teams that are worth considering—absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. Absence of trust is demonstrated in a team’s unwillingness to be vulnerable with each other. Fear of conflict is present when people are unwilling to engage in open and vigorous debate of ideas. When teams are not free to passionately discuss and debate their ideas a lack of commitment is almost sure to follow. Due to this lack of genuine commitment an avoidance of accountability becomes the next problem for the team. Avoidance of accountability spawns an environment that yields an inattention to results. 57

How Does One Overcome Hindrances to Effective Team Ministry?

One of the biggest hindrances to team ministry is getting people to see the importance of working together as a team. Team ministry takes time, and if the people involved do not see the time working together as worthwhile, it can be counterproductive. Some may even see the implementation of teams as an invitation to “anarchy.” Others may not see how the work of teams contributes to their individual goals. 58

Another hindrance to effective team ministry can be described in one word—fear. Managers may fear the loss of control or even their jobs. Managers may also fear the challenge of responsibility without the necessary authority. Some may feel that they


might not be able to function effectively under the new team concept. The team concept is not how they have been taught and trained in the past. Managers may fear the loss of power or status or just the sheer predictability they had when they exercised more control.  

The most common fear of those being supervised is described by Hitchcock and Willard as the Trojan Horse Syndrome. Can they really trust what management is trying to do or is it simply an attempt to try to get more work out of employees for the same amount of pay? Some may fear what might happen if they make a mistake. Others just like to complain.

Lawrence Holpp says teamwork may be improved by using clear communication, delegating at a cautious pace, and picking one commitment action and sticking to it. Duncan Brodie gives these suggestions for breaking down barriers that hinder a team’s success: keep communication lines open, avoid aggression, avoid blame, stay positive, and stay focused on the goal.

Another way to view Lencioni’s model is from a positive approach by looking at how healthy, productive teams behave:

1. They trust one another.
2. They engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas.

---

59Ibid., 21-22.
60Ibid., 27.
3. They commit to decisions and plans of action.

4. They hold one another accountable for delivering on those plans.

5. They focus on the achievement of collective results.\(^{63}\)

Trust can be expedited by bringing up issues that have been buried that need to be discussed, avoiding personal attacks, and encouraging team members to speak freely and passionately about ideas without fear of discipline. Healthy conflict actually saves time rather than wasting it. These ground rules can be invaluable for a church staff.

Lencioni goes on to say that the two greatest reasons for lack of commitment are “the desire for consensus and the lack of certainty.” Great teams understand that one does not have to completely agree with an idea to support it; they just need to know that their ideas are heard. Better, in most cases, to make a clear decision that turns out wrong and in need of correction, than to make no decision at all. A failure by the key leaders to commit to decisions creates more problems than any of the other five dysfunctions, as it ripples through the rest of the organization. Some helpful tools for increasing commitment are reviewing decisions that need to be communicated to others before the team leaves the meeting and setting clear deadlines for the actions to take place. The leader must not place too high a priority on consensus or certainty. More than anyone else on the team he must be comfortable with decisions that sometimes turn out to be the wrong ones. He must consistently push the group toward a resolution.\(^{64}\) Resolution is important for church staffs as well as businesses.

\(^{63}\) Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, 202-06.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., 207-12.
Too often, staff can be uncertain about deadlines, communication can be unclear, or decisions are left unmade because there was not a strong enough consensus. Decision making must be balanced with prayerful understanding by the pastor. He cannot let the staff bottleneck decisions simply because it goes against a staff member’s preference, nor can he run roughshod over them in an effort to push through his personal agenda. Staff input must be considered valuable while the pastor still continues to be the leader.

Accountability refers to the “willingness of team members to call their peers on performance or behaviors that might hurt the team.” Setting clear measurable objectives and goals, holding regular progress reviews, giving team rewards, and the leader keeping the team involved in the accountability process are all helpful tools for ensuring accountability. The leader must be the catalyst to ensure that accountability takes place. Accountability is an area where church staffs in particular can be weak. The pastor must take the initiative here, even when it is uncomfortable or even unwelcome.

An effective team focuses on previously agreed upon results. Hindrances to successful teamwork can be satisfaction with simply being part of a team and more concern about personal gain than the goals of the team. Ways to overcome an inattention to results include publicly declaring goals and results-based rewards. When a team makes their goals known to others and reward is based upon results, team members will

---

65Ibid., 212.
66Ibid., 213-16.
often work harder to ensure that the results occur.\(^67\) This method can be one effective pathway for the pastor to help his staff have ownership.

Vince Lombardi once said, “Individual commitment to a group effort (is) what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”\(^68\) By the grace of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, it also makes a church work. In order for Cadiz Baptist Church to become all that it can become our staff must work together as a team.

As was stated in chapter 2, Jesus was the greatest leader of all time. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges state that “leading like Jesus involves the alignment of four leadership domains: heart, head, hands, and habits.”\(^69\) By specifically applying what it means to lead like Jesus in these areas, Blanchard and Hodges believe one will specifically be able to transform his or her leadership. The goal here is not stifling individual gifts or personalities of team members, but rather enhancing them into a synergistic effort.\(^70\) Leading with the heart focuses on character, faith, service, forgiveness, and humility.\(^71\) Leading with the head includes giving your followers a clear and compelling vision and empowering them to serve.\(^72\) Leading with the hands of Jesus involves being a performance coach who leads his team through stages of learning that

\(^{67}\)Ibid., 216-20.


\(^{71}\)Blanchard, *Lead Like Jesus*, 39-80.

\(^{72}\)Ibid., 113-15.
move from novice (someone just starting out) to apprentice (someone in training) to
journeyman (someone capable of working on his own) to master/teacher (someone highly
skilled capable of teaching others). The staff at Cadiz Baptist Church is in the role of
journeymen. They are capable of working on their own. Each of them has their own
unique abilities and personalities. These unique characteristics should be encouraged and
developed so that they do not fall back into “apprentice” mode, needing extra guidance,
accountability, and encouragement. Hopefully, as a result of this project, the staff can
move forward into the beginnings of the “master/teacher” position.

The habits of Jesus include solitude, prayer, study and application of Scripture,
accepting and responding to God’s unconditional love, and involvement in supportive
relationships. As the staff of Cadiz Baptist spends time together alone, studies, prays,
and plans together, they will have opportunities to become a strong team working
together in ministry.

All of the emphasis given to secular and even Christian writings must constantly
be viewed through the lens of Scripture. Too often Christian leaders have adopted secular
ideas without careful discernment. No doubt a Christian leader can and should learn even
from those who are unsaved. Jesus himself stated, in Luke 16:8, that “the people of this
world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.” Yet,
one must be careful to sift the principles of both secular and Christian leaders through the
lens of Scripture.

73 Ibid., 150.
74 Ibid., 188.
If one is not careful he or she can become like Israel when they saw the powerful monarchies around them and rejected God’s perfect plan for them by asking for a king. Too often churches in modern America have adopted the philosophy of the world. The standard measure of a successful church is numerical growth. Often this growth is based on membership transfer rather than on reaching new people with the gospel of Christ. Another powerful and perhaps more dangerous and ungodly statistic, if not viewed in balance, is financial growth. The preaching of the truth and the character of the pastor are secondary in most cases to these priorities. Henry and Richard Blackaby continue by observing, “Pastors of large churches (and some not so large) have become more like CEOs than shepherds . . . the pastor’s ability is measured in terms of numbers of people, dollars and buildings.”

As important as attendance, finances, and facilities may seem to the modern American church, they were never priorities for Jesus. He never worried about how many people attended his meetings or whether they had enough money to meet budget. He was always focused on one thing more than anything else: “What is the will of the Father?” He knew that if he did his Father’s will nothing else ultimately mattered. Conversely, if he did not do his Father’s will, everything else was in vain.

One of the encouragements to me as a leader is that God does not look at age the same as the world does. David was but a lad when he took on the giant Goliath and Moses was a senior adult when God finally gave him the assignment he had been preparing Moses for during the first eighty years of life. On February 3, 2007, I turned fifty. Thirty years ago God spoke to me in a way that I have only heard him one other

time. What I believe he told me while a student at Southeast Missouri State University is that my latter years of life would be the most productive in ministry. I am reasonably convinced that during my first fifty years of life God has been preparing me for what I will do during the last twenty or so years of full-time ministry. Robert Clinton speaks of this period in life as the “convergence phase.” During this phase a combination of a person’s ministry and life experiences “converge into a specific job or responsibility wherein they draw on all they have learned in order to enjoy maximum effectiveness.”

This convergence phase is where I hope to be entering during the next few years. That obviously does not mean that I can quit learning or growing. Learning and growth will be all the more important in the years ahead. What I do hope and pray that it means is that the latter years of my ministry will indeed be the most fruitful.

As I proceed from chapter 2 into chapter 3 of this project and, more importantly, as I move into future leadership endeavors, I am reminded of the words of Laurie Beth Jones, “Leadership does not come with detail-filled, certified maps . . . only a general sense of direction.” As a leader of a church staff, I can also learn from Florence Littauer, who did not “define her success in terms of her products, but in terms of the people she had trained.” By God’s grace, may I become a better trainer, better yet, discipler of those who work closest to me as a result of working on this project.

In order for our staff to become a better team, we must communicate more

---

76 Ibid., 44-45.


78 Ibid., 151.
consistently and effectively with each other. Because of different personalities, schedules, and priorities, this communication can be a challenge. But it is a challenge well worth pursuing. Acts 6:1-7 is a reminder that even the best churches experience conflict. Richard D. Dobbins, a clinical psychologist and founder of EMERGE Ministries, says a pastor cannot constructively manage conflict by continually avoiding, denying, or forbidding it. He can, however, often desensitize a situation by helping the offended person see different ways of viewing a set of circumstances. After his feelings have been sufficiently surfaced and aired deliberation may occur. Deliberation considers various points of view. According to Dobbins, “most people, dealt with in love and patience, will move through conflict satisfactorily.”79 The pastor must remember his spiritual responsibility and not succumb to any feelings of personal hurt or selfish agendas. He could also check with other pastors who had dealt with troubled staff members. Dobbins continues by reminding pastors, “Satan does not fear a big church. He fears a united church. Only when differences can be expressed in an atmosphere of acceptance and tolerance can a truly church-unifying point of view be discovered and defined.”80

According to Dobbins, pastors would also be wise to use more “I” statements than “you” statements. “I” statements tend to be informative while “you” statements tend to place blame. “I think it would be helpful for our church if we . . .” is much less blaming than “you made a big mistake when . . .” Giving supportive feedback may also


80Ibid.
be beneficial when an offended staff member is willing to express his or her thoughts. “Thank you for sharing your feelings” or “I can understand how you felt hurt” is much better than “you were wrong to get upset.” Even when a pastor does not agree with a staff member’s ideas he can affirm him or her as a valued member of the team, truly listen to what the offended staff member says, and choose his words carefully. When words are selected carelessly and used thoughtlessly, they can be incredibly hurtful and destructive. Dobbins concludes that, when it is necessary to choose a side in a disagreement, a pastor should remind those whose side may have lost that they are valuable members of the team and that their contributions will be important in future decisions.  

