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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS
AT MOUNTAIN VIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH,
RICHFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA

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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP FOR DISCIPLESIP GROUPS

AT MOUNTAIN VIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH,

RICHFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA

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To Crystal,
my partner in ministry and my love,
and to
my family,
always an encouragement to me

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PREFACE

This project is born out of the necessity to be obedient to the Great Commission and the encouragement of my family and friends. It was through the encouragement of my wife, mother, and children that I entered the Doctor of Ministry program. My congregation graciously allowed me time to write.

I am grateful for the assistance of the Southern Baptist State Convention leadership in Pennsylvania and South Jersey. I would like to thank Dr. David Waltz, Executive Director, Dr. Stan Smith, Barry Whitworth, Dr. Bob Hylton, the State Convention staff, and Larry Theisen, the Director of Missions in the Keystone Baptist Association, for being sources of stability and godly wisdom.

The faculty at the Graham School of Missions and Evangelism is unrivaled in personal and spiritual integrity. Dr. Jeff Walters has been a source of encouragement and knowledge. Dr. Adam Greenway's academic precision has been both challenging and appreciated. Through his tutelage I have become a better student and writer. Both men took the time to evaluate, encourage, and instruct me. Without their devotion to academics and the Lord's work, this project might never have been completed.

This project would not have been possible without the eight men and women who stepped forward in faith to become spiritual leadership interns. These believers have made a significant difference in the harvest field for generations to come. One of these eight believers is Jeffrey Auker, who worked with me many hours to tabulate and formalize the statistics from the pre and post-surveys and the Spiritual Gifts tests.

God gave me wonderful grandparents, Pusey and Mary Losch and the Reverend Stuart and Sarah Lengel, all Lutheran church planters in the 1950s who instilled in me the drive to work hard and persevere for the kingdom of God. Thanks too to my mother and father, Annamae and George Losch, for their support and guidance. Through their diligence I grew up in the healthy environment of loving Sunday School and Vacation Bible School teachers, which later launched me on the journey that has led me to where I am today. I am grateful to our children, who have been so patient while I asked for quiet times to write. And a special thanks to my wife, who juggled work, family time, and church to help me realize a dream.

It is my hope that this project will encourage many church leaders who feel the weight of church responsibilities resting upon them. The answer to their frustrations rest in one word—multiply!

Pusey A. Losch

Richfield, Pennsylvania

December 2012

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop leaders for discipleship groups at Mountain View Community Church, Richfield, Pennsylvania.

Goals

At the completion of this project, I developed leaders for future discipleship groups at Mountain View Community Church. This leadership development was achieved through four measurable and obtainable goals, which brought an increase in knowledge, attitude, skills, and personal development.

The first goal was that the discipleship network of Mountain View would better understand leadership of disciples through expository preaching over a period of six weeks. The content, and focus of this series was on leadership development as taught in Scripture.

The second goal was that the discipleship network grow in confidence and develop a positive attitude toward becoming leaders. This goal began with a weekend retreat, at which time the participants began the discipleship process by taking the leadership survey and the Spiritual Gifts Inventory found at www.enewhope.org.¹ The

¹“Spiritual Gifts Evaluation,” <http://www.enewhope.org/spiritualgifts/evaluation.php> (accessed September 24, 2011).

weekend retreat consisted of six seminars on the topic of leadership, five that cover the leadership development of the Old Testament Prophets, Jesus, Paul, the leaders of the Reformation, and Spurgeon, and the sixth that discusses current trends in leadership development.

The third goal was to equip those in the leadership network of discipleship groups to develop an increased awareness of evangelistic opportunities and witnessing skills through occasions presented by ministry opportunities afforded within the discipleship groups.

A fourth goal was to improve my own skill in expository preaching and to be considered as a credible resource and developer of healthy biblical leaders, thereby providing both relief and encouragement for other churches in need of healthy leadership. This goal was realized when I was asked to teach the Basic Training course, which is required to be attended by the church planters that are funded by The North American Mission Board. In the course I taught, and continue to teach, the methodology of leadership development for small groups. The sermon points, the survey, and the training material are a significant portion of the class.

Context

The ministry context of Mountain View Community Church in Richfield, Pennsylvania is one of predominantly German heritage and influence. Positioned in the center of the state, Richfield sits between the Tuscarora and Shade mountains, alongside Mohantango Creek. The early settlers of 1740 discovered the Delaware, Monsey, Shawnee, and Tuscarora tribes. Following the work of Moravian missionaries, mainline denominations such as the Methodists, United Brethren, and Lutherans erected the first

permanent churches shortly after the extinction of these Native American settlements.² As the Richfield area was settled, the Swiss-German agrarian society gradually transformed into a town that included saw mills, tanneries, clothing stores and haberdashery, local hardware stores, and its first bank. Also, there came the introduction of German witchcraft and Pow-wowing, still practiced today as it was used and taught then by “Daddy Tschupp,” a local farmer.³

Today, Richfield is somewhat the same. Sawmills, hardware stores, feed mills, and one bank are still there, although the tannery and haberdashery are gone. Mountain View Community Church was planted in November of 2002 as the first Southern Baptist church in the area, functioning as a witness of biblical truth and Baptist values. Other denominations, such as the Methodist, Lutheran, and Mennonite churches, still exist on a road called “Church Street.” According to a Percept Group Study in 2010, a five-mile radius survey identifies 4,523 inhabitants, which is up 12.7 percent or 510 inhabitants, since 1990. This statistic is well below the U. S. average of 23.3 percent population growth.⁴ The statistics from the survey showed that the Anglo community was projected to grow into an even more Anglo community, that the community is very traditional in its preference of worship styles, and that the largest age group was between ages 29 to 49.⁵

Compared to the surrounding population, Mountain View Community Church has a distinctly different congregation from the rest of the community. The fellowship

²U. J. Jones, *History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley* (Philadelphia: Henry B. Ashmead, 1856), 18-25; Theodore K. Long, *Tales of the Cocolamus* (New Bloomfield, PA: Carson Long Institute, 1936), 37.

³Ibid., 56.

⁴Percept Group, “Demographic Study for Five-Mile Radius for Zip Code 17086” (Richfield, PA: Percept Group, 2010), 4.

that comes together on Sundays consists of 60-80 local attendees. The diverse worshippers range from low income and high school educated to six-figure income and college educated. The worship style is blended, dress is casual, and the body of the church emphasizes a missional lifestyle. Considering ourselves to be a Great Commission Church, we embrace the Great Commandment of loving one another. As a result, approximately 85 percent of the membership consists of new believers. This seven-year-old church was started from a Bible study that met on Monday nights in a log-hunting lodge at the base of Shade Mountain.

Beginning with twenty people, we initiated the first worship service. Everyone brought a lawn chair to sit on. As the church grew, calculated steps were taken to fulfill the church's mission statement that we will "seek to lead toward salvation those who are lost, while equipping the saints, until the return of Christ." As the church grew, a new dynamic moved within the church, the need for discipleship groups. The leadership at Mountain View agrees with the wisdom of William R. Hoyt that we would not grow larger until we become smaller.⁶ This, in and of itself, created another need, that is, the need for biblical leaders to multiply the leadership of the discipleship groups.

Historically, Mountain View Community Church sought growth by addition, not multiplication, often losing families due to an immature understanding of a servant lifestyle, forgiveness, obedience to Scripture, and accountability. While the attendance continues to grow, those who have been baptized are not staying. From 2007 to the present, the church has baptized 32 believers but has only added 4 to its membership

⁵Ibid., 2.

⁶William R. Hoyt, *Effectiveness by the Numbers: Counting What Counts in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007), 72.

role.⁷ This statistic is troubling. Furthermore, local traditional churches have added staff in an attempt to re-create the growth Mountain View Community Church is experiencing, thereby diminishing the attendance of Mountain View's youth, senior citizens, and children.

Since the first Bible study at the hunting lodge, the DNA of the church has always included church planting and servant leadership, giving 1 percent of our general fund offerings to church planting, 10 percent to the Cooperative Program, and 6 percent to the Keystone Baptist Association. Currently, Mountain View Community Church has planted one Anglo church and has plans for another plant within a twenty-mile radius. In addition, I serve as the Director of the Multiplying Church Center in the Allegheny Region where indigenous church planters are brought on as interns and trained to be effective church planters and pastors.

Rationale

Since planting Mountain View Community Church, there has been a steady growth in membership, baptisms, giving, and attendance. Almost every Sunday someone makes a profession of faith. Mountain View Community Church is one of the leading churches per capita in both baptisms and giving in the Baptist State Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey. For most pastors, this would be a positive sign, only Mountain View is not doing a good job of retaining its new believers. To ignore the problem would prove to be unbiblical for two reasons. First, Mountain View's leadership

⁷"Mountain View Community Church Annual Church Profile," <http://www.lifeway.com/sbds> (accessed 24 September 2011; password required, provided by Lifeway to each church).

would not be faithful with the stewardship responsibilities granted by Christ. Second, it is our responsibility to seek what is best for the bride of Christ until he comes.

To remedy the problem of attrition, the Administrative Team at Mountain View Community Church has looked at possible options and feels that more leaders are needed in the areas of administration, ministry, community, accountability, and discipleship groups. Since such a system does not exist, a leadership development process is necessary.

The first step will be to take steps toward the creation of a core group of leaders who are knowledgeable, motivated, and skilled. These leaders will disciple the new discipleship groups, thereby creating a system of accountability and better community, ministry, and care. The process will begin by identifying, surveying, teaching, training, and implementing lay members. These interns will lead discipleship groups toward spiritual maturity. The multiplication dimension of this project will occur when an apprentice is identified within the discipleship group who will be trained and empowered to begin the process over again within the next two years.

On more than one occasion, a discouraged pastor has confided his displeasure of the responsibilities placed upon him in the local church and the need for competent lay leadership. While all churches go through peaks and valleys in their ministries, the effectiveness of leadership development seems to be the key component that determines whether a church grows or declines.⁸ In other words, lay leaders fail to “grow their own.” Good leaders reproduce while good managers merely maintain the situation, living for the here and now. Leaders are out ahead.

At its completion, this project taught pastors and lay leaders alike the importance of leadership development and the need to visualize a future beyond themselves by creating a process that stimulates the church to become an organism of Christ.

Definitions

A variety of terms were used in this project to describe the development of leaders. For the purpose of clarity, these terms are defined below.

Expository preaching. Harold T. Bryson’s definition was used in this project: “Expository preaching is the art of preaching a series of sermons, either consecutive or selective, from a Bible book.”⁹ Given Mountain View Community Church’s postmodern context, apologetics was emphasized. Craig A. Loscalzo’s definition is also helpful: “Apologetic preaching offers theological meaning to a culture that desperately seeks significance but does not know where to find it.”¹⁰

Pastoral leadership. This project followed Larry J. Michael’s definition of pastoral leadership: “The empowering of laypersons to accomplish the mission of Christ through the local church.”¹¹

Administrative team. Each year, the membership of Mountain View Community Church elects men to serve as elders who meet the criteria set forth in the by-

⁸Neil Cole, *Organic Leadership: Leading Naturally Right Where You Are* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 126.

⁹Harold T. Bryson, *Expository Preaching: The Art of Preaching through a Book in the Bible* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 39.

¹⁰Craig A. Loscalzo, *Apologetic Preaching: Proclaiming Christ in a Postmodern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 26.

laws of the church. These individuals make spiritual decisions for the church, decisions spanning from the mission of the church to church discipline.

Intern. An intern is an individual who is going through the training process to become a spiritual leader.

Apprentice. This term refers to an individual who is in a discipleship group and has expressed interest in becoming a spiritual leader of a new small group.

Evangelism. This dissertation assumed the Lausanne Conference's definition of evangelism: "To spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe."¹²

Leadership network. This term applies to the network of spiritual leaders that lead small groups under the authority of the Administrative Team.

Group-Link. This term refers to the equipping and strategy meetings that will occur after the launching of the leadership network and small groups.

Limitations

Due to the subject matter of this project, two limitations and two delimitations were experienced. The first limitation was the short period of fifteen weeks. This project concentrated on developing leadership for discipleship groups, but not all participants developed at the same pace. The actual time needed for some participants was much

¹¹Larry J. Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership: Key Insights for Christian Leaders from the Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 28.

¹²"The Lausanne Covenant," <http://www.lausanne.org/covenant> (accessed August 14, 2011).

longer, especially when the participants are as diverse as those at Mountain View Community Church. While it was a limitation, it was not necessarily bad. The reason is that other churches that employ the principles of this project will probably encounter the same scenario. The next limitation was the availability of the subject matter. Plenty of information was available to launch and maintain small groups, but there was very little to inform one on how to develop leadership from within the church or community.

The two delimitations were that the participants were told that they must be members of Mountain View Community Church and must be over eighteen years of age. The purpose of the membership and age restrictions is due to concerns of liability at the weekend retreat.

Research Methodology

The inauguration of this project was a six-week sermon series that looked at the fundamental principles of leadership and leadership development and focused on eight qualities of biblical leaders. These qualities, as taught through Scripture, included competence, confidence, calling, courage, commitment, character, creativity, and compassion. Furthermore, the members at Mountain View were encouraged to join in a leadership weekend retreat.

The retreat entailed two days of prayer, teaching, and role-playing, beginning with the taking of the leadership questionnaire and a Spiritual Gifts Test. Six classes through the weekend highlighted leadership development, beginning with the Old Testament period, including the Prophets, Essenes, Sadducees, Scribes, and the Pharisees. Second, we explored the development style of Jesus. Third, we looked at Paul's methodology while on his missionary journeys and his imprisonments. Fourth, a class

was taught on the leadership development methodology of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other sixteenth-century theologians. The leadership principles taught by Spurgeon were taught in the fifth class. Finally, we looked at current trends, contextualization, and concluded by looking at Mountain View's discipleship group expectations and the blueprint of what a mature Christian should look like. After the equipping class concluded, a commissioning service with full church recognition of the once interns, now spiritual leaders, was conducted.

After the completion of the weekend and one week into the launch of the discipleship group process, those on the retreat retook the leadership development questionnaire to ascertain a measurable development of leadership growth. The facilitator encouraged feedback from the participants to further improve the process, created a promotion table within the church, and scheduled successive leadership meetings that were called "Group-Link." Group-Link allowed for the charting of spiritual growth and the maintaining of accountability. Its members discussed potential community projects, needed goals, future leadership retreats, apprenticeship and intern growth, prayer, and group multiplication.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES
ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Biblical leadership is in short supply. If one asks any pastor what his top ten needs are, biblical leadership will be somewhere among them. Pastors need lay ministers who are willing to take on the responsibility of small group leadership for the personal growth of others and the physical growth of the kingdom of God. While many tools exist to identify these leadership prospects, it is God who is the integral developer of his Spirit-led servants by giving certain gifts to accomplish the ministry ahead. Sanders states, “Spiritual leaders are not elected, appointed, or created by synods or churchly assemblies. God alone makes them.”¹ Healthy biblical leadership goes beyond a job description or a job title; healthy biblical leadership must be effective. To be effective, spiritual leaders need to view themselves as stewards of God’s gift, and to develop habits that will increase effectiveness, achievement, and personal satisfaction within the scope of spiritual biblical leaders for discipleship groups.

In this chapter, I discuss 1 Peter 4:10-11, and its applicability to develop a spiritual leadership development plan. My theological argument is that the spiritual leader is identified through the discovery of two significant spiritual gifts: hospitality and exhortation. I also discuss the biblical arguments for developmental training found in 1

¹J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody, 2007), 18.

Timothy and Paul's spiritual development from child to Pharisee to missionary to the Gentiles. Finally, I argue that a critical piece to leadership development lies with the proper deployment of the spiritual leader—a topic covered in Acts 6:1-7—the leadership development within the early church, and the creation the ministry for the seven who were chosen to serve. These theological signposts of identification, training, and deployment provide the biblical basis for leadership development and provide the discipleship catalyst for the multiplication of physical and spiritual growth at Mountain View Community church.

Some argue that those who are professional, attractive, and competent are the ones destined to be leaders within the church. The New Testament teaches differently. It teaches that effective leaders are not always professional, attractive, or competent, but, most importantly, they are *spiritual*. To be effective, these individuals seek the advancement of the kingdom of God and recognize that they are completely dependent upon his empowerment and direction. It becomes the task of each pastor in need of biblical leadership to identify, train, and deploy these new, potential leaders whom God has gifted for his work. In order to execute the development of these spiritual leaders, both Peter and Paul taught three primary facets of leadership in the New Testament. They taught the early church and the church today that if it wants biblical spiritual leadership, elders must be intentional at finding, teaching, and empowering converts to lead. The church must endeavor to begin a process that will identify, train, and deploy the key component of church multiplication, namely, spiritual leadership.

