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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
COURSE AT CROSSPOINT CHURCH IN CLEMSON,
SOUTH CAROLINA, FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE
ELDER CANDIDATES

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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	vi
PREFACE.....	vii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Purpose	1
Goals	1
Ministry Context.....	3
Rationale	6
Definitions	7
Limitations and Delimitations	8
Research Methodology	9
2. THE SCRIPTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR TRAINING ELDERS.....	14
Elders in the Old Testament	16
Elders in the Church are Qualified	24
Elders in the Church are Trained	32
Elders in the Church are Jesus' Undershepherds.....	37
Conclusion	45

Chapter	Page
3. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES IN TRAINING ELDERS.....	46
Principles of Instructional Design	50
Knowles’ Andragogy and Effectiveness in Adult Education	61
The Value of Mentorship in Education	70
Conclusion	76
4. THE FIFTEEN–WEEK PROJECT.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Enlistment of Course Participants	79
Phase 1: Development of Training Objectives	81
Phase 2: Course Design	84
Phase 3: Course Implementation	89
Conclusion	97
5. PROJECT EVALUATION.....	98
Introduction.....	98
Evaluation of the Project’s Purpose.....	98
Evaluation of the Project’s Goals	99
Evaluation of the Project’s Methodology	102
Strengths of the Project.....	104
Weaknesses of the Project	106
Suggested Project Modifications	107
Theological Reflections	109
Personal Reflections	112

	Page
Conclusion	113
 Appendix	
1. TRAINING OBJECTIVES RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXISTING ELDERS.....	115
2. CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXPERT PANEL	117
3. PRE-COURSE AND POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE: TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE PARTICIPANTS.....	119
4. POST-COURSE MENTOR SURVEY: TO BE COMPLETED BY MENTORS	126
5. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE.....	127
6. LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES INCLUDED IN THE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE NOTEBOOK.....	226
7. TRAINING OBJECTIVES RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXISTING ELDERS.....	227
8. CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXPERT PANEL	229
9. PRE-COURSE AND POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE: TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE PARTICIPANTS.....	232
10. RESPONSES TO THE POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE SUPPLEMENT.....	240
11. POST-COURSE MENTOR SURVEY: TO BE COMPLETED BY MENTORS	243
BIBLIOGRAPHY	245

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table	Page
A1. T-test: Paired two sample for means	232
A2. Pre-course and post-course questionnaire results	234
A3. Weighted rank order responses	241
Figure	
A1. Summary of pre- and post-course perceived readiness.....	233

PREFACE

The truest expression of a shepherd is the Lord Jesus, whom I esteem and to whom give glory and gratitude for calling me his own.

Many godly men have shepherded me in the watchcare of our Lord: the late Rev. Robert Freeland, Dr. Ron Grizzle, Rev. Steve Genoble, Mr. David Heinbuch, Rev. Barry Bouchillon, Dr. Kevin Ezell, and Dr. Thurman Hayes. Additionally, I am grateful for Rev. Ken Lewis and Rev. Jeremy Chasteen, two men with whom I currently have the privilege to serve and who shepherd me so skillfully and lovingly.

I am thankful for the skillful counsel and generous encouragement provided by my faculty supervisor, Dr. Anthony W. Foster.

The Lord has taught me so much on the heart of a shepherd as he has entrusted my wife, Cayce, to my care. She is a woman through whom his grace exudes and has demonstrated much strength through this project. Our children Reese, Will, Stu, Clark, and Nathan are gifts from the Lord. I pray they may know the good Shepherd.

May the Lord be pleased to use this project to release well-trained men to shepherd his flock with the skill, gentleness, and zeal of Jesus.

Jason Finley

Clemson, South Carolina

December 2014

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a pastoral leadership course at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina for present and future elder candidates.

Goals

Three goals determined the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to determine and list training objectives to equip Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out their duties as elders. These objectives were identified in collaboration with the existing Crosspoint Church elders by considering Crosspoint Church's local context of ministry, Scripture, theology, and church history. A rubric developed for the purposes of this project was given to the existing Crosspoint Church elders to measure the effectiveness of the training objectives to prepare present and future elder candidates for pastoral leadership (see appendix 1). In order for this goal to be deemed successful, the existing Crosspoint Church elders must have affirmed the training objectives for the pastoral leadership course on the training objectives evaluation rubric by marking 90 percent of the rubric indicators at sufficient or above. A successful score on this rubric determined that the training objectives help prepare present and future elder candidates for the work of pastoral leadership.

The second goal was to develop a course curriculum to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives. The curriculum included a schedule, teaching outlines, prompt questions to facilitate group discussion, outside of class reading assignments, a mentoring component, and leadership development objectives. This goal was measured using a curriculum evaluation rubric developed for this project that an expert panel used to evaluate the completed course curriculum (see appendix 2). This goal of developing an effective curriculum was successfully accomplished if the expert panel affirmed the training curriculum by marking 90 percent of the indicators on the curriculum evaluation rubric at sufficient or above.

The third goal was to implement a six-session course with Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. The course consisted of 5 three-hour sessions along with homework assignments. It was proposed that homework would take no more than five hours to complete between classes. At the beginning of the training course, the participants completed a pre-course questionnaire, which evaluated their theological knowledge, understanding of issues related to practical shepherding, ministry philosophy, and perceptions of their leadership ability (see appendix 3). The same questionnaire was distributed at the conclusion of the course to measure the effectiveness of the course. A t-test for dependent samples was used to determine whether there was a positive statistical difference between the pre-course and post-course questionnaires. This goal was successfully accomplished if the t-test indicated there were statistically significant differences gained from a comparison of the two questionnaires given before and after the pastoral leadership course. Additionally, three supplemental questions were

added to the post–course questionnaire to gain additional feedback on the participant’s experience in the course that would be used to improve future offerings of this course.

Ministry Context

Crosspoint Church was planted in the college town of Clemson, South Carolina, in the fall of 2005. Two men initially served as full–time pastors at the church. Five months later, in January of 2006, my family and I moved to South Carolina to join the staff team as the third full–time pastor in the role of Discipleship Pastor.

From the beginning, Crosspoint Church’s leaders have been committed to plant a church that is God–centered in our worship and ministries. Maintaining a high view of Scripture, the elders are convinced that the Bible should inform everything the church does. At Crosspoint, this philosophy of ministry is called “theologically–driven.” One way churches are theologically–driven is by being organized in a way that is most faithful to Scripture. Crosspoint Church’s elders believe the most biblical manner for a church to be organized is to be led by a plurality of elders who are accountable to the congregation. This form of polity is known as “elder–led, congregationally–ruled.”

In 2008, Crosspoint Church took its next step toward a healthy plurality of elders that would include elders that are both paid and unpaid. After preaching a series on the church and the office of elders, the congregation prayerfully recommended men to be evaluated for the office of elder. This effort yielded 1 candidate who moved beyond an initial questionnaire into the evaluation stage of elder selection. Unfortunately, changes at this candidate’s work and pressures at home changed his availability and he had to withdraw from candidacy.

In 2011, the existing elders went back to the congregation for recommendations of men to be considered as elders. This time, another man moved into the evaluation stage of elder selection. Unfortunately, he likewise had a change in work and became unable to proceed through elder evaluation due to personal time constraints.

By Crosspoint Church's eighth anniversary, the church still had not mobilized any additional elders to help carry out the shepherding and oversight of the church. Additionally, Crosspoint Church no longer exists as a church plant, but by God's grace has grown to be a large, established church. Crosspoint Church's average weekly attendance has grown past 800 with a membership exceeding 600. In spite of the church's size and increased shepherding load, the same three elders continued to provide oversight of the church. In order for the church to remain united in mission and vision, its leadership base must continue to expand to faithfully provide oversight in shepherding, care, and leadership

Crosspoint Church's existing elders love one another and maintain close working relationships with each other. However, they are overloaded and need more elders laboring with them in order to faithfully shepherd the flock. The shortage of elders negatively affects the existing elders and church in a number of ways. (1) By not having enough elders, the existing elders carry too many areas of oversight. This role overload¹

¹“Role overload describes situations in which employees feel that there are too many responsibilities or activities expected of them in light of the time available, their abilities, and other constraints.” Mark C. Bolino and William H. Turnley, “The Personal Costs of Citizenship Behavior: The Relationship between Individual Initiative and Role Overload, Job Stress, and Work–Family Conflict,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 90, no. 4 (2005), 741, accessed August 15, 2013, <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/apl/90/4/740/>. See also John R. Rizzo, Robert J. House, and Sidney I. Lirtzman, “Role Conflict and Ambiguity in Complex Organizations,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (June 1970), accessed August 15, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2391486>.

affects the church as a whole as the elders are less effective in shepherding the church family. (2) Some church members are not being carefully shepherded or are not being appropriately pursued in their absence. The existing elders have identified nearly 100 members who are either unaccounted for or are known to not be presently attending our corporate gatherings. It is a great concern that sheep in the congregation are not being shepherded well. (3) Further, corrective church discipline has not been adequately maintained. Pursuit of church members in need of corrective discipline has at times been too slow or neglected altogether. (4) With growing ministries and staff, church organization and processes need strengthening. This organizational strengthening is contingent on an appropriately sized elder body for the church. Crosspoint's recently revised strategic plan evidences this need for more elders in the church's organizational health. In the strategic plan, one of the priorities for the church to continue to grow as a healthy church is to mobilize more elders, particularly lay elders.

The good news is that the existing elders see men in our fellowship who they believe will meet the biblical qualifications and be able to serve as elders. Additionally, Crosspoint has other godly men with future elder-potential. The existing elders desire to provide teaching and training for these men to deepen their theological foundation and prepare them for future leadership in the church. If Crosspoint Church is to maintain unity in love and in mission, the elders must maintain this same unity. A strong training course for present and future elder candidates will foster this continued unity. These men must be trained in Scripture and theology, matters of practical shepherding and pastoral leadership, and in Crosspoint Church's core theological distinctives and philosophy of

ministry. As a result, such training will yield alignment and unity among the elders and help prepare other men to serve as elders in the future.

The existing elders tasked me with the responsibility to develop a pastoral leadership course for present and future elder candidates. This course was developed to strengthen our elder candidates through church-based theological training and develop them as pastors with training in practical shepherding and leadership. This ministry project was thus dedicated to the development and implementation of such a course.

Rationale

In its first eight years of existence, Crosspoint Church has grown from a small church plant to a large church that is making disciples on the campus and in the community of Clemson, South Carolina. While the church grew steadily, it continued to be led by the same three elders who led it in the first year of its existence. While the church maintained a strong unity, its health was in jeopardy unless more men were raised up to help shepherd the congregation as elders. As noted, the existing elders were overloaded and pastoral care and discipline of the church family suffered. Further, the elders had no formal plan in place to train and assimilate qualified elder candidates.

Several key benefits arose from the development of a pastoral leadership course for training present and future elder candidates. First, qualified elder candidates were trained with a clear understanding of God's calling on elders in the context of Crosspoint Church and assimilated onto the body of elders at Crosspoint Church. The training helped move the elder body toward a more healthy size to faithfully shepherd the church by doubling the number of elders. Additionally, ten other men who were identified as future elder candidates received a season of intense training and discipleship

to help prepare them to potentially serve the church as an elder in the future. A third benefit from the development of this pastoral leadership course is that the elders now have a strategic, formal process to train and assimilate men who will be identified as qualified elder candidates in the future. Except for the senior pastor, men hired to lead in ministry from outside the church are not immediately appointed to the office of elder. For such men, the church utilizes a second-tier leadership level called “minister.” After at least one year of service at the church, these paid ministerial staff may be eligible to be considered for the office of elder. These paid ministerial staff will participate in the same elder selection process as other elder candidates and will likewise participate in this elder training with the unpaid elder candidates in the future.

Definitions

The following words and phrases used throughout this project need to be defined.

Elder. In *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons*, Thabiti Anyabwile provides the following description of elders, which has been adopted for the purposes of this project:

As a gift to his flock, the Chief Shepherd appoints godly men as under-shepherds to tend the flock that he purchased with his blood (Acts 20:28). We know these under-shepherds by various titles use interchangeably, including: pastors, overseers, bishops, and elders. Like the Chief Shepherd, elders or pastors watch over the flock entrusted to their care (1 Pet. 5:1–3) by leading, feeding, and protecting the sheep.²

²Thabiti Anyabwile, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 49.

Qualified elder candidates. According to the process delineated by the Crosspoint Church Constitution, qualified elder candidates are men the congregation has recommended for the office of elder and found to meet the biblical qualifications for this office by the existing elders through an oral and written examination.³

Future elder candidates. Future elder candidates are men the existing elders recognize as demonstrating elder-like character and shepherding in the church but are younger or have not been Christians as long as the qualified elder candidates.⁴

Pastoral leadership. Pastoral Leadership is the work of the elders (*presbuteros*) that depicts leadership of the church through the biblical ideas of shepherding (*poimen*) and oversight (*episkopos*).⁵

Limitations and Delimitations

A limitation to this project was the number of elder-like men who were members of Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. While it is a noble task to aspire to the office of elder (1 Tim 3:1), Scripture gives clear traits identifying the

³Crosspoint Church Constitution, Clemson, SC, 2011. See also John Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishing, 2005), 186. Hammett observes that Scripture gives little explicit direction on the selection of elders (see the only two examples in Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5) and identifies two biblical principles for the selection of elders. He writes, “The biblical support for congregational church government would argue for a role for the congregation in the process. The biblical teaching on the leadership role for the elders would support their involvement in and oversight of the process” (186). Both of these biblical principles are a part of Crosspoint Church's process for identifying qualified elder candidates.

⁴Phil Newton, *Elders in Congregational Life: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 137.

⁵Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*. On pp. 161–63, Hammett demonstrates the interchangeability of the terms *episkopos*, *presbuteros*, and *poimen* for the office of elder and the functions of pastor/shepherd and overseer.

character of men who are elder-like (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Scripture gives warrant to appoint for pastoral leadership in the church only those who meet these qualifications.

Another limitation was that course participants were given a reading list in advance of the pre-course questionnaire. The pre-course questionnaire could have been impacted by knowledge acquired in preparation for this course. Scores on the pre-course questionnaire may have been higher than the participants' actual knowledge and preparedness prior to the reading for the course.

Two delimitations to this project were established. The first delimitation was that this course was limited to a small group of current and future elder candidates as identified by the existing elders of Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. Thirteen men participated in the course. A second delimitation to this project was the six-week duration of the course. This duration restricted the depth and amount of material taught in the course. Continued training of current and future elder candidates will continue beyond the scope of this project.

Research Methodology

Three goals were established to accomplish the purpose of this project. In order to measure the effectiveness of these goals, several research instruments were utilized.

The first goal was to determine and list training objectives to equip Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out the duties of elders. These training objectives encompassed theology, practical shepherding, leadership development, and Crosspoint Church distinctives. The first 2 weeks of the project were used to determine and list the training objectives. These objectives were identified in

collaboration with the existing Crosspoint Church elders by considering Crosspoint Church's local context of ministry, Scripture, and theology. At the conclusion of week 1, the training objectives were presented to the existing Crosspoint Church elders during a regularly scheduled elders meeting. The existing elders completed a training objectives rubric and returned to me at the conclusion of the elders meeting (see appendix 1). The rubric evaluated the training objectives through ten questions covering Scriptural faithfulness, clarity, and effectiveness in accomplishing the purpose of the project. Utilizing a four-point scale, the rubric evaluated the given criteria as insufficient, requiring attention, sufficient, or exemplary. This goal was deemed successful if the Crosspoint Church elders affirmed that the training objectives help prepare present and future elder candidate for the work of pastoral leadership by marking 90 percent of the indicators on the training objectives evaluation rubric at sufficient or above.

The second goal was to design a course curriculum to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives. During weeks 3 through 8 of the project, I used the approved training objectives to develop a curriculum in pastoral leadership for training Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. The curriculum included a syllabus, course notes, and participant assignments (see appendix 5). Participant assignments included reading, writing, personal reflection, and shepherding experiences with a mentor. In week 8 of the project, the completed course curriculum and a curriculum evaluation rubric was issued in electronic and hard copy form to an expert panel to evaluate whether the curriculum accomplishes the goal. The expert panel was selected to include diverse areas of expertise to assess the curriculum comprehensively. The three members on the expert panel were a pastoral

leadership reader, a curriculum reader, and a theological reader. The pastoral leadership reader was required to have at least twenty years of pastoral experience and hold a Master of Divinity degree. The curriculum evaluator was required to be a professional educator or curriculum designer with a Master's degree or higher. The theological reader was required to hold a doctoral degree in a theological field.

The curriculum evaluation rubric utilized a four-point scale evaluating the given criteria as insufficient, requiring attention, sufficient, or exemplary (see appendix 2). The curriculum evaluation rubric measured the curriculum for biblical faithfulness and educational effectiveness. Additionally, it allowed for comments and other feedback. This goal was deemed successful if the expert panel affirmed the training curriculum to be an effective instructional tool with 90 percent of the rubric indicators marked at sufficient or above.

At the beginning of week 9, members of the expert panel returned their evaluations of the curriculum. Completed evaluation rubrics were analyzed and results compiled. The curriculum was determined to be useful if it reached the stated threshold of 90 percent at sufficient or above on the curriculum evaluation rubric. If any threshold was not met, changes needed in order to achieve the standard of success would be made. In either case, all feedback received from the expert panel was considered and integrated for the effectiveness of the training course.

The third goal was to implement a six-session course with Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. This course met during weeks 10 through 15 of the project on Sunday afternoons. Though originally built to be a six-week course meeting for two-hours each session, schedule conflicts dictated the course be taught over

five weeks in three-hour meetings. Teaching methods for this course included lecture, group discussion, student-facilitated discussion, and personal reflection exercises. Participants also met outside of class at least three times with a mentor for training and discussion in practical theology and pastoral ministry. Homework included shepherding experiences, reading, and writing assignments. Homework time-on-task was set for five hours per week. Participants who missed a class were required to meet with me for a make-up session within ten days of the absence. Due to the value of class participation and the brevity of the course, participants could not complete the course if more than 1 class was missed. In week 9, participants were gathered and issued a pre-course questionnaire. The questionnaire collected the participant's name and include a variety of questions utilizing a six-point Likert scale. Participants were examined on their perceived preparedness to teach or explain issues pertinent to the office of elder and practice in matters around the qualifications and duties of elders at Crosspoint Church. The questionnaire consisted of eighty questions with three sections: Scripture and theology, practical shepherding and leadership, and Crosspoint Church distinctives. The church's Administrative Coordinator compiled the completed pre-course questionnaires. At the conclusion of the course during week 15 of the project, a post-course questionnaire was distributed to each participant. This questionnaire consisted of the same questions as the pre-course questionnaire. Additionally, a three-question supplemental questionnaire was added to the post-course questionnaire. This supplement included two open-ended and one quantitative question to allow for participant feedback on the perceived value of the course in his preparation for the office of elder (see appendix 3). After the church's Administrative Coordinator compiled the post-course questionnaires, I reviewed and

compared the responses to the pre-course questionnaires. For both questionnaires, the participants' responses were averaged for comparison.

A t-test for dependent samples was used for each section of the questionnaire to determine if there was a significant statistical difference between the pre-course questionnaire and post-course questionnaire results. The third goal was considered successfully met if a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a significant statistical increase in a comparison of the post-course questionnaire with the pre-course questionnaire averages.

In the post-course supplemental questionnaire, the two open-ended questions were evaluated for recurrent themes, such as the percentage of participants who mentioned specific themes. The quantitative question responses were compiled and analyzed to determine which areas of the course were most beneficial to the student's perceived preparedness for pastoral leadership in Crosspoint Church.

At the conclusion of the course, each mentor was asked to complete a Post-Course Mentor Survey (see appendix 4) providing feedback on the participants he mentored. Utilizing open-ended questions, this survey verified the course participants' participation in mentoring and gave valuable feedback on the mentors' perceptions of the course participants' progress. Additionally, the mentors gave feedback and recommendations for improving this aspect of the course for future course offerings.⁶

⁶All research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research ethics committee prior to use in the ministry project.

CHAPTER 2

THE SCRIPTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR TRAINING ELDERS

Shepherds, who are often marginalized in society, fulfill the important role of caring for a flock of animals. Shepherds provide for and protect their herds while sojourning in the wilderness. In light of this human experience of shepherds, it is surprising that God chooses to use this very idea of a shepherd over his people to describe *himself* in Scripture (Gen 49:24; Ps 23:1; Isa 40:10; Ezek 34). In this shepherd metaphor, God intentionally and explicitly applies a known role from the realm of human experience to himself. This important anthropomorphism helps God's covenant people to understand central aspects of His work to protect, lead, feed, and care for them.¹

In his book *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, Timothy Laniak demonstrates that the shepherd metaphor is essential to understanding God's leadership of his people in the Bible. In Scripture, he writes, one finds "a persistent, fully developed narrative of the divine Shepherd who, with his undershepherds, looks after the needs of his vulnerable flock as they wander along the margins of settled society."² As Laniak observes, a primary way God shepherds his people is through raising up human leaders from among

¹For an excellent analysis of the shepherd metaphor in Scripture applied to Yahweh, see Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* 20 (Downers Grove, IL: Apollos: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 77–87.

²*Ibid.*, 41.

his people to protect, lead, feed, and care for them. These divinely appointed leaders are described as undershepherds, for they are shepherds under the authority of God himself.

In Scripture, a prominent title of God’s human undershepherds is that of elder. In *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons*, Thabiti Anyabwile provides the following description of elders:

As a gift to his flock, the Chief Shepherd appoints godly men as under–shepherds to tend the flock that he purchased with his blood (Acts 20:28). We know these under–shepherds by various titles used interchangeably, including: pastors, overseers, bishops, and elders. Like the Chief Shepherd, elders or pastors watch over the flock entrusted to their care (1 Pet. 5:1–3) by leading, feeding, and protecting the sheep.³

In the new covenant community of the church, the faithfulness of elders significantly influences the health and faithfulness of the church. Therefore, it is crucial that God’s appointed shepherd leaders carefully follow His design and calling. Mark Dever explains that faithful leadership in churches is more than mere practical concern, but has significant gospel implications: “Our conduct in the church in regard to this matter of leadership is to be such that the Gospel is not brought into disrepute but rather is held up to be the glorious light of hope and truth in the world.”⁴ What, then, is God’s design for leadership in the church? Scripture reveals that churches need a plurality of qualified and trained men serving together as God’s undershepherds in the office of elder.