**Common Denominators between Effective Secular Teamwork and Effective Team-based Ministry**

**Productivity Is Important in Both Types of Teams**

Peter Drucker once said, “There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.”  

Whether in a church, a school, a small business, or a billion dollar corporation, productivity is important. Ultimately, glorifying God is infinitely more important to a church than reaching humanly measurable goals, but measurable goals in churches, as in other areas of life, can be helpful tracking points. A church’s health is not ultimately measured by attendance or budget or even the number of

---

81 Ibid.

82 John McKee, “These 6 Tactics Will Improve the Team’s Productivity,” *IT Leadership* [article on-line]; accessed 10 March 2011; available from http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/tech-manager/these-6-tactics-will-improve-the-teams-productivity/1502; Internet.
people baptized or involved in ministry. If that were true, then the ministry of Jesus was a failure. He drove crowds away when they came to him by the thousands (John 6:1-66) and the budget of his small group of disciples was certainly less than enviable. If attendance is plummeting, however, and people stop giving, and no one is being baptized, those are often signs of poor church health. God did not call every ministry team to serve megachurches or to lead churches in exponential growth, but he did call those in ministry to give their best.

**Vision Is Important to Both**

Proverbs 29:18 (AV) states “Where there is no vision the people perish.” The Scriptures may speak of a revelation of divine truth here, but nevertheless direction is vital to teams both inside and outside the church. Under God’s leadership, Joshua gave the Israelites the vision of conquering the Promised Land, and Nehemiah gave the Jews the vision of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Jesus gave the Church the Great Commission.

**Many of the Same Obstacles Hinder Both Types of Teams**

Lack of unity, problems with motivation, and lack of trust are all potential obstacles in business, in secular volunteer organizations, and in churches. Communication is also vital to all types of teams. Many problems occur, both in churches and in secular organizations, when communication breaks down. Whether communication is assumed or mishandled or presented poorly, problems here can cause significant issues. According to Hitchcock and Willard, clarifying the rights and
responsibilities of both managers and employees is vitally important. The same is true with pastors and staff. When each understands and agrees with what is expected of them this understanding will go a long way toward avoiding potential conflicts.

Interaction Associates surveyed Fortune 500 and other companies across a variety of industries on internal obstacles to team success. Moses faced the same lack of support when the ten unbelieving spies gave their discouraging report from the Promised Land in Numbers thirteen. Many church staffs have failed in leading their churches to greater ministry due to lack of support from key leaders in the congregation. The second reason listed in this survey was team members not setting appropriate goals for the team and then building and implementing a plan to reach them. Too often church staffs, like secular teams, do not have any clear goals or direction concerning what they are trying to accomplish. The number four reason on this survey is the most damaging to many churches: “Team members don’t know how to reconcile differences or resolve interpersonal conflict.” Sadly, many churches have been divided and rendered ineffective because church staffs and/or other key leaders in the church could not resolve interpersonal conflict or reconcile problems.

**Leadership Is Vitally Important to Both Types of Teams**

Whether in the community, the business world, or on the athletic field, effective teamwork can produce great results. Effective teamwork, however, is not easy. It does not happen automatically; it takes hard work and compromise. The same is true

---

84 Ibid.
in churches. Clyde B. McDowell says, “Staff relationships can make or break the effectiveness of a church’s ministry. . . . If a staff can’t practice with each other what they preach to the church (unity, love, forgiveness, maturity, servant hood, and prayerfulness), they may be doing more damage to the church than good.”

Harold Westing asserts, “If there is any place in the Christian world where people ought to be a genuine team it is in the leadership of the church. The pastoral staff should be a model of all Christ intended the church to be.”

In order for a church staff to work at maximum effectiveness there must be a team. Team ministry is not any easy task, but is certainly worth the effort. The initiative for team ministry falls squarely at the feet of the pastor. George Barna places the lack of growth in churches directly at the feet of leadership. Barna writes, “In this time of unprecedented opportunity and plentiful resources, the church is actually losing influence. “The primary reason,” according to Barna, “is the lack of leadership.” Yet genuine leadership can be a slippery concept to understand and an even more difficult task to successfully employ. Successful ministry takes a significant amount of passion, patience, and persistence. The combination of these traits in large doses is rare in the individual and even rarer in groups. Yet, the task of the leader is to create an environment in which this type of dynamic is the norm. Along with passion, patience, and persistence, there must be a powerful and unified vision for what the church leaders

---


believe God wants them to accomplish and specific steps toward reaching the goal. Henry and Richard Blackaby state that a “spiritual leader’s task is to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be.”

An important question that occasionally comes up when discussing leadership is, “Are leaders born or made?” Most scholars seem to agree that both heredity and hard work are key contributors to a leader’s success. Some children, due to their size or creativity or personality, show leadership ability early on in life. Watching children can reveal innate leadership abilities even before they are old enough for school. Churchill used to command armies of fifteen hundred toy soldiers as a child. Napoleon structured complex battles involving other children. Other great leaders showed little promise as children. Harry Truman described himself as “blind as a mole” and “something of a sissy” as a child. While Churchill may have commanded armies of toy soldiers as a boy, his peers were apparently unimpressed. He had fragile hands and spoke with a slight stutter. He seemed to be a favorite target of bullies and he used to hide in the woods from them in fear.

The best leaders are always seeking to improve themselves. For example, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, one of the greatest Christian leaders of the past two hundred years, “excelled in so many different areas of leadership that it almost boggles the mind. . . . His level of accomplishment is even more astonishing in light of the fact that he was largely self taught.” Spurgeon was a voracious reader, testifying that he read from three

88Ibid., 20.
89Ibid., 32-33.
90Larry Michael, Spurgeon on Leadership (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2003), 21.
to five books per week.\textsuperscript{91}

There is a difference between being called to a church and leading a church to become increasingly more of what God has called her to be. The degree to which the pastor is willing to improve himself not only will make him more effective, but a ripple effect will be encouraged in the staff as they see the difference. As the staff rises to new levels of quality service and godliness, others in the congregation will be encouraged to do the same. If the pastor becomes lazy, sloppy, and neglectful of personal leadership, preaching, and ministry, others will be affected negatively.

Another important area for improvement is in personal confidence. A Christian leader’s confidence must always be centered on God rather than trusting in education, experience, or personal charisma or ability. God uses all of the above, but he is not dependant on us. We are dependent upon him. Jesus wisely reminded his disciples that apart from him they could do nothing (John 15:5). Spurgeon once said, “It is admirable to see a man humbly conscious of his own weakness, and yet bravely confident in the Lord’s power to work through his infirmity.”\textsuperscript{92} This God centered confidence includes faith in God’s providence and faith in God’s promises.\textsuperscript{93} Faith in God’s providence and promises leads to a positive attitude. John Maxell correctly states that

\textsuperscript{91}\textit{Ibid.}, 22.


\textsuperscript{93}Michael, \textit{Spurgeon on Leadership}, 36-39.
“Leadership has less to do with position than it does with disposition.”

Larry Michael encourages leaders to be positive and develop a plan for right thinking, associate with other encouragers, read motivational works and inspiring Scriptures, and count blessings daily. The results will pay great dividends.

One area of necessary personal improvement is in challenging people personally and individually. Jesus did not enlist his twelve disciples with a general plea to the masses. He recruited them personally. As Bob Briner suggests, “There is power in a personal call.”

Another area of personal and necessary growth is in becoming a better teacher. This teaching must not only be done in the large group setting, but also with smaller groups and individuals. Teaching the Scriptures to a congregation must be combined with discipling people individually. Some of the best candidates for training by the pastor are often church staff members. Sending occasional e-mails and holding quick meetings to talk about the church calendar may be the easier route, but not nearly as productive as mentoring other ministers. Genuine staff leadership must move beyond the superficial and encourage, challenge, and train staff to become more effective in ministry. A pastor should not pretend to be the expert in a staff member’s area of expertise, but he can serve as a catalyst for helping staff members develop and utilize their individual gifts to the fullest extent possible.

In order to be effective in this area the leader must also demonstrate personal  

---

94Ibid., 40.
95Ibid., 42.
competence. To teach with authority he must be prepared. Jesus spent thirty years preparing for a mission that lasted less than four years.\textsuperscript{97} One of the purposes for working on this project is to become more proficient as a leader. As a leader demonstrates personal competence it gives confidence to those who follow him.

Jim Collins, in his book \textit{Good to Great}, found as he researched the very best leaders in the corporate world that they possessed a unique combination of humility and fierce resolve. Harold Myra and Marshall Shelly discovered these same traits in Billy Graham.\textsuperscript{98} Jesus himself demonstrated boldness in his life. Did he wash his disciples’ feet? Yes. But he also boldly told his disciples he was going to the cross. Nothing could deter him from that. Laura Beth Jones states, “Jesus did not mumble or whisper his message. He did not discuss for hours the safest approach for doing something. He did not go through countless committees seeking permission to make a statement. He was bold.”\textsuperscript{99}

One of the intangibles that a Christian leader has is the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the greatest resource available to the Christian. Everything a pastor does must flow from a dependence upon God. The famous evangelist, Billy Graham, is a living testimony to this truth. As a young preacher, Graham received many invitations to preach, but he was also painfully aware of his inadequacies. Once after hearing the young Welsh evangelist, Stephen Olford preach, Graham realized that Olford had a power in his preaching that he did not have. He sought a two day audience with

\textsuperscript{97}Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{98}Myra and Shelly, \textit{The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham}, 19.

\textsuperscript{99}Jones, \textit{Jesus CEO}, 111.
Olford in order to learn more. Olford would teach him during the day, and Graham would preach in meetings during the evening. After the first day of their meeting, Olford relates that Graham’s preaching was completely unaffected. On their second day, Olford continued teaching Graham as he told him how he had to be broken and have his life turned inside out like the Apostle Paul. As Graham was pouring out his heart to God, the Holy Spirit came upon him in a new and fresh way. That night, the Welsh evangelist relates that Graham’s preaching was completely different. For unexplained reasons the building was filled, and people began making decisions before the sermon was even over. The great Welsh evangelist relates that he was so moved by Graham’s preaching that “he could hardly drive home.”