Leadership Development Is a Process

The early Christians understood that development was a process. They called it discipleship. Commenting on first-century leadership, Coleman writes, “These few early converts of the Lord were destined to become leaders of His church that was to go with the gospel to the whole world, and from the standpoint of His ultimate purpose, the significance of their whole lives would be felt throughout all eternity.”² Many have undertaken a leadership role for the wrong reasons, creating an environment for unbiblical growth that is man-made rather than Spirit directed and inspired. Nor does biblical leadership occur over night. As with many of the leaders of God’s people, their capabilities were enhanced gradually over time. Spiritual leadership is a process and a journey marked by humility and personal growth.

The Development of Peter’s Spiritual Leadership

Peter was the first to declare Jesus as the Christ (Mark 8:29), was part of Jesus’ core group on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:28b), and was the first to enter the tomb where Jesus was buried (John 20:6). At times, Peter’s decisions and behavior were questionable. He was rebuked by Jesus (Mark 8:33; John 18:11), failed to pray (Matt 26:40), and even denied the Christ (Mark 15:72). But his leadership was never in question. Where he went others followed. He preached at Pentecost and reaped a harvest for the kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:14-36). After prayer in the upper room, he spoke to the one hundred and twenty, urging them to replace Judas with another for the ministry of apostleship (Acts 1:25). He preached from prison (Acts 4:4)

²Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993), 22.

and later gave Paul the right hand of fellowship to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Gal 2:9).

Peter approached his work lovingly and willingly. He continued to write as an equal with fellow elders and a witness of the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet 5:1). He reminded them to be shepherds of the flock (v. 2), clothed with humility (v. 5), and alert (v. 8). A biblical spiritual leader must be a disciplined watchman who is an instructor, a good steward, a humble example, and a brave soldier ready to stand firm. Finding such a person is crucial.

Identifying Leaders

The first task of spiritual leadership development is identifying those who will become part of the spiritual leadership network. These spiritual leaders, once developed, will be those who develop others. Peter, writing to the growing church, listed two necessary gifts for spiritual leaders—hospitality and humility (1 Pet 4:10-11). Spiritual leaders must know that the ministry they are about to begin is God-directed, not self-directed. In a letter to the suffering Christians in Asia Minor, Peter writes,

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Christ Jesus, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Pet 4:10-11)³

Peter exhorted these current and future leaders to identify the spiritual gifts that they possessed as part of being good stewards of the grace of God. Reminding them that they cannot claim these gifts as their own, he instructed them that the free gifts were to be

used for God’s kingdom. Furthermore, Peter reminded the early Christians that the passion created by the manifold grace given to them comes in the form of various skills and capabilities. Commenting on Peter’s text, Kistemaker writes, “God owns all gifts even while they are in our possession. He does not grant us his gifts for our personal enjoyment; he gives them for the benefit of the body of Christ. Talented possessors—and that includes all of us—must be faithful stewards who, by continually extending the benefit of these gifts to others, function as channels of God’s grace.”⁴

Peter’s encouragement to those on the journey of spiritual leadership and development is just as important to the church today. The church today must allow God to do through them what they cannot do themselves. In order to do this, God gives his people certain gifts. Commenting on 4:11, Schreiner writes, “Peter wrote so that those who speak will do so in accord with the gospel, not to suggest that the words spoken become part of the revelational deposit for believers. Similarly, those who minister and serve others must not rely on their own strength.”⁵ Too many lay leaders occupy positions within the church, relying on their own strength. They are neither trained nor gifted, causing wasted energy, resources, time, and damaging those affected by the ineffective, though often well-meaning, individual.

³Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from The New American Standard Bible.

⁴Simon J. Kistemaker, *James, Epistles of John, Peter and Jude*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 1987), 171.

⁵Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville: B&H, 2003), 215.

The Gift of Hospitality

Putting the manifestation of the grace of God into two broad categories, Peter highlighted serving and speaking. The gift of service or hospitality was important to all the early Christians. Blum, commenting on Peter's words, reminds the reader that "hospitality is not a one-way virtue because every Christian is in some way capable of ministering to others."⁶ This was the position of the early church. Schreiner advocates that all believers have at least one gift, citing Peter's reference to "each one" who has received a gift.⁷ Furthermore, he emphasizes that "spiritual gifts are given to serve and to help others in the faith."⁸ The idea of allowing a stranger into their homes today might be a great concern to many, but Christians need to be aware that God's love and Christ's Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) urge all to do so.

The Gift of Exhortation

People must hear about the forgiveness of sins and eternal life through Christ, and someone has to tell them. Peter called it "speaking the very words of God." This is the gift of exhortation. Preaching and modeling the Christ-like life are ways to exhort the gospel before others. Spiritual leaders who lead small discipleship groups do so by both speaking and being an example. Leaders of groups also need to be aware and willing to open their homes and lives for others to hear the gospel.

⁶Edwin A. Blum, *1, 2 Peter*, in vol. 12 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 246.

⁷Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 215.

⁸*Ibid.*, 214.

McGavran and Arn note, “If the church is serious about the Great Commission, the involvement of the laity is of utmost importance. The growth of each church is uniquely dependant on its laity.”⁹ Great Commission leadership will need to go, disciple, baptize, and teach. For this to occur, those who will be identified as potentially gifted leaders must have a desire to be good stewards of God’s manifold grace. Blum writes, “One of the longstanding misconceptions in church practice is the idea that only one person is to ‘minister’ in the local church. The biblical principle is that all can and should minister in one way or another.”¹⁰

Train Leaders

The Bible teaches that people must be trained. Certainly, the best example would be from Paul’s first letter to Timothy, which is referred to by many as the first of the Pastoral Epistles. Paul wrote to a young man who appears to have been struggling with his church. The apostle Paul gave advice to Timothy then, and he gives advice to church elders today on the credentials and training required to develop effective spiritual leaders. Speaking on leadership development, Sanders quotes Samuel Brengle, a leader in the Salvation Army, who describes this process of development:

It is not worn by promotion, but by many prayers and tears. It is attained by confession of sin, and by much heart-searching and humbling before God; by self-surrender, and a courageous sacrifice of every idol, a bold uncomplaining embrace of the cross, and by eternally looking unto Jesus crucified. It is not gained by seeking things for ourselves, but like Paul, by counting those things that are gain to us as loss for Christ. This is a great price, but it must be paid by the leader whose power is recognized and felt in heaven, on earth, and in hell.¹¹

⁹Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work with God to Build a Faithful Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 107.

¹⁰Blum, *1, 2 Peter*, 246.

Paul understood the value of personal integrity and sound doctrine and a church's contribution to leadership training. Emphasizing what is needed for the task of spiritual leadership and healthy leadership development, Paul addresses six areas of importance. First, candidates will need to be prayerful people (1 Tim 2:1-7). Second, they must be men and women of integrity (2:8-15). Third, spiritual leaders need to be good servants of God's resources given them (3:1-14). Fourth, they must seek doctrinal purity and reject false doctrine (3:14-4:16). Fifth, the performance of those executing the task of teaching disciples will have to be merged with perseverance and longsuffering (5:1-6:10). Sixth, Paul's command for Timothy and the church today is that they strive toward spiritual maturity (6:11-16).

Training According to Paul

As Paul encouraged young Timothy, he mentored him from Scripture as well as from his own training and personal experience. Paul was brought up in the Jewish tradition and practiced Hebrew piety. The training of his faithful parents began at his circumcision on the eighth day (Phil 3:5). His formal training was taught at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), and his spiritual training came at the feet of Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:4-6).

The training of a Hebrew child in Paul's day began early and was centered on two significant areas. The first was personal growth and the second was spiritual. According to Josephus, Moses prescribed the learning of certain laws for the boys because it is the best knowledge and cause of prosperity. They were taught to read and

¹¹Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 19.

write, walk according to the laws, and know the deeds of their forefathers.¹² Repeatedly commending the zeal of the system by which the instruction was accomplished, Josephus wrote, “We take most pains of all with the instruction of children, and esteem the observation of the laws and the piety corresponding with them the most important affair of our whole life.”¹³

In the period of the Mishna, and possibly up to the first century after Christ, boys with fathers (not orphans) went to elementary schools for instruction. To improve upon the learning of the Law, Joshua ben Gamla mandated that teachers be appointed in Jerusalem and assigned to every province and every town.¹⁴ The habitual practice of writing and reading the law taught the children the importance of reading, especially reading on the Sabbath. Concerning the gathering on the Sabbath, Schurer writes, “For it is necessary first of all to remark, that the *main object* of these Sabbath day assemblages in the synagogue was not public worship in its stricter sense, *i.e.* not devotion, but religious instruction, and this for an Israelite was above all *instruction in the law*.”¹⁵

Certainly this kind of training would have influenced Paul’s way of thinking. He viewed the synagogue (now the church) to be a place of instruction and training for both the personal and spiritual growth of the believer. He understood this to be the biblical model from childhood up to adulthood. Now, he was instructing young Timothy about how he might train babes in the faith at Ephesus. The personal and spiritual realms

¹²Emil Schurer, *A History of Jewish People in the Time of Christ: Second Division*, vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 47.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., 49.

¹⁵Ibid., 54.

would be the focus of development for the spiritual leaders that had been identified through the discovery of their gifts. If the disciple pursues personal and spiritual growth and becomes a spiritual leader, he or she will begin training others in the spiritual disciplines and doctrinal clarity so that doctrinal error is diminished.

Personal Qualifications

The spiritual leader, to be developed, will need to have certain social and personal skills to reach Paul's status of "excellent minister of Jesus Christ." Spiritual leaders must be men and women of integrity, passionate about preserving the ministry given them, hard working, people who treat others as equals, and those who avoid worldliness. The New Testament teaches that biblical leaders must be good stewards of God's resources (1 Tim 3:1-14). Also, it encourages them to interact with both believers and nonbelievers for the purpose of communicating the gospel (4:9). For the spiritual leaders to be successful, they must also be longsuffering in order to overcome the humanism in the world today (5:1-6:10).

Writing to Timothy, the apostle Paul lists five areas of falsehood that need to be corrected and guarded against if he is to be an excellent minister (4:1-5): Timothy needs to (1) understand the root of false teaching, (2) know that some professions of faith will be empty, (3) expect apostates to create a gospel of their own, (4) know that what he means for good will be turned to evil by others, and finally, (5) insist that ministry stability must come through the Scriptures and prayer. These falsehoods are explained further in the following paragraphs.

First, Timothy must know that there will be those who will wander away from the faith and be seduced by "doctrines of demons" (v. 1). Six years before writing this

epistle, Paul addressed the elders of the church located in the same region where Timothy was laboring. He warned them that grievous wolves would come in and not spare the Ephesian flock (Acts 20:29). At the time of Timothy's ministry, this prophecy had come true. Hendrickson, acknowledging the fulfillment of Paul's prophetic warning, writes, "And now writing to Timothy from Macedonia, he is distinctly informed by the Holy Spirit that the error, *already present* in its incipient form *will grow and develop*."¹⁶

Second, Satan will use what appears to be pious and learned men to utter lies. Earle accurately describes their behavior as following the wrong spirit: "Instead of being led by the Holy Spirit, these apostates give their attention to deceiving spirits and the teaching of demons."¹⁷ Third, the fruit of heresy is as bad as the character of the false teachers when doctrinal clarity is not sought. Truth is lost, hope is diminished, and the increase of Christ is stopped. As a result, those who reject God-breathed Scripture create a gospel of their own in which God cannot be known. Commenting on the embryonic form of Gnosticism present in Timothy's flock, Lea and Griffin write, "The command was: Persevere in teaching and preaching the truths of Scripture."¹⁸ The spiritual leader needs to see the value in biblical truth and not be willing to depart from it. Secular thinking today is akin to the seeds of the Gnostic thinking in Paul and Timothy's day. Humanism disregards the Word of God and embraces human reason, raising it above the Christian faith. Hendriksen and Kistemaker write that whenever the thesis "Sin is real

¹⁶William Hendricksen and Simon Kistemaker, *Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*, The New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 146.

¹⁷Ralph Earle, *1, 2 Timothy*, in vol. 11 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 371.

¹⁸Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: B&H, 1992), 132.

and is in its essence rebellion against God” is rejected or whenever man’s ability to save himself is proclaimed—which is a denial of Christ as the only and perfect Savior—Gnostic thinking is apparent.¹⁹

Fourth, Paul taught that what God consecrates as good cannot be called evil (1 Tim 4:4-6). What God makes is good. There will be those, however, whose thankless hearts will try to re-create God’s goodness into something unacceptable. The fifth area that Paul warns Timothy against involves one’s prayer life (vv. 1-5). For Paul, a prayerless leader is powerless, but those things received through the Word and thankful prayer are consecrated and blessed. Here again, the spiritual leader needs to remain faithful to God’s Word, pray, and avoid the temptation to follow other ways of empowerment, leaving in his wake a fruitless ministry as his legacy. Sanders writes, “Prayer is the most ancient, most universal, and most intensive expression of the religious instinct. It includes the simplest speech of infant’s lips, and the sublime entreaties of older age. All reach the Majesty on high. Prayer is indeed the Christian’s vital breath and native air.”²⁰

Spiritual Qualifications

The spiritual qualifications needed for a strong ministry, according to Paul, are threefold: first, leaders will need to be people of prayer (1 Tim 2:1-7); second, they must seek doctrinal purity (4:13-16; 6:3-4; 6:20); and finally, they must strive for spiritual maturity (6:11-16).

¹⁹Hendricksen, *Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*, 147.

²⁰Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 83.

Spirituality. Lewis Sperry Chafer describes seven steps of progression from the carnal to the spiritual man.²¹ First, divine revelation is given such that “eye has not seen and ear not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Cor 2:9-10). God is revealed by the Spirit. Second, the spiritual man becomes spiritually discerning (v. 10). Third, believers receive the Spirit “so that we may know the things freely given to us by God” (v. 12). Fourth, the Spirit of God opens an understanding of God’s Word that goes beyond hearing just words of wisdom (v. 13). Fifth, the spiritual man accepts God’s word that seem foolish to the natural man (v. 14). Sixth, the spiritual man is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Finally, he that is spiritual does not hinder the work of the Spirit (1 Cor 3:1-4).

As Paul writes to the believers in Corinth, he recognizes their spirituality, but their difficulty with letting go of their natural desires did not evade his notice. What they were missing was spiritual maturity beyond the spiritual milk they were currently receiving (2 Cor 10:2-5). Their “living in the flesh” was hindering the work of the Spirit, and causing division within the church.

When writing to Timothy in Ephesus, Paul addresses the same underlying problem—division in the church. Here, he cites both the problem and the cure. The problem was doctrinal error caused by spiritual immaturity, which was caused by living in the flesh instead of the Spirit. The cure was to become spiritual mature through prayer. He instructed them to study Scripture in order to develop the right doctrine and to set a

²¹Lewis Sperry Chafer, *He That is Spiritual: A Classic Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), 21-22.

goal to achieve spiritual maturity. A. W. Tozer refers to this as “the pursuit of God”.²² In his book, *The Pursuit of God*, Tozer writes, “the man is saved, but is not hungry and thirsty after God. In fact, he is specifically taught to be satisfied and is encouraged to be content with little.”²³ Referencing scientists who have lost God through the wonders of the world, he believes that the saved have lost God in the midst of his word. Like Paul, he finds the remedy in a healthy, hard pursuit after God and receive the blessedness of nothing except the experience of apprehending Him behind the veil to find meekness and rest. It is here that Tozer says we find the true sacrament of living, total consecration to God.²⁴

Prayer. As Paul began to give Timothy the schematic of spiritual leadership and growth, he taught him that prayer is foundational for every believer, especially the spiritual leader. He also taught Timothy that one’s attitude matters. Lea and Griffin explain, “Paul’s primary emphasis was the attitude that men were to bring to prayer. They are to pray in all places, ‘lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension’” (2:8). The term “holy hands” describes hands that are morally pure.²⁵ What better example to build a leadership ministry upon than one bathed in and built upon prayer? Certainly, the spiritual leader who prays and exemplifies a holy life affects those coming out of bondage to sin and pursuing freedom.

²²A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1982), 11.

²³*Ibid.*, 13

²⁴*Ibid.*, 117.

²⁵Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 95.

Doctrine. Reading Scripture and seeking biblical instruction make a sure foundation for a spiritual leader. Mohler writes, “Thus, authentic Christian Leadership is deeply doctrinal, inescapably theological, unrelentingly biblical and by virtue of the bible’s authority, unavoidably practical.”²⁶ Paul also viewed spiritual leadership as more than a secular preoccupation. Looking back at the Old Testament prophets, priests, kings and judges, one can see that their rise or fall was dependent upon how they viewed the Scriptures. Those who were of use to God viewed his Word as a non-negotiable part of their leadership. They led with compassion and conviction just as Paul did in the New Testament. Who better to write about doctrinal purity than the apostle Paul? Paul telling Timothy that he was to give attention to the public reading of Scripture was like giving him a prescription for a healthy church. Where else would disciples come to learn about God’s faithfulness, love, and sovereignty (4:13-16)? Hendriksen and Kistemaker write, “When a person rejects the *sound* and *healthy* words, *sickness* results. This sickness reveals itself in a morbid craving for controversies and word battles.”²⁷

Paul wanted to train Timothy to emphasize the teaching, exhortation, and public reading of Scripture. Again, the place of meeting would be a place of instruction. Paul wanted people to hear the real gospel. Lea and Griffin, commenting on 1 Timothy 6:4, write, “The unhealthy teaching of the false teachers stood in contrast to the healthy

²⁶R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “Leadership and Conviction: Recovering the Vision,” *Southern Seminary Journal* 79 (Fall 2011): 32.