³Thabiti Anyabwile, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 49.

⁴Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 242.

Elders in the Old Testament

God has worked through history to redeem for himself a people in covenant relationship with himself. As such, God has always provided human undershepherds to lead and spiritually oversee his people. When observing God's leadership of his covenant people through the Old Testament, God raised up men in several offices, including prophets (*navi*, Deut 18:18), priests (*kohen*, Mal 2:7), kings (*melek*, 2 Sam 24:21), and elders (*zaqan*, 2 Kgs 12:6–8). While each of these offices had distinct responsibilities and differing levels of authority, each was fundamentally a means the Lord provided to give leadership and spiritual oversight to his covenant people. Whereas Jesus distinctly fulfilled the offices of prophet and priest and king,⁵ the New Testament writers chose to continue using the term “elder” in the office of oversight and spiritual leadership of local churches (Acts 11:30; 15:4; 20:17, 28; 1 Tim 5:17; Jas 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1–4). Even in Revelation, the term “elder” continues to describe men who represent leadership and spiritual oversight of God's covenant people (Rev 4:4; 11:16). With this continuous use of the term “elder” throughout the canon of Scripture, it can be demonstrated that the Old Testament institution of elder serves as a forerunner of the new covenant office of elder.

Elders in Israel

Among the divinely appointed authorities of the people of Israel (prophets, priests, kings, and elders), the only one to maintain a presence among all the people

⁵Jesus fulfills the office of prophet as he speaks the very words of God (Matt 7:24–29); the office of priest because he offered a perfect sacrifice for our sins bringing us to God (Heb 6:19–20; 9:24; 10:4); and the office of king as he will rule over God's redeemed people for all eternity (Matt 26:64; Rev 19:16, 22:3–5).

across the towns and villages of the nation throughout the history of the nation was the institution of elders. The elders were identified from each clan and community. Their responsibilities were to provide local leadership of judicial matters, give spiritual oversight of the people through preserving and applying Torah, and give account for the people to God (Exod 19:7–8; 1 Kgs 8:1). As Old Testament elders maintained a judicial role, modern readers must be careful to not apply the contemporary judicial system onto their reading of the work of elders in the Old Testament. For the theocratic nation of Israel, the preservation and application of the law correlated directly to the spiritual well being of the people. Under the old covenant, keeping God’s law ensured the covenant blessings of God (Deut 6:42–25) and breaking God’s law forfeited God’s covenant blessings (Jer 11:9–11). Elders were accessible and involved with all the people of Israel, being described as overseers “in the gate” (Deut 21:19). It is noteworthy that the Old Testament institution of elders existed after the collapse of Israel’s political monarchy and in times void of prophets. Elders had an active presence during the exile (Ezra 8:1; 14:1; 20:1–3) and following the return to the land of Israel (Ezra 10:16). Even into the New Testament period, the Jewish office of elder continued, remaining closely tied to each community with judicial responsibilities under Roman authorities.

An examination of Numbers 11:16–30 demonstrates several specific ways the Jewish institution of elder anticipates the Christian office of elder. To begin with, the literary context of this passage will be considered.

Context of Numbers 11

Following Israel’s exodus from Egypt and the reception of the law at Mount Sinai, this passage is set with God’s covenant people moving toward the promised land of

Canaan. However, God’s people began to grumble and begrudge the Lord’s provision for them. Immediately after this passage, the people’s complaining only increased, leading to the judgment upon the entire generation to perish in the wilderness. This generation of Israel would wander in the wilderness for forty years as they perish while the next generation yet to inherit the land would be raised up (Num 14:22–24).

From Egypt, Moses served as a prophet and priest for the people. He spoke God’s words to them and mediated to God on their behalf. As Moses was a shepherd of sheep before becoming leader of the Israelites (Exod 2:15–3:1), he continued as a shepherd—only now overseeing the people of Israel (Ps 77:20). Yet, as the flock of Israel increasingly rebelled against God, he alone could not shepherd the entire nation. There existed a group of men whom God chose to help Moses carry this burden. From the beginning of the nation of Israel, based on the common ancient Near Eastern practice,⁶ heads of families were identified as elders (Gen 50:7; Exod 3:16; 4:29). This seminal concept of elders as family-heads gradually grew, as Moses mobilized the elders to serve the first Passover meal (Exod 12:21, 22) and chose them to assist in interpreting God’s law and administering justice (Exod 18:13–23). Yet, the burden of leadership and spiritual oversight remained heavy on Moses.

At the outset of Numbers 11, the sin of grumbling was heavy among the “rabble” (*hasapsup*; Num 11:4) of the people dwelling on the fringe of the camp. Sadly, their grumbling spread to the rest of the Israelites throughout the camp, revealing the people’s distrust of the Lord and rebellion against him. In Numbers 11:10–15, instead of

⁶Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), 39.

interceding for his people, Moses joined in with this grumbling when he observed the Lord's anger burning against the "weeping" (11:10) of the people. Moses was completely overwhelmed and in despair at his calling to spiritually lead the people.

Demonstrating his wisdom and judgment, in response to Israel's yearning for meat to eat, God gave the grumbling Israelites exactly what they wanted (11:13). God gave them meat until it became "loathsome" to the people (11:19–20) and then caused a plague to break out in judgment of the people (11:33). Verse 34 summarizes this judgment: "Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah [literally, 'graves of craving'], because there they buried the people who had the craving."

Yet God was gracious to Moses. Even though Moses had joined in grumbling to God over the burden of the people, God graciously provided elders that would bless both Moses and the people instead of judging Moses. The Lord instructed the downcast Moses to select seventy men from among the elders of Israel to assist him in shepherding the people (11:16, 17). Gordon Wenham observes the spiritual aspect of these elders' shepherding role, "Since [Moses'] administrative duties were already shared with others (Ex. 18:13ff.), these elders must have been intended to give him spiritual support (*cf.* Ex. 24:9)."⁷ In at least three ways, this selection of elders points forward to the Christian office of elder.

⁷ Gordon Wenham, *Numbers: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 4 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1981), 108.

Recognized Leaders

The seventy men that the Lord called Moses to select were to be from among the elders of Israel (Num 11:16). The existing elders of Israel were those already recognized as leaders and known to be trustworthy by the people of Israel. Exodus 18:21 describes them as men who “hate a bribe.” While Moses appointed these men, it is clear that these were to be men who were already recognized as faithful leaders among and by the people of Israel.

Similarly, Christian elders are to be men identifiable for their blameless character as they are to be “above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2) and “well thought of by outsiders” (1 Tim 3:7). Further, they are to be seasoned and mature in the faith (1 Tim 3:6). Additionally, Paul instructs Timothy to entrust the teaching and shepherding of the church to men who are already faithful. He writes, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). Thus, both Jewish and Christian elders are recognized because they already exhibit characteristics of godly leadership.

Filled with the Spirit

Moses was not simply to appoint and send the seventy men to share in his burden. God instructed Moses to gather the seventy elders with him at the tent of meeting (Num 11:16) because he was going to affirm and empower them for such a task. This location is significant in the Old Testament, for it was “the standard place for revelatory activity from the Lord and where priests and Levites were anointed and commissioned

for service.”⁸ Before these elders would be fit for serving in this unique elder role, God would take a portion of His Spirit that was on Moses and place it upon these men. This gift of the Spirit is especially significant because, in the old covenant, God’s covenant people were not ordinarily indwelled with the Holy Spirit.⁹ This unique indwelling demonstrates the very unique work and challenge that lay before these elders, for they would assist Moses in providing leadership and spiritual oversight to the rebellious people of Israel. These spiritual leaders must be led by God.

The Spirit’s indwelling of the seventy elders provides a second evidence of how the new covenant elders are anticipated in Numbers 11. While these men were uniquely endowed with the Holy Spirit, their indwelling was only temporary (11:25). All believers post-Pentecost have been indwelled by the same Spirit of God permanently. However, it is instructive that Christian elders today continue to serve in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit. The source of wisdom for elders today is revealed to them by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:1–10). James equates the wisdom of the Spirit with fruit that is quite similar to the qualifications of elders (Jas 3:17; 1 Tim 3:1–7). Thus, contemporary elders must carefully tend their spiritual life, not quenching (1 Thess 5:19) or grieving (Eph 4:30) the Spirit of God. Elders should never lead from fleshly confidence, through which they abandon the privileges promised them with the indwelling Spirit of God. Because God continues to see fit to indwell and lead all believers today, elders should

⁸R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers*, The New American Commentary, vol. 3B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 189.

⁹For a helpful treatment on the nature of the indwelling Spirit in the Old Testament, see James M. Hamilton, *God’s Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testament* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006).

shepherd with thankfulness to God and have hope in the work that God is doing to sanctify his church (Phil 1:6).

Not only were the seventy indwelt with the Spirit, but Numbers 11:26 records that two men who remained in the camp instead of assembling at the tent of meeting were also recipients of the gift of the Spirit (Num 11:26). As these two men began prophesying in the camp away from the other elders, Moses' assistant, Joshua, was troubled and urged Moses to have them stop prophesying (11:28). Yet Moses would not stop them. He replied, "Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" (11:29). Two observations must be made from this response. First, the Spirit's impartation to men beyond the tent of meeting shows the overabundance and effectual working of Spirit. Secondly, this overabundance demonstrates an anticipation of a greater filling in which all believers would be permanently indwelt by the Spirit of God. Indeed, Moses longed for the day when all the people would be indwelt by God's Spirit, "Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" (11:29). This anticipation is escalated through the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28) and recognized by Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16–21).

Plurality of Spiritual Overseers

A third manner by which this passage points forward to the new covenant office of elder is in the plurality of elders that are set apart. One of God's concerns seems to be that Moses alone could not bear the burden of the people, so these elders were appointed to bear the burden of the people with Moses (Num 11:17). Dennis Cole explains that these elders were given to Israel to share a spiritual leadership role with

Moses: “Seventy of these men, a number suggestive of a full complement of persons, would be endowed with the Spirit of God for assisting Moses in bearing the burdens of the people as spiritual leaders.”¹⁰ The plurality of elders is seen consistently through the Old Testament and leading up to the Jewish culture of Jesus’ day. Deuteronomy repeatedly refers to multiple elders working together (Deut 19:12; 21:1–9, 18–21). In the Gospels, a centurion sends several Jewish elders on his behalf to appeal to Jesus for help (Luke 7:3). The practice of plural elder oversight was carried over into of the New Testament church. As Mark Dever observes, “James, Peter, Paul, and Luke also referred to the office of elder in the church, and each of them apparently presumed a plurality of elders per congregation.”¹¹

It must readily be acknowledged that, as history unfolded, these elders of Israel, much like the nation itself, did not remain to have their hearts set on the glory of the Lord. Indeed, this instance of the Spirit’s indwelling was temporary and was not passed on through subsequent generations of elders. Apart from the permanent regeneration of the Spirit, these men could not set their hearts to obey the Lord. In fact, in the Gospels, the Jewish elders are the very ones who *opposed* Christ (Matt 16:21, 27:1). Further, in Acts, the first four and last four occurrences of “elders” (*presbuteros*) refer to Jewish elders opposing the church,¹² while the middle ten occurrences refer to the elders

¹⁰Cole, *Numbers*, 189.

¹¹Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2012), 57.

¹²Benjamin Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008), 63. Acts 4:5, 8, 23; 6:12; 22:5; 23:14; 24:1; 25:15.

of the Christian church.¹³ Indeed, the Christian elder is a distinct office compared to the Old Testament and first-century Jewish practice. However, the greatest difference between the offices of the Christian and Jewish elders seems to be their response to Jesus. Only those who are regenerated by the gospel, qualified by the Spirit, and called out by the church may serve as elders in the church. Manfred Brauch helpfully observes, “Since the primitive church eventually regarded itself as the new Israel (Mt 21:43; Gal 6:16) it is easy to see why it should gradually adopt the institution of elders.”¹⁴ Alexander Strauch agrees, explaining that “for Israel, a tribal, patriarchal society, the eldership was as basic as the family. So when the New Testament records that Paul, a Jew who was thoroughly immersed in the Old Testament and Jewish culture, appointed elders for his newly founded churches (Acts 14:23), it means that he established a council of elders in each local church.”¹⁵ As has been observed from the appointing of the seventy elders in Numbers 11:16–30, God’s gives to his covenant people a plurality of men to share the burden of leadership and spiritual oversight. The Old Testament institution of elder is indeed a forerunner to the Christian office of elder.

Elders in the Church are Qualified

An old adage says, “As the leaders go, so goes the church.” Recognizing the decline of the church in America over the past century, much of the responsibility must

¹³Ibid., Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18.

¹⁴Manfred Brauch, “Elders,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 680.

¹⁵Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 39.

be attributed to the leadership of the church. From search committees to pastoral leadership development, emphasis is often placed on the “what” and “how” of church leadership. Yet, when Scripture speaks to the office of elder, it speaks less to what the elder is to *do* while placing emphasis on who the elder is to *be*. The character and qualifications of the elder are the emphases of the biblical authors. As Thomas Schreiner states, the focus of the biblical writers “was not on [elders’] skills but rather on their conformity to Christ.”¹⁶ It is no wonder the church in America is in decline when such little emphasis is placed on what Scripture expresses as most important for its leaders. Paul’s first letter to Timothy is one of several passages (see Acts 20; Titus 1; 1 Pet 5) that emphasizes the qualifications of elders in the church. An examination of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 demonstrates that churches must appoint as shepherds only those men who meet the biblical qualifications of elders.

Context of 1 Timothy

Paul wrote the letter of 1 Timothy to Timothy, who was serving as an apostolic representative leading in the church in Ephesus. Demonstrating his fond affection and vital partnership with Timothy, Paul refers to his younger co-laborer as his “true child in the faith” (1 Tim 3:2). Paul’s purposes in this letter were, first, to exhort Timothy to vigorously oppose false teachers and their errant doctrine (1:3) and, secondly, to explain the kind of behavior that was to characterize believers in the church (3:15). A rise of false teachers in Ephesus was no surprise to Paul. As Thomas Lea notes, “Paul had warned

¹⁶Thomas Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 575.

the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:30 that false teachers would arise from within their own body.”¹⁷ Therefore, in urging the excommunication of two false teachers in the church, Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:18–20), Paul demonstrated that unqualified leadership is detrimental to the church and must be dealt with. He then went to great lengths to describe the qualifications that should mark all the men serving as leaders in the church (1 Tim 3:1–13; 5:17–25). Paul’s concern was not merely organizational health, but for God’s call for the church to faithfully steward and spread the gospel (2:4–6). Indeed, as the leaders go, so goes the church.

Qualifications

As has already been noted, when the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about leadership in the church, he was concerned more with the leaders’ character and spiritual maturity more than their methods and strategy. Elders are not called because they are spiritual gurus or have impressive resumes, but because they are ordinary, godly men who all Christians can and should emulate. D. A. Carson writes, “The most remarkable feature of this list is that it is unremarkable. It contains nothing about intelligence, decisiveness, drive, wealth, power. Almost everything on the list is elsewhere in the New Testament required of all believers.”¹⁸ It is for this reason that elders, like the Apostle Paul, are to urge other Christians to emulate their character. Paul writes, “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in

¹⁷Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 42–43.

Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 1:13). For churches to be healthy and faithful in disciple-making, they must appoint as leaders only those who meet the biblical criteria. Let us now examine the qualifications as given by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1–7.¹⁹

Blameless reputation. Paul begins his list of qualifications by emphasizing that elders are to be men of blameless reputation. They are to conduct every aspect of their lives in faithfulness to Christ so that all who see them will have no grounds of accusation. Paul writes, “Therefore, an overseer must be above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2). Listed first among the qualifications, “above reproach” serves as a simple summary of the remaining qualifications. Literally translated, this word (*anepilempton*) says an elder’s character or reputation “cannot be laid hold of.” It means that churches should only appoint men whose character is blameless and reputation is of the highest integrity. William Mounce explains that an elder will not be perfect, but exude such character that it benefits the church: “It cannot mean that an overseer must be free from any sin, internal or visible, but the emphasis here is on the type of external personal reputation that would be a credit to the church.”²⁰

Just as the gospel message is for those within and outside of the church, Paul’s concern for the reputation of elders extends beyond believers to those outside of the

¹⁸D. A. Carson, *The Cross and Christian Leadership: Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 95.

¹⁹The following categories for summarizing the Scriptural qualifications of elders are adapted from Brian Croft, *Test, Train, Affirm & Send Into Ministry: Recovering the Local Church’s Responsibility in the External Call* (Leominster, UK: Day One Publications, 2010), 43–46.

²⁰William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 170.

church. That is why Paul includes among the qualifications that “he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil” (1 Tim 3:7). One who is “well thought of by outsiders” (v. 7) gives a beautiful witness to nonbelievers. Indeed, the church is a “pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15) and testifies to the world the character of God. The church must be led and cared for by men who exemplify the veracity of the gospel everywhere they go, showing the truth and beauty of the gospel to all.

Faithful management of his family. The most difficult place to live out the Christian life is in the home, for this is the place where one’s character is most clearly proven and developed. That is why Paul instructs the church to also look at a man’s domestic life when examining his character. Here, Paul first says that an elder must be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim 3:2). This means that an elder’s marriage will be exemplary to other Christians. Indeed, if the institution of marriage is to be a display of the gospel message (Eph 5:32), those who lead in the church should give most clear evidence of the gospel in their own marriages. This verse does not mean that an elder must be married, but Paul is assuming that most men would be married and have children. Paul is aware that healthy family relationships evidence the man’s character and ability to lead.

Paul does not restrict evaluation to the elder’s marriage, but includes his whole household. He writes, “He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Tim 3:4–5). The words “manage” and “submissive” reveal Paul’s concern for the elder’s proper view of authority. Both at

home and in the church, an elder exercises God-given authority. While the elder manages and leads, he does so in a manner that aims to please God. George Knight observes, “The argument moves from the ‘lesser’ to the ‘greater,’ in analogous realms, i.e., from the family to the family of God, and states that inability in the former makes ability extremely doubtful in the latter.”²¹ Indeed, an elder will give account to God for his stewardship of this delegated authority (Heb 13:17).

An elder’s domestic life is an indicator of how he will lead in the church. That is why Paul includes “hospitable” in this list of qualifications. Just as God has instructed all believers to “show hospitality” (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9), so the elder will model this virtue in his life and home. Hospitality is a trait that verifies the faithful management of one’s home. Hospitality not only reveals the elders’ care and love for others, but reveals orderliness in the home and is a powerful tool in the ministry of the gospel.

Godly character. In 1840, Pastor Robert Murray M’Cheyne wrote to the Rev. W. C. Burns of the great need of an elder to be growing in godly character: “I am also deepened in my conviction, that if we are to be instruments in such a work, we must be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Oh, cry for personal holiness, constant nearness to God by the blood of the Lamb!”²² Character that reveals inward trust and conformity to Christ is another essential trait of elders. In verses two and three, Paul lists

²¹George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 162.

²²Robert Murray McCheyne and Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne* (Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1894), 248. Logos.

several evidences of godly character that must mark the life of an elder. He must be “sober-minded” and “self-controlled” (1 Tim 3:2). “Sober-minded” evidences judgment that is not clouded by excessive influences, whether substances, passions, or emotions. He doesn’t act rashly but walks carefully. Similarly, he is “self-controlled,” which reveals discipline, sensibility, and wisdom. Additionally, he is “not a drunkard” (v. 3) and thus is not in bondage to any substance. One who is “sober-minded,” “self-controlled,” and “not a drunkard” will also be “respectable.” Lea states that this qualification is not reduced merely to good manners, but that this word “describes a person whose orderly outward life is a reflection of inner stability.”²³ Indeed, outward vices reveal internal struggle and spiritual unhealthiness.

Godly character is also revealed in how one responds to adversity and conflict. Paul continues by stating elders are “not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome” (v. 3). An elder does not respond to adversity or attack by being argumentative, divisive, or violent, but is a peacemaker. Further, he demonstrates contentment and a heart for God’s kingdom as he is “not a lover of money” (v. 3). Through and through, only men of godly character should be considered for the office of elder.

Ability to teach. In writing that he must be “able to teach,” (v. 2), Paul gives one of the few competencies and commitments of an elder. While he may not be one with primary preaching responsibility, an elder must be one who continues to grow in his knowledge of the Bible and is able to explain the Bible with clarity and fruitfulness. Paul later wrote to Timothy an imperative, “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of

²³Lea, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 110.

season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2). Mark Dever explains that the ministry of the elder hinges on the crucial responsibility of preaching and teaching. “Pastors in churches today must recover the understanding that their primary role is to preach the Word of God. . . . Whether or not numerical growth results from biblical preaching in any given congregation at any given time, Christ's church will experience true growth and edification through teaching and instruction.”²⁴

Spiritual maturity. Paul’s final category of qualifications is that elders must demonstrate spiritual maturity. “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim 3:6). Paul reveals that immature or newly converted Christians face a particular danger in the lure of pride and subsequent condemnation of the devil. A mature Christian will fully recognize the dangers of spiritual temptations and the schemes of Satan (Eph 6:11). He will be humble, able to receive criticism, and even submit to other elders who hold a different opinion. William Mounce makes an important observation: “The desire to appoint rich and well-known people into leadership positions, often for the wrong reasons, was as much a problem then as it is today.”²⁵ Only men who are deeply rooted in the grace of Christ will make the sacrifices required to faithfully shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet 5:2). Indeed, sacrificial humility evidences the spiritual maturity that is required of an elder.

²⁴Dever, *The Church*, 150.