One constant emphasis in the life of the Christian leader must be character. Billy Graham put it like this, “When wealth is lost, nothing is lost. When health is lost, something is lost. When character is lost, everything is lost.”

Encouragement is another key component in the successful leader’s tool box. Ben Franklin once told John Paul Jones, “If you should observe on occasion to give your officers and friends a little more praise than is their due, and confess more fault than you can justly be charged with, you will only become the sooner for it, a great captain.” An early role model for this pastor was Bob Cuttino. To a staff member fresh out of seminary serving in an overwhelming task, Cuttino’s model of encouragement meant volumes. He spoke very highly of everyone at every opportunity. Everyone knew they

---

100 Ibid., 22-23.
101 Ibid., 63.
102 Ibid., 133.
were not nearly as competent or hard working as he said they were, but it still lifted their spirits because of their respect for him.

Humility is a third factor each Christian leader must possess. Billy Graham understood this as well as any other leader of national prominence. Graham’s treasurer once related a story about a man who recognized him on an elevator. “You’re Billy Graham, aren’t you?” “Yes,” Graham replied. The gentleman then told him, “You are truly a great man.” Graham immediately responded, “No, I am not a great man. I just have a great message.” Too many pastors in various size churches have forgotten the humility principle. Graham is quick to give praise to others and to ultimately give all the praise to God for anything he has accomplished. Perhaps the most common trait that those who know him mention is his genuine humility. He is not intimidated by presidents, yet with all of his phenomenal success he is neither arrogant nor aloof with the common man.103

Peter Drucker once said, “The test of an organization is not genius. It is its capacity to make common people achieve uncommon performance.”104 Churches are no exception. Neither are church staffs. There must be a synergy that takes place when leaders of churches come together. Billy Graham understood this concept as well as anyone in Christian leadership. Not only did he and his staff spent decades together in ministry, some of them have even chosen to build their houses next to each other. When Graham received his Congressional Gold Medal of Honor, scores of government officials

103 Ibid., 190-93.
104 Ibid., 46.
and world leaders filled the room, but when he stood to receive this very prestigious honor he was careful to say quietly yet clearly, “This medal is not for me. This medal is for our team.”

Great leaders have the ability to raise the level of others around them. Michael Jordan and Larry Bird did it on the basketball court. Business leaders do it in the business world. The best pastoral leaders seem to have that same ability in their churches with the staffs and congregations. “No institution—religious, military, educational, political, or business—can be great unless it has a great leader at the top who develops leaders at all levels of the organization.”

Noel Tichy, director of Global Leadership Partnership, and a worldwide advisor to CEOs on leadership maintains, “Successful leaders add value. No matter what level or what type of organization, the true measure of a leader is whether he or she has made the assets under their control more valuable today than they were yesterday.” Tichy goes on to say that Jack Welch’s “secret was the fact that he was constantly teaching.” No matter what else he was doing he was teaching and you could “expect a quick coaching clinic at the end.” Teaching, however, is not just one way, from the leader to the student. The best teaching in the business world is bilateral where both the

---

105 Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 75.


107 Ibid., xxiv.

108 Ibid., 5.

109 Ibid., 11.

110 Ibid., 14.
teacher and the student are learning. This bilateral teaching is even true in such an unlikely place as the military where Special Forces use this concept.\textsuperscript{111} It should also be true in church staffs. As a pastor, I must be competent enough to add insight and understanding to the other staff members, but I also must be both humble enough and secure enough to listen to and learn from them. The church staff meeting ought to be a place creativity flows and we choose ideas, not based on who initiates them, but rather on their merit along under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

\textbf{The Ripple Effect Is Common to Both Types of Teams}

Empirical evidence demonstrates that a leader’s positive attitude is directly associated with worker performance. Entire organizations such as Mary Kay and AMWAY use “emotional contagion” as a “conscious corporate strategy” to further their business practices. AMWAY even has a name for it: “positive programming.” Here, the entire company is encouraged to stay positive and to transfer that positive attitude to others. Understanding the environment that brings about this positive attitude gives greater insight into improving worker productivity. When Lou Gerstner, chief executive officer of IBM, talked about the culture change needed at IBM and stated, “It’s not something you do by memos. You’ve got to appeal to people’s emotions. They’ve got to buy in with their hearts and their bellies, not just their minds.”

Empirical evidence also shows that leaders’ and manager’s positive mood are positively associated with employees’ work performance and that people are attracted to

\textsuperscript{111}Ibid., 48-52.
emotionally expressive leaders. Sigal Barsade concludes that “some organizational cultures, especially sales cultures, use emotional contagion as a conscious corporate culture strategy.” Mary Kay cosmetics uses songs, recognition dinners, and national meetings to intentionally spread positive emotions. This optimism plays an important role in work-group dynamics.\footnote{Sigal G. Barsade, “The Ripple Effect: Emotional Contagion and its Influence on Group Behavior,” \textit{Administrative Science Quarterly} 47.4 (December 2002) [journal on-line]; accessed 27 December 2011; available from http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/friedkin/Syllabi/Soc147/Emotional%20Contagion.pdf; Internet.} Pastor David Smith readily admits the importance of relating positively to the church staff. He regularly meets with his staff for prayer, fellowship, and discussion of church members. They also have monthly fellowships at different staff members’ homes and an annual staff retreat. “It’s not enough to simply work together,” according to Smith, “playing together and genuinely enjoying and relating to one another is important in building a strong leadership team.”\footnote{Deborah Lovett, “Ripple Effect: Impacting the Body of Christ and the Community,” \textit{Alliance Life} [article on-line]; accessed 18 January 2011; available from http://www.alliancelife.org/article.php?id=142; Internet.}

**Staff Improvements**

As I worked to improve my own abilities, I also asked the staff to improve theirs. Much of that happened at Cadiz during the past two years. My prayer is that the staff will continue improving in both communication and organization as they serve with a new pastor in the future. In the past, too many plans and programs were hurriedly put together in the few days just prior to events, leaving room for improvement and adding frustration to those who worked with them. One of my jobs as the pastor was to help the staff improve in planning, coordination, and communication. The focus of this project
should continue the assistance of that task.

In order to aid this process, the staff was to meet together more frequently and discussing plans more freely. This type of planning is a bit more risky, even messy, but it could have been well worth the effort. In the end, it should have helped eliminate some of our dysfunctions as a staff and served to develop more of a team based approach to ministry.

**Conclusion**

During the past few months I have moved to a new church. Much of what I have learned at Cadiz can and should be implemented at Northside. My prayer is that I will be able to take the principles I have learned in this project and apply them at my new place of service.
CHAPTER 4

STAFF TEAM-BASED MINISTRY PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to lead the staff of the Cadiz Baptist Church into a more effective team-based ministry. The project sought to accomplish three goals. The first goal was to improve my own leadership skills. Specific focus was given to improving personal and team leadership skills. Goal number 2 was to build the staff into a more effective team through regular, normally weekly, communication and mutual accountability. Goal number 3 was to develop a team spirit that went beyond the staff meeting into the life of the congregation. This unity was to be demonstrated by a cohesion between the staff in well-planned weekly worship services, well-coordinated weekly ministry, and special emphases.

Week 1: I met with our Minister of Youth and Children (sometimes referred to simply as the Minister of Youth in this chapter) and our Minister of Music in my office on Sunday afternoon. I had planned to use the Myers-Briggs test,¹ but I could not get permission, so at the suggestion of one of my seminary advisors, I switched to the DISC personality test.² The Minister of Music was not comfortable taking a personality test so he did not.

²Inscape Publishing, Everything DISC Test (Des Moines, IA: Resources Unlimited, 2009).
During the meeting, I asked the Minister of Youth and Children to use some words or short phrases to describe himself and he said, “empathetic, good-natured, outgoing, friendly, and loyal.” I asked the Minister of Music the same question and he said he was a “team player, especially when the team is going in the right direction.” He said that he did not have problems with me or at Cadiz Baptist Church, but he has had some issues at school and he tends to push back a lot to make sure that the subject under consideration has been thought through properly. He also said, “I am persistent, patient in my subject.” When I asked him to explain what he meant by “patient in my subject,” he said that he was patient when working with people musically. A prime example would be choir rehearsals. He exhibits a lot of patience with choir members who are trying to learn new music. I then asked both of the staff ministers, “What benefits and challenges do those personality traits bring to our relationship as a staff?” The Minister of Youth said that “being friendly and outgoing helps the staff” as does “loyalty and commitment” to our relationship as a staff. The minister of music said that “patience helps” because when the “music goes well people are happy.” I then commented that it benefits all of the staff when one portion of the service goes well. We agreed that during any given service people may be touched by different aspects of the worship, but when God speaks to people through any part of the service it benefits us all.

Since I could not get permission to use the Myers-Briggs test I obtained permission to use the DISC personality test. The Minister of Youth tested as an iS (influence and steadiness). I tested as an Si (steadiness and influence). I asked Jason if he felt the “iS” style fit him and he said that it did. He is a sociable person who reaches out to others and is friendly and laidback in his approach. He places a high priority on
personal relationships. Jason is a “people person.” He agreed with the assessment from the test that says he values collaboration, enthusiasm, and giving support. He admitted to having trouble sticking to deadlines and working with critical people. He continued by saying that he tends to avoid conflict.

I told him that I scored as an “S style” and one of the weaknesses of the “S style” was indecisiveness. I asked him if he could remember any time that he sensed that this tendency was a problem with my leadership. At first he said that he could not think of anything, but then later added that perhaps I could have been more proactive in the early days of starting the church preschool last summer. Due to special circumstances outside the scope this paper, it had to be done quickly. The deacons, personnel and finance committees, staff, and I all met before it was taken to the church. After that, it was voted on at the next business meeting. After much discussion, I made a motion that the church begin the preschool on a one year trial basis. The church agreed with the motion, but it was only a sixty-five percent vote. An interim preschool committee was also elected at that meeting. A lot of decisions had to be made very quickly. I was not asked to meet with the committee, but communication issues arose after they had been meeting for about a month so I stepped in and got involved. In retrospect, I could have been a bit more proactive and helped with communication all the way through the process. There are other times when I could have made decisions more quickly or given stronger leadership or been more decisive. In the future, I hope to be maintain a healthy balance between caution and wisdom, bold, yet patient leadership, and risk taking.