²⁷Hendricksen and Kistemaker, *Thessalonians, the Pastorals and Hebrews*, 196.

instruction from Jesus' teaching."²⁸ Spiritual leaders must be taught that they can expect factions, discord, and arrogance instead of genuine knowledge and ignorance (6:3-5).

In the conclusion of the epistle, Paul's desire to be with Timothy in battle was evident: "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the empty chatter of what is falsely called knowledge" (6:20). Spiritual leaders need to see that they are entrusted with the exhortation and teaching of the gospel. They must disciple others in the principle doctrines of the gospel. Spiritual leaders need to be trained just as Paul trained Timothy. Doctrinal training will prepare them to defend the gospel on their own.

Maturity. Not only do spiritual qualifications for leaders include prayer and doctrinal study, but also maturity. As Paul looked at the poor spiritual condition of the churches of his day, spiritual immaturity was often the problem. Immature churches do not bear good fruit. The conclusion of his first letter to Timothy testifies to this fact. Those professing to be knowledgeable were ignorant in the Word and rich in possessions but poor in works—a state of affairs that frustrated Timothy. The church needed to grow up. To be effective, spiritual leadership needs to be mature. Spiritual maturity stands against uncertainty and heresy. Spiritual maturity rests in the security of obeying God's Word, it seeks God in prayer, and it waits for his answer. Mature believers have integrity.

If one is to reach one's full potential as a mature spiritual leader, one needs to be trained in the personal and spiritual disciplines. Paul admonished young Timothy to "discipline himself for the purpose of godliness" (1 Tim 4:7b). Regarding this training as

²⁸Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 166.

something that would not come easy, Paul compared disciplined, physical training with spiritual training. Godly living and training, the apostle taught, is beneficial in *every* way.

It is the job of the entire church, especially the elders, to be involved in the process of developing disciples and spiritual leaders. Lawless acknowledges that “healthy churches lead their members to know God in the power of His Spirit and to know who they are in Christ. Churches built upon scriptural truth produce believers who aren’t afraid of the storm.”²⁹

Deploying a Leadership Network

Interns who went through the identification and training process to the satisfaction of the church elders began their spiritual leadership journey through the final step of deployment. This required them to be knowledgeable about their mission field and to have a clear understanding of the expectations placed upon them. The selection of the seven in Acts 6 is one example of how the apostles deployed leadership. The Christian movement had gone outside the Jewish community in Jerusalem, following God’s will that they would be witnesses beyond Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and the remotest parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). Acts 6:1-7 provides four steps used by the apostles for fulfilling God’s Great Commission and deploying a leadership network: identify the mission field (6:1), identify the qualifications of those who would lead in the identified areas (6:3), identify the expectations (3b-4), and commission those who will lead (6:6).

²⁹Chuck Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches That Are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 43.

Identify the Mission Field

Christianity had broken out of its Jewish heritage and begun to cross over geographical, racial, gender, and religious barriers in Acts 6. Polhill writes, “It is much more the story of the gospel becoming a truly universal gospel, breaking the racial, national, and religious barriers in which it was born and carrying out a genuinely worldwide witness.”³⁰ Referring to the Greek-speaking or Hellenistic Jews who were within the Jerusalem Christian community, Luke points out that these Hellenists were slighted by the Jewish sector of the Jerusalem Christians. Polhill continues, “These Greek-speaking, Diaspora Jewish Christians, who are the main characters in chaps. 6-8, seem to have been instrumental in first taking the Christian witness beyond Jerusalem.”³¹

While the Jewish Christians may have viewed the Hellenistic Jews as second-class citizens, the apostles knew that it was important that all converts were treated equally so that the gospel would be unhindered. The same principle applies to deployment as part of the development of spiritual leaders. The mission field of the church is not limited to race, or nationality—all are worthy of discipleship. Kistemaker comments on the leadership development of the early believers: “Notice that Luke identifies the believers as disciples. In the time of Jesus’ ministry, the Twelve but also the seventy were known as disciples. Now these twelve apostles and the new converts have become their disciples.”³²

³⁰John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: B&H, 1992), 176.

³¹*Ibid.*, 177.

Identify the Qualifications

When the Twelve chose the seven for administration it was important that they described the qualifications required to fulfill the new leadership roles. The Twelve required the seven to be filled with the Spirit and wisdom. We also find that the apostles were looking for people who had a good reputation (Acts 6:3).

Following the example of the choosing of the seven, leaders should assess those entering into the leadership network by administering a spiritual gifts test and by interviewing the candidates in order to identify the qualifications set forth by Peter in 1 Peter 4:10-11 and by Paul in 1 Timothy, including the gifts of hospitality and exhortation. Like the seven, spiritual leaders should lead the discipleship groups to which they are indigenous. They should be deployed to a group that has their same interests. Finally, the leaders must be people of integrity.

Identify the Expectations

Clarity of expectations creates an environment of understanding and cooperation. Before choosing the seven, the twelve disciples explained clearly what the ministry of the seven would entail and what their ministry would entail (Acts 6:3-4). There needs to be a clear understanding of what the elders of the church will do, how they will equip and support spiritual leaders, and what the spiritual leaders’

³²Simon J. Kistemaker, *Acts*, The New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 220. At this juncture, an argument might be made that Peter was addressing the elders (1 Pet 4:10-11) and that Paul was writing about the ordaining of the seven (Acts 6:1-7), and that neither have anything in common with spiritual leadership. Kistemaker points out that that Luke refrains from using the term “deacon” and stresses that the seven were chosen to minister to the poor (ibid., 222). Peter, similarly, describes the importance of the ministry of service between Christians. The point to be made here is that both were giving instructions about Christian leadership that would minister to others.

responsibilities and goals are toward the disciples in their groups. The seven were to be filled with the Spirit. Hence, they would depend on the Spirit to do something that required God's power and use wisdom where people and money were involved. The apostles would then be devoted to prayer and teaching. Henry and Richard Blackaby write, "Spiritual leadership is moving people on to God's agenda."³³ The agenda of the spiritual leaders will be to exalt God, disciple his people, and advance his kingdom by being obedient to his Word and the Great Commission.

Commission Those Who Will Lead

Writing about the commissioning of the seven, Luke points out that the Jerusalem church recognized this new dimension of the Christian church (6:2). Quoting McGavran and Arn, Macintosh writes, "If a church is serious about the Great Commission, the involvement of the laity is of utmost importance. The growth of each church is uniquely dependent on its laity."³⁴ Longenecker also comments, "The apostles made the proposal, but the church, the community of God's Spirit, made the decision. The apostles therefore laid their hands on the seven and appointed them to be responsible for the daily distribution of food."³⁵ Biblically, the last step of deployment is to involve laity and leadership to celebrate and affirm their ministry together and their participation in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

³³Henry Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville: B&H, 2001), 20.

³⁴McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 107.

³⁵Richard N. Longenecker, *Acts*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 331.

Measurable Goals

Luke concludes by listing four significant changes that occurred in Jerusalem as a result of the apostles' actions (Acts 6:7). These same changes should be observed by churches today. First, the Word of God continued to spread through the reading of the Scripture and prayers of the church leaders, who in turn taught them. Second, discipleship groups multiplied "greatly." In using the word "greatly," Luke was not speaking about growth by addition, but growth by multiplication. Third, the needs of God's people were met through the multiplication of leaders, and finally, people's lives were being transformed in the areas of faith, service, and obedience.

Luke shows us that a healthy church that is experiencing growth has conflict too. But an emotionally healthy church will see a threat and remove it. The measurable goals Luke describes are personal discipleship through the Word and prayer, growth through multiplication, servant leadership, and transformation of personal lives through obedience to Scripture and church leadership.

Conclusion

Spiritual leadership should be deployed with the intention of creating Christian community through discipleship. Acts 6:1-7 teaches that spiritual leaders should be commissioned to areas of ministry that coincide with their spiritual gifts. Interns, for example, should be assessed for the spiritual gifts of hospitality and exhortation. Accordingly, the personal qualifications of integrity and perseverance should be sought while the spiritual disciplines of prayer and doctrinal clarity are taught and improved upon. One must remember that spiritual growth is a process that is vital to spiritual

maturity. Church elders, through periodic meetings, must monitor the spiritual growth of leaders and of the discipleship groups.

At the time of deployment, the church elders, spiritual leaders, and all of the members at Mountain View Community Church knew to whom we were ministering. It was clear to everyone that leaders were in place to disciple both those within the church and those outside it. The leaders were doctrinally-sound, prayerful, spiritual guides who were exhorters of the gospel and instructors in biblical truth. They were committed to be faithful to their community without any expectations except to be obedient to God and his Word. Finally, they reproduced and commissioned new spiritual leaders who began groups of their own. With a celebration and commissioning of the spiritual leaders through prayer and public affirmation of their effective ministry at Mountain View Community Church, five discipleship groups began with the first Group-Link meeting scheduled within the following three months. It will be at this meeting that we will continue the process of encouragement, prayer, strategy, and apprentice development.

CHAPTER 3

THE DNA OF A SPIRITUAL LEADER

In chapter 2, the key components of effective spiritual leaders were studied in order to build a theological basis for how to identify, train, and deploy lay leadership to disciple others. The instruction given by Peter and Paul in Scripture underscores the personal development of spiritual leadership. For the early church to grow and for the church now, it is imperative upon believers that the church develop “effective leadership,” the significant ingredient of the Great Commission command found in Matthew 28:19a, some of which became leaders. This chapter focuses on what others have contributed to the subject of developing spiritual leadership.

Spiritual Leadership

What is a spiritual leader? Someone who wants to make a difference in the kingdom of God and the lives of his disciples. A spiritual leader is involved in the life-transformation of others. He or she is the catalyst for disciple-making; the church is in desperate need of his or her ministry. George Barna explains the importance of spiritual leadership and the development of leaders: “Too many resources are spent recruiting people for groups and too few resources in preparing people to develop within the groups.”¹ Barna believes that the church is better served when its resources are spent in

¹George Barna, *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2001), 94.

leadership development. For the church that has plateaued or is declining or is mired in a doctrinal dispute, a change toward biblical church growth is needed. For transformation to occur and for the misrepresentation of Scripture and the absence of accountability to diminish, attention needs to be paid to developing the doctrine and personal disciplines of the church's group leaders and teachers.

George Barna's definition of spiritual leadership is echoed and expanded upon in an interview I conducted with Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr., President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, on April 18, 2011. In this interview, he described four necessary leadership principles. First, he explained that leadership is born out of the providence of God, conviction, and passion.² He stated that "leadership is based on conviction and passion, it's what drives one into a human work, deeply into the area and background of something worth doing." Mohler continued, "We are communicating a spectator passivity, a culture, an entertainment value, a kind of lack of responsibility for the many, and the burden is carried by the few."

Certainly, leadership passivity is not part of the teaching of the New Testament nor does it fit the burden of Christ. Furthermore, spiritual development becomes a part of stewardship. Mohler stated, "The most important thing I can say to the Christian church is that it is failing in mobilizing lay people for leadership and ministry."

Second, he explained that leadership is developed by the influence of others. Mohler said that his father, grandfather, and men he grew up around in the church—Sunday School teachers, people he observed from a distance, pastors, and scholars—

²R. Albert Mohler Jr., interview by author, April 18, 2001, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

created in him a vision of leadership by their influence. He stated, “Every man should have a perpetual vision of greatness and that vision must have a name.”

Third, leaders must be willing to face opposition because they lead out of conviction, but also because they have a sense that there is something greater at stake. Fourth, Mohler believes that leadership must be understood as a matter of stewardship. He said, “If you look behind you and people are following, you’re leading. It then becomes a matter of stewardship of that opportunity.” The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is known for its leadership development. When asked about his success, he said that he looks for people who have the appropriate gifts and talent and he looks to see if people are following them. These people can lead because they are already leading. He never chooses someone who might be able to lead, but someone who, on some level, is already leading.

Spiritual leadership is a matter of influence, stewardship, conviction, opposition by some, and the providence of God. Spiritual leaders have to know that they cannot lead by themselves. They need a constituency, and they should be developing components that help them to begin influencing others with new ideas, good communication. They need to be motivating people with their spiritual gifts.

In his significant book *Spurgeon on Leadership*, Larry Michael writes on Spurgeon’s key insights for Christian leaders. In his book, he categorizes systematically Spurgeon’s worldview of leadership development. The components of Spurgeon’s worldview³ referred to by Michael include competence, calling, context, confidence, and character. This chapter uses these components to show what is needed for one’s ministry

to be effective because they are elements seen in many effective leaders through time, and today.

The Competence of the Candidate

For someone to be a leader, he or she must have followers. For someone to sustain leadership, one's followers must see them as competent. The ability to be a competent spiritual leader starts from within the candidate. In too many churches the usual way of recruiting leaders is out of institutional need. A person of authority makes a mental assessment and chooses somebody that could fill the role. Once identified, a respected lay-leader or the pastor is sent to convince them that they are the person for the job. Once consent is given, a vote is taken, and schoolteachers are elected to teach Sunday School, owners of insurance companies become church treasurers, and the township supervisor is ordained as a deacon.

Competent spiritual leaders know that they must first prove themselves to be trustworthy. Disciples under their care need to know that they can have faith in their leadership. These leaders are looked upon to provide boundaries and balance between commitment and compliance. Pat MacMillan writes, "*Leadership* is the act of influencing others toward the accomplishment of a specific task or purpose."⁴ Competent leadership will gravitate toward a more informal organization rather than an authoritative structure. MacMillan writes that an effective spiritual leader must be competent in five areas. First, one must appreciate the collective IQ of the team or discipleship groups. Second, one

³Larry J. Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership: Key Insights from the Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 11.

⁴Pat MacMillan, *The Performance Factor: Unlocking Secrets of Teamwork* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 97.

must believe in the power of diversity. Third, one must view one's ministry as a role, not a position. Fourth, the leader must see leadership as something to be shared. Finally, one must manage the delicate balance between team and tasks.⁵

The Call of the Candidate

The second qualification mentioned by Spurgeon is the call upon the candidate to fulfill the ministry of leadership. He taught that before one is to be considered called, one must exhibit evidence of conversion.⁶ Furthermore, he believed that those who are called must exhibit a strong sense of urgency to reach those who are not yet redeemed.

The conversion of a person, according to Spurgeon, is paramount:

I would rather be the means of saving a soul from death than be the greatest orator on earth. I would rather bring the poorest woman in the world to the feet of Jesus than I would be made Archbishop of Canterbury. I would sooner pluck one single brand from the burning than explain all mysteries. To win a soul from going down into the pit, is a more glorious achievement than to be crowded in the arena of theological controversy as Dr. Sufficientissimus.⁷

Spiritual leaders need to be genuinely concerned about their conversions, and they must be willing to share the story of it to others. This is significant to the success of their leadership and the success they will have in teaching others to give a testimony of their conversion. They need to be courageous, not fearful. William Hoyt writes, "There is a common root for the fear of failure, fear of growth, and an unwillingness to change. The common root is the absence of passion for lost people."⁸

⁵Ibid., 98-99.

⁶Ibid., 61.

⁷C. H. Spurgeon, *C.H. Spurgeon's Autobiography: The Early Years (1834-1859)* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 1:38.

⁸William R. Hoyt, *Effectiveness by the Numbers: Counting What Really Counts in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007), 35.

Convinced that the call to leadership was directly connected to one's own spiritual commitment and obedience to Christ, Spurgeon writes, "True and genuine piety is necessary as the first indispensable requisite; whatever call a man may pretend to have, if he is not called to holiness, he certainly has not been called to the ministry."⁹ Spurgeon, while lecturing his students at The Pastors College, gave a definitive explanation of the call to ministry. He taught that one who is called would first have an overwhelming passion for the work of the ministry. Second, one cannot consider himself a minister until it is proven that he can exhort people using Scripture. Third, evidence of conversion must be seen in one's work. Finally, one must provide evidence of the gifts of knowledge and teaching.¹⁰ Spurgeon warned listeners not to become leaders as a last resort: "I have met ten, twenty, a hundred brethren who have pleaded that they were sure, quite sure, that they were called to the ministry-they were quite certain of it because they had failed at everything else."¹¹

When God issues the all-consuming call on those who will lead his people, it usually is not long until what has happened on the inside shows on the outside. Spurgeon believed that spiritual leaders needed to be Spirit-led, prayer-empowered, full of faith, resolved to grow, and servants. To disciple those who will disciple others, clear guidelines need to be established as to the qualifications needed for those responding to the call to ministry and for the purpose of this project of disciple-making. One never

⁹Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership*, 67. While Spurgeon focuses on the ministry of a pastor, it is equally important to apply his principles to the ministry of spiritual leadership for discipleship groups.