²⁵Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 180–81.

As has been demonstrated from 1 Timothy 3:1–7, churches must appoint as elders only those men who meet the qualifications of elders. While the *work* of the pastor–elder is important in Scripture, of greater importance to the biblical writers is the *character* of the men the church appoints to be its leaders. Churches will only be healthy when they emphasize what Scripture emphasizes in the identification and training of their leaders. For this reason, Paul’s letter to Timothy is a wonderful gift to the church today.

Elders in the Church are Trained

Scripture has a word for the training of men in the church to grow in the grace of Christ Jesus to increasingly reflect the qualifications of an elder. That word is discipleship. As the mission of the church, the work of disciple–making is to be the driving effort of every elder in every church (Matt 28:18–20). Apart from the slow growth in godliness that occurs over time through the ministry of the church, there is no training plan for developing elders. The office of elder is not a duty for which men simply train and then execute. God is the one who ultimately raises up men to reflect the Scriptural qualifications of an elder. Mark Dever cautions against such an attitude of “manufacturing elders” when he writes, “By *training* elders before we recognize them as such, we’re taking a man who may not have displayed any of these character traits or discipling habits and trying to mold him into a shape he hasn’t yet taken.”²⁶ Rather, Dever rightly urges churches to first *recognize* men who already reflect the biblical qualifications and shepherding of an elder before training them:

²⁶Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 138.

By *recognizing* elders before we train them, we're simply acknowledging that a man is already living with elder-quality character and doing elder-type relational work without having the title. . . . This is the kind of man who is most likely to be fruitful and faithful as an official elder. He has adopted an eldering lifestyle before ever assuming the office and so is likely to continue in that lifestyle long after his official tenure has ended.²⁷

Dever's admonition aligns with the biblical mandate that churches train those who demonstrate faithfulness and maturity in his walk with Christ. Paul wrote to Timothy, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:1-2). Here, it is evident that churches are to deliberately train elder-like men for the shepherding of the church.²⁸

Context of 2 Timothy

Second Timothy represents the Apostle Paul's final letter that was canonized. He wrote from prison in Rome (2 Tim 1:8, 17; 2:9) and was facing certain judgment and death by the Roman courts (4:6). Mounce observes, "Paul had already made his initial defense before the Roman court. Although he was abandoned by his friends, it appears that the court's initial ruling was positive; Paul proclaimed the gospel to all the Gentiles and was 'rescued from the mouth of a lion' (2 Tim 4:17)."²⁹ Rather than instructing in doctrine, this letter is laden with encouragement and personal updates. Further, Paul eagerly desired to see Timothy (1:4) and encouraged him to finish up some

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Other New Testament evidences of the pattern or mandate to train future elders include Jesus to his disciples (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:40), Barnabas to Paul (Acts 13:1-13), Paul to other men (Acts 15:40, 16:3, 18:18, 20:4), 2 Tim 2:24, Titus 2.

²⁹Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lxiii.

responsibilities in Ephesus that his “child in the faith” (1:2, 2:1) may come and encourage him (4:9, 21). Before leaving Ephesus to visit Paul, Paul’s greatest concern for Timothy was to see that the church continued in faithfulness to the gospel. To ensure faithfulness to the gospel, Paul urged Timothy to ensure that men of character are trained and entrusted to continue to teach the same gospel in the face of adversity and persecution (2:2).

Recognize Elder–Like Men

Paul instructs Timothy to “entrust to faithful men” (2 Tim 2:2) the things that learned from Paul. In contrast to the men in Ephesus who were devoted to myths, Paul emphasized looking “faithful men” (*pistoi*). He was concerned that these men would faithfully represent the Lord in their character and in their teaching. In other words, Timothy was to recognize and train elders in Ephesus. Mounce notes that Paul’s choice of the term “faithful” “is a one–word summary of the condition for overseers and deacons in 1 Tim 3.”³⁰ George Knight agrees, adding that “it is certain that they are the same group of whom Paul wrote in 1 Timothy, the presbyters who ‘work hard in word and teaching’ (5:17), and also in Titus, the presbyters/overseers who are ‘holding fast the faithful word that is in accordance with the teaching’ so that they are ‘able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict’ (1:9).”³¹ Timothy was to recognize elder–like men who could be entrusted with the stewardship of the gospel in the church.

³⁰Ibid., 506.

³¹Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 162.

Train Elder–Like Men

Those who are faithful must be trained for effective and lasting shepherding in the church. Paul’s charge in verse 2 is to “entrust” to elders the stewardship of the gospel and the leadership of the church, which is the totality of that which Paul had taught and entrusted to Timothy over the years. Written in the aorist tense, “entrust” is an imperative that reveals the need to train and transfer responsibility for the truth to more leaders. Alexander Strauch states, “A good eldership will be praying and looking for capable men to join them and will be conscientiously training and preparing men for future leadership. What Paul told Timothy applies to the eldership.”³² George Knight adds, “Plummer is correct in suggesting that this brief reference to men being taught so that they can teach others gives evidence of ‘the earliest traces of a theological school.’”³³ Elder–like men of faithful, godly character are to be trained for their stewardship of the gospel and the church.

Send Elder–Like Men

As elder–like men are recognized and trained with the stewardship of the body of the Apostolic teaching, they are to be sent to continue making disciples and shepherd the church. Paul wrote, “entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2:2). Though application of this verse is not limited to training and sending elders, it is yet another evidence that Paul is primarily referring to the office of elder in the church. Mounce observes, “Paul is thinking of male elders, who were repeatedly required to be

³²Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 278.

³³Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 392.

able to teach and who had to be able ‘to exhort with healthy doctrine and to rebuke those who oppose [it]’ (Titus 1:9).”³⁴ This elder responsibility is indeed the pattern modeled by the Lord Jesus, who, after training those he called, sent them to preach and disciple others (Matt 10:16, 28:19; Mark 3:14; Luke 24:49; John 20:21). In his *Training of the Twelve*, A. B. Bruce writes, “‘Follow Me,’ said Jesus to the fishermen of Bethsaida, ‘and I will make you fishers of men.’ These words. . . show that the great Founder of the faith desired not only to have disciples, but to have about Him men whom He might train to make disciples of others.”³⁵

With many responsibilities and busy schedules, intentional training of future elders will not occur by happenstance. Elders must deliberately plan to train and shepherd future elders. Kenneth Gangel points out, “The key to reproducing leadership is to clearly plan for it.”³⁶ Just as Paul recognized, trained, and sent Timothy, so was Timothy to train faithful men, so that when the Lord called him to leave, there would remain in Ephesus trained men ready to guard the flock and train other faithful men. Indeed, elders must be determined to train other faithful men for shepherding and leadership in the church. In his book *Elders in Congregational Life*, Phil Newton urges elders to, “Nurture, therefore, the spiritual development of men that show promise for future service as elders.”³⁷ Unless

³⁴Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

³⁵A. B. Bruce, *Training of the Twelve: Principles for Christian Leadership*, eBook (Chandler, AZ: Brighton Publishing, LLC, n.d.).

³⁶Kenneth O. Gangel, *Feeding and Leading* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 313.

³⁷ Phil Newton, *Elders in Congregational Life: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 137.

elders intentionally plan for the future leadership of the church beyond the current generation, the church will fade away with the existing leadership. 2 Timothy 2:2 demonstrates the responsibility churches have to train elder-like men for future leadership. The life and the future of the church depend on it.

Elders in the Church Are Jesus' Undershepherds

God the Father and the Son as Shepherds

The Apostle Peter describes the unique privilege Christians have in the church as being God's covenant people: "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people" (1 Pet 2:10). God loves his covenant people with a distinct love (Deut 7:7) and takes responsibility to provide, care for, and lead his covenant people. God is the ultimate shepherd of his people and the standard for which all other shepherds are to emulate (1 Sam 12:14; Ps 80:1; Isa 40:11; Mic 2:12; Matt 25:32–33). God shepherds his people through several means. In the new covenant, God actively shepherds his people through the person of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:17; Eph 1:13–14) and through the gift of His Word (Ps 19:7–14; Eccl 12:11). However, God has not left his people without undershepherds, which are human leaders (often elders) whom he appoints to care for and oversee his covenant people on his behalf. In the church, God provides for the ongoing care of his people through elders whom He has called as undershepherds of his flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:1–2; Heb 13:20, 21). The biblical authors so closely viewed the work of elders in the church as shepherding that they used the terms interchangeably (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet 5:1–4). Benjamin Merkle states, "Though the two words are synonyms in the biblical story, the pastoral title 'shepherd' captures the role of an elder/overseer in a

beautiful way.”³⁸ As shepherds appointed by God, elders in the church are accountable to God in their care for his sheep, namely, the Christians in their local congregations. As Jesus Christ reveals himself as “the good shepherd” (John 10:11; see Matt 26:31), 1 Peter 5:1–4 reveals that Jesus remains the “chief shepherd” to whom all his undershepherds are accountable. Indeed, Christian elders are undershepherds on behalf of Jesus, the chief shepherd.

Context of 1 Peter 5

Several passages in the gospels provide important background to understanding Peter’s concept of elders and their relationship to Jesus Christ in 1 Peter 5. As the “good shepherd” (John 10:11), Jesus demonstrates numerous attributes of a shepherd through his ministry in the gospels. First, Jesus is intimately acquainted with his sheep and provides for, protects, and even lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:11; Matt 26:31). Additionally, Jesus is a humble (John 13:1–14), compassionate shepherd (Matt 9:36) who seeks after lost sheep (Matt 18:12–14). Jesus’ judgment of men will also be as a “shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt 25:32). Further, in restoring Peter after the resurrection, Jesus used shepherding language to commission Peter to his apostolic ministry (John 21:15–19). On Peter’s restoration, Timothy Witmer observes,

In *all three* imperatives the risen Christ calls Peter to the work of caring for the flock. The response of Jesus to Peter’s affirmations of love and affection *could* have included three *different* charges. For example, he could have said “preach the Gospel,” “make disciples,” or “love one another” or any other combination of imperatives. Instead ..., he responded in each case with imagery related to

³⁸Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, 66.

shepherding the flock: “Tend My lambs,” “Shepherd My sheep,” and “Tend My sheep.”³⁹

Peter’s restoration and commissioning to shepherd Jesus’ sheep had a profound impact on Peter’s life and remaining ministry. Undoubtedly, it informs his understanding of the church and pastoral leadership. This impact is seen in 1 Peter 2 where Peter applies shepherding language to Christ and the church: “For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls” (1 Pet 2:25). Peter’s understanding of Jesus as the shepherd sets the context for chapter 5, where Peter continues using shepherding language to exhort the elders among the local congregations in the dispersion. Indeed, Jesus’ restoration of Peter to serve as an undershepherd indelibly impacts Peter’s understanding of the nature and work of elders.

Jesus is the Chief Shepherd

In his exhortation to the elders, Peter reminds them that as undershepherds, they will give account to the “chief Shepherd.” He writes, “And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory” (1 Pet 5:4). As the “chief Shepherd” (*archipoimenos*), Jesus is who undershepherds are to follow. Thomas Schreiner points out that Peter’s use of “chief Shepherd” is, “a rare term that occurs nowhere else in the New Testament or in the Septuagint.”⁴⁰ Further, it is unto this chief Shepherd that undershepherds will give account. Karen Jobes notes,

³⁹Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2010), 36.

⁴⁰Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 236.

The *archipoimenos* was the overseer of the shepherds when a flock was too large to be attended well by one. The *presbyteroi* are not simply to follow the example of Christ as independent agents when shepherding God's people; instead, they are to recognize themselves as underlings of Christ the chief Shepherd, to whom they will be held responsible."⁴¹

Indeed, elders are servants under the authority of the chief Shepherd, doing his will rather than their own. An elder is not a faithful shepherd merely by virtue of his appointment (see Ezek 34). Shepherds need to be intimately acquainted with the acts and character of the Covenant King and his chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus. All of Jesus' undershepherds are subject to His design, commission, and judgment.

As Peter clearly establishes in his epistle, following Christ will result in suffering.⁴² He therefore reminds elders of a future reward from their chief Shepherd. He describes himself as "a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed" (1 Pet 5:1). Peter promises the elders to whom he writes that when the chief Shepherd returns, they also "will receive the unfading crown of glory" (1 Pet 5:4). This inconceivable future reward frees elders from the lure of seeking "shameful gain" (1 Pet 5:2). J. Ramsey Michaels explains, "The reason Peter introduces the language of remuneration here is rather to set before the elders the proper alternative to shepherding their congregations for financial gain. They are working for a reward but not for a temporal or corruptible reward. Their reward is designated, 'the unfading crown of glory.'" Until that glorious day, elders need to be encouraged that Jesus remains *their* good Shepherd. When days are difficult and suffering is very real, elders will be cared for

⁴¹Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 306.

⁴²See 1 Pet 2:19, 21, 3:14–18, 4:13–16, 5:9–10

by the chief Shepherd himself. As Jared Wilson writes, “Jesus neither sulks nor sighs about us. He ministers to us willingly, eagerly. And there is power there to extend that ministry of reconciliation to others in the hardest times.”⁴³

The Chief Shepherd Appoints a Plurality of Elders to Shepherd his Sheep

As has been demonstrated with the elders of Israel, it is noteworthy that the New Testament continues the pattern of a plurality of elders to shepherd local churches. The church in Jerusalem had elders (Acts 11:30; 15:2; 16:4; 21:18) and Paul and Barnabas practiced appointing elders in the churches they planted (Acts 14:23). Acts 20:17–38 records Paul meeting with the elders from the church in Ephesus. Even the Pastoral Epistles show a plurality of elders (1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5). Here in 1 Peter, Peter addresses a plurality of elders, “So I exhort the elders among you” (1 Pet 5:1). Thomas Schreiner concludes, “It is also likely that elders functioned as a plurality in the churches since the term is always plural, and Acts 14:23 says elders were appointed ‘for them in each church.’ Further, the elders who visited the sick in James were plural, but the elders who visited were almost certainly from one local church.”⁴⁴ To the degree that men are qualified for the office of elder in a local church, that church will be most faithfully cared for and led by Jesus as it appoints a plurality of elders for its oversight.

⁴³Jared Wilson, *The Pastor’s Justification: Applying the Work of Christ in Your Life and Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 35.

⁴⁴Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 231.

The Chief Shepherd Entrusts Sheep to Christ-Like Elders

The Apostle Peter also speaks poignantly to the character and work of the elders. Whereas Scripture is filled with examples of God's appointed shepherds who failed in this stewardship,⁴⁵ Jesus Christ is the only truly good shepherd. Jesus is the perfect example and Savior after which all other shepherds are called to follow.

Peter's admonition of how the elders are to conduct themselves perfectly contrasts the failure of Israel's elders in Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23. Israel's shepherds were condemned for their selfish interest, but Peter charges the church's elders to exercise oversight "willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2–3). Israel's shepherds dominated the flock severely (Ezek 34:4), but the church's shepherds are called to lead lovingly and not exploit God's people for selfish gain (1 Pet 5:2). Peter is concerned that elders faithfully represent the character of Christ as "examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:3). Jared Wilson provides a challenge to all elders: "A plurality of elders can be an example to the congregation of unity of mind and heart despite differences. Pastors are not appointed to a church primarily to lead in the instruction of skills and the dissemination of information; they are appointed to a church primarily to lead in Christ-following."⁴⁶ Ultimately, God's appointed shepherds are to lead others to imitate Christ himself.⁴⁷

⁴⁵For example, see Num 20:12; Ezek 34; 1 Kgs 11:6; Jer 23:1; 2 Pet 2:15

⁴⁶Wilson, *The Pastor's Justification*, 48.

⁴⁷See 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7, 9; Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 2:21

Timothy Witmer warns, "There will always be leaders—the issue is whether they are the leaders called and gifted by God to shepherd his flock or those who push themselves forward so that they can push others around."⁴⁸ However, until the chief shepherd returns to destroy sin, Satan, and death, elders will be unable to carry out their shepherding duties perfectly. Gregg Allison adds, "Perfection in each of these areas is not possible, but men who exhibit these characteristics in high and increasing measure should be the leaders who fill the office of elder."⁴⁹ They must keep a close watch on their lives and their teaching (1 Tim 4:16) lest they fall into sin and are disqualified (1 Cor 10:11; Jas 5:19, 20; 2 Pet 2:1–3; Jude 3, 4). It is only by God's grace that elders are qualified and made sufficient to be ministers of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:3–4) as Christ-like examples.

Peter urges shepherds to follow Christ in a servant posture (1 Pet 5:2; Matt 20:28; Mark 10:42). Shepherding and overseeing God's people on Jesus' behalf is a challenging and costly task. As God's appointed shepherds, elders must view people through the lens of the gospel. This will allow them to see the sheep as God sees them and compel them toward sacrificial service as modeled by Jesus. J. Ramsey Michaels writes, "The elders are to be good leaders of their congregations precisely by being good servants, so that the members of the congregation will in turn become servants to each other."⁵⁰

⁴⁸Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 23.

⁴⁹Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 218.

⁵⁰J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 49 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), 286.

Another matter of crucial concern for Peter is that elders pursue humility. They are “not domineering over those in [their] charge” (1 Pet 5:3). When elders recognize their lives and calling are entirely by the grace of Jesus, they will recognize this calling to lead in the church is a gift from God and allows no grounds for boasting. Scripture is clear that godly leadership is a gift that derives from God and, therefore, is not something about which the leader can boast (1 Cor 1:26–31; 3:21; 4:6–7). Paul Tripp insightfully interrogates elders’ prideful tendencies by reminding them that the gospel is not just a message they preach to others, but to themselves also:

As I’m telling the old, old story to others, I must tell it over and over to myself. As I’m studying the ways of grace, I must apply the truths of grace to myself. As I’m preparing to preach grace to others I must pause and worship, recognizing that such grace includes me. As I welcome others to run with confession and repentance to the Savior of grace, I must do the same again and again. My sense of privilege for what I’ve been called to do must never degrade into the pride of thinking that I’m special or different. I need the rescue I hold out to others. This means I’ve been chosen to tell God’s story and to represent his grace not because I’m worthy or up to the task, but because he is.⁵¹

Elders serve recognizing that Jesus is not merely their overseer to whom they will give account, but that He is the Lord God. Jesus’ undershepherds need to have this reminder and constantly live in view of God’s sovereign purpose and rule. Charles Spurgeon said it well: “It is not great talents God blesses so much as likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God.”⁵²

⁵¹Paul Tripp, “The Beauty in the Busy,” *The Gospel Coalition blog*, January 6, 2013, accessed January 7, 2013, <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/tgc/2013/01/06/the-beauty-in-the-busy/>.

⁵²Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students: Complete and Unabridged* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954), 8. Logos.

As has been demonstrated from 1 Peter 5:1–4, Christian elders serve as Jesus’ undershepherds for the oversight and care for local churches. Elders serve under the authority of Jesus, their chief Shepherd. Similarly, elders serve like Jesus, following the example of their chief Shepherd as they set an example for the flock. Working together under Jesus’ commission, Christian elders bring glory to God as they together lead the flock of God toward holiness.

Conclusion

Scripture reveals that churches need a plurality of trained and qualified men serving together as God’s undershepherds in the office of elder. The Old Testament institution of elders sets a pattern for the office of elder adopted by the New Testament churches. As New Testament churches appointed elders in a plurality, so churches today should practice plural elder leadership. Churches should only appoint men who meet the Scriptural qualifications to this office of leadership and spiritual oversight, lest the name of Christ be reviled and churches not faithfully carry out their call to make disciples. When elder-like men are recognized in a church, existing elders should follow the pattern of the early church and deliberately train them so they are equipped and may be entrusted with the stewardship of the gospel and of the flock, which the chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus himself, has made them overseers.

As with agricultural shepherds, the important work of shepherding the church requires sacrifice and dedication that is often unheralded and underappreciated. But to the undershepherds who faithfully protect, lead, and feed the flock of God, when the chief Shepherd appears, they “will receive the unfading crown of glory” (1 Pet 5:4). Whatever sacrifice made by these shepherds will have been worth the effort.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES IN TRAINING ELDERS

In surveying the biblical evidence that churches need a plurality of trained and qualified men serving together as God's undershepherds in the office of elder, I argued that churches must make a deliberate effort in training elder candidates for pastoral leadership. Several challenges to effectively train elder candidates at Crosspoint Church must be overcome. First, men who are elder candidates at Crosspoint Church already carry responsibility for ministry leadership in the church. Small group leadership, men's discipleship, and teaching are some of the areas where these men are being evaluated in their pastoral leadership. Shepherding and ministry leadership in the church is a great context for training, but alone is not sufficient to train elder candidates. Another challenge to effectively train elder candidates is that men who are elder candidates have demanding personal lives. Commonly, these men are married, have children, and hold responsibilities in another full-time job. Finding time to gather for training is difficult. Additionally, these candidates have to invest time for personal study and mentor meetings amidst their personal schedules that are already arduous. For these reasons, the investment in training must be stewarded well.

In spite of the availability of many resources on pastoral leadership, a course for training elder candidates at Crosspoint Church needed to be designed. While these existing resources have their place in resourcing and training elders, the current elders at

Crosspoint Church determined the existing publications are inadequate to stand alone as the curriculum for training elder candidates. Several reasons contributed to this decision.

First, there are not many elder candidate training courses to choose from. While numerous studies exist related to leadership, the writer could locate only one published example of a course specifically designed for training elders within a local church context: *The Mentor's Guide to Biblical Eldership* by Alexander Strauch and Richard Swartley.¹ This workbook was published as a companion to Alexander Strauch's *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*.