As a part of this discussion, I reviewed some of the benefits of the DISC test, including the suggestions on how people with different personality styles could best
relate to each other under various conditions. I also asked both staff members, “What can I do as a pastor to better relate to and connect with you? Our minister of music said that e-mail is best. Due to his schedule, he does not have a lot of time to meet, but the more communication he can get by e-mail the better. When I asked him about any specific suggestions, he told me that the more information I can give him about upcoming sermons the better. I was giving him the Scripture reference and subject about six months in advance, but I agreed to give him and the Minister of Youth the rough draft of my sermon four or five days ahead of time. They both agreed that this information would help them as they plan for their different parts of the worship service. I also told Jason that I had dropped the ball with a suggestion he made to me a few years earlier about getting together occasionally to drink a soda and talk. I promised to improve on that.

Week 2: After spending some time in prayerful thought and study, I decided to make the first assignment for our staff in *Breakout Churches*, reading chapters 1 through 3 (pages 15 to 67).³ I would have liked to have made the reading assignment longer, but it was an extremely busy time for the music minister in particular. He just started a new year at school where he served as an elementary music teacher. Cadiz Baptist Church also had revival services scheduled during the time that this assignment was to be completed. He had asked me back in July to try and find someone else to lead the music for the revival because he and his wife, who plays the piano for Cadiz Baptist, needed a break. I agreed but was not able to get anyone. The shorter reading made his schedule a little more bearable and gave this assignment a more focused discussion. Chapter 1 of *Breakout Churches* gives a helpful overview for the rest of the book, including a

definition of a breakout church. Chapter 1 also introduces the six major components of the chrysalis factor. They are Acts 6/7 leadership, the ABC movement, the who/what simultrack, the VIP factor, culture of excellence, and innovation accelerators. Chapter 2 explains Acts 6/7 leadership in more detail. Discussing Acts 6/7 leadership helped us to talk more specifically about how we as a staff relate together as a team.

Week 3: I met with seven people I selected from the church who I felt could give me a balanced view of our staff and who have had some experience with each staff member and myself directly. Included in this group was the leader of our brass ensemble and a youth Sunday School teacher. Both were members of the personnel committee. All of the people in the small group have served on the personnel committee at Cadiz Baptist Church at one time. Two of them have served as deacon chairmen. I asked the group three questions.

The first question was “What do you see positive about how the staff works together as a team?” Many of their answers centered around the Sunday morning worship service. They included responses such as “the music coordinates with the sermon,” “even though the music minister is not at the church during office hours the service seems to flow,” “no one sees the day to day relationships, but the public worship service is evidence of the staff working together,” “the people attending on Sunday morning would not know that the minister of music was not full time by sitting in the worship service.” Other positives included “the respect the pastor has toward both of the staff members and toward people in general, and the respect they return to the pastor.” Another group member commented that “there is always a staff member who shows up when someone has a need. This is not always the pastor, but someone from the staff
always comes.” Someone else commented that “the staff seems to like each other. This is not the case in all churches.”

The second question was “What improvements do you think the staff and I can make to become a more effective team?” One of the group members, a retired school principal, said, “As a school principal, I had a similar situation to a church staff. There are some teachers who respond better to praise while others need ‘more rigid accountability.’ ” Other comments included the feeling that “all three staff members (pastor, minister of music and minister of youth and children) demonstrate high expertise in what they do on Sunday mornings, but the negative perceptions people may have of the staff are not based on what they see on Sunday mornings. On Sunday mornings the staff looks like they have it all together.”

Most of the suggestions for improvement centered around my need to be more of an authoritarian leader with the staff. Another said that “you would not want someone on the other end of the spectrum.” Another group member encouraged me to find a better way to help the staff “meet bench marks.” According to him, the staff evaluations were set up to assist the pastor in doing that. Another group member added that “Kevin tries to see how Christ would handle a situation” and that “the church is not a business.”

The third question was “What would the ideal pastor/staff relationship be like at Cadiz Baptist Church? “The staff executes as team,” commented one group member. Another expressed some frustration about a staff member not following up on suggestions that he had agreed were good ideas. Other suggestions related to church calendar planning. One group member suggested that “more calendar planning would be helpful, such as is done with a church council.” Someone else said that “the church used
to have a committee on committees that made sure that committees met.” Another group member noted that “More church council meetings could help the staff work together better” because the pastor and staff would have a better understanding of what each part of the church was doing.

Week 4: Reflecting back on the meeting with the small group, I was reminded that many of the members had strong feelings about the work of the staff. I did not include some of the more direct comments in this paper. My approach to staff was mostly encouraging, patient, and understanding, although I have made some strong suggestions on rare occasions. In my opinion, both staff members have made progress recently. The Minister of Music started showing progress three or four years ago, and the church is much more pleased in general with his ministry. The Minister of Youth and Children did a lot of good things for the church, but they were not recognized by some, partly due to a focus on other weaknesses. He still has some challenges with following through on some important areas of ministry, but he has made improvements. Hopefully these will continue.

As mentioned, I have tried to be a coach for the Minister of Youth and Children in the past year. He has responded positively. I am not, however, a good micromanager, nor a strong, authoritative personality. Knowing his personality and mine, I still think the positive and proactive approach is best. Where I need to improve is with continuing to be more proactive. Often I get busy with my own ministries, and I do not keep myself aware enough of what the other staff members are doing. I do not mind being more involved with staff members, but neither of them respond well to micromanaging.
The Minister of Music and I have made significant strides in the past three years. During my first four years at Cadiz Baptist, we had some disagreements, largely due to differences of opinions in musical styles and the ineffectiveness I saw in our church in regard to reaching out to young adults and students. He has made significant changes in the last four years. Most of them were not done because I put any pressure on him to make changes; he just decided that a lot of the contemporary music was actually pretty good. He started a brass ensemble, incorporated a bass guitar, and even bought the church a drum set! They now play every Sunday, and most of the congregation loves it. I would like to see us move a couple of more steps toward the contemporary spectrum, but I am not sure the congregation as a whole is ready to embrace it. I have tried to serve as a supporter and cheerleader, and it seems to be working rather well. He procrastinates with others more than he should, but not with me. He has become a big supporter of mine and a rather ideal staff member for me to work with.

After reflecting on what was told me by the small group, I still believed the best course was to continue with the same emphasis I had started. My plan was to continue meeting with the Minister of Youth and Children weekly, discussing upcoming ministry opportunities and reviewing past assignments, and to give the Minister of Music occasional suggestions, but mostly encouragement and praise. At times, I have not been as consistent in meeting with the staff ministers as I need to be. I decided to be more faithful in scheduling ministerial staff meetings and to better anticipate events that would need my involvement.
Week 5: This week I e-mailed several questions to the Minister of Music and to the Minister of Youth and Children from Breakout Churches. The Minister of Music did not answer; the Minister of Youth’s answers are listed under the questions below:

1. On page thirty, Rainer says, according to research, “leaders discovered vision through an intersection of three factors: the passion of the leader; the needs of the community; and the gifts, abilities and talents of the congregation.” What is our intersection point?

   The Minister of Youth said our church’s intersection included a long tenured staff and credibility in the community.

2. On page thirty-one, Rainer says that breakout leaders tend to bring on innovation “slowly with discernment.” He adds that innovations are “accelerators, but not the solutions to all the church’s needs.” What innovations do we need to bring about at Cadiz Baptist Church? At what pace do we need to seek to bring them about?

   I chose these questions because they help the staff to reflect a bit on the past while considering how to approach change in the future. The reason I believe God called me to Cadiz Baptist Church over eight years ago was to help a church move out of her “comfort zone” in order to reach people with the gospel. In my opinion, the church has been too slow in making some of those changes, but it has made at least a few fairly significant ones. This question was designed to help the staff to consider what changes we may need to make in the future and how to approach them.

   The Minister of Youth suggested that the church break from traditions on Sunday night to more family friendly offerings, but that this change must be done slowly. I concurred, but the fact that this very traditional church has been on the local radio station on Sunday evenings for decades would make that change very difficult to make any time soon. Other changes might be less painful and more significant.

3. On page forty-seven Ranier says that breakout leaders “move patiently and
persistently toward their goals.” What goals do we need to be pursuing? How patient and persistent should we be? This question is similar to question number three, but it is a bit more specific and was designed to help the staff focus more clearly on particular goals.

The Minister of Youth only answered one question in this list, but it was significant. He said the church should be growing active disciples committed to personal ministry and evangelism. While his answer was fairly general, it was still encouraging, because he spoke to areas that have long been passions of mine. Hopefully this vision is finally catching on.

4. On page sixty-seven, Ranier says that “Acts 6/7 leaders are persistent. They never consider a setback a failure.” What setbacks have you experienced during the past seven years at Cadiz Baptist Church? How have you responded to them in the past? How are you responding to them now? How can you respond to them better in the future?

These are the most penetrating and personal questions I gave to the staff. We have all had some disappointments in the past seven years. These questions gave us an opportunity to talk about those struggles and address how to approach any possible current issues and potential problems in the future. The Minister of Youth’s brief comment on this question included a mutiny of youth Sunday School teachers against him and an annex painting issue. He then said that “the best response is prevention.” This too is significant, because he was willing to take ownership and try to prevent similar problems from happening again. If he can follow through with this preventive approach it will noticeably increase his effectiveness.

5. On page forty-four, Rainer says that Acts 6/7 leaders seek to make decisions that will benefit the church after they are gone. What decisions can we make that will benefit Cadiz Baptist Church after we are gone?

The timing of this question was particularly interesting. For four years I sensed God leading me to another church. I thought it would have happened two or three
years earlier than it did. As I worked on this project with the staff, it became clear that I would likely be moving within about a month after I finished this project with the staff. While I felt I could not discuss the prospect of my leaving with the staff early in the process, it was certainly in the back of my mind as I talked about the legacy I wanted to leave as a staff.

The Minister of Youth’s response was revitalization and expanded use of the church annex as a connection point for ministry, being intentional in our effort with Upward, seeing it as an outreach tool, not just an activity; and helping the new Cadiz Baptist Church Christian Academy become an effective ministry conduit to Cadiz Baptist Church. These answers were all encouraging because they spoke to an outward focus.

The timing for sending these questions was not good for our staff. Our church was in the middle of revival. Our Minister of Music, who is bi-vocational, had to end up leading the music even though we had hoped to find someone else. Originally the revival services were scheduled for a different date, but we had to change it due to schedule conflicts. Despite all of the challenges, everything worked out exceptionally well. This week was one of the best weeks of revival Cadiz Baptist Church had experienced in some time, but it was an extremely busy week for the staff and not a good time for them to finish a reading assignment and answer questions. My hope was that they would at least finish the reading assignment by Sunday and look over the questions before we sat down to meet. Due to a hectic schedule, the Minister of Music was not able to complete the assignment, but thankfully the Minister of Youth did.