¹⁰Ibid., 68.

¹¹Ibid.

knows from only an external observation who is equipped and called to lead. It is always through an internal assessment that the spiritual leader is defined.

Jesus picked the best and worst of humankind to be his disciples and spiritual leaders. For him, each person in his inner circle had a significant ministry that they would later fulfill. The Twelve in the book of Acts, moving from the process of disciples to leaders, led new converts to become disciples who would later become the Early Church Fathers, who in turn discipled others. Bill Hull declares, “Only a few are called to be in leadership in the corporate body, but every disciple should take part in the disciple making process at some level.”¹² How does one bring clarity to the call of God upon ministers of the gospel? Spurgeon answers this question by listing five evidences seen within a person’s life that confirm the gift of the ministry upon one’s life.

Called Leaders Must be Spirit-Led

The ability to be an effective spiritual leader lies within the minister’s ability to be led by the Spirit. His sensitivity to God’s guidance creates a conviction of sin, a desire for holiness, and brokenness over the lost. Spurgeon writes, “I do not believe that God will set His seal to a ministry that does not aim at being strictly in accordance with the mind of the Spirit.”¹³ Those who seek the filling of the Spirit are guided by the Word, which enables them to develop fresh insights into God’s mission.

Referring to the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism, Coleman writes, “It is only through the Spirit of God who enables one to carry on the redemptive mission of

¹²Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 26.

¹³Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership*, 72.

evangelism.”¹⁴ Spirit-filled leaders become Spirit-led missionaries who seek to evangelize the lost and equip disciples. J. Oswald Sanders explains,

To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit. The Christian leader’s mind, emotions, will, and physical strength all become available for the Spirit to guide and use. Under the Spirit’s control, natural gifts of leadership are lifted to their highest power, sanctified for holy purpose. Through the work of the now ungrieved and unhindered Spirit, all the fruits of the Spirit start to grow in the leader’s life. His witness is more winsome, service more steady, and testimony more powerful.¹⁵

The ability to be Spirit-led instills a confidence within the spiritual leader, creating a secure foundation for his or her ministry of evangelism and discipleship development.

Called Leaders Must Be Prayer-Empowered

The second quality to be seen in someone called to the ministry of spiritual leadership entails that of prayer. Spurgeon believed greatly in the effectiveness of prayer. Michael writes, “Spurgeon was said never to have prayed more than five minutes at a time, but he never went more than five minutes without praying.”¹⁶ A spiritual leader must have a deep prayer life in order to obtain the blessing of favorable results. Spurgeon writes,

All hell is vanquished when a believer bows his knee in importunate supplication. Beloved brethren, let us pray. We cannot all argue, but we can pray; we can all be pleaders; we cannot all be mighty in rhetoric, but we can all be prevalent in prayer. I would sooner see you eloquent with God than with men. Prayer links us with the Eternal, the Omnipotent, the Infinite, and hence it is our chief resort Be sure that you are with God, and that you may be sure that God is with you.¹⁷

¹⁴Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1993), 57.

¹⁵J. Oswald Saunders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody 2007), 80.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁷C. H. Spurgeon, *An All-Round Ministry* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim, 1973), 314.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Matt 6:5-8). This means that prayer to the heavenly Father is by no means a natural activity. In other words, Jesus taught his disciples that prayer to God, as opposed to prayers offered to pagans, was effective because they had a relationship with him. He was teaching them that the only way for the Father to hear their prayers was through their relationship to him. Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes, “It matters little what form of prayer we adopt or how many words we use, what matters is the faith which lays hold on God and touches the heart of the Father who knew us long before we came to him.”¹⁸ Coming from the mainspring of faith, prayer displays the hidden character of the believer and spiritual leader. Bonhoeffer continues, “When men and women pray, they have ceased to know themselves, and know only God who they call upon.”¹⁹ Spiritual leaders must be prayer-empowered.

Called Leaders Must be Full of Faith

The third quality of the call to be found in the spiritual leader is that he or she must be full of faith. Timothy George states that “the word *faith* is used to describe not *what* we believe but rather the means *by which* we believe the gospel message.”²⁰ For spiritual leaders, their faith in God should be evident. Spurgeon writes, “To believe God’s Word is the most reasonable thing we can do; it is the plainest course that we can take, and the safest policy that we can adopt, even as to taking care of ourselves Let us stake all upon the faithfulness of God, and we shall never be ashamed or confounded,

¹⁸Dietrich Boenhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 163.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Timothy George, “What Faith Isn’t: Six Mistakes That Keep People From Christ,” in *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook: Expert Advice on Reaching Others for Christ*, ed. Scott Dawson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 25.

world without end.”²¹ Leaders should know that they cannot rely on their abilities; instead, they must trust God.

Coleman writes that this kind of faith is one that stimulates disciples to grow in commitment and discipline.²² Faith is what helps the disciple to see that there is no compromise in the cross. It carries the spiritual leader through the phases of counting the costs, denying one’s self, and completely changing one’s mind. Faith helps leaders to stay on course. Furthermore, faith creates the groundwork for affirming the authority of Scripture. Prayer comes from faith as well as belief in the value of fasting and the setting of goals.

Prayer, which is produced by faith, creates boldness in evangelism. Additionally, faith in a called minister will be declared and defended. It will be declared by the sharing of one’s testimony in discipleship groups. Similarly, one’s passions will bring out the faith within them as he or she expounds the infallible Word of God, trusting the Holy Spirit to convict. Faith is seen as well, when the spiritual leader does not have the answer to all of the questions unbelievers ask. There will be times when an answer is not readily available or known. This is when we must say that we trust in faith for God to have the answer we do not.

Finally, faith is also declared when goals are set. Wagner believes that goals are a statement of faith.²³ The spiritual leader will have to have the faith to set relevant, measurable, significant, and personal goals. Faith is required for eternal life. Further, the

²¹Spurgeon, *All-Round Ministry*, 186.

²²Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Spire, 1998), 83.

²³C. Peter Wagner, *The Everychurch Guide to Growth: How Any Plateaued Church Can Grow* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1998), 59.

object of faith is Jesus Christ and without faith it is impossible to please him (Heb 11:6). Faith can be proven by the way one lives. It is what allows spiritual leaders to grow and to teach others how to have a relationship with Christ.

Called Leaders Must Resolve to Grow

Fourth, called spiritual leaders need to have a desire to grow. “Most believers say their faith matters, but few invest much energy in the pursuit of spiritual growth,” writes Barna.²⁴ Stagnated spiritual growth leads to a declined ministry. Commenting on the foolishness of a spiritual leader who ministers out of his reserves, Spurgeon once wrote, “The most needful and profitable labor is that which we spend upon our own mental and spiritual improvement.”²⁵ A leader is a disciple for life. Spiritual leaders called by God have an attitude to grow spiritually, not just so that they can know more about him, but so that they can help others know him.

What develops from a resolve to grow is character. Neil Cole writes, “Unlike a false sense of righteousness that comes from the outside in, true character in God’s kingdom grows from the inside out. In essence, character is unearthing what Christ has already planted within you.”²⁶ The inner growth of ministry leadership is a lifelong process. Commenting on the Great Commission, Gary McIntosh points out that the church is supposed to go, baptize, and teach. Disciples, he writes, are learners.²⁷ Spiritual

²⁴Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 33.

²⁵Spurgeon, *All-Round Ministry*, 307.

²⁶Neil Cole, *Organic Leadership: Leading Naturally Right Where You Are* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 140.

²⁷Gary L. McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth: How You Can Work with God to Build a Healthy Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 65.

leaders are not only called to exhort and evangelize the lost, they are also called to grow and as they grow, the church grows.

Called Leaders Must Be Servant Leaders

The last evidence to be seen in called spiritual leaders is that they must exhibit growth by having a lifestyle that is servant-driven. The spiritual leader needs to have a sacrificial attitude. Spurgeon teaches that servant-driven sacrifice goes beyond financial and material realities. He felt that a servant lifestyle included dying to one's self daily and living for Christ. He writes, "We must be prepared to give up everything else: our name, our repute, our friendships, our connections, must all go without reserve if Christ needs them."²⁸ Spiritual growth, according to Spurgeon, means that spiritual leaders should not prefer comfort, but Christ-likeness. That which is surrendered is an offering to God; it is where the fruit of discipleship takes place.

For spiritual leaders to be successful, they need to redefine ministry success. They need to de-emphasize church attendance and stress authenticity and depth in discipleship. Their lifestyle should influence others to be committed to worship every day of the week. They should grow in such a way that they instruct others on how to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. They ought to be sharing their faith regularly, in a way that is natural and built on relationships. Barna believes that servant leadership can be achieved by observing three commitments: relying on God, changing in ways that

²⁸Spurgeon, *All-Round Ministry*, 306-07.

may be uncomfortable to them, and committing to using their God-given abilities in harmony with others for the good of the church.²⁹

The Context of the Candidate

Recalling Michael's six domains as seen in Spurgeon's ministry worldview, the third domain is the context of the candidate.³⁰ While Spurgeon was successful in his day and time, the spiritual leader must look at his or her own context. One's culture and the technological advances of the last century shape the vision of today's leader. Vision is developed through exposure to the spiritual and physical needs of individuals in this new environment. Spurgeon's success was directly related to his understanding of the Word of God and its application to his life and ministry. Current contextual analysis discloses that today's spiritual leader must be a visionary. It is vision that gives birth to faith, and it is vision that fuels our faith.

Visionary Focus

Visionaries can see through the contextual clutter that exists within a culture. Thom Rainer and Charles Lawless write that spiritual leaders need to have a vision of their purpose and have a certain vision for carrying out that purpose.³¹ Visionary leaders not only focus on *what* their discipleship members are doing, they focus on *how* they are doing it. This focus on the *how* produces the vision of the spiritual leader and creates what Rainer and Lawless call "vision pathways"—visionary paths that, despite obstacles,

²⁹Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 13.

³⁰Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership*, 51.

³¹Thom S. Rainer and Chuck Lawless, *Eating the Elephant: Leading the Established Church to Growth*, rev. ed. (Crestwood, KY: Pinnacle, 2003), 13.

produce stability, missionary focus, and growth.³² Hoyt uses a travel metaphor to illustrate this type of vision: “Your vision identifies the city where you are headed Goals or action steps are like the succession of highways and roads you take to arrive at your destination or your objective.”³³ Once developed, the spiritual leader needs to see potential disciples with the vision described by Wayne Cordeiro, who writes that “vision is the ability to see what others may not. It is the capacity to see potential—what things could be. Vision is the ability to see what God sees and the God-given motivation to bring to pass what you see.”³⁴

The Confidence of the Candidate

Effective discipleship group leaders are people of genuine faith in God and his assurance of provision, which provide the motivation for ministry. Spiritual leaders who have failed are those who had a confidence apart from God. Spurgeon had a passion to please God. He was confident that it was Christ who builds the church and that the true church belongs to him:

Dependence upon God is the flowing fountain of success. That true saint of God George Muller, has always struck me, when I have heard him speak, as being a simple child-like being in his dependence upon God; but alas! Most of us are far too great for God to use us; we can preach as well as anybody, make a sermon with anybody—and so we fail. Take care, brethren, for if we think we can do anything of ourselves, all we shall get from God will be the opportunity to try.³⁵

³²Ibid.,15.

³³William R. Hoyt, *Effectiveness by the Numbers: Counting What Counts in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007), 94.

³⁴Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team: The Miracle of Teamwork and How it Transforms Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2004), 125.

³⁵Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership*, 38.

The spiritual leader's effectiveness will have more to do with disposition than position. The needs of the disciples being developed will demand that he be a dispenser of hope who is passionate and inspiring. He will be called upon to be a morale builder and one who is active in evangelistic endeavors. For him to achieve such a demanding endeavor, he must be confident that it is God who is directing his path. Balancing patience with humility develops confidence in a leader. By recognizing his weaknesses and strengths, the leader's patience intersects with humility, creating trust and confidence. And this kind of confidence brings glory to God.

The Character of the Candidate

The final quality of the spiritual leader is character. Spurgeon exhibited high moral integrity in both his personal and public life. He was known as a man of integrity and principle among his peers. Interns entering the spiritual leadership network will be entering a ministry that requires them to exhibit integrity over their lifetimes. Michael writes, "To judge one's character, especially as it relates to leadership, a full accurate assessment could take a lifetime."³⁶ Spiritual leaders will face a vulnerability caused by secular individuals who wish to discredit them. Facing temptation and accusation, they will need to be held accountable within the leadership network's Administrative Team. The members of this team also function as the elders of the church, elected by the congregation. In order to protect the integrity of the network and discipleship groups, the character of all interns needs to be investigated and held accountable by the Administrative Team of the church. Spiritual leaders, under the accountability of godly

³⁶Ibid., 77.

church administrators, will benefit from the consistent moral conduct of their private and public lives. Spurgeon warns,

I do not think that any of us would dare to say to our people, “follow me in all things.” And yet their tendency is to follow the pastor. In this tendency lies influence for the holy, and a dreadful power for mischief for the careless. Many beginners take readily to an earthly model; they find it more natural to copy a godly man, whom they have seen, than to imitate the Lord Jesus whom they have not seen. I do not commend them in this; but so it is, and we must be tender toward this weakness so that it may not become the occasion of evil.³⁷

Leadership is the influence of one person over another, and one’s success as a leader is measured over time

Contemporary Methods of Developing Leadership

Modern concepts of spiritual leadership development are not in conflict with Spurgeon’s six components of effective spiritual leadership. But, in order to reach the highest potential of effective ministry within discipleship groups and develop the strengths of leaders, six additional principles will be explored. These principles include a team approach, servant leader development, the development of disciples, developing what counts, developing the leadership community, and reproduction. I conclude this chapter by outlining the major reasons why spiritual leadership and discipleship groups break down and how can avoid this break down.

A Team Approach

Emphasizing the importance of reaching for God’s best, Cordeiro stresses the changing of the traditional church mindset and transitioning disciplined converts to a team approach. He writes, “Few things are more beautiful to God than seeing His people serve

³⁷Spurgeon, *An All-Round Ministry*, 245.

and work together in a united rhythm. It's like a symphony to His ears."³⁸ Spiritual leaders must learn the principles of teamwork. Each one in the church has God-given gifts that are unique. In other words, the body of Christ is not one member doing one hundred things, but one hundred members doing the thing they do best.

It is up to the spiritual leader to discover the gifts within his discipleship team and find how those gifts fit into the ministry of the church. Cordeiro teaches that spiritual leaders will receive the blessing of accelerated growth as well as the blessing of having the group members come to know joy and healthy accountability.³⁹ Spiritual leadership development, moreover, is not something that happens suddenly. It is something that happens over time with no specific timetable; hence, the word "development" is used. Assessments of the intern create opportunities for weaknesses and gifts to be discovered. Character will be developed, accountability instilled, dreams discovered, and visions set into place.

Cordeiro's team approach begins with starting at the right place. He writes that spiritual leaders begin with lateral serving, or serving each other while giving equal importance to accomplishing a task.⁴⁰

Finally, spiritual leaders will develop the skill of guiding converts into discipleship groups so that a bond of trust, confidence, and reproduction occurs. Spiritual leaders can achieve all of the above by serving each other and by developing the gifts they possess.

³⁸Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team*, 18.

³⁹Ibid., 76.

⁴⁰Ibid. 120.

Leadership Development Requires Strategy

Robert Dale calls leadership development a “theology of leadership.”⁴¹ Dale believes that the strategy of leadership development is built upon the four themes of focus, flexibility, future-orientation, and feasibility. Jesus was the master strategist. To restore the kingdom of God, Jesus called a distinctive group of people to himself and created a new community. He trained men and he chose certain places and times for action. His strategy involved sending others such as the seventy and the Samaritan woman as witnesses. Jesus lived what he taught. He taught love and modeled it all the way to the cross. Finally, the strategy of Jesus involved taking risks. He knew that to receive great results great faith and great risks were involved.