Secondly, as has already been demonstrated, the strain of time on elder candidates' schedules demands a faithful stewardship of time invested in training. The course must cover the essential objectives determined by the existing Crosspoint Church elders. Strauch and Swartley's work is valuable in developing a course for training elder candidates, as it contains a thorough study of what the Bible teaches about elders and the work of pastoral leadership. Additionally, it provides a proven example of a tool for preparing elder candidates and a guide to facilitate a mentoring relationship between an experienced elder and an elder candidate. However, Strauch and Swartley's work is unsuitable for usage as the elder training curriculum for Crosspoint Church as it does not reflect the same polity, does not integrate Crosspoint Church's philosophy of ministry, and gives no attention to historical theology. Additionally, this curriculum cannot consider the prior training of the candidates at Crosspoint in the same manner as one who

¹Alexander Strauch and Richard Swartley, *The Mentor's Guide to Biblical Eldership: Twelve Lessons for Mentoring Men for Eldership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1996).

has first-hand knowledge of the local context. Indeed, training effectiveness is correlated to the degree that a course design correlates to a specific context. Karen Lynn Estep confirms the importance of contextualized curriculum when she writes, “The context of curriculum is an essential component and a necessity for educators to include in their design. The elements worthy of consideration are (1) psychological understanding, (2) societal and cultural factors, and (3) the learning environment, which includes facility, materials, teachers, and resources.”²

Many books have been published on pastoral leadership, polity, and other matters of ecclesiology. While many of these books bring value to an elder candidate training course, any one of these is insufficient to serve as the course material.³ In developing a pastoral leadership course for elder candidates at Crosspoint Church, I referenced these resources as I tailored the course to the specific needs of the church and the elder candidates. *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer was especially considered in the pastoral ministry section the course. Witmer provides much wisdom on what elders are called to do along with an effective tool for developing a strategy for shepherding the

²Karen Lynn Estep, “Charting the Course: Curriculum Design,” in *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*, ed. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 185.

³Foundational books consulted for this instructional design include Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995); Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2010); Mark Dever, *A Display of God’s Glory: Basics of Church Structure*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: 9Marks, 2001); Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005); Alfred Poirier, *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006); Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being A Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004); Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift That Changes Everything* (Kingsford NSW, Australia: Matthias Media, 2009).

church. Mark Dever and Paul Alexander's *The Deliberate Church* also was integrated in the course as it expresses the same polity and a similar philosophy of ministry of the existing elders and practically applies sound theology for the leadership of the church.

With a scriptural plan and a plethora of resources on pastoral leadership, it is crucial that the pastoral leadership course for elder candidates fosters true learning and preparedness for these candidates. To the degree the elder training course is successful, the body of elders will be better prepared for a smooth transition and the church will have opportunity to experience rich unity as modeled by the elders.

All learning that leads to spiritual growth is dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit to illumine, convict, and empower. But how can a course be designed to most effectively teach and train current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church? While many churches offer no formal training for elder candidates, other churches train without consideration of principles of effective teaching and learning. Such training evidences what Dan Lambert calls "sloppiness in teaching God's Word."⁴ Indeed, reliance upon the Holy Spirit is no grounds for laziness or presumption in one's approach to teaching and training church leaders.

If knowledge leading to life change could simply be downloaded, teachers and training would no longer be needed. Yet, the challenge remains: How can a teacher pass knowledge, understanding, application, integration, and problem-solving abilities to the students? This reveals the challenge of education. My concern is to train current and

⁴Dan Lambert, *Teaching That Makes a Difference: How to Teach for Holistic Impact* (El Cajon, CA; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Youth Specialties, 2004), 10.

future elder candidates in such a way that yields true learning, through which they go beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge to be able to evaluate and apply Scriptural knowledge in their lives and ministries. Indeed, this is a great challenge. In this chapter, I will argue that principles from the field of education bring value to an elder training course in the church.

Principles of Instructional Design

The first area to be considered is the field of instructional design. Applying principles in educational instructional design greatly enhance the effectiveness of a course for training elder candidates. Principles including learning objectives, levels of learning, and instructional design will be evaluated for how they are beneficial in developing and implementing a pastoral leadership course.

Learning Objectives

“Begin with the end in mind” is a principle that is widely used to help individuals or organizations develop plans and determine strategic steps to accomplish a mission. This principle is championed in such fields as leadership, athletics, ministry, and business. This principle plays a significant part in education as well. In setting out to design a course for training elder candidates, the desired results for the course participants must be clearly in view.

Learning objective is the educational term to describe a desired end–result of a course. LeRoy Ford has written extensively on the advantages of this outcome–based approach to curriculum design, and his book *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education* has been a standard for decades. Ford writes, “In education, the

term *objective* means a description of an observable action or learning outcome which the teacher will accept as valid evidence that the student has achieved the course goal.”⁵ Ford argues that goals and objectives should be written clearly so the instructional activities may be developed to achieve the learning objectives. In this way, the learning objectives pave the way for the development of the course by giving the targeted destination.

Learning objectives give the course designer a clear focus on what to include and exclude in the course design. Anthony W. Foster explains how learning objectives direct the instructional design:

One of the main approaches for introducing higher cognitive learning activities in the learning environment is to start with clear learning objectives, which are in turn mapped to learning activities that appropriately teach to the objectives. As these learning activities are designed to fit the content, it is imperative that one be intentional about the cognitive levels they address in the learner.⁶

Not only do learning objectives give direction to the instructional design, but they also benefit the course participants. The learning objectives set a standard of expectation and goals of achievement for the course participants. As Chickering and Gamson write in “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education,” “Expect more and you will get more Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations for themselves and make extra efforts.”⁷ Students will only achieve the standard that is set

⁵LeRoy Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991), 224.

⁶Anthony W. Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula at Select Christian Institutions of Higher Education” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), 212–13, accessed January 16, 2014, Boyce Digital Library.

⁷Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson, “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education,” *AAHE Bulletin* (March 1987), 5.

for them in the course. Low expectations will yield lesser performance. Clear, challenging, and relevant learning objectives are the first step to an effective course for training elder candidates.

Levels of Learning

In order to develop learning objectives that are relevant and challenging, mere knowledge of the subject matter is insufficient. The course designer must understand levels of learning, such that the course participants may move beyond understanding of concepts to application, analysis, and integration of these concepts into his life and ministry.

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago formulated six levels of learning in the cognitive domain. Known as Bloom's Taxonomy, these levels of learning have become a standard tool for instructional designers and educators alike. William Yount writes, "These domains and levels of learning provide the basis for writing instructional objectives."⁸ Taxonomies of levels of learning inform the complexity of learning objectives, progressing in the cognitive domain from simple recall to the higher levels of analysis and evaluation. Bloom's Revised Taxonomy includes two dimensions: The *cognitive process dimension* and the *knowledge dimension*. The *cognitive process dimension* progresses as follows: Remember, Understand, Apply,

⁸William R Yount, *Created to Learn: A Christian Teacher's Introduction to Educational Psychology* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 140.

Analyze, Evaluate, and Create.⁹ This cognitive continuum describes a student’s level of cognitive understanding according to what he is able to do with the information. “These processes are ways in which students can actively engage in the process of constructing meaning.”¹⁰ On the lower end, basic comprehension or memorization is observed. With the higher levels of learning, the student is able to take the information and perform exercises, solve problems, critique a product or operation based on external standards, or put elements together to form a coherent whole.

The second dimension of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy is the *knowledge dimension*. This dimension has four levels: factual knowledge, conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and meta–cognitive knowledge. The lower level of knowledge is limited to the “basic elements students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems in it”¹¹ whereas higher–level meta–cognitive knowledge reveals “knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one’s own cognition.”¹²

Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy helps educators target and assess a student’s learning. Anderson and Krathwohl use three categories to describe learning outcomes that parallel Bloom’s Taxonomy: no learning, rote learning, and meaningful learning.¹³ A

⁹Lorin W. Anderson and David R. Krathwohl, eds., *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (New York: Longman, 2001), 31.

¹⁰Ibid., 65.

¹¹Ibid., 29.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 64.

student who remembers only a few key terms or facts and cannot use these to solve problems evidences “no learning.” “Rote learning” is evidenced by a student who remembers important terms and facts but is unable to use the knowledge to solve problems. “Meaningful learning” happens when a student remembers important terms and facts and is able to solve problems.

Additionally, Anderson and Krathwohl describe a number of ways that the utilization of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy in developing learning objectives improves instructional design and student learning: permits educators to examine objectives from the student’s point of view; helps educators consider the panorama of possibilities in education; helps educators see the integral relationship between knowledge and cognitive processes inherent in objectives; makes life easier; makes more readily apparent the consistency, or lack of it, among the stated objectives for a unit, the way it was taught, and how learning was assessed; helps educators make better sense of the wide variety of terms that are used in education.¹⁴

For the purposes of designing a course for training elders, learning objectives based on the desired outcomes of the course must be developed and then integrated into the instructional design. To successfully do so, the desired levels of learning for each objective must be thoughtfully considered. Subsequently, the course design must accommodate the appropriate time–on–task required to satisfactorily achieve that level of learning. As Anthony W. Foster writes,

A secondary characteristic to track is to designate a time–on–task differentiation in regard to the difficulty levels of the activities. Learning objectives that require application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of knowledge should be matched

¹⁴Ibid., 34–36.

with activities, assignments, or projects that require this kind of cognitive interaction. The very verbiage one uses, such as analyze, rank, interpret, appraise, develop, classify, and extrapolate, will help determine how engaged a learner must become with the content. The key issue is the demands of the content.¹⁵

Foster concludes by writing, “Intentionality yields results in this area. Instructional design provides a process by which these imperatives can be built into the learning environment.”¹⁶

William R. Yount’s explanations of the benefits of “directed–discovery learning” and the cognitive theory of constructivism for teaching Scripture are useful concepts in course design. Yount writes, “Constructivism emphasizes top–down processing: begin with complex problems and teach basic skills while solving these problems.”¹⁷ Jerome Bruner, an early advocate of directed–discovery learning, helpfully writes, “We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather to get a student to think . . . for himself, to consider matters as an historian does, to take part in the process of knowledge–getting. Knowing is a process, not a product.”¹⁸

In integrating cognitive theory into training elder candidates, biblical wisdom and discernment must be applied. I am accountable to God and desire to faithfully apply Scripture for the purpose of training elder candidates. Any teaching or training that is Christian must be sound in its biblical and theological framework. Foster wisely cautions,

¹⁵Foster, “A Study of Post–Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 212–13.

¹⁶Ibid., 213.

¹⁷Yount, *Created to Learn*, 202.

¹⁸Jerome Seymour Bruner, *Toward a Theory of Instruction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 72.

“Most basically one must lay a foundation in learner development theory that is compatible with the Christian worldview if one expects to adhere to a bibliocentric design.”¹⁹ As Michael Wilder writes, this integration is

no less than the intentional efforts of both the [teacher] and the learner engaging one another in gospel living with the Scriptures as their guide for faith and practice. This intentional means of interaction has as its goal the displaying of God’s glory among a community of believers in such a way that the gospel is accurately proclaimed and is consistently reflecting God’s love and holiness and humanity’s need for redemption.²⁰

As applied to training current and future elder candidates, the my goal is not for course participants to simply regurgitate facts, but to be able to think biblically and consider the real-life challenges of pastoral leadership from God’s point of view. The term “competencies” is commonly used to describe the type of learning desired. Anthony W. Foster provides a helpful definition of competencies that is relevant to this study. To Foster, competencies are “Proficient abilities usually composed of some combination of knowledge, measurable skills, understanding and values. In this context competencies are further defined as those skills which are necessary to master in order to insure proper preparation for qualified, effective leadership.”²¹ Thus, the term competency provides a category to describe the higher-level of learning attained according to Bloom’s Taxonomy. Citing George Barna, Foster provides specific application of competencies for church leadership that will benefit the course herein considered:

¹⁹Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 107.

²⁰Michael S. Wilder, “All Grown Up or Not: Shaping Adult Education Curriculum in the Church,” in *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*, ed. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2012), 279.

²¹Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 9–10.

In a ministry context, competencies are the actions taken by leaders to intentionally and strategically facilitate positive life transformations toward Christlikeness. Competencies are the outgrowth of a Christian leader's determining to serve God through leadership (calling), being in tune with God and thus knowing where to lead His people (vision), attracting followers through demonstration of God's work in his or her life (character), and striving to provide people with the direction and tools they need to facilitate God-honoring change and growth.²²

Instructional Design

As has been established, instructional design must be built on the foundational principles of learning objectives and levels of learning. According to Foster,

Curriculum design is, by definition, concerned with the intentional building of a course of study that incorporates interaction and encounters with learning opportunities. Much of the literature of curriculum design comes from a secular viewpoint, and this must be addressed. It is this researcher's contention that many methodologies of curriculum design are compatible with a Christian worldview.²³

Foster continues by demonstrating the relevance of principles of curriculum design for such a course as pastoral leadership for elder candidates. He writes, "Curriculum Development might be thought of as solely associated with Educational Leadership. The study showed this to be a wrong assumption, as curriculum development skills are necessary to design Christian education programs in the ministry category and training in the other categories."²⁴ James Plueddemann provides a simple, three-component

²²George Barna, *The Power of Team Leadership*, (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2001), 89, quoted in Foster, "A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula," 93.

²³Foster, "A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula," 105.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 176.

approach that helpfully summarizes the key considerations in course design: the teaching/learning context, expected outcomes, and the educational activities.²⁵

Instructional design matrix. Such principles are combined in a tool called an instructional design matrix.²⁶ With this tool, educational principles are integrated in the design of a course. The goal of this tool is to impose order on the chaos of ideas and goals by integrating activities and resources to clearly support specific sub-topics and achieve corresponding learning objectives. The categories in the instructional design matrix include: unit topics and sub-topics, learning objectives the sub-topics seek to achieve, reading references, possible student misconceptions, learning resources within the lesson presentation, minor elements as additional resources, minor elements as stand-alone activities, time-on-task, and miscellaneous notes.

A linear pattern of instructional design will be used in the design of the course for training elder candidates. According to LeRoy Ford, “The linear pattern consists of several units, each following in a logical sequence. In a sense, each unit grows out of a preceding unit.”²⁷ Additionally, the course design will include time-on-task. Foster explains the importance of including time-on-task: “This is an instructional design concern as well as a project management issue that can help instructors allow time to complete assignments and encourage students to steward their time. Tight deadlines are

²⁵James E. Plueddemann, “Curriculum Improvement through Evaluation,” *Christian Education Journal* 8, no. 1 (Autumn 1987): 56.

²⁶Instructional design matrix supplied by e-mail message from Anthony W. Foster, January 9, 2014.

²⁷Ford, *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education*, 247.

necessary throughout the project or course to keep the group pacing through the content and to have multiple groups coherently interacting.”²⁸

The goal of using the instructional design matrix is to deliberately shape the instructional design to engage the whole person in the course material in a manner that will yield true learning. This true learning will be demonstrated in competencies consistent with biblical church leaders. The resultant course will resource elder candidates with competencies to embrace the responsibilities of the office of elder and continue to pursue growth in Christ-likeness throughout their ministry.

The goal of instructional design: meaningful learning. The triad of human experience, “think, feel, do,” may be used to illustrate the goal of the instructional design. In the realm of Christian education, this triad of human experience is often translated as “head, heart, hands” to describe meaningful learning. Meaningful learning is demonstrated when a student integrates content such that it provides a holistic affect in his life. Thus, the student obtains knowledge (head) affecting his values and emotions (heart) that are realized in his actions (hands).

In the context of training elder candidates, it is one thing for an elder candidate to know about love, but what or whom does he love? An elder candidate may be able to identify a good shepherd, but will he protect the sheep? Thus, meaningful learning happens when a course participant is competent and motivated to apply what he has acquired beyond the scope of the course. This high level learning that leads to a change in action describes what Dee Fink calls a “significant learning experience.” A significant

²⁸Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 211.

learning experience is evidenced by student engagement during the course that “adds value to their personal, professional, social, or civic lives after the course.”²⁹ Indeed, this course will be successful if it adds value to the elder candidates’ faithfulness in pastoral leadership beyond the duration of the training course for elder candidates.

Research shows, however, that instructors commonly fail to implement course design to actually achieve the learning goals:

Instructors often have learning goals that focus on critical thinking skills, but their activities and assessments often do not effectively scaffold students’ development of those skills. Aligning the use of various technologies to specific levels of thought can help instructors identify learning activities that will promote higher-order thinking skills and allow instructors to take full advantage of various technologies.³⁰

Hixon, Buckenmeyer, Zmojski provide a helpful visual aid to align the levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy with action verbs and activities that harness the potential of emerging technologies for student learning. Utilizing such a tool in course design “sparks instructional ideas and helps ensure that [instructors] are using appropriate and effective technology tools to accomplish their instructional goals.”³¹ This visual tool was utilized to creatively develop learning activities to achieve the desired learning level outcome for each course objective in training elder candidates.

²⁹L. Dee Fink, preface, in *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, Designing Courses for Significant Learning: Voices of Experience*, 119 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 2.

³⁰Emily Hixon, Janet Buckenmeyer, and Heather Zamojski, “Bloom’s Taxonomy Meets Technology: An Instructional Planning Tool,” *Online Classroom*, October 1, 2011, accessed January 29, 2014, <http://www.magnapubs.com/newsletter/online-classroom/story/5882/>.

³¹Ibid.

Knowles' Andragogy and Effectiveness in Adult Education

In the previous section, it was demonstrated that the desired outcomes, or learning objectives, must shape the instructional design. A second important consideration for instructional design is the course participants. Many factors of the learner must be considered for instructional design, including his life-stage, spiritual maturity, and prior knowledge and experiences. It almost goes without saying that current and future candidates for the office of elder are adults, many of whom have long been away from the classroom. To support the thesis, understanding the educational performance of adult students is beneficial to discern how busy elder candidates with career and family obligations may be trained most effectively. Specifically, principles in andragogy as an instructional method and active learning techniques for adults will be examined and applied.

Knowles' Andragogy

What most people think of when they think “education” are traits of the pedagogical model of education. Pedagogy is literally defined as “the art and science of teaching children.”³² According to Malcolm Knowles, in the pedagogical approach, the learner is a dependent person and the teacher has full responsibility. Moreover, “the learner has little experience, and the learner is motivated by external pressures from parents and teachers, competition for grades, the consequences of failure, and the like.”³³

³²Malcolm S. Knowles, *Andragogy in Action* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984), 6.

³³*Ibid.*, 9.

Through a career dedicated to adult education, Knowles developed a theoretical framework for adult learning called andragogy. Key components of Knowles' framework will be considered for how they may benefit the design and implementation of a course for training elder candidates at Crosspoint Church.

Self-directing. First, Knowles observes that adult learners are autonomous and self-directing. When adults enter a situation labeled “training” or “education,” they commonly “hark back to their conditioning in school, assume a role of dependency, and demand to be taught.”³⁴ Knowles cautions against this default mode, explaining the harm of this conditioned response. “If they really are treated like children, this conditioned expectation conflicts with their much deeper psychological need to be self-directing, and their energy is diverted away from learning to dealing with this internal conflict.”³⁵ To effectively train elder candidates, strategies must be implemented to help the learners be self-directed rather than allowing them to default to a passive, dependent position.

Prior knowledge. Secondly, adults have a rich reservoir of knowledge and experience, which is rich resource for learning. Indeed, an adult's identity is commonly intertwined with his knowledge and experience. This connection is evidenced when adults introduce themselves by stating they *are* their occupation. For example, one may introduce himself by saying, “My name is John, and I am a veterinarian.” Andragogy recognizes that adults thrive when their prior knowledge is appealed to. This link to prior

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

knowledge is especially true for elder candidates, as they have already been assessed and determined to meet the biblical qualifications for the office of elder. They have deep knowledge of Scripture and have walked with Christ many years. The goal of instructional design for training elder candidates is to maximize the effect of what these men already know for the purposes of faithful service to Christ in leading at Crosspoint Church.

Relevancy-oriented. Thirdly, concerning their readiness to learn, adults are relevancy-oriented. Simply put, adults learn on a need-to-know basis. Andragogy emphasizes direct applicability because adult learners are commonly in a volunteer learning situation. Warren Wilbert asserts, “the practicability and useful transfer of the learning is a virtual must.”³⁶ Elder candidates will benefit as course material and assignments are carefully designed and implemented based on their relevancy to prepare these men to serve as elders.

Problem-oriented. Fourthly, adults typically do not learn for the sake of learning, but are seeking to be equipped to perform a task. Knowles posits that learning experiences must be organized “around life situations rather than according to subject matter units.”³⁷ While “Composition 1” may suffice as a course title for the purposes of an institution, “Writing Better Business Letters” is preferable for adult learners.

³⁶Warren Wilbert, *Strategies for Teaching Christian Adults* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1984), quoted in Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 47, accessed January 16, 2014, Boyce Digital Library.

³⁷Knowles, *Andragogy in Action*, 12.

Andragogy is problem-centered rather than subject-centered. In designing a course for training elder candidates, it is essential to quickly demonstrate the importance of subject matter to the learners. As Michael S. Wilder observes, “Adult learners experience transformation in their way of thinking as they are challenged to reflect critically on their current life assumptions (what they believe and how they perceive the world). These challenges often come through exposure to content, conversation with fellow learners, and crisis events in the learner’s life.”³⁸

Internally-motivated. Knowles acknowledges that adults will respond to some external motivators, such as a better job or increased pay, but “the andragogical model predicates that the more potent motivators are internal—self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, greater self-confidence, self-actualization, and the like.”³⁹ From a biblical worldview, in a context of training elder candidates, it is observed that these men are motivated to learn in order to grow in godliness (Rom 8:29; Col 3:10; 1 Pet 2:2) and to be better equipped for the work of the ministry (2 Cor 5:18; Eph 4:12; 2 Tim 4:5). One example of this Scriptural motivation is found in 2 Timothy 2:15, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”

Physical climate. Knowles candidly suggests that a typical classroom setup with rows of desks facing the front of the room is “the least conducive to learning that the

³⁸Wilder, “All Grown Up or Not,” 278.

³⁹Knowles, *Andragogy in Action*, 12.

fertile human brain could invent. It announces to anyone entering the room that the name of the game here is one-way transmission, that the proper role of the student is to sit and listen to transmissions from the lectern.”⁴⁰ A classroom setup for training elder candidates is one that communicates interaction and collaboration with learners around tables together.