In week 6 I gave the staff a reading assignment from chapter five of Rick Pitino’s book, *Success is a Choice*. Unfortunately, Pitino has had some severe family
problems in recent years. Despite his recent personal problems, the book offers some
great principles for team leadership. Chapter 5 of Pitino’s book deals specifically with
communication. Pitino has a lot of helpful tips in this chapter. He says that clear
communication is a habit that can be learned and improved. He adds that “clear effective
communication is the best problem solver there is, but so many of us don’t know how to
go about it. We talk and talk, but we don’t communicate and we don’t establish
connection.”

Communication is a challenge in any relationship. Church staffs are no
different. I can easily get so busy preparing sermons, visiting hospitals, planning events,
and counseling people that I forget to stay in close communication with other staff
ministers. Four lessons that Pitino gives in this chapter are: (1) miscommunication of
even minor incidents can change an entire relationship; (2) going through someone else
to communicate your message increases potential for being misunderstood; (3) be sure
not to let things fester, and (4) know that what you do not say can have as big an effect as
what you do say.

Pitino also says that communicating with a crowd is completely different than
communicating with an individual. In communicating with a crowd, the speaker is trying
to stir up passion. Communication with an individual means concentrated listening.
Here the leader is not trying to stir up passion as much as he is trying to have a dialogue,
build trust, and establish a relationship. Pitino then elaborates on this point by giving a


---


5Ibid., 121.
personal example of how he failed to listen to potential basketball recruits when he went into their homes, and as a result, they chose a different school.  

Pitino also gives specific examples illustrating why it is important to explain to someone why he chose him to do a particular job, especially if the job was an unpleasant one. He says that “people want to know why they are being asked to do something. It’s not enough to say I told you so.” Two more tips that Pitnio gives are the need to reinforce good performances and to be careful not to burn any bridges. Both of these are important keys in team ministry.

Week 7 was a week to prayerfully evaluate how the pastor relates to the staff based on the team ministry readings and discussions. The staff discussion of the Breakout Churches readings was a reminder to both the staff and myself that we do have some noticeable strengths in our church, such as a number of active senior adults, tremendous facilities for a medium sized church, and long tenured staff. The ministerial staff had been at Cadiz Baptist an average of thirteen years. The support staff had been at Cadiz Baptist an average of nine years. The day before I had this discussion with the staff, however, I met with a pastor search committee to talk rather seriously about the possibility of me becoming their pastor. This meeting went very well. The possibility had become very clear that I might be moving in the next three months to a new location. The timing of this move was rather ironic because the church had started seeing positive growth for the first time in several years. Attendance had risen somewhat noticeably.

\[\text{Ibid., 122-23.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., 125-29.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., 130-35.}\]
More people were joining the church by both baptism or statement of faith in Christ than in five years, and the church was beginning to reach more young families than we had in several years. I did not know if this was just a three month mini-surge or the beginning of a new era, but it was encouraging, if not a little confusing.

In relation to Pitino’s chapter on communication, I have occasionally gotten so busy doing the work of ministry that I temporarily neglected working alongside the other staff ministers. One of the other more specific challenges is staff evaluations. This communication tool was put into effect by the church personnel committee last year. I had no opposition to the tool as a general idea, but I was uncomfortable with the rating system and the imbalanced nature of some of the questions. Communication had gotten better in general with the staff in recent years, and I had sought to be more intentional with the Minister of Youth during the past fourteen months. I had noticed rather significant improvements in outreach and organization since then. A small part of this improvement was probably due to my encouragement and a larger part of it is due to his maturing into the position and understanding how to work with people in our church more effectively. The Minister of Music and I had also began to jell better as a team in the past three years. He began embracing a wider variety of musical styles and incorporated more people into leading worship by starting a brass ensemble and adding a bass guitar along with a percussion section. He also involved the children more in worship. The difference was significant according to many in the congregation including the personnel committee.

Week 8 was an opportunity to ask the staff questions about our communication, using chapter five from Rick Pitino’s book, *Success is a Choice*, as a
guideline. I e-mailed the staff five questions related to this book. The questions were:

1. What three statements or principles stood out most to you in this reading?

2. What do you think I need to do in order to improve our communication as a staff?

3. What do you think you need to do in order to improve our communication as a staff?

4. On pages 122-125, Pitino says “sometimes you have to ignore your own agenda.” How does that apply to staff communication?

5. On page 128, Pitino says to “confront problems immediately.” Are there any problems we are not confronting that need to be addressed?

I did not receive any written communication back from the staff on these questions. I did, however, have a meeting scheduled with them for week nine. Part of the problem was that both of them went on vacation this week; however, I did send the questions four days in advance to try and allow for this. Since I did not get any e-mail feedback I planned to spend some of our meeting time during week nine to discuss the Pitino questions.

Week 9 was a spiritual gifts inventory. This juncture was where my project almost fell apart. This challenge had nothing to do with the spiritual gifts inventory. The issue had everything to do with the possibility of me leaving Cadiz Baptist Church to pastor Northside Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. About two weeks before this meeting I agreed to go to preach in view of a call at Northside. My wife and I agonized over this decision even after it was made, but I still felt that it was God’s plan. I had not made this decision public, although some people knew, mostly references from my résumé or additional references that had been requested. The Minister of Music was initially very upset about this, but after I explained my reasons and after he had several weeks to pray about it he seemed to be a little more understanding.
My reason for e-mailing questions as part of my project was to make it easier on my Minister of Music since he is part-time. I had e-mailed the questions to the staff ten days before our last meeting, but neither staff member e-mailed their answers back, so as a continuation of week nine I discussed the answers to the e-mailed questions from the Pitino book and doing a spiritual gifts test with my Minister of Youth.

Later in week 9 I was able to sit down with the Minister of Youth and discuss questions from Rick Pitino’s book. Responses from the Minister of Youth to the questions were as follows:

1. What three statements or principles stood out most to you in this reading?

   The Minister of Youth responded with: “communication as a habit,” “lack of communication narrows success,” and “the importance of communicating value to people.”

2. What do you think I need to do in order to improve our communication as a staff?

   The Minister of Youth responded in saying that, if possible, it would be beneficial to include the Minister of Music in staff meetings more often even though it was difficult to meet with him due to his schedule. The Minister of Music teaches school out of town and has a very busy internet business on the side. I also asked the Minister of Youth how often he would ideally like the pastor to meet with him apart from our regular staff meetings with the rest of the church staff. He suggested every two weeks. That would give him some time to plan for meetings while also holding him accountable for keeping me better informed. I had been somewhat inconsistent in meeting with our Minister of Youth. My plan for that past year had been to meet with him once each week individually. Some months I did this almost every week. Other months, due to our
hectic ministry schedules, these meetings were missed for three or four weeks at time.

He added that he liked freedom, but it also helps to be held accountable.

3. What do you think you need to do in order to improve our communication as a staff?

The Minister of Youth said he should keep my more informed with Sunday School literature he is using as well as Wednesday evening material. He said that he had done a better job in the past but has gotten more lax in this regard recently.

4. On pages 122-125, Pitino says “sometimes you have to ignore your own agenda.” How does that apply to staff communication?

The Minister of Youth said that he can get too focused on his own agenda and not on keeping the pastor informed. I brought up the obvious question about how I could have handled the possibility of my leaving better. The Minister of Youth said that he understood after hearing my reasons, but until then he did feel left out since other support staff members knew, but he did not.

5. On page 128, Pitino says to “confront problems immediately.” Are there any problems we are not confronting that need to be addressed?

The Minister of Youth said there was nothing to be addressed other than the possibility of my moving and that we had already addressed that. I asked him if he had ever been on staff at a church when the pastor left. He said that he had not. I told him that I have on two different occasions and told him that he would likely have to pick up a lot more responsibility with hospital visitation and that he may have to do some of the preaching at least during the immediate weeks after I leave. At that point I still had not gone to Northside Baptist church in view of a call so nothing was definite concerning my leaving.
My actual purpose for week 9 was moved to the following Monday. The Minister of Youth agreed to work on it over the weekend and we would meet then. On the following Monday I was finally able to finish week 0 as the Minister of Youth and I talked about the spiritual gifts test he had taken.\(^9\) He ranked exceptionally high on pastoring/shepherding: 21 out of a possible 24. This discovery was a little surprising to both of us since he has no desire to be a senior pastor at a church; however, we both recognized that a lot of the questions were about caring for people. I told him that I sensed a pastor’s heart in him because he had a genuine concern for other people. Out of this discussion came his appreciation for involving him in hospital visitation. He would like for that to continue. His desire to be involved in pastoral care should be especially helpful since I ended up being called to another church.

Another surprise was that the Minister of Youth scored relatively high, 14 out of a possible 24, on administration. For the past seven years he has been criticized by individuals, the finance committee, and the personnel committee for problems in this area. His reasoning for the relatively high score was that sometimes he did well and sometimes he did not. I added that he was very good with higher tech opportunities such as the one-call now and he did an excellent job of organizing Upward. He has also added Twitter to keep parents updated when the students are gone to camp. Turning in money and receipts were still an issue as was follow-through on assignments, so I would say that his assessment was accurate. One of the weaknesses of this spiritual gifts inventory that

\(^9\)Larry A. Gilbert, *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory* (Forest, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1985).
he pointed out was that it did not give a lot of options. Each statement allowed for only three responses: “almost always,” “occasionally,” or “not very often.”

Week 10 was an opportunity for me to prayerfully consider how I interpreted the gifts of each staff member and what adjustments I might need to make in their ministries. The Minister of Music did not take the spiritual gifts test. He was very busy as a bi-vocational minister so I am fairly certain he would not want to take on any expanded role in ministry outside of leading worship on Sundays. The Minister of Youth and Children had already taken on a bit of a more expanded role in the area of pastoral visitation. During the time we were doing the project I had to be with a family an hour and a half away in Nashville during a heart surgery. He spent the entire day forty-five minutes in the other direction with the family of a fifty-seven-year-old deacon who was near the point of death. When I arrived at that hospital later that evening, the father of the deacon told me that our Minister of Youth had been an “absolute jewel.” He also attended a meeting this week about being “on call” with our new local hospital’s chaplaincy ministry. He also scored higher than I anticipated on teaching. I normally use him in the pulpit when I am away, but if I were staying I would also consider using him occasionally on Sunday nights when I am present. He said that while he would not like preaching on a weekly basis, he would enjoy preaching an occasional Sunday evening.