Focus. Jesus, the master strategist was a focused leader. Telling his listeners to seek first the kingdom of God teaches one the importance of removing distractions (Matt 6:23). Focused leadership requires discipline.⁴² As Jesus taught his listeners the truths of God and his kingdom, he was intentionally focusing on personal relationships, which are at the heart of the small group process. Diana McLain Smith, chief executive partner of New Profit Incorporated, specializes in professional and organizational relationship development. She is the author of the book, *The Elephant in the Room: How Relationships Make or Break the Success of Leaders and Organizations*. Quoting Suzanne Clothier, she writes, “The relationship—the pivotal point on which all else

⁴¹Robert D. Dale, *Leading Edge: Leadership Strategies from the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 19.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 23-35.

turns—is built (or undermined) in every interaction.”⁴³ Smith writes that successful relationship development navigates healthy change in relationships by avoiding three common mistakes: setting unrealistic expectations, miscalculating the costs, benefits and feasibility, and failing to anticipate barriers.⁴⁴ Spiritual leaders who interact and relate to both believers and non-believers in a small group setting need to focus on healthy relationships. Spiritual leaders must use a strategy that focuses on healthy relationships and relationship development.

Flexibility. The world is continually changing because culture changes. Strategic planning requires flexibility. With his statements like “But I say to you” (Matt 5:21-48) Jesus turned the traditional way of doing things upside down (cf. Acts 17:6). Not even his followers grasped the shifts in his strategy. Spiritual leaders need to be ready to shift their strategy to adapt to the culture of their communities and follow the Spirit.⁴⁵

Future-Oriented. Jesus did not waste time maintaining the Temple institutions, but rather he had a strategy that was oriented toward the future. Spiritual leaders are trained to prepare for the future, to achieve what God has prepared for them. Christ’s strategy was preparing for a collision course at the cross and then the coming of

⁴³Diana McLain Smith, *The Elephant in the Room: How Relationships Make or Break the Success of Leaders and Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 2.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 141.

⁴⁵Dale, *Leading Edge*, 51-66.

the kingdom. Spiritual leaders strategize for the harvest regardless of the cost. Dale writes, “The point is stark, there is no integrity in cheap ministry.”⁴⁶

Feasibility. Spiritual leaders will be asked to restore wholeness in the midst of brokenness. The task then becomes to strategize the feasibility, and identify the mode to execute it. Is it a hurdle, or a permanent state of affairs? Is this a survival or a faith initiative. Do we need to encourage each other until God triumphs? Dale, referring to Revelation 1:1 writes, “..take heart by remembering that Christ, who spans time completely as the One who was, who is, and is to come, is ultimately in charge of history.”⁴⁷ Spiritual leaders need to have conviction to follow through the slow start of their groups, and the faith to see it through.

Developing Servant Leaders

Barna’s perspective of developing servant leaders begins with an appropriate question that identifies conversion and the call of ministry on one’s life rather quickly. The question is “Do you want to make a difference?”⁴⁸ He believes that while the church has the best intentions when it invites others to worship, to crusades, and to Sunday School, there is a better way. Barna insists that one’s passion for God must first be ignited and then nurtured.

Spiritual leaders and servant leaders are similar in effectiveness, purpose, and commitment. They each want to glorify God by relying on him, being committed to spiritual growth, and recognizing that they do not possess a position in the church as

⁴⁶Ibid., 91.

⁴⁷Ibid., 109.

much as a responsibility to humbly submit their abilities for the good of the whole church. Barna writes, “All God wants to do is transform our hearts from focusing on self and the world to focusing exclusively on Him.”⁴⁹ Spiritual leaders that are sincere invest their energy in the pursuit of spiritual growth. Barna points out that 6 out of every 10 believers have no sense of what they want to achieve or become.⁵⁰ Spiritual leaders who have the gift of hospitality or service will be developed to teach those in their discipleship groups the importance of personal growth, humility, and serving God. Spiritual leaders teach what they have developed and found to be true in the simplest form to their disciples. They teach that faith requires depth and passion. They are also committed to teach that growing in faith is a process that is to be shared with others and that it occurs over a lifetime.

The Development of Disciples for Christ

Can the church be unhealthy if it is it making disciples? Hoyt affirms that it is possible. Outlining a better way to recruit potential leaders, he promotes a system that matches skills, passions, spiritual gifts, and a sense of call to a ministry role.⁵¹

Administrative team leaders need to identify these gifts and skills and spend time with the candidate in order to discover what they are passionate about. By identifying discovered passions, the Administrative Team becomes a facilitator in bringing alive what God has called the potential leaders to do.

⁴⁸Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 1.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 36.

⁵¹Hoyt, *Effectiveness by the Numbers*, 65.

The candidate progresses to the development stage of “intern” where the Administrative Team will mentor, coach, and hold accountable those who will later become spiritual leaders. This is a process that can be repeated by identifying candidates within the spiritual leaders’ discipleship groups that can become apprentices. These candidates, once identified, will assist the spiritual leader for eighteen months, and will thereafter attend the leadership network meetings. Upon completion of the eighteen-month apprentice period, they will be commissioned, and sent to execute the launch of their own small group. This model creates an organic model of leadership development, which means that leadership is raised from within the church. This model is also measurable and requires monitoring how many leaders are in what particular stage of development.

Mountain View Community Church visualizes a spiritual leader that can also be described as a mature disciple. This individual demonstrates a clear call to minister to discipleship groups. Integrity is a quality easily seen in his character as well as a passion to draw others to Christ. He participates in church worship as well as develops the gifts and talents of others so that they might become servant leaders in their churches, communities, and in the world. Finally, the servant leader is disciplined in the doctrine of Scripture. His passion is what motivates others and stimulates healthy church growth.

Developing What Counts

Church growth must be biblical in order to be healthy. A growing church is a life-giving church. McIntosh writes that “churches grow as they cooperate with God in

bringing life to a lost world.”⁵² The spiritual leader who is connected to a life-giving church upholds God’s Word. He knows what he believes and is ready to testify to that fact.

McIntosh describes nine “right” priorities of a life-giving church that create biblical church growth and coincide with the developmental stages for spiritual leadership interns. These priorities will serve as the means of measurement toward the spiritual leader’s progress. He will grow in God’s word (right premise), glorify God through servant leadership (right priority), be disciplined and then disciple others (right process), seek the leading of the Holy Spirit (right power), be a shepherd to the discipleship group (right pastor), be an effective leader (right people), minister within his context and culture (right philosophy), focus on the lost (right plan), and, finally, keep the structure of the development and discipleship groups simple (right procedure).⁵³ These areas of measurable results will create a means of assessment to develop what really counts in biblical church growth—results.

Developing the Leadership Community

Developing a leadership community begins with developing a disciple who will, upon maturity, disciple others, creating a community of disciples. Included in discipleship is baptizing and teaching. This means that a public profession of faith at one’s baptism is made and that the spiritual discipline of reading and living God’s Word is followed. Hull describes three steps of disciple-making—deliver them, develop them,

⁵²McIntosh, *Biblical Church Growth*, 34. Spiritual leaders who follow the leadership development procedure will not only stimulate church growth, they will become confident as well.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 5.

and deploy them.⁵⁴ He writes, “Through the power of Christ we are delivered from sin; by the discipling process we are developed into mature believers; and finally God deploys us into the harvest field to reach others. Some will have leadership gifts, and God will call them to spearhead the disciple-making activity.”⁵⁵

Andy Stanley and Bill Willits write that when building a discipleship community or culture, “the small group program is not an appendage; it is not a program we tacked onto an existing structure. The small group is part of our lifestyle.”⁵⁶ What is key to Stanley and Willits’s position is that a spiritual leader must be a facilitator in creating meaningful relationships. Also, personal and measurable growth becomes a reality by following five criteria for those who aspire to become spiritual leaders. First, leaders must be connected to or be members of their church. Second, they must have a solid reputation and be known by others as people of integrity. Third, they must ascribe to the disciple-making process, apprenticeship, and reproduction values. Fourth, they need to have a good rapport with others within the leadership network, church, and community. Fifth, they must be seen as competent to serve.⁵⁷ These criteria instill clarity into the requirements for apprentices, interns, and spiritual leaders.

Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson confirm the need to communicate clear objectives as well. In their book, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Small Group Ministry*, they write, “Adults begin building small groups without deciding what they want small group

⁵⁴Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church*, 26.

⁵⁵Ibid., 26.

⁵⁶Andy Stanley and Bill Willits, *Creating Community: 5 Keys to Building a Small Group Culture* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004), 13.

⁵⁷Ibid., 145.

ministry to be ‘when it grows up.’”⁵⁸ Clear ministry objectives must be contextually relevant. Church administrations, Administrative Teams, or whatever the functioning decision-making branch of the church is, must visualize what the finished, mature disciple looks like and what is the culturally-relevant process to achieve the goal of growth through disciple-making. Donahue and Robinson continue, “Have a point person who will take responsibility for a group, agree to create an environment of care, keep members envisioned regarding church mission and strategy, and prompt people to take the next steps of spiritual growth.”⁵⁹ The point person referred to by Donahue will be the deployed spiritual leader developed by the church’s Administrative Team.

The Importance of Leadership Reproduction

Leadership reproduction is a vital ingredient that contributes to the stability and growth of discipleship groups within the church. Sanders writes, “The ultimate test of a person’s leadership is the health of the organization when the organizer is gone.”⁶⁰ Leaders need to reproduce themselves to ensure the health of the disciples and the discipleship groups within the church. When leadership changes, it gives God an opportunity to manifest the gifts he has given others, ensuring the future growth and stability of the church. Sanders, referring to the ideals of John Mott, writes that “leaders must multiply themselves by growing younger leaders, giving them full play and

⁵⁸Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Small Group Ministry: A Troubleshooting Guide for Church Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 18.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 38.

⁶⁰Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 143.

adequate outlet for opportunity and initiative, and power of final decision.”⁶¹ The reason that reproduction is important is that in all of God’s people who are given the gift of leadership, a vision develops that they have a passion to fulfill.

The Final Piece of the Project

The conclusion of this chapter will center on a key element that often goes overlooked by church Administrative Teams and leadership groups. Without this element, the best made plans will fail. Spiritual leaders, church leaders, and those within the leadership development process need to understand the critical discipline of “execution.” Coleman writes that “the ultimate goal of Jesus for His disciples was that *His life be reproduced in them and through them into the lives of others.*”⁶² This is where leadership development and discipleship group implementation cease to grow, let alone reproduce. If churches are to reproduce, they must execute leadership development for the purpose of increasing discipleship and evangelism.

What does it take for those who are reached to reach others? Strategy is important; so is prayer, good intentions, as well as administrative vision and support. But if there is not one person who will be responsible for the execution of leadership development, all attempts become frail. The pastor is responsible for developing the spiritual leadership for discipleship groups. Larry Bossidy, former Chairman and CEO of Honeywell International, and Ram Charan co-authored the book, *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*. In it, they list seven essential behaviors that the pastor must have and what should be instilled in leadership interns who will be developing

⁶¹Ibid., 149.

others within the discipleship groups who wish to apprentice for leadership.⁶³ First, the leader must know his people. This first step is important as the new spiritual leader begins something new, including beginning the recruitment for their discipleship group. Personal involvement and understanding are needed to reaffirm that the pastor is not going to accept a failed attempt. The first step of execution is that the initiative needs to be announced along with the explanation of the benefits. Church administrators meet with those who will be implementing and making clear what the spiritual leaders will execute.

Second, administrators must insist on realism. The pastor must discuss with his leadership team what they are going to do as well as how they are going to do it. Third, church administrators and those in charge of the spiritual leadership networks must set clear goals. Through this process, clear goals and priorities are set that are understood by everyone. Fourth, the pastor must make sure that others follow through. The pastor must also execute the inaugural phases of spiritual leadership development with the intent to follow through. Failure to follow through is the major cause of poor execution. Fifth, the “doers” must be rewarded. Leadership must be rewarded accordingly with no recognition of mediocrity or a poor performance. To create a culture of performance, it must be understood that rewards are based on performance. Sixth, pastors must facilitate the expanding of the capabilities of others. By watching over others, an effective leader who observes others in action can provide useful feedback. By asking questions that point out

⁶²Coleman, *The Master Plan*, 161, emphasis mine.

⁶³Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan, *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* (New York: Crown Business, 2002), 57.

potential problems, answers can be sought and problems fixed. Finally, the leader must know himself and have emotional fortitude. This characteristic allows the leader to hear conflicting opinions without feeling threatened and to confront those who perform poorly.

The Potential for Other Uses

As stated in chapter 1, the fourth goal included the desire that this project become a prescriptive model that could be implemented cross-culturally to help missionaries, house churches, church planters, lay ministers, and church revitalization leaders. The principles are theologically-grounded, and provides the tools necessary for healthy, biblical leadership development. It begins with a desire to fulfill the Great Commission by developing a system that finds, trains, and deploys indigenous believers within the church according to their spiritual gifts. It measures and improves a believer's receptivity to be taught and held accountable in matters both personal and spiritual. The potential for the usefulness of this project are several as leadership development for small-groups can take advantage of several opportunities. Listed below are four such possibilities.

Missional

The world is changing every day. American culture has become even more ethnically diverse and efforts to reach the different nations as directed in the Great Commission have become more important than ever. For the church to develop leadership in this cultural environment it must have a missional mindset. Again, the project should prove beneficial as one of its strengths is that it develops indigenous

believers and creates an environment of personal spiritual integrity while creating a structure of accountability and reproduction.

House Churches

Describing leadership needs within the house church movement, J.D. Payne writes, “Though some within house churches today have wrongly discarded biblical leadership for an erroneous understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer, the fact of the matter is that leadership is both biblical and extremely important in churches.”⁶⁴ Payne has discovered through his research that house churches are not raising up leaders. He writes, “It is fairly common knowledge that some house churches are so opposed to Western cultural definitions of pastor/elders and deacons that they refuse to have anything to do with such leaders.”⁶⁵ Remembering that God is the one who builds his church, many forget that it is a blessing to be part of the process.

Sociologists assert that the family unit and the concept of home is transcultural and found in every society.⁶⁶ Chaney supports biblical church growth by focusing church planting and leadership development within it.⁶⁷ The concept of the house church originates in Scripture as the result of explosive growth of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 2:46-47). The first-century believers were going from house to house, breaking bread with gladness and joy. By taking advantage of opportunities within the family unit,

⁶⁴Payne, J. D., *Missional House Churches: Reaching Our Communities With the Gospel* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2007), 86.

⁶⁵Ibid., 91.

⁶⁶Charles L. Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1991), 37.

⁶⁷Ibid.

biblical leadership development is not only valuable, but necessary for core group development, family discipleship, and natural growth centers or new church starts.

Church Plants

Unlike many churches in decline, growing church plants have several tools that contribute to the growth they enjoy. One tool is the presence of clear ministry objectives, the other is point leadership. Clear objectives give direction; the point person is one who can determine where the small group leaders go. For new churches to continue to exist and grow, they must have a strategy for leadership development, a coaching structure, and an open mind-set.

By using the project's principles for leadership development for small groups, church planters and members of their core group have a helpful tool to discover, develop, and deploy new leaders. They can also develop evangelism strategies and maintain accountability among the fellowship.

Lay Ministry

Aubrey Malphurs writes that 90 percent of churches in America are lay-led.⁶⁸ Malphurs has noticed in his counseling and training ministry a growing interest in a new approach to board governance.⁶⁹ This leaves the weight of leadership development upon the church's leadership, especially its pastor. This is where the project could once again be useful, namely, by being a part of the board process between pastor, board members, and indigenous members who have yet to be discovered, trained, and deployed.

⁶⁸Aubrey Malphurs, *Leading Leaders: Empowering Church Boards for Ministry Excellence* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 11.

⁶⁹Ibid., 13.

For lay ministry to produce biblical leadership, the lay-leaders need to understand that discipleship is a process, not an event. Ken Hemphill describes the “Acts Model” found in Acts 2:41-47. Hemphill lists six factors that provide balance in lay ministry.⁷⁰ First, biblical discipleship requires attachment to the body of Christ. Second, regular devotion in the word of God needs to be present for strong doctrinal teaching. Third, healthy believers are produced in the context of healthy relationships. Fourth, worship is an essential component of discipleship. Fifth, personal integrity creates trust and affirms character which in turn, provides favor in the community. Sixth, lay ministers must sow the seed of the gospel through their behavior and witness. The factors are synonymous with the principles discussed in this project.

Church Revitalization

If one listens to members of a church in decline, and they will soon lament about the days gone by when the church was full. If one begins asking questions, it will often become evident that the church went into decline when the church’s leadership stopped reproducing leaders. Leadership is the key to revitalizing churches that are plateauing or are in decline. Stetzer writes, “Leaders matter for church revitalization.”⁷¹

The usefulness of this leadership development for small groups project is that it supports the five principles of church revitalization as outlined by Stetzer. He writes that biblical leadership that is proactive toward change shares ministry responsibilities. By

⁷⁰Ken Hemphill, *The Antioch Effect: 8 Characteristics of Highly Effective Churches* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 185.