Psychological climate. According to Knowles, several factors contribute to a psychological climate that will maximize adult learning. First, adults learn best in a climate of mutual respect where they are not talked-down to or regarded as dumb or not valued. Additionally, a climate of collaboration, mutual trust, openness, and authenticity will enhance learning. If the instructor models humility, openness and authenticity, the participants are more likely to likewise adopt this posture. Knowles also suggests that a climate of pleasure and humanness will contribute to adult learning. Providing for human comfort, such as a good physical space, comfortable chairs, refreshments, and breaks will all contribute to creating a healthy learning climate.⁴¹ This type of setting will encourage and benefit elder candidates in a training course.

Raymond J. Wlodkowski notes a major limitation to Knowles’ andragogical framework. He writes, “Industry and business are filled with well-designed, efficient instructional programs that are not very motivating Motivation takes people-to-

⁴⁰Ibid., 15.

⁴¹Ibid., 17.

people skills and time. Like a good conversation, it cannot be rushed.”⁴² Indeed, the instructor’s enthusiasm and authenticity will lend credibility to the learning objectives and enhance motivation for the adult learner. Wlodkowski insists that instructors must effectively motivate adult learners. Characteristics of a motivating instructor include knowledge that is beneficial to share, empathy with the course participants, clarity in his organization and language, and enthusiasm which models commitment and expressiveness. Particularly relevant to training elder candidates, Wlodkowski expounds on the notion of enthusiasm: “The pillar of enthusiasm has two basic criteria: (1) we value what we teach for ourselves as well as for the learner, and (2) we display our commitment with appropriate degrees of emotion and expressiveness.”⁴³ The work of pastoral leadership is not simply understanding and applying concepts, but requires complete surrender and embodiment of Jesus Christ, the chief shepherd, in one’s character and ministry. Therefore, it is pertinent that the instructor be one who embodies godly character and love for Christ and his church to have credibility to teach. James Riley Estep, Jr., affirms the importance of embodying the message being taught in Christian education: “Teachers serve as examples to their students, teaching not only with their words but with their lives.”⁴⁴ By the Lord’s grace, I will endeavor to continue to

⁴²Raymond J. Wlodkowski, *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching All Adults*, rev. ed, The Jossey–Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco: Jossey–Bass Publishers, 1999), 290.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 45–46.

⁴⁴James Riley Estep, Jr., “Toward a Theologically Informed Approach to Education,” in *A Theology for Christian Education*, ed. James R. Estep, Michael J. Anthony, and Gregg R. Allison (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 271.

grow as a faithful example who embodies such character and diligently prepares for each training session so as to most effectively motivate the elder candidates.

Good Practice in Adult Education

Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gamson’s article, “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education,” provides further insight to teaching adults. These “good practices”

rest on 50 years of research on the way teachers teach and students learn, how students work and play with one another, and how students and faculty talk to each other. While each practice can stand alone on its own, when all are present their effects multiply. Together they employ six powerful forces in education: activity, expectations, cooperation, interaction, diversity, and responsibility.⁴⁵

As Chickering and Gamson argue, good practice in adult education includes the following features,

1. encourages contact between students and faculty,
2. develops reciprocity and cooperation among students,
3. encourages active learning,
4. gives prompt feedback,
5. emphasizes time on task,
6. communicates high expectations, and
7. respects diverse talents and ways of learning.⁴⁶

These good practices are based on the conviction that “What is taught, after all, is at least as important as how it is taught”⁴⁷ and must be integrated both in the course design and implementation. One particularly important concept in adult learning offered by

⁴⁵Chickering and Gamson, “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education,” 4.

⁴⁶Ibid., 3.

⁴⁷Ibid., 4.

Chickering and Gamson is that excellent learning results from active learning techniques. Consequently, active learning techniques will now be further considered.

Active Learning Techniques

Complementing Knowles' principles of andragogy and affirmed by Chickering and Gamson's "Seven Good Practices," the implementation of active learning techniques will bring value to a pastoral leadership course for elder candidates. As defined by Richard Felder and Rebecca Brent, active learning "is anything course-related that all students in a class session are called upon to do other than simply watching, listening and taking notes."⁴⁸ To Felder and Brent, active learning techniques are "a simple, effective, and easy teaching strategy with a solid foundation in research and common sense."⁴⁹

Active learning does not demand discarding the lecture. Indeed, teachers must spend time explaining, analyzing, and modeling course material. However, learning is hindered when instructors rely exclusively on the lecture. Felder and Brent admonish instructors to

avoid making lecturing the only thing you do. If a lecture or recitation session includes even a few minutes of relevant activity—a minute here, 30 seconds there—the students will be awake and with you for the remaining time in a way that never happens in a traditional lecture, and most will retain far more of what happens in those few minutes than of what you say and do in the rest of the session. If you do that in every course session, at the end of the semester you'll see evidence of high-level learning unlike anything you've seen before.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Richard M. Felder and Rebecca Brent, "Active Learning: An Introduction," *ASQ Higher Education Brief* 2, no. 4 (August 2009): 11, accessed January 22, 2014, <http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/ALpaper%28ASQ%29.pdf>.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., 12.

Felder and Brent provide helpful examples of active learning exercises for the classroom that aid the instructional design of an elder training course. These exercises range from involving students in discussion through asking them to answer questions and explain concepts, case study analysis, critiquing an article, brainstorming a list, to formulating a question about material covered in class.

One restraint with active learning techniques is that they must be brief, typically not lasting more than three minutes. Felder and Brent report that instructors who utilize active learning techniques as they prescribe “almost always say that their classes are much more lively and enjoyable and the quality of learning goes up dramatically.”⁵¹

In his book *Created to Learn*, William Yount offers more active learning techniques that will enhance an elder candidate training course. Principles of *directed–discovery learning* could be integrated in an elder training through the use of a multi–variable case study or in the context of debriefing supervised shepherding experiences. When facing a challenging and complex situation, various theological principles and pastoral leadership skills may be taught through evaluating and seeking solutions to the given situation. “Learners are actively involved with concepts and principles, experiences, and experiments in order to discover principles for themselves. Such an approach arouses the curiosity of students, develops independent problem–solving skills, and strengthens critical thinking abilities.”⁵² Such directed–discovery learning moves learners to the higher–ordered learning of Bloom’s Taxonomy and complements

⁵¹Ibid., 15.

⁵²Yount, *Created to Learn*, 202.

Knowles' principles of andragogy. Drawing from Jerome Bruner's work and the principles of constructivism, Yount provides a number of helpful suggestions for teaching in a Christian context that are applicable for a pastoral leadership course for elder candidates. One suggestion I found particularly insightful is that "learning should be flexible and exploratory, allowing students to solve problems on their own."⁵³ Yount also reminds instructors to periodically revisit important concepts. A third suggestion I found illuminating is Yount's encouragement to "let students satisfy their own curiosity, even if ideas are not directly related to the lesson."⁵⁴ Instructors should be slow to squelch where a person is connecting or learning just because it's not directly related to the course. The integration of these principles of andragogy and active learning in course design contribute to significant learning experiences for the elder candidates.

The Value of Mentorship in Education

Mentoring is third practice in the field of education that brings value to developing a pastoral leadership course for training elder candidates at Crosspoint Church. Mentoring can be defined as "a relational process between [a] mentor, who knows or has experienced something and transfers that something (resources of wisdom, information, experience, confidence, insight, relationships, status, etc.) to a mentoree, at an appropriate time and manner, so that it facilitates development or empowerment."⁵⁵

⁵³Yount, *Created to Learn*, 203.

⁵⁴Ibid, 204.

⁵⁵Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992), 33.

Michael J. Anthony describes a mentor as one who “serves to guide, nurture, protect, and facilitate the learning of one under her or his tutelage.”⁵⁶

Mentoring in Scripture

The use of mentoring in education or leadership training is deeply rooted in Scripture. In training his apostles, Jesus did much more than lecture about the kingdom, but used many activities modernly associated with mentoring to prepare them. In his classic work, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Robert E. Coleman describes the mentoring practices Jesus used to train his disciples, which is worth quoting at length:

Jesus checked up on the actions and reactions of his disciples as they faced various difficult situations. He kept after them constantly, giving them increasingly more attention as his ministry on earth came to a close. He would not let them rest in success or in failure. No matter what they did, there was always more to do and to learn....

Here was on-the-job training at its best. Jesus would let his followers have some experience or make some observation of their own, and then he would use this as a starting point to teach a lesson of discipleship. The fact that they tried to do his work, even though they may have failed at it, gave them greater awareness of their deficiencies, and hence they were more disposed to the Master’s correction. Moreover, their encounter with life situations enabled Jesus to pinpoint his teaching on specific needs and to spell it out in the concrete terms of practical experience. We always appreciate an education more after we have had the opportunity to apply what we have learned.⁵⁷

Jesus’ methods of training his disciples were not limited to his discourses and parables.

Jesus integrated teaching with his supervision of the disciples’ personal lives and ministry struggles. Indeed, Jesus mentored his disciples. The Gospel of Mark captures Jesus’

⁵⁶Michael J. Anthony, “Mentoring,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, ed. Michael J. Anthony (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 460.

⁵⁷Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, New Spire ed. (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 93–94.

mentorship in one simple verse: “And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14). As exemplified by the Savior, it is evident that mentorship is a valuable tool in effective training where a mentor guides, nurtures, and facilitates the learning of one under his tutelage.

Jesus is not the only example of a mentor in Scripture. As Howard and William Hendricks explain, “Mentoring was a way of life in Bible times. It was the primary means of handing down skills and wisdom from one generation to the next.”⁵⁸ Examples of mentors in Scripture include Jethro to Moses (Exod 18), Moses to Joshua (Deut 31:1–8; 34:9), Elijah to Elisha (1 Kgs 19:16–21; 2 Kgs 2:1–16), Barnabas to Paul (Acts 4:36–37; 9:26–30; 11:22–30), and Paul to Timothy (Acts 16:1–3; Phil 2:19–23; 1, 2 Tim).

Mentoring in Education

The formal concept of mentoring in the educational realm is derived from Homer’s epic, *The Odyssey*. When Odysseus is away fighting at Troy, he entrusts Telemachus, his son, to Mentor, a man who will nurture him to manhood in Odysseus’ absence. Mentoring (formal and informal) has a near universal precedent in the history of civilization. The practice of mentoring, where older men and women bring along younger men and women and train them in every aspect of a craft, trade, or skill, is evidenced in every type of society, whether urban, agrarian, or nomadic. Mentoring and apprenticeship has historically played a crucial part in developing the next generation.

⁵⁸Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 180.

Educational fields like medical school have built-in mentorship training as a part of preparing future workers. Students must integrate knowledge learned in the classroom through practicums all the way to residencies and fellowships. However, effective hands-on mentorship is not commonly practiced in most educational fields, including pastoral leadership training for elders in the church. Gordon MacDonald writes that modern practices in education and training fall short of what is required to ready men and women for responsibility and leadership. He argues, “What passes for people development happens in a classroom, and the certification of a person is by diploma from an institution rather than the stamp of approval from an overseer, a mentor. The criteria for judgment of people usually rests upon knowledge rather than wisdom, achievement rather than character, profit rather than creativity.”⁵⁹ This indictment on classroom training does not mean that classroom training is unnecessary, but that mentorship is necessary in addition to what may be taught in a class to guide students to integrate course material into their lives and ministries.

Anthony W. Foster affirms the importance of mentoring in education, particularly in view leadership development. He records, “A brief review of content covered in the precedent literature for this study reveals a recurring theme of the importance of the role of experience as a part of leadership development.”⁶⁰ Observing the consequences of the absence of supervised or mentoring experiences in leadership

⁵⁹Gordon MacDonald, foreword, in *The Fine Art of Mentoring*, by Ted Engstrom (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989), ix-x, quoted in Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 120.

⁶⁰Foster, “A Study of Post-Baccalaureate Leadership Curricula,” 217.

development, Foster claims, “This leads the researcher to consider the possibility that one of the reasons why the cry that there is a crisis in leadership in the Christian community and beyond is that there is evidence that there is a disconnect between theory and praxis in the stated subject matter, objectives, and competencies in existing curriculum.”⁶¹

Effective Mentoring for Christian Leaders

In the context of training elder candidates, character, leadership, communication, and pastoral care are vital traits course participants must continually develop. These traits extend far beyond knowledge or comprehension of information and are best developed, educationally speaking, through mentoring. As Thoman explains: "It is critical that the student receive feedback from real persons in real community regarding their spiritual maturity. Ministry mentors will be able to observe the student's spiritual formation from the context of real-life service. The strength of character qualities are tested by the pressures they endure."⁶² Howard and William Hendricks likewise underscore the impact of mentoring relationships in life of future leaders. They write, “Show me a man’s closest companions and I can make a fairly accurate guess as to what sort of man he is, as well as what sort of man he is likely to become. You see, people tend to rub off on each other—again, ‘as iron sharpens iron.’”⁶³ Indeed, the careful mentorship of godly, faithful elders will be of great value to training elder candidates.

⁶¹Ibid., 220.

⁶²Rick Thoman, “Leadership Development, Part 1: Churches Don’t Have To Go It Alone,” *Christian Education Journal*, 3, 6, no. 2 (September 1, 2009): 295.

⁶³Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 21.

Principles of effective mentoring must also be considered in training current and future elder candidates. Harry Reeder writes that effective mentors of Christian leaders are “consistently demonstrating growth and maturity with a measure of transparency and permeated by humility Followers are taught and strengthened by exposure to a leader who is sensitive to sin, careful in conduct, and humbly committed to honoring the Lord with a faithful witness.”⁶⁴

Practically, Hendricks and Hendricks argue that every mentor meeting should be defined with a clear purpose for the meeting. They write, “Your agenda is comprised of the things you intend to work on—your goals, your issues, your problems, your needs. Defining an agenda is key, because it forms a basis for everybody’s expectations. It also determines what you actually do in the interaction.”⁶⁵ Consistent with Knowles’ andragogical principle of self-directed learning, Hendricks and Hendricks add,

First, whatever you do, make sure that your protégé drives the agenda, not you. He may need your help in setting it; in fact, your first great contribution may be helping him . . . to think through what he wants and needs. But you must let *him* determine that. You cannot determine that for him The more the learner establishes the agenda, the more learning will take place.⁶⁶

In a pastoral leadership course for elder candidates, course participants benefit from a mentoring component in which they are paired with a mentor for supervised shepherding experiences and interaction around the course material. In this way, Scriptural concepts of pastoral leadership are applied and participants gain insight and

⁶⁴Harry L. Reeder III, *The Leadership Dynamic: A Biblical Model for Raising Effective Leaders* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 87.

⁶⁵Hendricks and Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, 98.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 196.

continued assessment on pastoral leadership. Mentors and elder candidates benefit from the mentoring associated with the elder training course to the degree these principles on effective mentoring are integrated.

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, principles from the field of education add value to developing and implementing a course on pastoral leadership for current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church. When integrated, these best practices of instructional design and adult learning maximize participant learning. If current and future elder candidates express significant learning experiences around the course objectives, the church's unity will flourish and the Lord Jesus Christ will be magnified.

CHAPTER 4

THE FIFTEEN–WEEK PROJECT

Introduction

A fifteen–week project was launched in order to develop and implement a pastoral leadership course for training current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. The project began in January of 2014 with the development of training objectives for a course on training elder candidates. The project concluded in April of 2014 with the successful implementation of a six–session course for training current and future elder candidates.

The content for the elder training course was developed in part on the foundational research from the biblical and theological basis of elders developed in Chapter 2. Additionally, content arose from coursework for the Doctor of Ministry program and from the fruit of personal study over the past fifteen years in ministry. The instructional design and teaching methods utilized insights gleaned from the theoretical and practical issues in training elders researched in Chapter 3.

Three goals were used to determine the effectiveness of the project. Each goal was accomplished in its own unique phase of the project. The first goal, achieved in phase 1, was to determine and list training objectives to equip Crosspoint Church’s present and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out the duties of elders. Phase 1 encompassed weeks 1 and 2 of the project. The training objectives were developed in

collaboration with Crosspoint Church's existing elders and in application of the research from chapters 2 and 3 of this project. The training objectives were unanimously affirmed by the elders with the training objectives evaluation rubric (see appendix 1).

Achieved in phase 2, the second goal was to develop a pastoral leadership course to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives. This phase was implemented in weeks 3 through 9. Utilizing an instructional design matrix, I determined a key topic for six class sessions. The topics of each of the class sessions progressed from general to particular, beginning with the biblical foundation for the church and moving to particular responsibilities of elders in the church. Each session included particular ways the concepts from the course are or need to be integrated in the life of Crosspoint Church. Class content, assignments, supplemental resources, and pedagogy were determined for each lesson. A course notebook containing all these materials was assembled. I selected an expert panel with diverse areas of expertise to comprehensively assess the instructional design of the course. The course notebook was presented to the members of the expert panel, and their feedback was received using a curriculum evaluation rubric (see appendix 2).

The third goal, achieved in phase 3, was to implement a six-session course with Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. This goal was implemented during weeks 10 through 15 of the project. Two weeks prior to beginning the course, in week 8, course participants were assembled following a worship service and issued a pre-course questionnaire (see appendix 3). This questionnaire utilized a six-point Likert scale and assessed the participants' perceived preparedness to serve in the office of elder. Questions were developed under three broad areas of pastoral leadership: (1) Scripture

and Theology, (2) Practical Shepherding and Leadership, and (3) Crosspoint Church Distinctives. Questionnaires were completed and collected in this same meeting. The results were tabulated by the church's Administrative Coordinator in the 14th week of the project. It was determined that the best time for all course participants was to meet on Sunday afternoons. Several participants' ministry responsibilities created a schedule conflict with one of the class dates and other conflicts existed in seeking to extend the course an additional week. To best accommodate the class, the six-session class was taught over five meetings. To make up for the missing week, the class meeting time was changed from two hours to three hours. The class met five times from 12:30 – 3:30pm on Sunday afternoons. The same questionnaire that was issued at the outset of the course was distributed, completed, and collected following the final session of the course in week 15 of the project. In addition to the post-course questionnaire, three additional questions designed to generate additional feedback on the effectiveness of the course were administered to the course participants. This post-course questionnaire data was tabulated by the church's Administrative Coordinator during week 15, following completion of the course.

Enlistment of Course Participants

The primary audience of the course design on pastoral leadership was qualified elder candidates for Crosspoint Church. At the time of the project implementation, Crosspoint Church was amidst the process of evaluating and appointing three elder candidates to begin serving alongside the existing three elders. These new elders' assessment and appointment process was completed during this project implementation in February 2014. This pastoral leadership course was the first assignment for these newly

appointed elders. However, for the purposes of this project, I determined it would be difficult to get thorough feedback on the effectiveness of the course design with a sample size of 3. In consultation with the existing Crosspoint Church elders and my project supervisor, I developed a plan to achieve a larger sample size that would enhance the evaluation of the course design. With a target of 10 to 15 course participants, I was able to enlist 10 more men to participate in the pastoral leadership class.

A second pool of course participants was derived from Crosspoint Church's pastoral training residency program, called Generation LINK.¹ In the 2013–14 school year, 7 men served as pastoral ministry residents at Crosspoint Church through Generation LINK. These men are aspiring elders who are receiving theological training, ministry experience, and shepherding by the Crosspoint Church elders. As part of their residency curriculum, they were invited to participate in this pastoral leadership course. Three of these men were able to complete additional assignments outside of the scope of this course in order to receive three hours of masters–level seminary credit through Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's EQUIP program or The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Ministry Apprenticeship Program (MAP).²

¹Generation LINK offers year–long resident opportunities to serve Christ and be developed for pastoral ministry through the local church. The five core components of Generation LINK are ministry experience, theological training, discipleship, leadership development, and community. More information is available at www.generation-link.org (accessed June 18, 2014).

²Southern Baptist seminaries are increasingly providing avenues whereby students can receive part of their degree through training in a local church. For more information about Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's EQUIP program, one can visit <http://www.sebts.edu/Equip/default.aspx> (accessed June 18, 2014). For more information about Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Ministry Apprenticeship Program, one can see <http://www.sbts.edu/alumni-and-friends/ministry-apprenticeship-program/> (accessed June 18, 2014).

A third pool of course participants was derived from other men known to the elders of Crosspoint Church to be aspiring elders. On behalf of the existing elders at Crosspoint Church, I personally invited 3 such men who aspire to the office of elder to participate in this course for their development. In each case, these men are current students in Southern Baptist seminaries. Two are currently members of Crosspoint Church and one is a former member of Crosspoint Church who now lives in a neighboring community. As with the Generation LINK residents, these men were also able to complete additional assignments and receive three hours of masters–level seminary credit for this course through Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary’s EQUIP program or The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary’s Ministry Apprenticeship Program (MAP).

Phase 1: Development of Training Objectives

Training objectives (also called learning objectives) serve as an important first step in instructional design. For teaching to be effective, everything that happens in a course needs to be subservient to the training objectives. Two years prior to beginning this project, Crosspoint Church’s elders began discussing the need to develop a course for training qualified elder candidates that would contribute to a smooth transition for a church that needs additional elders. Since this time, I have mulled over and studied various issues related to elder training. Crosspoint’s existing elders have also held numerous discussions on desired outcomes of a pastoral leadership course for training

elder candidates. Thus, the articulation of training objectives was a culmination of these conversations of the existing Crosspoint Church elders, my personal study, and my coursework through the Doctor of Ministry program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The driving question behind developing the training objectives was, “What does a newly appointed Crosspoint Church elder need to know, think, and do in order to faithfully serve the church?” It was assumed in this question that a newly appointed elder meets the Scriptural qualifications of an elder, and therefore is grounded in faithful theology, godly character, and has the ability to teach.

To evaluate the ideas brainstormed by the Crosspoint Church elders, I referenced seminal books on elders in Baptist churches. Books that contributed most to the training objectives include, *The Deliberate Church* by Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Church* by Mark Dever, *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer, and *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* by John Hammett.³

An initial draft of these training objectives was established at the beginning of week 1 of the project. I revisited these objectives and seminal resources three additional times in week 1. With each revision, the objectives gained greater clarity as I ensured the most important matters to prepare qualified elder candidates to serve in the office of elder at Crosspoint Church were included.

³Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005); Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2012); Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2010); John Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005).

During a regularly scheduled elders meeting at the beginning of week 2, I distributed a printed copy of the training objectives rubric (see appendix 2) to the existing elders and gave them instructions for how to use it. I then presented them with a printed copy of the training objectives and we discussed them together.⁴ The existing elders were already well acquainted with these concepts as a result of our many conversations on these in previous weeks and months. Although I asked the elders to take an additional day or two to consider these objectives before submitting the training objectives evaluation rubric, they unanimously felt ready to complete the rubrics so I allowed them to submit their feedback on the rubric during that meeting.

Additionally, invitations to participate in the forthcoming pastoral leadership class were issued during phase 1. My goal was to have a class size of 10 to 15 men who were either qualified elder candidates or were considered by the Crosspoint Church elders to be future elder candidates. This size of a class was desired because it would provide a sufficient sample size for meaningful quantitative feedback on the pastoral leadership training course questionnaire while allowing for meaningful dialogue and interaction during class sessions.

At the time of phase 1, 3 elder candidates had been evaluated and affirmed by the existing elders and were amidst a period of congregational evaluation before their appointment to the office of elder. These men were informed of the upcoming class through personal conversations followed up with details over email. On behalf of the existing elders, I communicated that this course would serve as their first assignment

⁴The training objectives are listed as “course objectives” on the first page of the pastoral leadership course in appendix 5.

subsequent to their appointment to the office. Additionally, on behalf of the existing elders, I invited the church's resident interns during staff meeting and email correspondence. The existing elders also identified 3 other individuals whom we observed have many elder-like qualities but have not yet been identified to take on the role of elder. For the purposes of this project, these men are considered "future elder candidates." I called these men by telephone and invited them to participate in the course, and subsequent details were communicated via email. Each of them accepted the invitation, and an initial class of 13 men was established.

Phase 2: Course Design

Weeks 3 through 9 of the project saw the implementation of phase 2 of the project in which I sought to accomplish the second goal. This goal was to develop a course to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives.

This goal was to be measured by an expert panel using a curriculum design rubric (see appendix 2). At the beginning of week 3, I confirmed the three members of the expert panel and gave them the target date of week 9 so they could allocate some time for reviewing the curriculum and completing the curriculum evaluation rubric in a timely fashion. The expert panel included a theological reader, a pastoral ministry reader, and a curriculum design reader. For the theological reader, I mobilized a church member who holds a Ph.D. in Theology, has served as a faculty member in an evangelical seminary, and has significant experience teaching theology in adult contexts. For the pastoral ministry reader, I enlisted Crosspoint Church's Senior Pastor, who has over thirty years of pastoral ministry, with twenty-one of those years as a senior pastor. For the curriculum

design reader, I enlisted my faculty supervisor, who holds a Ph.D. in Leadership with an emphasis in curriculum design of higher education and also serves as a Senior Instructional Designer for a major publisher in the curriculum publishing industry.

Through personal conversations and email communication, it was determined that Sunday afternoons immediately following our worship service would be the best time for the course participants. I discovered that a number of the course participants would be participating in a mission trip during the time of weeks 9 through 15 of the project and would have to miss one of the course meetings. In an attempt to accommodate all the course participants, I consulted with the existing elders, and we determined it would be best if we lengthened the class meetings from two to three hours to create the additional instructional time to cover six sessions in five class meetings. Additionally, I scheduled a short orientation meeting two weeks before the beginning of the course during the regular class meeting time of Sunday at 12:30 p.m. so I could issue the pre-course questionnaire and review the course syllabus with the participants.

In designing a pastoral leadership course for current and future elder candidates, I began with an instructional design matrix, which was described in chapter 3 as a tool to help an instructional designer build an effective course to accomplish the desired outcomes of the course. The training objectives were utilized as the course objectives. I then gathered all the resources that I could which related to the objectives. Throughout the process of instructional design, these resources were continuously at hand. Additionally, I kept some of the most practical resources from my research on educational principles in chapter 3 and regularly consulted them.

Based on the course objectives, I determined a central topic for each of the six classes. The content of the class sessions progressed from general to particular. The first topic was “The Elders and the Church,” in which the course participants were equipped with a robust Baptist ecclesiology. The final three lessons very practically concluded the course by training the course participants with practical responsibilities of the role of elder in the context of Crosspoint Church.

Before the course could be designed, I had to determine a reasonable time-on-task requirement for class participants outside of class. Considering the existing work, ministry, and family responsibilities of the elder candidates, I set the anticipated time-on-task for all outside of class assignments within the time frame of five hours. This limitation placed significant restraint on the amount of homework that could be given and forced me to carefully focus each assignment towards the learning objectives.

Over weeks 4 through 7, each of the 6 class sessions was designed. For each session, I divided the topic into subtopics that were necessary to adequately cover the topic. The number of subtopics under each topic ranged from 4 to 6. Each subtopic was crafted in such a manner that it supported one or more of the course objectives. I then determined how much in-class time-on-task could be appropriated for each subtopic. Then, key Scripture passages for each topic and subtopic were chosen and listed. For each subtopic, I considered possible student misconceptions and collected learning resources that may be useful for the course. After evaluating many books on the topics of pastoral leadership and elders, I developed the students’ course reading and kept note of other books that would be useful supplemental reading. Additionally, I noted which portions of the assigned books were most pertinent to supplement the subtopics and

planned the reading assignments in the syllabus accordingly. At the request of the elder candidates who worked full-time jobs outside of the church, I gave the course participants the titles of the first two reading assignments in week 5 to allow them to get a start on their reading in advance of the class.

For each subtopic, I developed a detailed outline over the content that I wanted to cover in each class. Then, I integrated learning resources such as quotes, article excerpts, diagrams, and tables within. I then reviewed the course design through the lens of the educational principles studied in chapter 3 and ensured each session was pedagogically sound and included instructional tools such as active learning techniques. Next, I further subdivided each lesson with time-on-task allotments for each key segment or activity.

Along the way, I saved any articles or supplemental church documents that I came across that could be valuable in the course. Based on the course objectives and unfolding of the curriculum, some of these resources were inserted in part or in whole for in class reading or reference, others were put in an appendix, and others were excluded from the course.

In week 8, I edited and reviewed all lessons and organized many remaining resourceful articles and church documents in appendices. I developed a course syllabus and produced a course notebook for each member of my expert panel containing the course design (see appendix 5) as well as other resources that would be helpful to new elders to Crosspoint Church.⁵ These additional resources included a current church

⁵The syllabus is contained in the first five pages of the pastoral leadership course in appendix 5.

membership directory, book reviews I wrote on several books related to elder leadership, and selected other resources and articles. Additionally, I scheduled a meeting for the following week with two members of my expert panel who live in my community. I communicated this meeting to the third member of my expert panel who is out of state by inviting him to a video conference call with us.

In week 9, I met with two members of my expert panel and provided them with a course notebook and a hard copy of the curriculum evaluation rubric (see appendix 2). I surveyed the curriculum evaluation rubric with them before walking them through the syllabus. After this, we examined the course design together, interacting around the concepts, instructional methods, and formatting of each lesson. Following a ninety-minute meeting, I reminded them of their instructions for the curriculum evaluation rubric and asked that they return it within three days. The curriculum reader on my expert panel was unable to video conference call with us, so at his request, I emailed him the course design in his preferred format along with an electronic copy of the curriculum evaluation rubric for his review.

Each member of the expert panel responded by the end of week 9 with his feedback using the curriculum evaluation rubric. The results were compiled and suggestions for improvement were taken into account in a final revision (see appendix 8). With the assistance of Crosspoint Church's Administrative Coordinator, I then printed and assembled course notebooks for the course participants.

Additionally in week 9, I gathered the course participants together for a course orientation. In an effort to develop a learning community, each course participant

introduced himself, shared briefly about what brought him to participate in the course, and shared what distractions he faced to successfully engage with and complete the course. Following this time of introduction, I administered the pre-course questionnaire, reviewed the course syllabus with the students, and answered questions about the class. Course participants were also paired with a supervising mentor with whom they were expected to meet three times over the duration of the course for personal shepherding, supervised ministry experience, and leadership development. Course participants were asked to keep a reflective journal for this course. At least one entry was required each week in which participants reflected on shepherding experiences, mentor meetings, ministry involvement, and personal growth. Additionally, students were asked to read *A Display of God's Glory* by Mark Dever and the Crosspoint Church Constitution prior to the first class session.

Phase 3: Course Implementation

In week 10, session 1 of the pastoral leadership course was held. In a course introduction, participants examined the value of training and preparation for the office of elder and discussed the benefits and risks of adding more elders to lead in the church. Session 1 was entitled “The Elders and the Church.” The goal of this session was to equip students to biblically defend Baptist ecclesiology by explaining its key tenets and Scriptural basis in course discussion and writing exercises and then discuss how Crosspoint Church expresses Baptist ecclesiology.

Participants were given one minute to write a definition of the church. Class discussion ensued around the various definitions that were given, noting the various ways each contributed to a biblical definition of the church. Next, the class examined how the

church came to understand its own nature and organization by surveying definitions of the church throughout church history, beginning with the New Testament writings and progressing to modern Baptist scholars. Baptist polity, also called congregationalism, was then compared with other prominent forms of polity. Then, the class investigated how congregationalism works at Crosspoint Church by examining the church's constitution, membership documents, and affiliations. The class was then divided into three groups and provided a unique definition of the church. The groups reviewed their definition, evaluated Crosspoint Church in light of that definition, and shared its findings with the class. Following this session, students were asked to prepare a handout summarizing Baptist ecclesiology that was no more than two pages in length and to submit it to me via email before the next class session.

No class was held in week 11 due to several course participants' travel requirements for a mission trip. In week 12, session 2, "The Elder as Shepherd" was held. The goal of this session was for students to gain a biblical understanding of the nature of elder leadership in the church by examining a biblical theology of shepherding. Prior to class, students were asked to read *The Deliberate Church* by Mark Dever⁶ as well as the Baptist Faith and Message.⁷ Class began with a discussion of the agrarian concept of shepherd. We then reflected on Psalm 23 and prayed. Next, the class examined several passages of Scripture revealing God's nature as a shepherd of his people. The class

⁶Mark Dever, *A Display of God's Glory: Basics of Church Structure*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: 9Marks, 2001).

⁷ Charles S. Kelley, Richard D. Land, and R. Albert Mohler, *The Baptist Faith and Message*, 2000 ed. (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2007).

discovered how God shepherds by appointing human undershepherds for the oversight of his people and defined the term “elders” as that office of undershepherds in the church. The class then surveyed the office of elder in the Old Testament and observed continuity and discontinuity with the office of elder as Scripture reveals it in the new covenant community of the church.

Beginning with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the class then surveyed the theme of elders as shepherds through the New Testament. Next, participants were paired together and given a unique passage of Scripture. Each pair was instructed to examine their passage for traits of faithful shepherding in Jesus’ life. These traits were then shared with the class and a list of Jesus’ shepherding traits was compiled.

The class then examined the various terms used by the Christian church to describe the office of elder. Next, the class discussed the relationship of the indwelling Holy Spirit with God’s shepherding of his people through human undershepherds. Then, attributes of Christian elders being plural, qualified, and male were examined. The class then read and discussed an article on “The Pattern of Male Eldership” by Alexander Strauch.⁸ For historical perspective, the class surveyed the rise of the offices in the church from the New Testament writers to today. To exhort the class that elders are not faithful merely by virtue of their appointment, a meaningful discussion on Peter’s charge to the elders 1 Peter 5:1–4 followed. Participants were confronted with dangers and temptations elders face along with the sacrifice required to serve as an elder. At the conclusion of

⁸Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership Booklet: Restoring the Eldership to Its Rightful Place in the Church*, rev. ed. (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1997), 7–8.

class, participants wrote several brief phrases that describe ways God encouraged or challenged their lives or character as a result of class discussion. Participants were asked to read Acts 20, portions of *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer, as well as a short article I wrote entitled, “Why Crosspoint Should Practice Corrective Church Discipline” for the next class session the following week.

Week 13 was one of two classes predetermined to complete one and a half sessions. The topic of the first session of this day’s meeting was “The Elder’s Life.” This session’s goal was for students to identify traits needed to serve well as an elder at Crosspoint Church and to conduct self-examination in view of the Scriptural qualifications for the office of elder. This session began with an examination of the qualification of an elder in 1 Timothy 3, followed by discussion on how God calls elders to continued growth in these areas throughout their lives. After a time of prayer, the class examined the internal and external aspects of God’s call to the office of elder. Next, the class discussed the character of an elder. I then explained how chemistry among the elders is important for promoting the unity of the church and the class discussed specific ways the elders can maintain chemistry. The final two components of this session on the elder’s life included competency followed by communion with Christ. This session concluded examining several passages that revealed the Apostle Paul’s motivation in ministry and the class related the importance of an elder’s motivation to be derived from the gospel.

The final portion of this class period was used to begin the next session in the course, called “The Elder’s Work, Part 1: Protect.” The goal of this session was for students to evaluate the elder’s responsibility to protect the church and explain specific

strategies the Crosspoint Church elders employ to protect the church. The class discussed Acts 20:28–32, where the Apostle Paul admonishes the Ephesian elders to protect the flock of the church. As time expired for this meeting, the class discussed their reading assignment from Timothy Witmer on strategies for elders to know their church members. In preparation for the next class meeting, the class was asked to read all of 2 Timothy, Ephesians 4, selections from *The Shepherd Leader*, and a short article by Jeramie Rinne called, “Elders—The Church’s Lead Disciple–Makers.”⁹

In week 14, class picked up where we left off in the previous week’s discussion on “the Elder’s Work, Part 1: Protect.” After a recap of the elders’ task to know the sheep, we discussed the responsibility of elders to guard the flock. In so doing, the class examined some means by which the elders guard the flock, including the church covenant, membership class, membership interview, and the elders’ and congregational affirmation of prospective members. Next, several passages of Scripture that detail how elders are to defend the doctrine were examined followed by discussion of the courage required to lead faithfully and specific challenges faced in our ministry context.

Elders also protect the flock by pursuing the hurt and straying. After laying out a biblical foundation, I explained how the Crosspoint elders practically seek to protect the flock by presenting documents and strategies currently utilized. The final segment of this class focused on the elders’ call to discipline the rebellious. Here, the class examined

⁹Jeramie Rinne, “Elders—The Church’s Lead Disciple–Makers,” accessed February 11, 2014, <http://www.9marks.org/journal/elders%E2%80%94church%E2%80%99s-lead-disciple-makers>.

Crosspoint Church's discipline policy, pertinent Scripture passages, and the reality that elders will give an account to Jesus for the church members entrusted to our care.

In the final hour of this class meeting, we worked through session 5: "The Elder's Work, Part 2: Feed." The goal of this session was for students to evaluate the elders' responsibility to feed the church and be able to explain specific strategies the Crosspoint Church elders employ to shepherd the church with God's Word. After a discussion on Colossians 1:28, participants reflected on traits of men who have taught them the most. The class listed traits of these men that made them such good teachers.

We discussed Crosspoint Church's mission and core values, which frame how the elders feed the flock. The first tool the elders have to feed the flock is the public ministry of the Word. Aspects of this ministry that were studied were expository preaching, Word-saturated worship services, public prayer, and the regulative principle of worship. The next component examined was the personal ministry of the Word, which includes small groups, biblical counseling, and personal discipling relationships. After observing the necessity of fellowship alongside of Scripture, the class made observations from the article "Elders—The Church's Lead Disciple-Makers."

A third component of feeding the flock examined was training and sending leaders. We studied 2 Timothy 2:2 and brought application to our lives personally and collectively as a body of elders. The final component of feeding the flock considered was the proper administration of the ordinances. I led the class through a brief exegetical and theological study of baptism and then shared resources and training strategies for how this ordinance is applied in our church context. Similarly, I facilitated an exegetical and theological study on the Lord's Supper and related the two ordinances together in the life

of Crosspoint Church. Time ran short on this component for the class, so participants were asked to carefully read through the class notes prior to the final class session. In addition, students were asked to read remaining portions of *The Shepherd Leader*, email their reflection paper to the class one day prior to the next week's class, and read three of the reflection papers prior to class.

Because we ran short on time in the previous session, I began the week 15 class briefly recapping the ordinances and fielding a few questions on the church's application of the ordinances. We continued a few minutes of question and answer time from the previous week's session, discussing counseling and the legal requirements elders have as mandatory reporters if child abuse or neglect is ever known or suspected.

Session 6 of the course focused on "The Elder's Work, Part 3: Lead." The goal of this session was for students to evaluate the elders' responsibilities to lead the church and be able to explain specific strategies Crosspoint Church's elders employ to lead the church to accomplish its mission. To open our study of this responsibility, we examined Ezekiel 34:1–10 and discussed marks of good leaders, potential causes to discouragement, and solutions for times of discouragement. Next, we discussed the most important facet of an elder's leadership: his personal example. Then, the responsibility to lead through strategy and direction was considered. We discussed what it means that Crosspoint Church is theologically-driven, and then I presented components of the church's strategic plan and the class evaluated areas of this plan in need of continued development. A third component of the elders' leadership is to lead to reach the lost. I presented Scripture's calling on elders to do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim 4:5), and

then presented Crosspoint Church's missions strategy and financial commitment to partnership in the Great Commission.

A fourth aspect of leadership examined in this session was the principle that elders lead cooperatively. We read a short article that described first among equals among a plurality of elders and identified keys to effective elders meetings. A fifth aspect of leadership was that elders lead through loving service. We observed from several Scripture passages that elders are humble and servant leaders. The final aspect of elders' leadership examined is overseeing. I explained and gave examples of this oversight at Crosspoint Church, including communication, stewardship, and administration. The class was presented with church documents demonstrating how the elders provide such oversight and I shared known weaknesses in these areas.

To conclude this session, some of the course participants presented their reflection papers on the work of the elders and then facilitated a class discussion around an important or controversial aspect of his stated topic. For the final twenty-five minutes of our time, I administered the post-course questionnaire, which included the same questions as the pre-course questionnaire with an additional page for feedback on the pastoral leadership course. Students were dismissed upon completing their questionnaires.

At the conclusion of week 15, students submitted their journal entries to me either in hard copy or electronic form. By reviewing the journals, I was able to observe how participants related Scriptural concepts of pastoral leadership into their personal lives, conducted self-examination in view of the scriptural qualifications of elders, and developed in their understanding of the nature of elder leadership in the church.

Additionally, I emailed the Post–Course Mentor Survey (see appendix 4) to the course mentors and requested that they complete the survey with specific feedback for each course participant that he mentored.

On the following Monday after the final class, I had the church’s Administrative Coordinator compile the questionnaire responses. In order to determine if there was a positive statistical difference gained between the pre–course and post–course questionnaires, I ran a t–test on the data (see table A1 in appendix 9).

Conclusion

At the intersection of a need for leadership development in the life of Crosspoint Church and an area of personal study through my Doctor of Ministry studies, I was privileged to invest significant time in developing and implementing a course on pastoral leadership for current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. This endeavor proved to be a tremendous learning exercise under the wise oversight of my faculty supervisor and with the input and encouragement of my fellow elders. In chapter 5, I will demonstrate that the project was successful in accomplishing the project goals and provide additional reflections and recommendations for future endeavors in training elders.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

Introduction

This chapter will serve as an evaluation of the project. The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a pastoral leadership course for current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. The project's purpose will be evaluated first. Then, the project's goals will be evaluated. Following this, respective sections will be devoted to evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the project leading to a section proposing future project modifications. Next, theological reflections on the project will be shared. Then, I will offer some personal reflections on the project.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

As the project's purpose set forth, the project resulted in the successful development and implementation of a pastoral leadership course for training current and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina. As a result of this project, Crosspoint Church has a course it can use to train and align elder candidates for years to come. This project helped Crosspoint Church's first addition of new elders to very smoothly assimilate onto the existing elder body.

Several components were crucial to the project accomplishing its purpose. First, the existing Crosspoint elders played a significant role in achieving the purpose.

Two years prior to this project, the existing elders unanimously affirmed the development of an elder training course as essential for the continued advancement of Crosspoint Church's mission. The elders' continual support and cooperation demanded by this project evidenced their recognition and affirmation of the need for this course. The elders' cooperation was evidenced in many ways, including carefully discussing ideas and needs at various points along the way, providing valuable input throughout the project, and by granting me the opportunity to prioritize the development of this course in my responsibilities as an elder in the church. Additionally, they fully participated in the class meetings and as mentors to the course participants.

A second component crucial to the project accomplishing its purpose was the course participants' commitment to the course. The participants fully engaged in each session of the class. Their engagement demonstrated their recognition of the gravity of the issue of training elders. Participants made a significant investment of time by spending three hours in class on Sunday afternoons during the course. For several of the men who had ministry responsibilities bookending the class meetings, participation in the course made for an extremely long day. Additionally, these men faithfully completed their reading, writing, and mentoring assignments outside of class with care and excellence.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

Each of the project's goals were successfully accomplished, as evidenced by the data collected from the various project research instruments. The first goal was to determine and list training objectives to equip Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out their duties as elders. During the first two weeks of

the project, six training objectives were developed and presented to the existing Crosspoint Church elders. Using a training objectives evaluation rubric (see appendix 1), the existing elders affirmed that the training objectives would equip Crosspoint Church's current and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out their duties as elders by giving each indicator the highest mark of "exemplary" (see appendix 7).