Consistency in administration is an area the student minister and I have talked about several times over the years. He tends to have a weakness with follow through on certain assignments. This deficiency has hurt him in the past. If he can become more consistent here it would make a significant difference in his overall ministry.
During week 11 the staff was given a second reading assignment in *Breakout Churches*, chapters 7 through 10. Chapter 7 talks about building a culture of excellence, chapter 8 discusses innovation accelerators, chapter nine is about building momentum, and chapter ten gives some final thoughts on becoming a breakout church. By the time the staff answered these questions I knew for sure that I would be moving and phrased my questions a little differently than I would if I were staying for an indefinite period of time.

In reference to becoming a breakout church and building a culture of excellence, Rainer gives the following quote from Jim Collins’ book, *Good to Great*, “Indeed, you might even gain the deepest of all satisfactions: knowing that your short time here on earth has been well spent, and that it mattered.”\(^{10}\) Rainer continues by adding, “If making a difference in work is so meaningful, how much more meaningful is making a difference in God’s work?”\(^{11}\) Another interesting insight in relation to innovation is that it cannot be evaluated as good or bad out of context. Rainer says, “A particular innovation may be spectacular” in one church and a disaster in another.\(^{12}\)

For the past six years Cadiz Baptist has been in a process similar to what Rainer calls “blind erosion.”\(^{13}\) We were not blind to the erosion. In fact, some church members were very negative and critical about it. The blindness came in that many could not see themselves as part of the problem. Thankfully, the church began experiencing some momentum during my last six months with them. I saw no real cause for this,  

\(^{11}\)Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 186.  
\(^{12}\)Ibid., 153.  
\(^{13}\)Ibid., 174.
except God’s mercy and grace. We did not change much of what we were doing. We did have an excellent revival in August, but most of it was prospects showing up for church who were new in the community. Many of them returned after visiting and some of them joined the church. We did not set any records, but we did baptize more people in my last six months than we did in the entire year before. Attendance had also gotten better and people were noticing. When people heard that I was leaving, some were saying, “I could understand you leaving a while back, but now things are getting better.” My prayer is that the momentum will continue.

Innovation was a challenging issue for us. During my first few years at Cadiz Baptist, we considered a fairly significant amount of innovation for a traditional older congregation. We did event evangelism, bought a projection system, and tried to start a preschool. Some of the innovations proved successful, but after my first few years at the church, almost all of the attempts at innovation were either turned down by the congregation or adopted with little enthusiasm. We lost several young families due to our failure to embrace new ideas, but in my last six months the church started building back. Several young families began attending the church and some have joined. One family with four children stopped by my office and said that they had to come and visit Cadiz Baptist. They had already been invited by five different people. Another couple said that they were drawn to Cadiz Baptist because the church was so friendly. Our people had been encouraged by seeing new people come and they were becoming more proactive in inviting other people.

At the end of this week the Minister of Music sent me his answers to the Pitino questions. One of his more insightful responses referred to a time when I was “trying to
change worship.” He said that he had several church leaders who approach him with statements supporting the current worship format, knowing that it was difficult for him to change. To his credit he still heard some of the suggestions from me and from other and he began including some of the newer songs and choruses. By his own admission, “This too has worked well.” He concluded by saying that while it was difficult he understood that using some of the contemporary songs helped our worship. He even started visiting churches with different types of worship while on vacation to see what others were doing. He concluded by saying that he wanted to “do what’s right for our church” whether it matched his personal idea of “what worship should be at Cadiz Baptist Church,” or not.

He had truly come some distance in recent years. While he was opposed to changes in worship when I came, he has made some fairly significant changes from the very traditional worship we once knew. My hope and prayer is that he will continue to move even further down the road he has started. He has the ability and if he moves slowly most of the church will embrace it.

During week 12 the staff was to gather together to pray. The Minister of Music was not able to make it due to a last minute vacation plan, but the Minister of Youth and I had a productive meeting and prayer time together.

During week 13 I emailed both staff members the questions from chapters 7 through 10 of Breakout Churches. Chapter 7 deals with “A Culture of Excellence,” chapter 8 with “Innovation Accelerators,” chapter 9 with “Big Mo or Blind Erosion,” and chapter 10 with becoming a “Breakout Church.” In relation to cultivating “A Culture of Excellence,” Rainer talks about getting the right leaders in the right places. What type of lay leaders do we need to involve in order to improve the church’s level of excellence?
Rainer also says in some churches the “tail wags the dog” and some churches do not even have a “dog,” or a primary vision. I asked the staff, “What do you see as the primary vision of Cadiz Baptist Church,” and, “Are there any places where the ‘tail is wagging the dog?’.” In chapter 9 Rainer speaks to the vital ministry of prayer. I then asked them how they would evaluate the prayer ministry of Cadiz Baptist Church and how can it could be improved. A final question was in relation to chapter ten and becoming a “breakout church.” In those recent months the church seemed to find a new momentum and some positive growth. I asked the staff, “What do you think Cadiz Baptist Church needs to do in order to continue in that direction?”

The Minister of Music suggested that we try and involve “EVERYONE” in leadership. This inclusion would help them see their importance to the church and the value of their opinions. He continued to say that trying new things “will show them we lend credence to their abilities” and that many of them have been in ministry longer than the staff has and that discounting their resources would show an “unwillingness to involve others in the ministry of the church.” In view of his reluctance to heed suggestions by other church members in this past, I found this a rather profound change. While I was not sure that involving “everyone” in leadership is a feasible idea, I was encouraged by his openness to change.

Another suggestion he made that is worth considering is attempting to make the Wednesday night prayer meeting a more “focused prayer time,” with different prayer emphases each week. For years Cadiz Baptist has had the typical prayer meeting/Bible study that is fairly well done and pretty well attended. Every attempt, however, to make
this into a stronger prayer emphasis has fallen short. Perhaps some fresh ideas here could prove helpful in strengthening the churches prayer ministry.

He also hoped that the church could begin involving more people, helping them to find ownership in this church. I think the church already does this fairly well, but there is certainly room for improvement. The church has tried using new members classes on at least two different occasions in the past eight or nine years, but they never gained much traction. Perhaps with a new pastor coming the time might be ripe to try it again.

The Minister of Children and Youth responded to the question concerning involvement of lay leaders by saying, “We need to develop and utilize lay leaders who have ‘buy-in’ to CBC’s ministry and are willing to take initiative. A ministry/activity should not have to have ‘staff’ involvement to be successful.” In response to the tail wagging the dog question, he referred to our initial mission statement as “A Caring Church Sharing the Good News.” He commented that we have always done extremely well with the first part of that statement, and that recently, we seemed to be doing better with the second. A few years ago we modified our mission to statement to “A Church with a Passion . . . .” He referred to a question asked by Andy Stanley, “Does what is on the wall reflect what goes on in the hall,” or does the church’s vision or mission statement match what goes on at the church? In recent months, most notably since our revival, the Minister of Youth felt that we were becoming more passionate about ministry and being the church God wanted us to be. In relation to our prayer ministry he felt that our church’s prayer ministry was strong, but that it was more reactive than proactive. He felt that we could improve our prayer ministry by praying for life-change for our
members, praying that our church would join God where he is working, and praying for new opportunities of ministry. In relation to my final question regarding what Cadiz Baptist Church needs to do in order to continue in a positive direction, he replied that the church must continue to be outward-focused and that our recent positive growth was due to a shift in focus on others rather than on ourselves. He also suggested that we continue using Sunday School and small groups as an outreach tool and that we be more intentional about how the church uses Upward sports. There was untapped potential there waiting to be used.

I felt there were some excellent insights here. If Cadiz Baptist Church can implement some of these suggestions the church will be strengthened. One of the biggest challenges was starting or sustaining outward-focused ministries without heavy involvement of the staff. Unfortunately, some ministries cannot even be sustained without senior pastor leadership. Lay leadership would have to be key to the church being able to sustain real growth.

During week 14 I met with the small group again. Originally, I was going to focus on the improvements in staff ministry team building that would hopefully occur as a result of this project. Word about my moving, however, changed the dynamics dramatically. Nevertheless, my first question asked about changes in staff ministry relationships over the past ten to fifteen weeks. The group’s consensus was that it was hard to tell with everything going on. The next question asked whether I should have told the ministers on staff immediately after I had agreed to go in view of a call to another church rather than waiting until the week before. The group had mixed feelings about this subject. Some said I should have, others understood that I would not want to do
anything that might undermine my ministry at Cadiz Baptist if I did not receive a positive vote at the new church.

Considering the transition process I asked what qualities the church should look for in a new pastor. Answers included spiritual leadership, being sensitive to the needs of the church, and a strong administrator but not a dictator. The consensus of the group was that I was always sensitive to the Lord’s leading and that they were confident that I would not be leaving Cadiz Baptist if I were not sure of this decision. The next question asked, “How do you think the new pastor at Cadiz Baptist should approach his relationship with the staff?” Strong administration was emphasized here again. Another said that the person will have to learn the staff and cultivate relationships with the staff. He will not need to be a dictator, but he should be a motivator. Another added that he should do observation for a maximum of six months and then form an action plan for the staff.

I then asked the group what they thought I could have done better with the staff at Cadiz Baptist Church. One person said I should have held the staff more accountable. He continued to say that if I have a weakness it is in not being a strong enough administrator with the staff. Another suggested that I should have formulated a more definite game plan for the staff and gotten them to buy in. Another member added, in defense of what I had done, that the Minister of Music made significant changes since I came. He mentioned that when I came the Minister of Music was very resistant to change and now he loves many of the changes the church has made in worship. Another felt that when a guest came to visit Cadiz Baptist Church, from one of the Kentucky Baptist agencies, he was amazed at the dramatic improvement in the worship service.
Another added that the music at Cadiz Baptist Church had moved significantly, but it was not anywhere near where “society says we need to move.”

Week 15 was the last week of my project. I had hoped to meet with the Minister of Music and the Minister of Youth and Children together. I emailed the Minister of Music earlier in the week but did not get a response, so I did not contact the Minister of Youth and Children. On Sunday morning the Minister of Music said he could meet with me that evening. I asked the Minister of Youth and Children if he could meet; he said that he would except that we had a deacon’s meeting that night. The chairman of deacons had moved the deacons meeting up a week and did not contact me until the middle of the worship service on Sunday morning. I kept the meeting with the Minister of Music after a brief meeting with the deacons, and we discussed some staff issues related to team building. One of the reasons why I kept the appointment was I knew that it would likely be the last opportunity I would have to meet with him before moving. Another reason was due to the fact that the personnel committee insisted that I do staff evaluations before leaving.