⁷¹Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2007), 35.

challenging the excuses of the congregations, the church once again begins to move. It prays for each other, serves each other, and evangelizes with a new attitude. Second, the church plans intentionally. It spends more time doing “people projects.” Third, revitalized churches have a vision. They know they need it, they share it, and it is an integral part of their leadership. Fourth, they develop a culture of leadership development. Finding, training, and deploying leaders is part of the process. Biblical leaders envision a blueprint of what is to come, and they develop leaders with that blueprint in mind. Fifth, they live a life of personal and spiritual integrity. Each of Stetzer’s five principles fall within the scope of the developing leadership for discipleship groups project. Given the time limitation of the project, there is no data that shows the effectiveness of the project for church revitalization.

Conclusion

Spiritual leadership is essential to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). The church has been commanded by Christ to begin the life-changing process of making disciples. Leaders called by the providence of God to minister to those within their contexts will teach sound doctrine and stretch their thinking about their purpose in life. Ministry to them becomes a matter of stewardship rather than obligation. Like Christ, it becomes a burden of passion and conviction to grow personally in spiritual integrity so that others will be influenced by their vision, gifts, and ability to communicate and motivate. It becomes equally important for spiritual leaders to realize that opposition is part of ministry and that leadership is born out of conviction and compassion. Since they know that what they are doing is right and worth facing opposition, they will grow, reproduce, train, and deploy others.

This chapter identified the necessary components of spiritual leaders. In chapter 4, I summarize and analyze the Administrative Team, the participation of the members at Mountain View Community Church, the training material, the retreat, survey instruments, the Spiritual Gifts Test, and the sermon series. I also provide a synopsis of the elements needed for discipleship group leaders. I also discuss the potential value of the project outside the Geographical influence of Mountain View Community Church and the spiritual impact possible in other communities through the use of technology, training events, and group multiplication. Furthermore, the possibility of missional, congregational, and institutional growth through spiritual leadership development will be discussed. Mountain View's leaders calls this the "philosophy of getting things done." It means that they will do whatever it takes, give whatever they have, and give the results to God.

CHAPTER 4

ELEMENTS OF DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP FOR THE DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS RESEARCH PROJECT

The developing leadership project for discipleship groups consisted of a ten-week sermon series based upon New Testament examples of spiritual leadership development. The elements of the research project consisted of a pre-test and a post-test survey, an Administrative Team, an eight-week sermon series on spiritual leadership, a weekend retreat focused on early and modern leadership development, evangelism training, and the clarification of roles. The elements utilized were based on the project's four goals: (1) developing an understanding of healthy biblical leadership; (2) developing a healthy confidence and attitude toward personal spiritual development and teaching others; (3) developing evangelistic skills through small group teaching opportunities; and (4) improving personal expository preaching skills. Each of the above elements helped to achieve and measure these goals.

Scheduling of Elements

The sermon series began in February and ended in March. A timeline of the research project's elements were as follows:

1. February 4—Meet with Administrative Team to approve timeline, retreat, and launch dates
2. February 5—Begin sermon series
3. March 18—Administer pre-retreat survey
4. March 25—Conduct weekend retreat training and Spiritual Gifts Test

5. April 1—End sermon series and execute commission service
6. April 22—Administer post-retreat survey at leadership network meeting
7. April 15—Compile and review results from research instruments with the Administrative Team and write final evaluation
8. April 29—Launch discipleship groups
9. June 9—Schedule Group-Link meeting

Administrative Team

The Administrative Team consisted of five middle-aged individuals from various income levels who resembled the demographic of the community. These men were elected by the congregation to serve as elders of the church. They were required to be members of the Mountain View Community Church congregation, possess evidence the Holy Spirit in their lives, attend most of the special functions of the church, be missional and connected to the outside community.

We met on Sunday evening, February 1, for about an hour. The purpose of the meeting was to review and approve the timeline, propose special funding, and suggest potential candidates from the results of the Spiritual Gifts Tests, which were given at the church membership classes. It was decided to ask the spouses of the candidates to take a “perceived” Spiritual Gifts Test at the retreat. In other words, a spouse or friend took the test in view of the spiritual gifts they saw in the primary participant. Both tests were then averaged.

Sermon Series

I began the sermon series on Sunday morning, February 5, which served as a vital piece of the process for pastoral leadership to identify, train, and deploy spiritual leadership for discipleship groups. It also functioned as a springboard to begin the initial phase of intern identification. Each sermon built upon the previous message to describe what will eventually be the model for spiritual leadership measurement and development. Each sermon began with a clear description of what a biblical disciple or candidate looks like. Definitions were also given to show what a healthy disciple and spiritual leader should look like. The progression of the sermons discussed biblical leadership, theological mandates for training, and the importance of fulfilling the Great Commission. This sermon series ended with a commissioning service and a final message on biblical church growth.

Synopsis of Sermons Preached

The theme of the sermon series focused on describing the personal and theological growth needed to progress from a disciple to a spiritual leader given a New Testament perspective. Beginning with a description of what a mature disciple should look like, the definition was developed over the eight-week sermon series.

Sermon 1

The first sermon introduced the intentions of the pastoral leadership and described what an emotionally healthy and productive disciple looks like. It explained the rule that good leaders must first be good followers. The objectives of emotionally healthy disciples are as follows: (1) they are relational toward all others and God; (2) they are incarnational, reshaping their lives to grow in holiness; and (3) they are invitational.

Emotionally healthy and productive disciples invite others to transform their lives by addressing sin and repentance through evangelism, hospitality, and sound doctrine.

I concluded the sermon by explaining to the congregation their role in the process. They were told that entire congregational participation was expected if they were truly missional believers. Many responded positively to the challenge.

Sermon 2

The second sermon, “What Is a Biblical Leader,” built upon the principles from the first. The message, taken from Acts 6: 1-7, described how the apostles selected and deployed the seven for ministry to the Grecian Jewish widows. The sermon pointed out that a biblical leader was as follows: (1) a servant leader who shares the load of ministry with others; (2) one whose call is confirmed by the congregation; (3) one who reproduces other disciples and causes others to seek personal and spiritual growth. The goal is that the body of Christ would grow numerically and spiritually.

Sermon 3

Sermon 3, “The Discipled Leader of Ephesians 6:10-20,” described what a mature disciple looks like. This sermon described four distinctives which were as follows: (1) mature disciples equip others; (2) mature disciples live evangelism; (3) mature disciples exalt Christ through suffering and worship, keeping the word of God central; (4) mature disciples edify others. The sermon led believers to examine their own personal and spiritual growth and look for areas that inhibit completeness in Christ. A handout was also distributed to the congregation that contained the previous sermon points. The sermon presentation included a Power Point presentation with a discipleship logo, which was met with a favorable response from the worshipers.

Sermon 4

The fourth sermon, “The Training of a Leader,” was taken from 1 Timothy. It described the DNA of a mature disciple or spiritual leader and his or her progress from a convert to a leader. The message was divided into two parts. First, I concluded that the DNA found in a spiritual leader should include the following characteristics: (1) competence; (2) calling; (3) knowing one’s context; (4) vision; (5) confidence; and (6) character. The second part of the sermon outlined the training that would develop the personal and spiritual disciplines of the identified convert. They would be trained to improve in the areas of: (1) prayer; (2) integrity; (3) stewardship; (4) doctrinal purity; (5) perseverance; and (6) spiritual maturity.

The sermon was well received. I asked the congregation if they wanted to make a difference in their own personal growth, the growth of the church, and God’s kingdom. One family of four came forward to give their lives to Christ. My first thoughts after the sermon were that it should have been two sermons instead of one. In light of the new converts, however, I believe it was just the right approach.

Sermon 5

“The Leadership of Paul” was the title and focus of sermon 5. Mountain View attendees were taught that Paul’s leadership reflected his training, passion, and focus on both kingdom growth and the personal growth of others. Listeners were taught that Paul was trained at the feet of his parents and at the feet of Gamaliel. But it was at the feet of Jesus that his unenlightened zeal was abolished. As a result of his Damascus road experience, Paul became competent, confident, visionary, and a man of integrity and character. Like him, spiritual leaders are to be people of prayer, doctrinal purity, and

good stewards of God's resources. The congregation was asked to write down four names of non-believers, and they were directed to pray for them until they were saved.

Sermon 6

Sermon 6, "The Leadership of Christ," focused on Jesus' description of himself as a good shepherd in John 10:11-22. Jesus describes his leadership as committed to the resources given him. He does this by delegating responsibility not only for their good, but also for his own. Second, he described the good shepherd as one who is relational, saying that he wants his sheep to be with him. This concept is confirmed in Mark 3:14 where Mark writes that Jesus wanted his disciples to be with him. In other words, Jesus' leadership stresses transformation through relationships. Finally, the leadership of Jesus proved that he was trustworthy. His trustworthiness was needed to teach the disciples the deeper things of God. The application to Mountain View's leadership interns is that they will lead in order to see people saved. They must also be content with the resources God gives them. Furthermore, they must be trustworthy, competent, committed, and people of integrity.

Sermon 7

The seventh sermon, based on Matthew 28:16-20, dealt with the essential elements of spiritual leadership needed to carry out the Great Commission. The sermon, "Leadership for the Great Commission," disclosed that Jesus wants leaders to teach converts and disciples that Christians, as his redeemed, can make the claim that they have his full authority to spread the gospel. Defining a disciple as a pupil or learner who not only knows the truth but lives and abides in it, I reassured the believers of the promise that the presence of Jesus is always with them.

Sermon 8

The final sermon focused upon the importance of biblical church growth. The message looked at five markers of a church that is growing according to Luke 6:46-47, Acts 1:8, and Acts 2:42. These markers are as follows: (1) biblical growth comes through a faithful church; (2) growth comes through a strong commitment to the life-giving Word; (3) biblical growth happens in churches who disciple people; (4) biblical church growth is the result of following the Holy Spirit; and (5) biblical churches grow as a result of following the right people. This sermon was intended to help listeners to see that biblical church growth was achievable.

Pre-Retreat Survey

The pre-retreat survey was composed of 64 questions and was divided into 8 categories that were identified as necessary to become an effective spiritual leader. Each question was set up on a 5-point Likert scale (see Appendix 1). The survey was designed to measure the spiritual status of the interns and their development in the areas of competence, confidence, calling, courage, commitment, character, creativity, and compassion.

The pre-retreat survey was distributed to the interns after church on March 18. They were asked to return the surveys on the March 25. Only those who planned to attend the weekend retreat and were over eighteen years of age were allowed to participate in the survey. Church membership was required for potential leaders, but not required of their spouses.

Synopsis of Survey

The purpose of the survey was to help both myself and the interns identify the strengths and weaknesses in the primary areas of personal and spiritual growth, which are centered on eight key components needed for effective spiritual leadership. Having surveyed the results and compared them to the Spiritual Gifts Test results, the survey, with a few alterations mentioned in chapter 5, proved to be a very useful tool, providing a blueprint for developing and discipling new converts, members, interns, and future apprentice leadership candidates. The results also provided a helpful spiritual leadership checklist.

Competence

The survey asked eight questions created to assess both personal competency and the competency of others. Competent spiritual leaders need to have a personal devotion to the Word of God and a desire to grow in sound doctrine. For this to occur, they must be teachable. Competent leaders must be willing to work with others within and outside the church, while also ministering under the authority of the church's elders. In addition, the survey measured the goal orientation of the candidate by providing measurable desire, interactive, and communication statistics. Effective leadership must be competent.

Confidence

This section of the survey measured the two components of leadership that create confidence in both leaders and followers. First, spiritual leaders must have a visible relationship with Christ for others to follow. Second, confident leaders know that

they can trust God. The rest of the questions measured faith, knowing God's will, one's attitude, and one's desire to summarize the spiritual health of the intern.

Calling

Spiritual leadership is ministry, and ministers must be called. This section of the survey was designed to measure the call of God in the intern, beginning with the necessity to see evidence of his conversion and ending with the confirmation of others that the call to ministry is visible in their life. The personal measurement of these questions centered around six principles. First, one's desire to lead flows from a personal relationship with Christ. Second, there is an intense desire to see the Word of God fulfilled. Third, the intern has a desire to have sufficient knowledge to lead. Fourth, they are Spirit-led. Fifth, they are committed to the process of long-term growth, and finally, they walk by faith.

Courage

Another key component of leadership is courage. A leader who goes alone to face a giant has courage. It takes courage for effective leaders to gather together a constituency, to gain momentum toward something worth fighting for. Evangelism takes courage. Creating an environment of discipleship and multiplying a small group where one did not exist before takes courage. The eight questions measure both personal and perceived opinions of what it means to be an evangelist and who does it. In addition, the questions assess the frequency, comfort level, and both the personal and spiritual resolve of the survey participant.

Commitment

When putting together this survey, I deemed it necessary to measure and define the commitment of the survey participants. The areas of commitment I wanted to define were family, prayer, marriage, tithing, personal responsibility, and integrity. Within the questions that measured commitment to these areas, I also added questions that measured the frequency they pray, read scripture, witness and tithe. I wanted to know how much of their spiritual activity was personal, and how much time was spent investing in the spiritual growth of others. The instrument produced data that helped to measure the participants level of commitment, their creativity potential, and their level of motivation, giving opportunity for me to strengthen weaknesses in personal and spiritual development through additional teaching.

Character

An emotionally healthy spiritual leader has already developed a definition of character. This portion of the survey asked questions that interpret and measure personal character, longevity, and motivation. The personal components to be discovered through this section of the survey are faith, compatibility to God's will, spiritual and personal integrity, conflict resolution, and self-esteem.

Creativity

This portion of the survey measures the creativity of the leader's willingness to take risks and what motivated him or her. One of the needs at Mountain View Community Church is to have creative servant evangelists motivated by a Christ-centered desire to see others grow. The first two questions give insight into the receptivity of the participant to contextualize the gospel and take risks. The second question identifies the

motive behind one's creativity. Question 3 measures one's comfort level in communicating the gospel. The questions, overall, measure the potential for creativity, desire, and ability to grow spiritually of each of the interns.

Compassion

Loving the lost as well as the saints can be both rewarding and frustrating at times. This final element of the survey measures both the personal compassion needed to be a biblical spiritual leader and the fortitude to be effective by assessing the following: (1) compassion toward saints who have sinned; (2) the importance of biblical counsel; (3) the balance needed between a loving spirit and strong convictions; (4) unconditional love for all people; and (5) patience toward those who disagree. Question 2 measures one's level of compassion for immature believers.

Weekend Retreat

On March 25, 8 candidates came to Mountain View Community Church for a one-day training seminar on the history of discipleship that began with a history of discipleship from the apostle Paul's day until the present day. Three were absent due to work schedules and the death of a friend. These three were trained at a later date. The pre-retreat surveys were collected for later analysis. The training material (see Appendix 2) consisted of six classes, five on the history of discipleship and one class on modern discipleship methodology, including the discipleship model for Mountain View Community Church and the blueprint of what a mature disciple should look like.

There was discussion on the expectations and vision of both interns and spiritual leaders. There was time given for questions and answers. Most of the questions centered around who they would invite into their homes and how the groups would

reproduce themselves. Other questions were voiced concerning the group's multiplication through the later divisions of the groups. It was interesting that those who had a high score in hospitality did not care who came into their home, while it was a high concern for those who did not. Those who attended the training were motivated to begin the vision stage of their journey. The spiritual leaders decided to meet one week after the commission service to work out details, pray, and discuss the make-up of their small groups.

Synopsis of Training Session

The theme of the training session focused on developing both a biblical and a historical perspective of discipleship throughout church history. Beginning with Jewish discipleship in the day of Paul, interns were taught the progression of discipleship through the ages, concluding with a session on discipleship in the twenty-first century. The purpose of the training material was to create a theological basis for understanding what biblical discipleship really is and what Mountain View Community Church needs to do to create an emotionally-healthy environment that fulfills the Great Commission, increases the kingdom of God, sends laborers into the harvest field, and multiplies its membership through community involvement, discipleship, and evangelism.

Session 1

The first session introduced the discipleship model of the Jewish culture in Paul's day. This session included (1) Josephus' writings that instructed young boys to learn certain laws, learn to read and write, and know the deeds of their forefathers; (2) the discipleship models of the Essenes, Sadducees, and the Pharisees; (3) discipleship in the

period of the Mishna; and (4) Paul's personal commitment to integrity, good stewardship, spiritual development, prayer, doctrinal purity, and spiritual maturity.

Finally, discussion was entertained as to the transition from the synagogue being a place of instruction to the church being a place of worship today and the importance of discipleship in it.

Session 2

The second session looked at the transition of discipleship from Jewish people in the time of Paul to the early church, which considered martyrdom to be the highest form of discipleship. Several factors were pointed out that led to an understanding of why martyrdom became the pinnacle of discipleship, beginning with the martyrdom of Ignatius in A.D. 110. Second, it was taught that the edict of Diocletian caused church leadership to re-interpret Luke 9:23-26. Converts believed that they were to deny themselves, take up their crosses, placing themselves under the authority of others as condemned believers whose lives were over.