The second goal was to develop a course curriculum to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives. During weeks 3 through 9, I designed a course that would prepare participants for pastoral leadership over three broad areas: (1) Scripture and theology, (2) practical shepherding and leadership, and (3) Crosspoint Church distinctives. Based on the training objectives, a topic was assigned to each of the six sessions. Lessons were built in an outcomes-based model to ensure that all the components in each lesson would contribute to attaining the training objectives. After the course was designed, I presented it along with the curriculum evaluation rubric (see appendix 2) to a three-member expert panel. The expert panel unanimously marked 7 of the 10 indicators as "exemplary," while the remaining three indicators received two "exemplary" and one "sufficient" marking (see appendix 8). With this feedback, it was determined that the curriculum design would be a useful tool for preparing Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives (see appendix 5).

The third goal was to implement a six-session course with Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. A class of thirteen men was assembled to participate in the six-session course on pastoral leadership. Three of the participants were recognized as qualified elder candidates and the remaining ten were considered by the

Crosspoint Church elders as future elder candidates. Over weeks 10 through 15 of the project, all thirteen class participants faithfully completed the requirements of the pastoral leadership course.

Prior to the start of the course, a questionnaire was administered to the course participants (see appendix 3). The questionnaire assessed participants' perceived readiness to serve in the office of elder at Crosspoint Church around three key areas: (1) Scriptural and theological knowledge, (2) practical shepherding and leadership, and (3) Crosspoint Church distinctives. The same questionnaire was distributed at the conclusion of the course to measure how the participants progressed in perceived readiness to serve in the office of elder as a result of the pastoral leadership course by their readiness to teach or explain a variety of pertinent topics. To participate in the questionnaires, participants had to be present for each session of the course and complete the out-of-class assignments. One class absence was allowed if the participant completed a make-up session within ten days of the absence. Each of the thirteen participants satisfied the requirements of the course and completed both questionnaires (see appendix 9). A t-test for dependent samples determined whether there was a positive statistical difference in the participants' perceived readiness to teach the topics covered in the class between the pre-course and post-course questionnaires. This goal was deemed successful as course participants' readiness to teach or explain pertinent issues related to the office of elder increased significantly from pre-course to post-course ($t_{(12)} = 6.87, p < 0.0001$). On average, participants felt more ready to teach or explain various topics related to the responsibilities of elders after taking this pastoral leadership course (see table A1 in appendix 9).

Evaluation of the Project's Methodology

The project was developed over 3 phases, with each phase corresponding to one of the goals of the project. The first phase consisted of weeks 1 and 2 of the project. In this phase, I determined and listed training objectives to equip Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates to faithfully carry out their duties as elders. This goal was successfully accomplished as determined by a training objectives rubric completed by the Crosspoint Church elders.

Phase 2 occurred between weeks 3 and 9 of the project. In this phase, I developed a course curriculum to train Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates in the training objectives. This goal was successfully accomplished as determined by the feedback of a three-member expert panel using a curriculum evaluation rubric.

In phase 3, I implemented a six-session course with Crosspoint Church's present and future elder candidates. This course occurred from weeks 10 through 15 of the project. As measured by a t-test run on the pre- and post-course questionnaire administered to the participants, the course successfully increased participants perceived preparedness to serve in the office of elder.

Additionally, in a comparison of the pre-course and post-course questionnaire responses, the pre-course ratings of readiness to serve in the office of elder evidence greater variance than the responses given in the post-course questionnaire. At the conclusion of the course, not only did participants' perceived readiness increase, but did so with less variance (see table A1 in appendix 9). This decrease in variance

demonstrates more consistency in the participants' perceived preparedness to serve in the office of elder after the course than before the course.

While accomplished over the first 9 weeks of the project, this course design was the fruit of years of study and experience in Christian ministry. Indeed, there is no way to quantify the preparation I received through these past ministry experiences along with my Doctor of Ministry coursework. With that being said, the methodology proved to sufficiently serve the stated purpose of this project as is demonstrated by each goal being successfully accomplished.

Moreover, feedback gleaned from participants in the post-course supplemental questionnaire (see appendix 10) confirms the effectiveness of the project methodology. Participants repeatedly stated that the pastoral leadership course was valuable for their preparation to serve as an elder. One participant stated that the course was a "huge value and resource for planning to be a future elder." Another participant stated the class was "very helpful. The class meetings added much value especially when we had built-in time for discussion."

One notable weakness in the methodology was mentioned by several participants. The pastoral leadership course could be improved if it was expanded to include two to four more sessions without adding to the content. By meeting over a few more sessions, more class time would be available for discussion and student presentations while relieving some pressure to rush through some parts of the material. The additional weeks would also allow for shorter class meetings and more outside-of-class work to be assigned without increasing the weekly time-on-task requirement.

Additionally, these extra weeks would provide more opportunities for intentional experiences in the mentoring component.

Strengths of the Project

The fifteen-week project contained several strengths that will now be considered. Foremost, this project provided a timely solution for an important need of Crosspoint Church. Whereas the elders of Crosspoint Church identified a need for a training course for elders that would reflect the church's theological and methodological distinctives, the pastoral leadership course filled this gap as a very useful resource for Crosspoint Church. Crosspoint Church now has a proven resource to aid in the alignment and training of its leaders to faithfully shepherd and oversee the congregation.

Further, this course may help to fill a gap for Southern Baptist churches whose polity is plural elder-led and congregationally ruled. I have had various conversations about this training gap with elders at approximately two-dozen churches of similar polity. Most of these pastors expressed that their churches did nothing at all to train or orient new elders, but new elders were simply added to the elder body after assessment. Of those elders who shared they gave some effort to train and orient new elders, none had a formal process for training and assimilating new elders.

Another strength of this project was the course notebook that was developed for participants. In the open-ended questions from the supplemental questionnaire, four of the participants specifically noted that the notebook added value to their development and preparedness for pastoral leadership. One participant commented, "I will be able to refer back to this elder training manual to find answers for my questions in pastoral ministry" while another observed that the "practical training manual [was] very helpful."

In addition to the six sessions that integrate practical shepherding and theology, the course notebook included other supplemental articles and resources such as policies and tools used in the leadership and administration of Crosspoint Church (see appendix 6). Plans are already being made to use this notebook again for this pastoral leadership course with the next group of elder candidates at Crosspoint Church. Furthermore, the outside of class assignments reflected in the notebook also served the purposes of the class well. One participant expressed, “The assigned readings matched the instructional goals for the class very well.”

From the rank order question in the supplement to the post-course questionnaire, three areas distinctly stood out to course participants as the most valuable components of the course (see table A3 in appendix 10). The area of highest benefit was pastoral ministry, mentioned by each participant as one of the top three areas of value. This unanimous response means the participants grew in their understanding of the nature of the office of elder and benefited in their perceived preparedness to serve as a shepherd in the church of Jesus Christ. This data also aligns with the responses from the open-ended questions in the supplement. One participant stated that the class “helped me understand some important key issues in pastoral ministry and leading a church, especially through the debates on some ambiguous or controversial topics.” Another participant shared, “I’ve greatly been challenged through freshly seeing what Scripture says about God’s care of his people and the responsibility of his undershepherds.”

The second area where participants benefitted in the course according to the rank order question was personal character. The participants recognized both the high calling in the character of an elder and increased in their personal desire to grow to reflect

the character of an elder. One participant shared, “I’ve felt a healthy gravity to the calling, and the dependence upon God that it naturally creates.”

Baptist ecclesiology ranked third in order of benefit to participants. For men to faithfully lead as elders in a Baptist church, they must have clear understanding of the biblical and theological underpinnings of the polity of the church. Course participants walked away from the course with increased confidence in their understanding of the nature and operations of Baptist churches. In the open-ended questions in the supplement, one participant shared that the class “filled in theological gaps I had and answered questions I had regarding ecclesiology.” The participants’ feedback of benefiting most in the three areas of pastoral ministry, personal character, and Baptist ecclesiology gives evidence to increased preparedness they feel to faithfully shepherd the flock of Jesus Christ.

Weaknesses of the project

In addition to the strengths, several weaknesses were apparent. First, the pressure to complete the lengthy lessons in the allotted class time each week created restrictions on the classroom experience. It was evident that the active learning techniques of discussion, case studies, and student presentations proved to be the most meaningful learning devices to the participants. The class time restrictions reduced the opportunities for students to engage in these learning techniques that, as chapter 3 demonstrated, foster higher levels of learning. This limitation was confirmed by participant feedback in the open-ended questions in the post-course supplement (see appendix 10), as seven participants expressed that the course would have added more value to their preparedness if there had been more time to engage in active learning

techniques around the material. One participant represented this opinion well when he said, “Maybe slow down. Make it 8–10 weeks. Include more potential case studies on dealing with certain topics with open discussion.”

Another weakness that contributed to the pressure on the class time was the participants’ availability for class. The only time to accommodate everyone was immediately after Sunday morning worship services from 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. Some participants had ministry responsibilities immediately prior to or following class. Due to some participants having post–service responsibilities and everyone needing to bring their own lunch to eat together as class began, the class was never able to start on time with everyone present. This typically cost the class about thirty minutes of instructional time, reducing our three–hour meetings to two and a half hours.

Another weakness was evidenced by the student–directed plan for the mentor aspect. As chapter 3 demonstrated, student–directed mentorship is more fruitful than mentor–directed mentorship. Participants valued the mentoring component, but this openness led 2 of the participants to express that more direction in the mentorship time would have been fruitful.

Suggested Project Modifications

Although all of the project goals were met, several modifications are recommended. First, two more class meetings should be added to the course. Additional class meetings will allow for additional engagement in active learning techniques as previously noted and additional interaction on outside of class assignments, including reading, writing, and mentoring components.

With these additional weeks added to the class, participants should be required to read session notes and answer discussion questions prior to coming to each class meeting. This will reduce the pressure for the instructor to lecture on every component of the course material. In turn, even more time can be given to interaction around urgent parts of the course material and increase active learning in the class sessions.

To further maximize the out of class assignments, a rubric should be provided to participants for how their writing assignments will be evaluated. Also, a tool should be created and provided to the students and mentors to maximize the effectiveness of the mentoring component of the class. This tool should be a simple worksheet to help the participants discern what areas are of highest priority to round out their preparation for serving in the office of elder. This tool then should be discussed with the mentor at the first meeting for his assessment. With the mentor's feedback, an intentional mentoring plan for the whole course can then be established that maintains the value of being participant-driven yet includes ideas and input from the mentor.

Finally, the timing of the elder training course as it relates to congregational appointment of elders should be changed. The three elder candidates who participated in the course did so after the congregation appointed them to the office of elder. In reality, they had become elders and this course was their first assignment as elders. It would be better for all parties if this course were part of the assessment process. By taking the course prior to appointment, the elder candidates would be able to gain greater clarity on what is expected of an elder. The existing elders could utilize this course as an additional portion of their assessment by being able to further observe the candidates through the

various components the course entails. The end result would be even greater confidence for the congregation that these men are indeed ready to serve in the office of elder.

Theological Reflections

Scripture has much to say about how Jesus shepherds his sheep through human undershepherds called elders. This concentrated study of the theme of shepherd leadership in the church was a great benefit for my continued growth as a follower of Christ and as an elder in the church.

By examining the nature of God’s covenant people throughout Scripture and surveying the doctrine of the church through the lenses of systematic and historical theology, I find myself more confident in the Baptist vision of the local church. The church as an assembly of baptized believers in covenant with one another who regularly assemble for worship, ministry, and the ordinances best depicts the New Testament church and fits in the historical record of the church. The Baptist vision of the church also practically works in maintaining fidelity to God’s design. Mark Dever’s definition of the oft–confused polity described as “elder–led and congregationally–ruled” is a helpful summary. Dever writes, “the final responsibility of the congregation does not contradict or undermine the elders’ general leadership, but it provides an opportunity to confirm it when it is right and to constrain it when it is in error.”¹

Scripture presents a fully developed metaphor of God’s care for his people as a shepherd of his sheep (Pss 23:1, 80:1; Isa 40:11; 1 Pet 2:10). Of all the creatures God

¹Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2012), 60.

created, mankind alone was created in His image. God did not have to enter into covenant relationship with his people, but he chose to place his distinct love upon man because he loves him and has created him to spread his glory upon the earth (Gen 1:28, 17:2, 26:4; Eph 1:9–10, 2:12–13; Heb 8:7–13). Discovering how God took the human experience of shepherds to describe his care for his people was very illuminating for me. Whereas human shepherds are often marginalized and separate from society, this picture of humility and care is consistent with the work of Jesus Christ who humbled himself, took on the form of a servant, and became obedient to death on a cross to redeem for himself a people to the praise of his glorious grace (Phil 2:5–11; Eph 1:3–14).

Indeed, Jesus is the premier example of a good shepherd (John 10:9–11; Matt 18:12–14, 25:32; Rev 7:17). Therefore, Jesus is the one after whom all human undershepherds should pattern their lives. Jesus is intimately acquainted with His sheep and provides for them, protects them, and leads them. In his earthly ministry, Jesus was devoted to developing human undershepherds to whom he would entrust the task of the Great Commission (Mark 3:14; John 21:15–19; Matt 28:18–20). It is in this same lineage of disciple-makers that elders in the church stand. Elders are called to shepherd the sheep like Jesus and entrust the stewardship to other faithful men whom God raises up so that they may teach and shepherd others (1 Pet 5:1–4; 2 Tim 2:2).

As a result of this study, I am more convinced that elders must be evaluated in light of Scripture. Elders must be assessed on their doctrine, abilities, and above all, their character at home, work, church, and in the community (1Tim 3:1–7; 1 Pet 5:1–5). One reason churches in America are not healthy is because their leadership is not healthy. While many factors correlate to unhealthy church leadership, one factor of great concern

for this project is that churches are not evaluating and holding their leaders to the standards given by Scripture. Timothy Witmer explains, “The loss of respect for authority has led to the loss of authoritative standards. The loss of authoritative standards has left each person to be his own standard–maker. The sovereign authority of God has given way to the sovereign authority of the individual.”² Rather than assessing men’s character by the Word, many churches take the man’s own word of “being called” over the Word of God, which provides a thorough assessment of the type of man fit to lead the church.

My personal observation and experience is that, while churches may give some consideration to the Scriptural qualifications in their assessment of a pastor or elder, pastoral search committees are more interested in things like degrees held, past “success” in ministry as defined by numerical growth, and positions the man has held. When leaders are not chosen based on the biblical qualifications, they are more prone lead apart from and depart from God’s Word. This standard results in shepherds who fail to disciple, discipline, and feed their flock with God’s Word. Additionally, churches led by men who are not biblically qualified will be led to accept values and ambitions that are contrary to those given in Scripture.

Scripture provides numerous warnings to church leaders who drift (Ezek 34; Acts 20:30; 1 Tim 5:19–22; 1 Pet 5:1–4) and to congregations to carefully consider who they place themselves under (John 10:12; Acts 20:29; 2 Cor 11:3–4; 1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 2:2, 4:3, 4; 2 Pet 2:1–22). Pastors or elders should not be called because they are leadership experts or have impressive resumes, but because they are godly men.

²Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2010), 79.

Christians ought to be able to emulate their leaders as faithful representatives of Jesus Christ (2 Tim 1:13). For churches to be healthy and faithful in disciple-making, they must appoint as leaders only those who meet the biblical criteria.

Personal Reflections

The section of the project that I approached with the least enthusiasm was chapter 3 on educational principles for training adults. This was a very vast field in which I was unfamiliar with key contributors and principles. With help from my faculty supervisor to point me in the right direction, not only did this investigation significantly serve the purposes of my project, but it also was a valuable study for me as a minister.

Whereas I previously understood some of the practices for effective teaching, I was not acquainted with the theoretical “why” behind the practical “what” of education and training. As I reflect on my ministry, this limitation has hindered my effectiveness in training and making disciples. Though being affirmed as gifted to teach, I have commonly felt an uncertainty about the content I prepared and teaching methods I had chosen for delivery. As a result of the research for the purposes of chapter 3, I more clearly understand how to develop instruction and curriculum so it will better foster meaningful learning by participants. I am already integrating these educational principles in my role as a Discipleship Pastor in curriculum evaluation and creating training plans for the church. I have also been able to train other ministry leaders in our church on best practices and principles in effective adult learning.

Not only did I benefit as an educator in the church, but I have grown as a pastor as well. This project sharpened my vision of the church and understanding of my calling as a pastor. This understanding has been humbling in some ways and has pressed

against some of the popular ministry philosophy that is commonly advocated by many contemporary pastors and writers. One specific aspect of this development came from Timothy Witmer's book *The Shepherd Leader*. He convinced me that small groups alone do not suffice as the elders' shepherding plan for the church. Indeed, a holistic shepherding plan that accounts for every church member is required in order to faithfully shepherd the flock of God under our care. This assessment has led to healthy and important conversations for the elder body of Crosspoint Church as we seek to continue to lead the whole congregation toward maturity in Christ (Col 1:28).

Whereas I have sought to demonstrate in this project that churches need to develop a plan to formally train elder candidates, it is noteworthy that elder candidates desire to receive formal training too! Participants in this course ranged in age from the twenties to the upper-forties. Some were single, some were married, and others were married with children. Some had seminary training while others had none. Some were very busy leaders in the secular workforce while others worked in non-elder staff positions in the church. Regardless of their current responsibilities and past training, each genuinely desired to be trained and equipped to serve the Lord Jesus faithfully as his undershepherds in the church and joyfully engaged in this pastoral leadership course.

Conclusion

As demonstrated, the development and implementation of a pastoral leadership course for current and future elder candidates has reaped positive dividends for Crosspoint Church and for the elder body. Further, this project proved to be a very fruitful effort for me personally, increasing my trust in Christ, my understanding of his

calling for the church, and my love for the church members who have been entrusted to my care.

Resulting from this project, I have received numerous requests by other pastors to view the curriculum or consult their elders on training and assimilating new elders. I have also been invited by state convention workers to train church planters who are struggling with unhealthy leadership teams. To the degree to which this curriculum can be scaled as a template for other like-minded churches and serve them in building healthy leadership teams in their church, I praise God. Where it lacks, I hope that others and I may build on this experience and these tools to continue to carry out the mandate Paul gave to Timothy: “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2).

APPENDIX 1

COURSE OBJECTIVES RUBRIC:
TO BE COMPLETED BY EXISTING ELDERS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the course objectives of a training course for current and future elder candidates. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____

Date _____

Training Objectives Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Is each objective distinct from the others?					
Are the objectives measurable?					
Do the objectives utilize active verbs that are not redundant?					
Do the objectives present a clear picture of the purpose of the course?					
Continued on next page →					

1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Do the objectives reveal a set of actions the course participants would understand and readily agree to?					
Are the objectives attainable in this course?					
Do the objectives reflect a logical sequence?					
Are the objectives faithful to Scripture?					
Do the objectives reflect the desired outcomes of training present and future candidates for the work of the elder?					

Other feedback or comments:

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC:
TO BE COMPLETED BY EXPERT PANEL

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the curriculum for a training course for current and future elder candidates. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____

Date _____

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Are the objectives clearly located in course materials?					
Does the content reflect the desired outcomes of training present and future elder candidates for pastoral leadership?					
Are participant expectations clearly articulated?					
Does content flow in a logical progression?					
Are instructions written clearly to ensure understanding?					
Continued on next page →					

1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Are opportunities for self-assessment provided?					
Are assignments and materials consistent with the course objectives?					
Do assignments include integration of course content into practice?					
Does the course accurately reflect Crosspoint Church's theological convictions?					
Is course content faithful to Scripture?					

Other feedback or comments:

APPENDIX 3

PRE-COURSE AND POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE:
TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE PARTICIPANTS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your knowledge of matters related to the office of elder at Crosspoint Church. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____
Date _____

Section I – Scripture and Theology

Directions: Rate your current readiness to teach or explain the given topic or question to a small group of inquiring church members:

1=Not ready 2=Mostly not ready 3=Slightly ready 4= Fairly ready
5=Mostly ready 6=Very ready

	Not ready	Mostly not ready	Slightly ready	Fairly ready	Mostly ready	Very ready
Theology						
1. The Baptist Faith and Message (2000)	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. A specific passage describing God the Father as a shepherd leader of his people	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. A specific passage describing Jesus Christ as a shepherd leader of his people	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. A specific passage describing elders as shepherd leaders of God’s people	1	2	3	4	5	6
Continued on next page →						

<u>Directions:</u> Rate your current readiness to teach or explain the given topic or question to a small group of inquiring church members:	Not ready	Mostly not ready	Slightly ready	Fairly ready	Mostly ready	Very ready
5. Biblical complementarianism and its implications in the church and home	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Two types of church discipline	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. The regulative principle	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. The two types of call to ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Biblical and theological defense of church membership	1	2	3	4	5	6
Offices in the church						
10. The number of offices of the church and Scriptural distinctions between them	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Old Testament forerunner for Christian elders	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Basis for elders in the Gospels	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Basis for elders in Acts and the epistles	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Place of elders in Revelation	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Use Bible to explain the plurality of elders	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. List and explain Scriptural qualifications of elders	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. List and explain Scriptural duties of elders	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Two Bible passages stating that an elder must be “above reproach”	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Biblical and theological defense of congregationalism	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Theological principles for congregationalism	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. The meaning of “husband of one wife” as a qualification for office of elder	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. If the offices of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Priest are for today	1	2	3	4	5	6
Continued on next page →						

Directions: Rate your current readiness to teach or explain the given topic or question to a small group of inquiring church members:						
	Not ready	Mostly not ready	Slightly ready	Somewhat ready	Fairly ready	Mostly ready
Historical Ecclesiology						
23. The Patristic and Reformation definitions of the church	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Three major forms of polity	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Baptist origins	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. The place of plural elders in Baptist history	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Three Baptist distinctions (What makes Baptists Baptist?)	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. The key ecclesiological contribution Baptists have made in church history	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Reasons for the decrease of regenerate church membership among Baptists in the 20 th century	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. The origination and agencies of the SBC	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. The single key issue in the Conservative Resurgence of the SBC	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ordinances						
32. Scripturally defend immersion as proper mode of baptism	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Three practices of the Lord's Supper among Baptists	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. The Catholic Church and Lutheran Churches' practices of the Lord's Supper	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Continued on next page →					

Section II – Practical Shepherding and Leadership

Directions: For the following areas, rate your current readiness to perform the following:

1=Not ready 2=Mostly not ready 3=Slightly ready 4= Fairly ready
5=Mostly ready 6=Very ready

	Not ready	Mostly not ready	Slightly ready	Somewhat ready	Fairly ready	Mostly ready
Counseling						
35. Articulate your personal philosophy of counseling	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Articulate legal requirements as a mandatory reporter if I become aware of an abusive situation	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. Effective pastoral visitation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pastoral Ministry						
38. Describe the duties of an elder at Crosspoint	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. Explain three components of biblical shepherding	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. List seven elements of an effective shepherding ministry according to Witmer	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. Explain four P's of pastoral leadership according to Dever	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. Officiate a wedding and funeral	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. Theologically–driven decision–making in leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6
Personal qualities						
44. Pursue persons who are not responsive to previous attempts to talk or meet	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. Handle occasional desires to escape or feelings of laziness and discouragement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Continued on next page →					

Section III – Crosspoint Church Distinctives

Directions: Rate your current readiness to teach or explain the given topic or question to a small group of inquiring Crosspoint church members regarding only Crosspoint Church’s practice or conviction of the following matters:

1=Not ready 2=Mostly not ready 3=Slightly ready 4= Fairly ready
5=Mostly ready 6=Very ready

	Not ready	Mostly not ready	Slightly ready	Somewhat ready	Fairly ready	Mostly ready
Crosspoint Church Organization						
46. Constitution, statement of faith, covenant, discipline policy	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. Mission and core values	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. Philosophy of ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. Newcomer assimilation pathway	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. Church member qualifications & expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. Practice of the Lord’s Supper (open, close, closed)	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. Relationship to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and other local SBC churches	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. Internal and external organizational communication	1	2	3	4	5	6
Crosspoint Church Leadership Structure						
55. Deacon organization	1	2	3	4	5	6
56. Elder organization	1	2	3	4	5	6
57. Practical distinctions between an elder and deacon	1	2	3	4	5	6
58. Relationship between elders and deacons at Crosspoint	1	2	3	4	5	6
59. Relationship between the elders and the senior pastor at Crosspoint	1	2	3	4	5	6
60. Accountability of the elders to the congregation	1	2	3	4	5	6
61. Policy for removing an elder	1	2	3	4	5	6
62. Procedures for counseling in varying circumstances (non-members; pre-marital, etc...)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Continued on next page →						

Directions: Rate your knowledge of how Crosspoint Church presently operates in the following areas.