At the meeting with the Minister of Music I told him I thought we had come a long way in recent years, even though our past several weeks had been somewhat disappointing. He seemed to agree, but his primary concern was that we were doing a staff evaluation without a member of the personnel committee present. He said that this was not because he did not trust me, nor was it about me, but because he had some ideas he wanted to discuss with the committee. I gave him high marks in most categories, but suggested that he continue working to involve children and youth when possible, that he
continue to look for ways to build more contemporary music in the service, and that he
continue to work in communication with the office staff.

Later that week I met with the Minister of Youth and asked him in what areas
he hoped to grow during the interim time. He said that it would depend on what the
interim needed him to do but that he had hoped to be more efficient in his use of time so
he could be free to be more involved in pastoral ministries such as hospital visitation and
contacting prospects. Next I asked him if I had been staying at Cadiz Baptist Church
what he would have liked to see improve in our relationship as pastor and staff. He said
that he would hope we could be more consistent in meeting together weekly and that we
would become closer friends outside of simply a professional relationship.

I then asked him what type of relationship he had hoped to have with the new
senior pastor. He said that he had not really thought about it yet, but that he had hoped
they could be friends, spending time “hanging out” together and be able to sit down
weekly to discuss ministry. Next I asked what suggestions he could give me in starting a
new relationship with a staff at a new church. He said to do a lot of what I have done
here, to be supportive, seek input, and develop relationships outside of work with the
staff. I felt that these were all good suggestions, which I hope to able to do and wish that
I had been able to do better at Cadiz Baptist Church. I hope to continue growing in these
areas in my new church.
CHAPTER 5
EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

The purpose of this project was to lead the staff of the Cadiz Baptist Church into a more effective team-based ministry. The project sought to accomplish three goals. These goals will serve as the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to improve my own personal leadership skills. Specific focus was given improving personal and team leadership skills. Goal number two was to build the staff into a more effective team through regular, normally weekly, communication and mutual accountability. Goal number three was to develop a team spirit that went beyond the staff meeting into the life of the congregation. This unity was to be demonstrated by cohesion between the staff of well-planned weekly worship services and well-coordinated weekly ministry and special emphases.

Evaluation of the Project’s Purpose

The purpose of my project was to build a team ministry with the staff at Cadiz Baptist Church. Was progress made during the four years after I started writing? Yes. Was progress made during the fifteen weeks of actually “doing” the project with the church staff? No. In fact, we actually had some setbacks. Evidence of staff progress include significant improvements made in our worship in recent years and some noticeable improvement in the youth and children’s ministry in the past year. As noted in
chapter four, there have been more frequent compliments and fewer complaints about the music in our worship services in the past three years. The minister of music has made rather significant progress with involving more contemporary elements such as video projection (to which he was initially opposed), a brass and percussion ensemble, and the inclusion of some more contemporary songs in worship. The traditional music and choir have always been good, but there were frequent complaints about the traditional, almost “high church” approach, that dominated our worship. Some progress was made with incorporating more contemporary elements. My relationship with the minister of music also improved noticeably in recent years. About three years ago the music minister commented to me how much better we had connected. My agreement, however, to go in view of a call to a new church without immediately informing him upset him noticeably. Thankfully, this relationship did start improving again, as evidenced by his agreement to resume working with me on my project. My leaving also had some effect on my relationship with the minister of youth and children, but much of that was positive. He became more proactive in ministry during the latter stages of my project. Most of that was not related to the project as much as it was a recognition that I would be gone and he would need to fill some holes. If he can continue recent improvements in the months and years ahead, his ministry effectiveness will increase noticeably.

**Evaluation of the Project’s Goals**

The first goal was to improve my own personal leadership skills. I think I did make some improvement here. I learned more about building a team ministry with the staff through research and by experience. I do not think the staff at Cadiz Baptist Church and I ever got completely on the same page, but I do think that we made some significant
progress. One thing I did see them do more of in recent months was to develop a more outward focus. One evidence is the minister of music’s more proactive involvement in our outreach team in recent months. It was also evidenced by the minister of youth stating at the end of the project that he wanted to use Upward as a better outreach tool than in the past. Hopefully this trend will continue.

One of the tools I was reluctant to use that should help in the future is personnel evaluations. I was frustrated with the specific questions and the numerical rating system used in the evaluations, but I felt the general idea of performing staff evaluations was good. Hopefully, I can take the good I have learned from doing staff evaluations and use them to build a better team ministry at my new church.

I am excited about a new opportunity as I started in a new church, January 1, 2012. There seems to be more interest by the new staff in building a team ministry from the beginning. I think my work on this project will be more helpful for the new staff than it was for the former one. Time will tell, as I move to a new church, whether my leadership skills have improved, but I am excited about the fresh start and the new challenge. The staff and personnel committee I will be working with at Northside all want to do staff evaluations, and they have already asked me for input. We seem to be in general agreement about how to proceed with these. This unity already puts me ahead of the game at the new church.

Goal 2 was to build the staff into a more effective team through regular, normally weekly, communication and mutual accountability. This area too saw some improvement. Part of this improvement was due to a new approach I started taking with the minister of youth eighteen months ago. He was struggling with some issues the
personnel committee had brought to my attention. We sat down together, and I told him I wanted to take a more proactive position in our relationship. I was going to be his “coach,” treating him as a star player on my team. I did not meet with him as often as I had hoped to meet at the beginning, but this approach forced me to continue building communication and accountability. We tried to meet individually at least once a week at the start, but this plan was not always feasible. The more frequent meetings along with the positive and proactive approach did prove to be somewhat helpful. The project was a way of building on this approach. It forced me to ask more specific questions related to team ministry, creating a better dialogue between us.

The minister of music did not thrive in an environment filled with suggestions. During my early years at the church, various church leaders, along with myself, strongly encouraged him to make changes which he was not in favor of doing. We even created some musical alternatives that did not require his blessing or his involvement. Our team ministry did not flourish during my first four years at the church. In the next four years I took a more patient and positive approach. This strategy helped our relationship considerably, and he made some of the changes I had encouraged him to make in earlier years without my prodding. He actually embraced more changes to worship than I ever thought that he would. These improvements were continuing as I started the actual implementation of my project with the staff. We briefly had some issues with the circumstances surrounding my resigning of the church, but this conflict began clearing up fairly quickly. There could have been an increasingly positive effect the project would have created had I not been moving to a new church.
Goal 3 was to develop a team spirit that went beyond the staff meeting into the life of the congregation. This unity was to be demonstrated by cohesion between the staff of well-planned weekly worship services and well-coordinated weekly ministry and special emphases. This area too saw some noticeable improvement during recent years, but there was not much change during the actual implementation of the project. The first time I met with my designated small group they were extremely complimentary of how the staff seemed to jell together on Sundays. In their view the Sunday worship services generally flowed in cohesion. The small group noted that a visitor would not know that the minister of music was not full-time. They commented that the staff ministers seemed to be together and the service was done well. Special events also seemed to be well coordinated on most occasions. This smooth coordination was largely due to an accurate calendar kept in the church office by the church secretary. Staff unity improved fairly dramatically from the time I started chapter one of my project, but I did not see any real change during the actual fifteen weeks of project implementation. One area that I did not improve as much as I would like is with building a closer bond of friendship with the staff. I would have liked to have done a better job of building social relationships with the other staff ministers and their families outside of a ministry context.

**Strengths of the Project**

The greatest strength of the project may have been in the subject chosen. Building a team ministry with the staff was the right focus. This emphasis benefited both the staff and the church. Due to some challenging circumstances at the church, staff relationships could have easily turned in a negative direction. This project helped make
sure that they stayed more positive and productive. This project will also be transferable to a new church where there is hunger among the staff for team ministry.

Another strength of this project was the amount of good research I was able to do from a variety of resources related to team building ministry. This element has been somewhat helpful at Cadiz Baptist and should be helpful at the new church. I think it helped me be a little more patient with the staff than I might have been. Some saw my patience as a weakness or an unwillingness to deal with issues. As one person in the small group I consulted said, “The pastor needs to get tougher.” While I understand his reasons, and at times I have been patient to a fault, I think it has been more of a strength than a weakness. I believe the staff is better now than it was four years ago when I started this process. The worship has improved. The youth minister has also made some personal improvements with follow through and outreach. They still have room for improvement, but I think both ministers have grown in recent years. Some of this growth is due to the patient and proactive approach I have been encouraged to make through the doing of this project.

An additional strength of the project was that I was able to get more people involved in talking to me about staff relationships. I enlisted a variety of people in this group with differing views of the staff and our ministry effectiveness in the church. A variety of opinions were expressed. While I did not agree with all of the comments, they did give me some insights I would not have had without them.

The greatest benefits from this project may be with my next staff more than with the last one. We seem to share many priorities in common from the onset. This unity of purpose should make team building ministry exciting. They are looking forward
to having a pastor who will be more available than their last pastor. He was unable to be on the field as much as some felt necessary, due to other obligations. His schedule made it difficult for him to build a team ministry with the staff. The pastor search committee at the new church told me that they are “hungry” for a pastor to come and give them direction and leadership. In the few meetings I have already had with the staff they have been most responsive. During the next several months, I should gain a better idea of how the team ministry approach will work with them.

Weakness of the Project

The project was interesting and exciting at first. The subject was good and the research was helpful. After a while, however, the project became more about getting margins and footnotes correct than it did about learning how to be a better pastor. All the challenges related to formatting became extremely frustrating for me. I was not computer savvy enough to fix jumping footnotes and other related issues. By the time I found a workable solution and started making real progress I was dangerously near the deadline for graduation. The project worked out satisfactorily in the end, but not without a lot of extra headaches and extra money spent for extension deadlines. I lost my enthusiasm for the project, and my family incurred rather serious debt during the process. All of the setbacks related to formatting took the joy out of learning for me. If I would have enlisted a typist sooner, that would have made a huge difference in my experience with the project. I think I submitted chapter 1 thirteen times before I got it approved. In contrast, I submitted chapter 3 two or three times.

Another weakness in the project was my feeling that God was going to move me before I got it done. I sensed that God was leading me to a new ministry much sooner
than it actually happened. That made it difficult to keep my heart at Cadiz Baptist and made the project less interesting as well. As it turns out, I finished the project during my final days at the church. When I knew I was moving during the project, that changed the tone of it even more. In some ways, however, it made the project more positive and exciting. I obviously will not be here, but what I have learned is certainly transferable in my work with a new church staff.