Session 3

The third session included a history of discipleship from the early church to discipleship in the middle ages and the cultural shifts that influenced discipleship to once again be focused upon the family. This lesson's objectives were to teach that (1) local priests promoted discipleship within the family, which included the teaching of basic prayers, household codices, the Apostle's Creed, and the ten commandments, (2) intellectual pursuit of Augustine's writings diminished family discipleship, and (3) other contributing factors that led to the demise of discipleship within the family were illiteracy, poorly prepared parish priests, and expensive books. The best educated were

removed from parish life and went to monasteries away from the people. This session concluded with discussion about the biblical importance of family discipleship and what can be done in the contemporary church to strengthen that.

Session 4

This session introduced the discipleship methodologies of two notable reformers: John Calvin and Martin Luther. It was taught that Calvin, a French reformer, and Luther, a German reformer, both used catechisms and both supported family discipleship. It was pointed out that while Calvin used two catechisms, Luther had a small catechism that included the ten commandments, the Apostle's Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the sacrament of holy baptism, the sacrament of holy communion, daily prayers, the table of duties, and Christian questions and answers.

Session 5

Session 5 introduced the discipleship of the nineteenth century and centered on the teachings of Charles Spurgeon, one of the most influential spiritual leaders of his time. The lesson taught that discipleship was as needed as faith, that a saved man is one who acts out what he learns, and what he learns is a service of love. Discussion of discipleship centered around what discipleship must be. While deciding that it is a process that leads to spiritual maturity, it was agreed upon that it must involve faith, servant leaders, prayer, the Holy Spirit, and growth.

Session 6

This session applied principles learned from group discussions. The group agreed that it was important to be linked together as a team in prayer, to hold each other

accountable, and to seek spiritual maturity as biblical spiritual leaders. From this point, they began to envision what their discipleship groups would look like, the blueprint of the mature disciple, and how they would teach their disciples to get there. The consensus was that there would be four standards by which growth could be monitored: (1) the leadership would need to be visionary and creative; (2) spiritually-healthy leaders and groups will be intentionally evangelistic toward all ethnic groups as directed in the Great Commission; (3) group leaders will live and teach servant evangelism; and (4) all group activities must agree with Scripture and guide every activity.

The final discussion of modern discipleship covered the demographics, context, and current trends in the community of Mountain View Community Church. Several of the group leaders found this helpful in the formulation of their group community projects and servant evangelism efforts. I asked the participants what could have strengthened the training class, and all replied that they felt that the class offered just what they needed to begin and that the real questions would come after the community groups had started.

Synopsis of Spiritual Gifts Test

The Administrative Team at Mountain View Community Church asked to include a spousal assessment (the secondary participant) of each intern's (the primary participant) personal Spiritual Gifts Test results (see Appendix 3). The test results were then tabulated and examined. The expectation was that the primary participant's gifts would be evident to the secondary participant, thus confirming the primary participant's scores.

Commissioning Service

The last sermon was delivered on Palm Sunday and focused on the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It was a day of celebration as the recently-trained spiritual leaders of the Mountain View small groups were presented. There was a brief time of prayer and explanation of what the new leaders had done and what they would be doing. The church congregation was also told what was expected of them. After the commissioning service, the entire church participated in the sharing of the Lord's Table.

Post-Retreat Survey

The post-retreat survey was supposed to be administered on April 1 during a scheduled leadership network meeting for prayer and questions (see Appendix 1). But the church calendar was full that day and the meeting was moved to April 22 due to the Easter season and other prior commitments.

The leaders met in the afternoon to review materials, discuss group members within the small groups, pray, and to take the post-retreat survey. The post-retreat survey was the same questionnaire used in the pre-retreat survey. The purpose of using the same survey was to create an instrument to evaluate and measure spiritual growth and the effectiveness of the project. Furthermore, the results of the two surveys provided tangible measurements of progress, plateaus, or digression of spiritual growth within the scope of the four measurable goals. Only 2 interns, a couple, exhibited the gifts of hospitality and exhortation as their two primary gifts. They have already surpassed the interns with community participation and inviting people to the church. They attended the first Group-Link for discipleship in personal and spiritual integrity and were taught Mountain View's leadership expectations and their Group-Link responsibilities.

Post-Review

The final meeting with the Mountain View Administrative Team was held on Monday evening, April 23. The meeting lasted for two hours. We charted and graphed the growth in the spiritual leaders' understanding of discipleship, and biblical leadership. The church treasurer agreed to do the spreadsheets.

In addition, I asked for feedback on the preaching, training material, and the usefulness of the project. The consensus was that the project was helpful, that it stimulated both spiritual and personal growth, and created a biblical model of assimilation. All of the Administration Team members thought that the project was a success and that it achieved its stated objectives, especially given the response of the congregation to participate in the small, or what is now called "community," groups of Mountain View Community Church.

Conclusion

Where there was once concern about the absence of those who were saved and baptized, there is now a new channel of discipleship growth and spiritual development for the new attendees, believers, and those baptized at Mountain View. The congregation and I appreciated the vision, cooperation, leadership, and obedience of the Administration Team at Mountain View Community Church. What started as a dream to eradicate attrition within the church and a desire to please the Lord has become a reality. The leaders at Mountain View believe that they have started something that will go beyond themselves to assist and equip others to identify, equip, and deploy leaders to reach the world for Christ.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The developing of leaders for discipleship groups consisted of several elements and an eight-week sermon series based upon New Testament examples of spiritual leadership development. The elements of the research project consisted of a pre-test and a post-test survey, a Spiritual Gifts Test, the forming of an Administrative Team, an eight-week sermon series on spiritual leadership, a weekend retreat focused on early and modern leadership and discipleship developments, evangelism training, and the clarification of spiritual leadership roles. The elements utilized are based on the project's four goals: (1) developing an understanding of healthy biblical leadership and discipleship through preaching; (2) developing a healthy confidence and attitude toward personal spiritual development and teaching others to become spiritual leaders; (3) developing evangelistic skills through small group teaching opportunities; and (4) improving personal expository preaching skills while become a credible resource for others desiring to develop leadership principles for small groups. Each of these elements helped to achieve and measure the four goals.

Evaluation of Research Data

Two sets of results produced the data analyzed. First, the data from the responses from the pre-retreat survey and the post-retreat survey was compiled. Eight congregants participated. The second set of data was gathered from the results of the

Spiritual Gifts Test. This data included results from the primary participants as well as the secondary participants who took the test as they observed the primary participant. The reason for adding the secondary responder was to see if the predominant gifts were evident to others.

The evaluation of the survey data gave tangible results that helped measure both the success of the project's eight sermons and the teaching at the retreat. Tabulation of the data included the reversal of numerical values where a negative response was desired. Furthermore, all of the data was examined to see if the project was a success. After the data was collected from the first survey, there was some concern over an obvious oversight. I did not consider that I had led the Lord and disciplined most of those involved in the process. As a result, their initial survey scores were very high, narrowing the margin for observable growth.

I first examined the reliability of my hypothesis through the Spiritual Gifts Test that successful spiritual leaders need to have the gifts of hospitality and exhortation. After compiling the data, statistics revealed that no one had both of these gifts as their predominant gifts. Most however, did have hospitality or exhortation, but no one had both. Those who had a high hospitality score were eager to get started, while those who scored higher in exhortation were more concerned with the rules of the process, and what they were supposed to use as resources.

The pre- and post-retreat responses showed that there was spiritual growth in all eight categories. Table 1 summarizes the results of the spiritual leaders and shows an increase in competence. One example of the "no growth" oversight due to the high pre-test scores is evident in statement 1. All of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that

a person should read the Bible every day. They answered the same in the post-test, showing no growth, but also showing that they were competent readers of Scripture

Table 1. Research data for competence

Competence	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. A person should read his or her Bible every day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. People should seek to improve their leadership	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
3. People who lead should possess the gift of leadership	0	1	0	-1	-1	0	2	0	1
4. Leaders should seek feedback from others	0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	0	0
5. Leaders should follow the appropriate channels of authority	0	0	0	0	-1	2	0	0	1
6. Leaders should communicate well with others	1	1	1	-1	0	0	0	0	2
7. Leadership comes naturally to me	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
8. I am goal-oriented	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	3	2	-3	-2	3	3	0	7

Table 2. Research data for confidence

Confidence	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. A strong relationship with Christ should be seen in leaders	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	-1
2. I know that I am in the center of God's will	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. I live by faith	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. If difficult times, I know that I can trust God	0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	0	0
5. I have a good attitude toward others	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0
6. I am optimistic	1	0	1	-1	0	1	0	1	3
7. I take initiative to direct others	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	3
8. My goal is to edify others in the church	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Total	2	3	3	-2	0	0	1	3	10

As the candidates came forward to make a commitment to lead small groups, I was encouraged to see a group total of 10 points in measurable growth. As I continued to examine the data, it appears that the group needed some additional teaching about being confident in God's will, trusting God, and the value of being a visible witness. I plan to strengthen this weakness through a sermon series called "Knowing God." There were some difficulties in section 3 of the survey due to the interpretation of words within the questions. In question 1, for instance, there was confusion over where leadership originates. Question 3 was similarly confusing as some reinterpreted the word "intense"

differently when they took the post-retreat survey, producing a negative growth score.

Overall the group showed a positive growth of 13 points with an increase of 5 points in knowledge, which was one of the specific goals of this project.

Table 3. Research data for calling

Calling	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. My leadership flows from a personal relationship with Christ	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	-1
2. The conversion of another is of utmost importance	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-1	2	0
3. I have an intense desire to see God's Word fulfilled	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
4. Others have confirmed that I am called to lead	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	5
5. I have sufficient knowledge to lead	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	1
6. I am committed to long-term growth	0	1	0	0	-1	0	0	1	1
7. My life is Spirit-led	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8. I walk in faith, believing in God's promises	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	0	2	0	4	1	1	0	5	13

Table 4. Research data for courage

Courage	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. It is the pastor's job to evangelize the lost	-2	-1	-2	0	-1	0	0	0	-6
2. I try to please everyone	1	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0
3. I have led more than one person to Christ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
4. I witness frequently	0	0	0	0	0	0	-3	1	-2
5. I am comfortable witnessing to the lost	1	0	0	1	0	-1	0	1	2
6. If need be, I will stand alone for Christ	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
7. Resolving conflict is not a problem for me	0	0	1	1	1	-2	1	1	3
8. Scripture is the authority by which I live my life	1	0	0	-1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	1	-1	-1	1	0	-3	-2	6	1

The data recorded in Table 4 indicates the frequency and comfort level of conflict resolution, evangelism, and maintaining one's personal integrity. One individual's score far exceeded the others. That person is Mountain View's most active evangelist. What the results from the questions listed in Table 4 reveal is that there needs to be some mentoring and discipleship by interns through community witnessing projects. Furthermore, there is a correlation with these scores and the results of The Spiritual Gifts Test.

Table 5. Research data for commitment

Commitment	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. One way to honor God is through family	0	0	-1	0	-1	1	0	0	-1
2. I pray regularly with my family	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
3. I enjoy ministering to others with my spouse	1	0	0	1	0	-1	1	1	3
4. I encourage other couples to live Christ-like lives	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
5. I encourage others to pray	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
6. I pray each day	1	0	-1	1	0	0	0	0	1
7. I tithe to the church	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
8. I enjoy overseeing work that needs to be done	1	0	-1	-1	1	0	0	-1	-1
Total	4	1	-3	6	1	3	1	0	13

It is worth noting that a 13-point positive growth score appeared in the research data for calling, character, and commitment. The positive increase shows a fruitful attitude toward getting things done. The negative scores of questions 8 and 1 indicated that the participants were still developing. These statistics will be analyzed later to see if commitment scores might give any indication of how well the intern will work to achieve hallmark of multiplication.

Table 6. Research data for character

Character	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. Leadership is not a position but a lifestyle	0	-1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
2. True character is measured over a lifetime	1	-3	0	2	0	1	0	0	1
3. Integrity is important for effective leadership	1	0	0	-1	1	1	0	0	2
4. Right doctrine must be accompanied by a holy life	1	0	0	-1	1	0	0	0	1
5. I feel encouraged when I help those in need	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
6. I feel as if my actions are consistent with God's will	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
7. I can minister to non-Christians without compromise	0	0	0	1	0	-1	1	1	2
8. I trust that God can do the impossible	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4	-4	1	4	2	1	2	3	13

Questions 1 and especially 2 resulted in radical changes in the data from the pre- and post-retreat surveys, creating, for some, negative results. While the growth in longevity can be debated, the growth in spiritual and personal integrity can not. As a group, the participants felt that they moved toward the center of God's will.

Table 7. Research data for creativity

Creativity	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. I like to discover new ways to teach the gospel	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
2. I am willing to take risks	0	0	-2	0	0	1	0	1	0
3. I have no trouble communicating the gospel	0	0	0	1	0	-1	0	1	1
4. God honors biblical innovation	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	1	-1
5. My motivation to be creative is to glorify Christ	1	0	0	1	-1	1	0	0	2
6. There are creative ways to communicate gospel truth	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
7. I research regularly news ideas on how to share the gospel	0	1	-3	2	1	0	0	0	1
8. A creative God wants me to use my creative potential	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Total	2	-1	-4	5	2	2	0	5	11

Given the DNA of Mountain View’s congregation, the value of contextualization is well known. The congregation understands that the gospel must never be compromised but that its delivery can be changed in order for it to be understood. Participants in this survey were comfortable with change. There was an 11 point growth in creativity with only one negative result. Again, that negative result was because of a misinterpretation of the question. The data here revealed a willingness among the participants to re-think what “church” means.

Finally, Table 8 revealed that I need to develop a stewardship sermon series that emphasizes the importance of being a good steward of the opportunities God gives his people, especially his spiritual leaders.

Table 8. Research data for compassion

Compassion	JA	JK	SK	JS	SS	DS	KS	CL	Total
1. I have compassion toward Christians who have sinned	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2. I will go to any length to build up God's people	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
3. I nurture God's people by giving spiritual counsel	0	0	0	1	0	-2	1	2	2
4. I believe that I should show respect toward all people	1	0	0	0	0	-1	0	1	1
5. I easily balance my strong convictions with a loving spirit	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
6. A person must be a good servant before he or she can lead	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	-1
7. I have an unconditional love for all people	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
8. I am patient with those who disagree with me	-1	0	-1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	1	1	-1	4	0	-4	2	7	10

This data reveals that Mountain View's spiritual leaders have grown to be more patient, accepting of people of all nations, loving toward others, long-suffering, compassionate, and wise.

Spiritual Gifts Test Results

Table 9. Spiritual gifts test results

	JA		JK		SK		JS		SS		DS		KS		CL	
Hospitality	3	3	4	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	3	5	2	1	3	4
Exhortation	7	5	2	4	5	5	6	6	4	5	5	6	1	7	7	3

The data here measured the gifts of hospitality and exhortation. I wanted to compare the spiritual gifts score with productivity in hopes that they would be connected. As of now, it is too early to tell. It is already evident, however, that those who scored highest in hospitality have started aggressively inviting strangers into their homes while those who scored high in exhortation have had the least amount of trouble deciding which teaching material to use due to their familiarity with scripture and the ability to teach others toward healthy spirituality. Those who scored lower in hospitality have been slow to invite strangers into their homes. The Spiritual Gifts Test results should not be prescriptive, but should instead be used as a resource to increase the potential and success of the candidate for future service.

Growth Graph

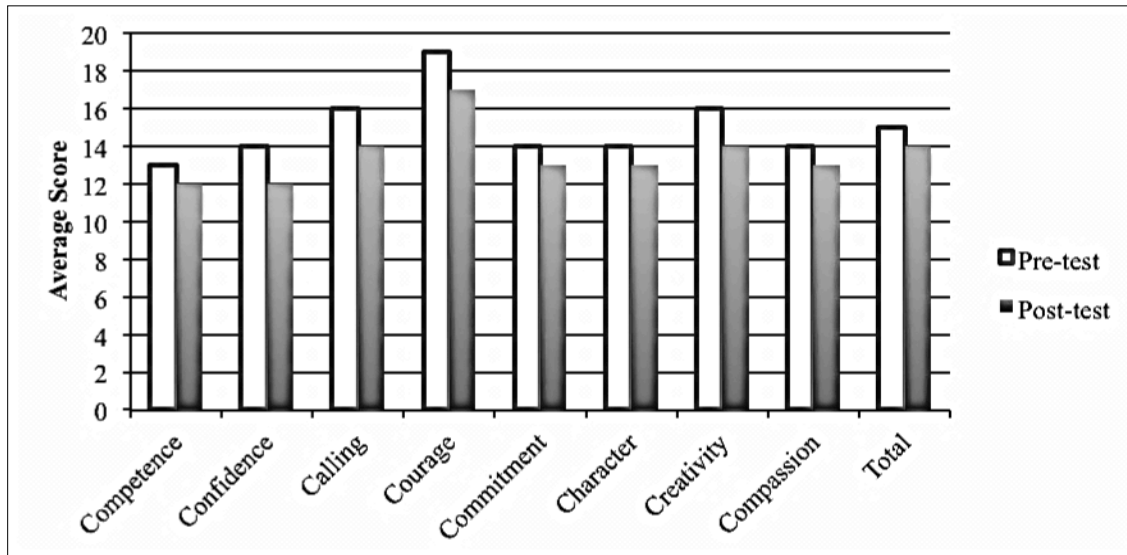


Figure 1. Growth graph

The growth graph above gives a broad overview of group responses within all eight categories where spiritual growth was desired. Due to the nature of the Likert Scale scoring, the most favorable scores are the lower scores. For instance, 1 was “strongly agree” and 5 was “strongly disagree.” Also, taken into consideration was when “strongly disagree” was the preferred response, the values were inverted to reflect a lower response. This graph indicated growth in all eight categories.