I also did not sense that Cadiz Baptist Church was excited about me doing this project. No one really objected, but until recently no one said anything about it being a good idea or that they liked what I was doing. Most of the people in my small group attended the two meetings I arranged, but no one in this group or outside of it said that the focus of my project was a good idea or a bad idea. This apparent lack of enthusiasm may have been a bit of a misconception on my part. I did hear midway through the project that the minister of music’s wife told him the project was a good idea because it would help our relationship, which started out a bit strained during my early years at the church. During week 15 of the project, the minister of youth also said he liked meeting more often and that he hopes to be even more involved with the new senior pastor.

What I Would Do Differently

The first thing I would have done differently was secure a typist through the seminary. After turning in my first chapter ten or eleven times, I began to realize I was not going to be able to get my margins and footnotes correct on my own. I then secured a typist. She was able to help me get chapter 1 approved, but I did not make it clear to her that even after she typed the next chapter that it would still probably get sent back for several more corrections. I was still learning more about the process myself, but I should
have made it clearer to her that multiple submissions were a definite possibility. At this point, I felt that it was best to put the project temporarily on hold. I also thought I would be moving within the next year and that I would resume the project again after I went to a new church. I did not move, but I did secure a new typist a year or two later. She helped me get the margins and footnotes right on chapter 2, but she said I had made too much of a mess out of the margins for her to easily fix chapter 3, so we parted ways. I then secured a typist through the seminary help wanted ads. She did an excellent job, but then moved overseas. I secured yet another typist through the seminary. He has been excellent as well. I should have started by securing a typist through the seminary. This would have made the whole process much easier. My failure to hire a typist at the beginning was by far my biggest mistake. I should have known that my computer skills were going to be an obstacle from the outset, or at least after three or four chapter revisions.

Another change I should have made was getting my permission for using tests with the staff sooner. The Myer’s Briggs group would not allow me to report their test in my project. This oversight caused me to scramble in order to find another test. Inscape Publishing was very good to work with when I requested their permission to use the DISC test.¹

I also would also have liked to have started this project at least a month sooner. I had hoped to start this project in June 2011. Since the Minister of Music is also a school teacher, this schedule would have been better for him. He later expressed frustration that I waited until August. The Youth Minister, however, was going to be out

of town with youth and children’s camps during three weeks in June, and we had
Vacation Bible School the other week. Due to staff vacations and a youth retreat in July,
that month was eliminated. I started the first week in August, not knowing that I would
soon be contacted by Northside Baptist Church. Holidays and other staff schedule
conflicts caused me to miss a few other weeks. In retrospect, I might have squeezed a
meeting or two in earlier despite the inconvenience. Compacting this schedule would
have made the project it a little less stressful at the end.

Theological Reflections

I would have liked to have been able to focus on a variety of biblical characters
and their styles of leadership. Due to the broadness of the subject, however, I was forced
to focus only on the leadership style of Jesus, who, after all, is the perfect role model. I
was reminded of how Jesus was the ultimate example and how he operated sacrificially
as a servant. I was also reminded that he, too, had a team to lead with his disciples and
how he was compassionate and caring, yet bold and focused. I was reminded of how he
inspired people and, even though he was God in human flesh, he was completely
dependent on his Heavenly father. How much more must I depend upon God’s power if
even Jesus did! I was also reminded about how church ministry is imperfect,
complicated, and messy because people are imperfect and I am far from perfect. I was
also mindful that the Scriptures give us the ultimate standard by which to compare our
leadership and how woefully short I come, especially in comparison to the leadership of
Jesus Christ. Compared to his example, I have been an utter failure and a pitiful excuse
for a leader, yet his grace compels me to get back up and try again.
Through this process and other dealings with church members, I am aware that well meaning people can be blind to what I think are the purposes and plans of God because they are set on their own agendas. At the same time, I realize that I may one day find out how truly blind I was to the direction God was trying to give me. I again saw that local church ministry is often hard and frequently frustrating. Everyone has an opinion, and most people want to follow you as long as they agree with you. When they think you are wrong, however, it is difficult to keep those people on board. Some of their lack of confidence in my leadership may well have been my fault. Perhaps if I could have done a better job of leading the church, they would have been more apt to follow.

**Personal Reflections**

Through this process, I was reminded once again of how truly flawed I really am. I am weak and afraid, and yet often when I try to be bold, it quickly becomes a work of the flesh. I have at times thought more highly of my potential and ability than perhaps I should have. I have made more mistakes than I probably realize. I am a less competent minister than I thought I was. All of this is very discouraging. At the same time, I realize that our God is a God who gives us more chances. As I acknowledge my personal flaws and complete inadequacy, he provides his strength.

I think a came out of this project a little more cautious in some ways than before. I am not sure I like that, but most of the bolder steps the personnel committee and I have taken with the staff have not been successful, particularly the few times when they were confrontational. I keep coming back to a statement made by our former deacon chairman, who told the deacons when he began a new assignment that he wanted to be “proactive and positive.” I have done this with at least a small amount of success with
our Minister of Youth more recently, and I hope to do so with ever greater success with the staff at the new church. In one sense, the timing of this project is bad. I am getting ready to move and leave my current staff. Anything I have learned through this project will not be of use to them. I have a brand new beginning, however, with a new staff without the baggage I may have had with the staff at Cadiz Baptist. That makes staff ministry more exciting.

This project confirmed that I am at my best when I am proactive with other staff members, planning and dreaming, discussing and praying with them, being careful to give more praise than criticism. That must not keep me from correcting staff when necessary, but most of the staff relationship should focus on praying and planning and dreaming, rather than on micromanaging. This perspective is not a new insight for me, but a reinforcement of an old one.

The new staff at Northside has indicated that they are hungry for pastoral leadership. This desire should be an advantage for me moving into a new ministry. It may not work out the way that I hope, but the new church appears to be a great opportunity to actively pursue team building ministry. That desire of team ministry is one of the reasons I have been drawn to Northside.

**General Conclusion**

When I first started the project, I had no idea it would take me this long to finish. After taking thirteen submissions to get chapter 1 turned in, I began to realize that I had hit a wall. Content and grammar and the basic “guts” of the paper were all manageable. Following the seminary style guide was very confusing at some points, particularly as it related to the many different types of footnotes. With some help from
the seminary, however, this issue could have been overcome. The most difficult part of the whole project was keeping footnotes from jumping. I would have eventually given up if I had not secured a typist. I had chapters one and two written three and a half years ago; however, I got completely bogged down with the formatting. Due to my struggles with formatting issues the process became more about fixing margins and footnotes that than it did about becoming a better pastor.

I loved the idea of building a team ministry with the staff. I would not change that, partly because it is very basic and practical and partly because it is transferable to another church. I have felt a tension between answering to the personnel committee and incorporating what I have learned about team-based ministry. The personnel committee has challenged me to be tougher on the staff, while the team-based ministry resources I read have challenged me to be more patient and understanding with them. Both views are probably helpful if kept in balance. Each individual staff member also responds better to different styles of leadership depending on their personalities. I will always remember being a high school football player and the coaches seeming to understand that different players needed different approaches depending on the player. I think the same is true of church staff members. The DISC test and spiritual gifts test gave me some insight into my Minister of Youth that I did not have otherwise. I began to see potential in some areas of his ministry that I had not noticed before. One example was his gifting for pastoral care. He should serve well in this capacity during the interim time, and if I were to stay here, I would consider giving him more opportunities in this area. The challenge is that he has other areas that already need to be shored up in his current ministry in order to provide time for this ministry.
According to the DISC test, the Minister of Youth scored high as an influencer. He may have more potential as a leader than I realized. His big challenge is with follow through. Issues in that area have cost him some credibility with key committees and other church members in the past. If he will improve with his follow through in administration, evangelism, and outreach, he can become an outstanding servant leader in the local church. The interim time will be an opportunity for him to grow in ministry skills he might not normally have the opportunity to develop. My prayer is that he will find a good fit with the interim pastor and especially with the new senior pastor who will come later. He has a lot of potential, but it will take diligence and passion on his part to reach it fully.

I am looking forward to implementing the general principles I have learned with the new staff at Northside. I have had outstanding pastors in the past, but I never had a pastor who developed the team ministry model with me. I have had to learn while serving on the job. Moving to a new church and serving alongside a new staff that has indicated an eagerness for team-based leadership should help initially. My prayer is that I can develop team-based ministry with the new staff for many years to come.

The benefits of working on this project should be reaped in the months and years ahead. I can already see some of those with the new staff at Northside. The challenge will be whether the specifics about teamwork will prove fruitful. I have gleaned some valuable insight. The proof will be in the application as I serve with a new staff in a new place.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


**Articles**


Tests


ABSTRACT

LEADING THE STAFF OF CADIZ BAPTIST CHURCH, CADIZ, KENTUCKY, INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE TEAM-BASED MINISTRY.

Kevin Lynn Roberts, D. Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Paul H. Chitwood

This project sought to develop a team-based ministry with the staff at Cadiz Baptist Church in Cadiz, Kentucky. Chapter 1 describes a proposal for team based ministry using goals, a church and community context, and the rationale for the project. Chapter 2 examines the biblical and theological principles of team leadership focusing on the ministry of Jesus. Chapter 3 explores the benefits of effective teamwork, including choosing a team, developing a team, and common denominators between effective secular teamwork and effective team-based ministry in a local church.

Chapter 4 gives details of the actual implementation of the project, including a personality test, a spiritual gifts test and question, questions from books, and meetings with an independent group of church leaders. Chapter 5 reviews the effectiveness of the project. The data is analyzed and the goals and process are evaluated.
VITA

Kevin Lynn Roberts

PERSONAL

Born: February 3, 1957, St. Louis, Missouri
Parents: Frank and Tina Roberts
Married: Monique Rene Smith, August 2, 1997
Children: Mikayla Lynn Roberts, born April 21, 2002
Timothy John Luke Roberts, born October 8, 2005
Kelly Nicole Roberts, born May 27, 2007

EDUCATIONAL

Diploma, Orchard Farm High School, St. Charles, Missouri
B.S., Bus. Admin., Southeast Missouri State University, 1979
M.R.E., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982
M.Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988

MINISTERIAL

Minister of Education and Youth, First Baptist Church, Lancaster, South Carolina, 1982-1986.
Pastor, Unity Baptist Church, Fayette, Missouri, 1989-1993
Minister of Education and Youth, First Baptist Church, Jackson, Missouri, 1993-1999
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Mount Zion, Illinois, 1999-2003
Pastor, Cadiz Baptist Church, Cadiz, Kentucky, 2003-2011
Pastor, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Kentucky, 2012