Strengths

There are three obvious strengths that the project achieved. First, the project’s main focus of creating leadership for small groups at Mountain View Community Church was achieved. Where there once was once a void in biblical leadership and development, there is now a network of eight spiritual leaders prepared to disciple new converts.

Because of their commitment and obedience to God's calling there are now small community groups at Mountain View Community Church. These groups are already identifying the next apprentices to be called out and trained for group reproduction.

The second positive outcome of the project was that the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania and South Jersey asked me to be a resource for leadership training and small group development. At the last basic training seminar, I was asked to train new church planters on how to develop leadership within their small groups. I have already taught the second class in the basic training courses offered to church planters. The participants have reported that this class has been both enjoyable and beneficial to their ministries.

Third, the new spiritual leaders are in the beginning stages of dreaming and developing a strategy to evangelize their communities. Several are making phone calls, planning community events, and sharing the gospel at each opportunity given. Evangelism—an area of weakness in the past—has increased. The Small groups are increasingly reaching out to the communities surrounding Mountain View Community Church. Two groups that meet regularly consist almost entirely of unchurched people.

Finally, the project provided an opportunity for those gifted in leadership ministry to be able to grow in the area of their passion and calling. The personal and spiritual growth they experienced can only validate the encouragement they give to others as their group multiplies.

Weaknesses

In retrospect, there were weaknesses in the project, some of which I can make corrections and some I cannot. The most common weakness was within the interpretation

of some of the wording within the surveys. The second weakness was the limitation of the fifteen-week time length allotted. Ample time to assess the success or failure of the project's effectiveness—the reproduction of groups through the multiplication of spiritual leaders through the identification, development, and deployment of apprentices—was not taken. In the short-term, the project served its purpose, but, in the long-term, it is too early to tell whether it was effective. The present results look good but one can only speculate if the project was a complete success. Third, I did not expect to find negative spousal support among some of the spiritual interns. I had assumed that couples would come forward to begin the process. Not all did and some of the groups are off to a slow start due to the lack of support from the spouses of the interns.

Fourth, there were interruptions in the project due to scheduling conflicts—church calendar events, personal commitments, and a church Administrative Team election. The holidays were also not taken into consideration and the calendar had to be changed several times due to conflicts in scheduling with the many people involved in the project. The election of a new Administrative Team member and the job change of another made full attendance of the Administrative Team meetings and group continuity very difficult. I had to change the meeting dates and times often.

Finally, the economic climate at the time of the project made full participation challenging for those who desired to become interns. The weekend retreat at a conference center had to be modified to a weekend training seminar at the church due to the difficulty of taking off work to attend the retreat. Perhaps, at a later time, with an improved economy, work schedules and job changes will not be factors.

Improvements Needed

The process of leadership development will be repeated at Mountain View every two years when the small groups multiply. From what was been learned, there will be some simple modifications to the model, and some difficult ones. First, the vocabulary in the survey will be simplified. Some participants did not understand words like “edify.” Second, some modifications need to be made for those who cannot comprehend the survey questions. Third, I will not allow the surveys to be taken at home. I allowed the interns to take them home and return them completed in a timely fashion. Several went weeks before they returned them. Next time, I will require interns to complete it at the weekend training retreat before leaving. The same requirement will be applied to the Spiritual Gifts Tests that are taken.

Fourth, I will add a small group table at the church where testimonies, pictures, and other information explaining the purpose of the small groups can be made visible and available. Mountain View Community Church will be intentional to promote and develop apprentices by creating a place of recognition.

Finally, the retreats in the future will be limited to one full Saturday at a local setting due to the time restraints placed upon the participants at their workplaces.

Theological Reflection

Born out of a desire to correct the void in discipleship development at Mountain View Community Church and a desire to fulfill the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20, an earnest effort was undertaken to fulfill God’s Word. As mentioned in chapter 2, Paul told Timothy to continue to grow toward both personal and spiritual maturity so that he would be able to teach others. Mountain View Community Church

has achieved this goal. Interns, as a group, have grown in prayer, personal Bible study, doctrinal clarity, Spirit-led ministry, spiritual maturity, and evangelism. They grew in all eight areas of ministry qualities needed to be a useful minister. The eight areas of ministry qualities include competence, confidence, calling, courage, commitment, character, creativity, and compassion. Again, as a group, there was positive growth.

Also, we have made an earnest effort to obey God's Word and make disciples by training credible spiritual leaders who may at some point plant churches within their own communities. At least two couples who live some distance away from Mountain View Community church, have said that they were interested in the small group leadership because it gives them opportunity to connect spiritually with others in their community and to be part of the church at the same time. Also, as a result of the training, one family has expressed interest in starting a house church through the small group they will lead.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, participants began to experience the new discipline of living Spirit-led lives. As a group they have increased in personal devotion and intentional evangelism, creating baptisms as a result. Scripture reading has increased as well as time spent in prayer. Additionally, the missional attitude of the entire church has increased.

Personal Reflection

My decision to return to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary began with a desire to grow personally as pastor, evangelist, and as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary faculty has exceeded my expectations, developed my gifts, and created an environment of learning. Friendships are

developed for a lifetime. By entering into the program I have developed accountability partners, close friends, and have developed a rigid learning and writing discipline. Having been disciplined by world-class professors, I feel equipped to lead others both inside, and outside my church community to strive for the ideal by confronting the real. Leaders are everywhere! But they need to be found, trained, and set free to lead.

Conclusion

Two years of reading, learning, and writing resulted in a fifteen-week project that attempted to create an environment that produces leaders and promotes leadership reproduction. The results of this project are positive. Our achieved goals for leadership development have already reproduced apprentices within the small groups. I intend to re-write this paper into a book that encourages pastors who work alone, wishing for leadership from someone, somewhere.

APPENDIX 1

PRE- AND POST-RETREAT QUESTIONNAIRE

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to survey the beliefs of Mountain View Community Church. Pastor Pusey Losch is conducting this research for the purpose of discovering leadership potential within the congregation of Mountain View Community Church. In this research, you will read the sentence and then circle the number that describes how that statement describes you. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential* and at no time will your name be identified with your responses.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this survey you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Competence	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. A person should read his or her Bible every day	1	2	3	4	5
2. People should seek to improve their leadership	1	2	3	4	5
3. People who lead should possess the gift of leadership	1	2	3	4	5
4. Leaders should seek feedback from others	1	2	3	4	5
5. Leaders should follow the appropriate channels of authority	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leaders should communicate well with others	1	2	3	4	5
7. Leadership comes naturally to me	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am goal-oriented	1	2	3	4	5
Confidence					
1. A strong relationship with Christ should be seen in leaders	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know that I am in the center of God's will	1	2	3	4	5
3. I live by faith	1	2	3	4	5
4. In difficult times, I know that I can trust God	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a good attitude toward others	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am optimistic	1	2	3	4	5
7. I take initiative to direct others	1	2	3	4	5
8. My goal is to edify others in the church	1	2	3	4	5
Calling					
1. My leadership flows from a personal relationship with Christ	1	2	3	4	5
2. The conversion of another is of utmost importance	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have an intense desire to see God's Word fulfilled	1	2	3	4	5
4. Others have confirmed that I am called to lead	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have sufficient knowledge to lead	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am committed to long-term growth	1	2	3	4	5

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. My life is Spirit-led | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I walk in faith, believing in God's promises | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Courage

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. It is the pastor's job to evangelize the lost | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I try to please everyone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have led more than one person to Christ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I witness frequently | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I am comfortable witnessing to the lost | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. If need be, I will stand alone for Christ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Resolving conflict is not a problem for me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Scripture is the authority by which I live my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Commitment

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. One way to honor God is through family | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I pray regularly with my family | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I enjoy ministering to others with my spouse | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I encourage other couples to live Christ-like lives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I encourage others to pray | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I pray each day | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I tithe to my church | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I enjoy overseeing work that needs to be done | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Character

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Leadership is not a position but a lifestyle | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. True character is measured over a lifetime | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Integrity is important for effective leadership | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Right doctrine must be accompanied by a holy life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I feel encouraged when I help those in need | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. I feel as if my actions are consistent with God's will | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I can minister to non-Christians without compromise | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I trust that God can do the impossible | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Creativity

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I like to discover new ways to teach the gospel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I am willing to take risks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I have no trouble communicating the gospel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. God honors biblical innovation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. My motivation to be creative is to glorify Christ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. There are creative ways to communicate gospel truth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I research regularly for new ideas on how to share the gospel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. A creative God wants me to use my creative potential | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Compassion

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I have compassion toward Christians who have sinned | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I will go to any length to build up God's People | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I nurture God's people by giving spiritual counsel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I believe that I should show respect toward all people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. I easily balance my strong convictions with a loving spirit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. A person must be a good servant before he or she can lead | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I have an unconditional love for all people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I am patient with those who disagree with me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX 2

TRAINING MATERIAL OUTLINE

Jewish Discipleship in Paul's Day

- Essenes, Sadducees, Pharisees
 - Training began at circumcision on the eighth day (Phil 3:5)
 - A Hebrew child in Paul's day began early and was centered on two significant areas. The first was personal growth and the second was spiritual.
 - According to Josephus, Moses prescribed the learning of certain laws for the boys because it is the best cause of prosperity. They were taught to read and write, walk according to the law, and know the deeds of their forefathers.¹
- In the period of the Mishna—the first written Torah that followed the oral Torah—and possibly up to the first century after Christ, boys with fathers (not orphans) went to elementary schools for instruction.
 - The habitual practice of writing and reading the law taught the children the importance of reading, especially reading on the Sabbath.
 - The synagogue was considered a place of instruction.
- Paul
 - Personal development
 - Integrity
 - Good steward of resources given to him
 - Spiritual development

¹Emil Schurer, *A History of Jewish People in the Time of Christ: Second Division*, vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 47.

- Prayer
- Doctrinal studies
- Maturity

Discipleship in the Early Church

- The highest calling of discipleship was martyrdom
 - AD 110
 - Ignatius' letter to the Romans
 - "Yet because of their [the soldiers] mistreatment I am becoming more of a disciple; nevertheless I am not thereby justified. May I have the pleasure of the wild beasts that have been prepared for me; and I pray that they prove to be prompt with me. I will even coax them to devour me quickly, not as they have done with some, whom they were too timid to touch. And if when I am willing and they are not, I will force them. Bear with me-I know what is best for me. Now at last I am beginning to be a disciple."²
- AD 304
 - During the time of Eusebius
 - Diocletian's edict declared that all pastors would worship the Roman gods by force. If they did not, their homes would be burned.³
 - Christian leaders were not to seek it, but were certainly never to retreat from martyrdom.
 - This came from an interpretation of Luke 9:23-26. The follower must
 - deny himself
 - take up his cross, which means to be:

²Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 231.

³Eusebius, *Church History, Life of Constantine The Great, and Oration in Praise of Constantine*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, ed. Philip Schaff (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 1:398-400.

- under authority of someone else
 - condemned
 - as good as dead
- Peter understood this (cf. 1 Peter 2:21-23)

Discipleship in the Middle Ages

- Early middle ages, local priest's promoted discipleship within the family
 - Parents and godparent's were to teach children the basic prayers and doctrinal statements of the church
 - In the Netherlands and Belgium, for example, manuscripts called "household codices" contained the Apostle's Creed, the Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer and other prayers; they were produced for family discipleship.⁴
- Late middle ages; some of the intellectual life in the church was preoccupied with interpretation over the application of Augustine's writings concerning the Trinity, marriage, the sacraments, and the interpretation of Scripture
- Church leaders failed to reproduce what Augustine taught in regard to family discipleship.
- Contributing factors to the demise of discipleship within the family included
 - illiteracy
 - the expense of books
 - poor preparation on behalf of the parish priests
 - educated clergy were removed from parish life to monasteries

Discipleship of the Reformers

- John Calvin

⁴Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, *Household, Women, the Christianities in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker and Joscelyn Wogan-Browne (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2005), 191.

- French reformer
- In Calvin’s thinking, parents, particularly fathers, were responsible to disciple their children.
- Two catechisms—one was for the instruction of their children⁵
- Martin Luther
 - German reformer
 - Stressed becoming a disciple before becoming a leader; “In holy and divine matters one must first hear rather than see, first believe rather than understand, first be grasped rather than grasp, first be captured rather than capture, first learn rather than teach, first be a disciple rather than a teacher and master of his own. We have an ear so that we may submit to others, and eyes that we may take care of others. Therefore, whoever in the church wants to become an eye and a leader and master of others, let him become an ear and a disciple first. This first.”⁶
 - Luther’s Small Catechism
 - 10 Commandments
 - The Apostles Creed
 - The Lord’s Prayer
 - The Sacrament of Holy Baptism
 - The Sacrament of the Altar (Communion)
 - The Daily Prayers
 - The Table of Duties
 - Christian Questions and Answers

Discipleship in the Nineteenth-Century

- Charles Spurgeon
-

⁵John Calvin, *Tracts and Letters*, trans. Henry Beveredge, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 33.

⁶Martin Luther, *Lectures on the Psalms II, Luther’s Works*, vol. 11 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1976), 245-46.

- Believed that discipleship was as needful as faith
- Preached that a saved man is a learner who practices what he learns; the practicing of what he learns becomes service in love
- Developed leadership trends in disciples who were to be⁷
 - full of faith
 - prayer-empowered
 - Spirit-led
 - resolved to grow
 - servant leaders

Modern Discipleship

- Wayne Cordiero⁸
 - Spiritual Gifts Test
 - Be yourself
 - Servant lifestyle
 - Work as a team
 - Dream the dream
 - Begin at the right place
 - Passing the baton
 - What is the blueprint of the mature disciple?
 - What is your passion or vision?
 - It must agree with Scripture
 - It must be consistent with the Great Commission

⁷Larry J. Michael, *Spurgeon on Leadership: Key Insights from the Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 11.

⁸Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2004), 17-190.

- It must guide every activity of one's life
 - What is your vision?
- Mountain View Community Church's discipleship group expectations and the blueprint for what a mature Christian should look like.
 - Administrative Team Expectations
 - Interns will chart personal and spiritual development of group disciples and report at Group-Link
 - Not all groups will develop at the same rate
 - All spiritual leaders are expected to attend the Group-Link meetings
 - Apprentices are to be identified and introduced to the other spiritual leaders at Group-Link
 - Apprentices will be required to attend a weekend retreat for prayer and training
 - Groups are expected to multiply every two and one-half years
 - Each group is expected to do four community projects per year
 - Accountability and prayer will be maintained between spiritual leaders
 - Blueprint of a mature believer
 - Describe what qualities you see in a mature disciple
 - Describe how you would challenge others to grow personally and spiritually
 - What is your vision for your group?
 - List some special interest groups in your community
 - Begin to think about community projects. What would they be?
 - Begin to build a prayer portfolio of who you would want to come into your group
 - Get a map and circle your area of ministry based on school system, businesses, churches, and vacation spots

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS AT MOUNTAIN VIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH, RICHFIELD, PENNSYLVANIA

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Chapter 1 describes the demographics and ministry context of Mountain View Community Church. This chapter also includes four measurable and obtainable goals of the ministry project and serves as the rationale for developing leaders for discipleship groups.

Chapter 2 examines the biblical and theological support for leadership development. It focuses on 1 Peter 4:10-11, an overview of Paul's training of Timothy in 1 Timothy, and the choosing of the seven deacons in Acts 6:1-7. These three texts serve as biblical models on how to identify, train, and deploy leaders.

Chapter 3 addresses other models of development used by Spurgeon and contemporary writers. It details the rationale and methodology for pastoral leadership, multiplication, and evangelism.

Chapter 4 outlines the course of this project. This chapter is designed to help other church leaders should they wish to duplicate the leadership development process used for discipleship groups at Mountain View.

Finally, chapter 5 evaluates the project's purpose as well as the accomplishment of the four goals. It addresses what could be changed, what went well, and what could be improved. It concludes with some theological and personal reflections.

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