1=No knowledge

2= Little knowledge

3=Some knowledge

4=Adequate knowledge

5=Strong knowledge

6=Thorough knowledge

	No knowledge	Slight knowledge	Little knowledge	Some knowledge	Adequate knowledge	Strong knowledge
Churchwide strategy						
63. Determine strategy to accomplish mission statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
64. Select ministry programs and evaluate their effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5	6
65. Leader selection criteria and current leaders across Crosspoint's ministries	1	2	3	4	5	6
66. Plan preaching and worship services	1	2	3	4	5	6
67. Missions strategy	1	2	3	4	5	6
68. Select missions partners locally & across the globe	1	2	3	4	5	6
69. Church giving toward external missions	1	2	3	4	5	6
Personnel						
70. Staff organizational structure and personnel categories	1	2	3	4	5	6
71. Creating positions, hiring and evaluating personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6
72. Determine salaries, administer benefits, evaluate staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
73. Staff development strategy	1	2	3	4	5	6
Finances, Assets and Capital stewardship						
74. Philosophy of budgeting	1	2	3	4	5	6
75. Budget development	1	2	3	4	5	6
76. Purchasing and reimbursing protocols	1	2	3	4	5	6
77. Risk management	1	2	3	4	5	6
78. Financial accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6
79. Oversight and supervision	1	2	3	4	5	6
80. Property management	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX 4

POST-COURSE MENTOR SURVEY: TO BE COMPLETED BY MENTORS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the mentoring component for a training course for current and future elder candidates. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____
Date _____

Mentor Name:

Name of Course Participant Mentored:

1. How many meetings or supervised shepherding experiences did you have with the course participant during the duration of this course?
2. List key topics of discussion and shepherding experiences from your meetings:
3. Please comment on the value that the mentoring times brought to the development of the course participant's preparedness for pastoral leadership.
4. Please comment on how your mentoring experiences could have added more value to your student's preparedness for pastoral leadership.

APPENDIX 5

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE

Pastoral Leadership

Crosspoint Church, Clemson, SC
Spring 2014

Course Supervisor

Jason Finley, M.Div., Discipleship Pastor

Course Objectives:

1. Relate Scriptural concepts of pastoral leadership into personal life through mentor relationship.
2. Biblically defend Baptist ecclesiology by explaining its key tenets and Scriptural basis in course discussion and writing exercises.
3. Gain a biblical understanding of the nature of elder leadership in the church through course discussions, readings, and mentor meetings.
4. Evaluate the three key elements of the work of elders (lead, feed, and protect) through class reading, discussion, and writing exercises to prepare participants with clear understanding of the responsibilities of pastoral leadership.
5. Conduct self-examination in view of the Scriptural qualifications of elders through mentor meetings and journal exercises.
6. Describe Crosspoint Church distinctives as they relate to the oversight of the church through course discussions and mentor meetings.

Course Requirements:

1. **PARTICIPATION IN CLASS:** The class will meet six times for three hours per session. Responsible Christian conduct should encourage the student to be faithful in class attendance and participation in class discussions. If a student needs to miss class, he should contact Jason Finley prior to the start of class. No more than one class may be missed and the student be eligible to complete the course. In the event that a student must miss, he must schedule a make-up

session with Jason Finley to be held within ten (10) days of the date of the class that was missed. **Students are encouraged to read through class notes and articles prior to each session.**

2. **MENTORSHIP:** The student will meet at least three (3) times over the duration of the course for at least 1 hour with one of the existing elders of Crosspoint Church. The student is to propose the agenda for each mentoring meeting, considering what questions, experiences, or areas of development he sees will benefit him in his preparation for serving as an elder. Discussions may include reflecting with you on your ministry involvement, helping guide you in your writing projects, engaging with you on the required reading, or discussing personal matters where the Lord is at work in your life. Include in your journal assignment brief reflections on your mentor meetings.
3. **JOURNAL NOTEBOOK:** The student is expected to keep a weekly journal reflection on his shepherding experiences and involvement in ministry along with a notebook that includes all notes taken from class discussions and meetings with mentor. This assignment may be a handwritten notebook, journal, or electronic file. One journal entry per week is to be recorded. Journal entries should include at least one specific pastoral issue that arose, biblical principles of pastoring that applied to the specific situation, the pastoral care that was rendered, and the response of those pastored. (1 single-spaced, typed page per week is sufficient).
4. **HANDOUT DEFENDING BAPTIST ECCLESIOLOGY:** Prepare a handout summarizing Baptist Ecclesiology that is no more than two (2) pages in length. Answer the question “What makes a Baptist Church Baptist?” Be sure to include key passages of Scripture, why this matters, and refer to class readings and discussions where applicable. The goals are to equip you with a tool for discipleship and to sharpen your understanding of Crosspoint Church’s organization to aid in faithful leadership and decision-making in the church. The student should expect to spend no fewer than three hours on this assignment. **Please email to Jason Finley by Sunday, March 23, 2014.**
5. **THE ELDER’S WORK REFLECTION PAPER:** Write a brief reflection paper (4–7 pages double spaced) on how Crosspoint Church’s elders can shepherd in line with the teaching of the Bible on one aspect of the work of the elders. Use Scripture, class notes, and course readings where needed. Write in a manner to contemplate the various ways you as an individual and the body of elders as a whole can seek to faithfully administer this stewardship given from the Lord Jesus. Conclude the paper with one question for class discussion or debate following your presentation. **Please email to class by Noon on Saturday, April 12, 2014.** Additionally, read each other’s papers prior to our class meeting on Sunday, April 13, 2014 and be prepared to present your reflection paper in class that day. The student should expect to spend no fewer than five hours on this assignment.

Required Texts:

- Witmer, Timothy Z. *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church*. (264 pages)
- Dever, Mark. *A Display of God's Glory: Basics of Church Structure*. (74 pages – free, downloadable pdf available at www.9marks.org)
- Dever, Mark and Paul Alexander. *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel*. (221 pages)
- Dever, Mark. *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. (208 pages)

Required Supplemental Reading:

- Baptist Faith and Message, 2000. Accessed February 9, 2014, <http://www.sbc.net/pdf/translate/basicEnglish/TheBaptistFaithAndMessage.pdf>.
- Crosspoint Church Constitution. Provided to class by instructor.
- Finley, Jason. “Why Crosspoint’s Congregation Should Practice Corrective Church Discipline.” Unpublished. Provided to class by instructor.
- Rinne, Jeramie. “Elders—The Church’s Lead Disciple—Makers.” *9Marks Journal*, (September–October 2012): 17–19. Accessed February 15, 2014. <http://www.9marks.org/files/ejournal201295sepoct.pdf>.
- Schaumburg, Harry. “Sexual Sin is a Corporate Affair.” *Desiring God Blog*, April 4, 2013. Accessed February 1, 2014. <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/sexual-sin-is-a-corporate-affair>.
- Schmucker, Matt. “Cleaning Up the Rolls (Part 2): The Care List.” *9Marks Blog*, February 26, 2010. Accessed February 1, 2014. <http://www.9marks.org/journal/cleaning-rolls-part-2-care-list>.
- Schmucker, Matt. “Those Toxic Non–Attendees.” *9Marks Journal* (November–December 2009): 12–14. Accessed February 9, 2014. <http://www.9marks.org/journal/those-toxic-non-attendees>.
- Traeger, Sebastian. “How Much Time Can a Lay Elder Give to Ministry?” *9Marks Journal*, Lay Elders: A User’s Guide Part 1 (November–December 2012): 9–12. Accessed February 15, 2014. <http://www.9marks.org/files/ejournal201296novdec.pdf>.
- “30 Practical Ways for Pastors to Love Their Wives and Families.” *9Marks Journal*, (July–August 2008). Accessed February 9, 2014. <http://www.9marks.org/journal/30-practical-ways-pastors-love-their-wives-families>.

Other Recommended Texts:

- Allison, Gregg. *Historical Theology*. (785 pages)
- _____ . *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*. (Foundations of Evangelical Theology series) (494 pages)
- Beale, Gregory. *The Temple and the Church's Mission*. (458 pages)
- Laniak, Timothy S. *Shepherds after My own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*. (311 pages)
- Merkle, Benjamin. *40 Questions About Elders and Deacons*. (269 pages)
- Mohler, Albert. *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters*. (224 pages)
- Newton, Phil. *Elders in Congregational Life: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership*. (176 pages)
- Osborne, Larry. *Sticky Teams: Keeping Your Leadership Team and Staff on the Same Page*. (225 pages)
- Poirier, Alfred. *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*. (310 pages)
- Prime, Derek J. and Alistair Begg. *On Being a Pastor: Understanding our Calling and Work*. (295 pages)
- Strauch, Alexander. *Biblical Eldership*. (337 pages)
- _____ . *Meetings that Work: A Guide to Effective Elders' Meetings*. (87 pages)
- Schreiner, Thomas and Shawn Wright. *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*. (392 pages)
- Schreiner, Thomas and Matthew Crawford. *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ until He Comes*. (431 pages).
- Perman, Matt. *What's Best Next: How the Gospel Transforms the Way You Get Things Done*. (327 pages)
- Tripp, Paul and Timothy Lane. *How People Change*. (272 pages)

Course Overview

Session 1: The Elders and the Church

Session 2: The Elders as Shepherds

Session 3: The Elder's Life

Session 4: The Elder's Work, Part 1: Protect

Session 5: The Elder's Work, Part 2: Feed

Session 6: The Elder's Work, Part 3: Lead

COURSE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment Prior to Class</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
March 2	Mentor Meeting		
March 9	(1) The Elders and the Church	<i>A Display of God's Glory</i> complete; Crosspoint Church Constitution	
March 16	Mentor meeting		
March 23	(2) The Elder as Shepherd	<i>The Deliberate Church</i> complete; "Baptist Faith & Message 2000"	Handout Due at class, March 23
March 30	(3) The Elder's Life; (4a) The Elder's Work Part 1: Protect	<i>The Shepherd Leader</i> Chs. 1–5, 8 complete; 1 Timothy; Acts 20; "Why Crosspoint Should Practice Church Discipline" Article in notes	
April 6	(4b) The Elder's Work Part 1: Protect (5) The Elder's Work Part 2: Feed	<i>The Shepherd Leader</i> Ch. 6 complete; 2 Timothy; Ephesians 4; "Elders–The Church's Lead Disciple–makers"	
April 13	(6) The Elder's Work Part 3: Lead	<i>The Shepherd Leader</i> Chs. 7, 9–11 complete	Reflection Paper Due via email Noon, April 12
April 20	Mentor meeting		Journal Due

Course Introduction

(10 minutes)

Elder candidates have already been recommended by congregation, examined by the existing elders, demonstrated aptitude in theology and godly character in line with the Scriptural qualifications for the office of elder.

- ❖ Why would we devote this time to study together in preparation for serving in the office of elder?

- ❖ As more men are brought on to serve in the office of elder, how may this benefit Crosspoint?

- ❖ What risks does Crosspoint Church face as more men are brought on to serve in the office of elder?

The faithfulness of the church is a reflection of the health and faithfulness of her leaders. With the popularity of voices articulating visions for the church that drift from or outright deny Scripture, it is crucial that God's appointed shepherd leaders follow His design and calling.

The stakes of the elders' leadership are incalculable. As Mark Dever describes: "Our conduct in the church in regard to this matter of leadership is to be such that the Gospel is not brought into disrepute but rather is held up to be the glorious light of hope and truth in the world."¹

May this course resource and encourage God's undershepherds to lead the church toward a sacrificial obedience to Jesus' Great Commission marked by humble courage and faithfulness to His Word.

¹Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 242.

Session 1: The Elders and the Church

Session Goals:

1. Student will be able to biblically defend Baptist ecclesiology by explaining its key tenets and Scriptural basis in course discussion and writing exercises (Objective 2).
2. Student will be able to discuss how Crosspoint Church expresses Baptist ecclesiology (Objective 6).

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read in its entirety *A Display of God's Glory* by Mark Dever
2. Read the Crosspoint Church Constitution

(15 Minutes)

1. One-minute Paper

- ❖ Take one (1) minute and write a definition of the Church. After students have a minute to write, discuss the definitions.

(60 Minutes)

2. How did the church come to understand its own nature and organization?

Christians today cannot understand and apply doctrine apart from historical perspective. We stand in the stream of church history, recipients of the apostolic tradition. We also stand in current historical context, viewing life from a perspective affected by our cultural context. To most faithfully understand the church's organization, we will briefly survey how the church has come to understand its own nature and organization since the New Testament.

2.1. New Testament

- 2.1.1. Jesus promises to build his church: Matthew 16:18–19
- 2.1.2. Church formed immediately after Pentecost: Acts 2:42
- 2.1.3. First church in Jerusalem was named “the Way:” (Acts 9:2, 19:9)
- 2.1.4. The word translated “church” is *ekklesia*, which literally refers to an assembly. Of the 114 usages in the New Testament, 109 refer to the Christian assembly.
- 2.1.5. The Apostle Paul engaged in missionary journeys, evangelizing and planting churches.

2.2. Patristic Marks of the Church

“As the church of Jesus Christ expanded rapidly and matured, questions concerning the nature, characteristics, and purposes of the church became one of its major concerns. This was especially the case as the church faced another opponent: not persecution from the outside, but heresy from the inside. The Nicene Creed defined the church by means of four adjectives: “We believe ... in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.”²

- 2.2.1. One – though dispersed throughout the world, maintains unity as body of Jesus.
- 2.2.2. Holy – called to reflect God’s character
- 2.2.3. Catholic – “universal,” distinguishing the true church from splinter groups
- 2.2.4. Apostolic – adhere to the teachings of the apostles, while heretical groups recognized by inventing and following other teachings

2.3. Middle Age Ecclesiological Decline

- 2.3.1. Spiritual & moral weakening of the church
- 2.3.2. Political and economic devastation of the former Roman Empire beginning with sack of Rome in 410.
- 2.3.3. First Schism: Catholic Church (West) and Orthodox Church (East) over the procession of the Spirit (A.D. 1054)
- 2.3.4. Increased political, social, economic involvement, immorality within

The Problem: “But how will or how can a poor confused person tell where such Christian holy people are to found in this world?” –Martin Luther³

2.4. Two Reformation Marks of the Church

- 2.4.1. Word of God purely preached and heard

²Quoted in Gregg Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 567.

³Ibid., 578.

2.4.2. Sacraments administered properly

*Calvin: "From this the face of the church comes forth and becomes visible to our eyes. Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists. For his promise cannot fail."*⁴

- ❖ In considering the reformation marks of the church, what problems remain in order to mark out God's people? These remaining problems led to the development of Baptist marks of the church.

2.5. Baptist Marks of the Church

The Problem: All three protestant churches—Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican—preserved the relationship between the church and state, called "Magisterial Protestant Churches."

2.5.1. **Regenerate Church Membership** (Church consists only of professing believers)

New Covenant Promise: Jeremiah 31:33–34 says, "I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

In 2 Corinthians 6:16, the Apostle Paul explicitly connects God's old covenant promise to make for himself a people with the new covenant fulfillment in the church. Paul writes, "For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'" (2 Cor 6:16) Additionally, the Apostle Peter reminds the scattered churches that they are the people of God: "But you are . . . a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:9–10).

The *most revolutionary* idea – indeed, the key contribution Baptists have made to ecclesiology: "Given that the New Testament restricts baptism to believers, Baptists have concluded that church membership is restricted to

⁴Ibid., 579.

individuals who have made a credible profession of faith. The profession of faith should include submitting to believer's baptism and making oneself accountable to a particular local congregation with whom the professing believer regularly communes. These conclusions led both European Anabaptists in the early sixteenth century and various English separatists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to separate themselves from the established churches. They instead espoused a "gathered" congregation, which was a revolutionary idea. Not everyone born in a certain geographic area, they said, should be baptized and confirmed in church membership. Rather, congregations should be composed of the faithful who gather together voluntarily upon their own profession of faith, desiring to unite with others in the same area and form a Christian congregation."⁵

2.5.2. **Believer's Baptism** (Baptism of regenerate persons precedes membership)

A second trait of the local church is that its members have been publically identified with Christ through baptism. Baptism is a public profession of God's saving work in the life of the believer. Baptism is modeled by Jesus (Matt 3:16), commanded by Jesus (Matt 28:19), and given to all members in the church throughout the New Testament as the public initiation of the believer into the family of faith. In Romans 6:3–7 and Colossians 2:11–12, the Apostle Paul explains that baptism signifies union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. Paul assumes that the Christians in the churches have been baptized. This meaning of baptism combined with the regenerate nature of the church demands that baptism only be administered to persons who have been born again. In *Kingdom Through Covenant*, Gentry and Wellum rightly argue that baptism, "which is the covenant sign of the new covenant church, is reserved for only those who have entered into these glorious realities by the sovereign work of God's grace in their lives."⁶

B. H. Carroll (one of the founders of the Southern Baptist Convention who ministered in the late 1800's and early 1900's): "All organized assemblies have prescribed terms or conditions of membership. In the Greek state *ecclesia* membership was limited to a well defined body of citizens. Not all residents of the territory could participate in the business of the *ecclesia*. So with the Old Testament *ecclesia* or national convocation of

⁵ Dever, *The Church*, 114.

⁶Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical–Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 74.

carnal Israel. One must have the required lineal descent and be circumcised or become a proselyte and be circumcised. Correspondingly the conditions of membership in the church on earth are regeneration and baptism.⁷

2.5.3. Church Covenant

Jesus teaches that Christians' love for one another will evidence to the world their relationship to him (John 13:14, 15, 34, 35). He later prayed that his followers would walk in close unity. This unity in the church would also demonstrate to the world the truth of the gospel (John 17:20–23). Jesus also is concerned with the purity of the church. In Matthew 18:15–17, he instructs the church on how it is to confront and even remove a member who is unrepentant and thus defames his reputation. The faithful practice of discipline helps the church to reflect God's glorious character. In passages such as 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1, 13:2, and 1 Timothy 6:3–5, the Apostle Paul instructs the church to take corrective action so as to accurately display the character of God.

How is it that churches can walk in the love, unity, and purity that is instructed by Jesus?

Since the protestant reformation, many churches have regarded community covenants as very important to accomplish this. The idea of the church covenant is derived from the very nature of the church as God's covenant people. P. T. Forsyth explains that, "the same act which sets us in Christ sets us also in the society of Christ. . . . To be in Christ is in the same act to be in the church. . . . It puts us into a relation with all saints which we may neglect to our bane but which we cannot destroy."⁸

Just as Jesus' relationship with the church is covenantal, so does this covenantal relationship extend into the church's horizontal relationships within its own community. As Gregg Allison states, "the church is *covenantal*, or gathered as members in (new) covenant relationship with God and in covenant relationship with each other."⁹ Thus, Baptist churches have regularly identified a church covenant as an essential

⁷B. H. Carroll, *Ecclesia – The Church: Lectures Given by Dr. B. H. Carroll*, Kindle ed. (Amazon Digital Services, 2013).

⁸Quoted in Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2013), 124.

⁹*Ibid.*, 123.

characteristic of the church. In *Historical Theology*, Gregg Allison observes as far back as 1610 John Smyth's emphasis on church covenants: "besides regenerate church membership and believer's baptism, a church covenant was a third element in Smyth's ecclesiology: 'The outward part of the true form of the true visible church is a vow, promise, oath, or covenant between God and the saints.'"¹⁰

Churches tolerating serious immorality among its members send mixed messages to the world. While affirming the member as a believer, the church tells the world and each other that this way of living is consistent with the Christian life and that those who live this way still may be saved (*cf.* 1 Cor 6:9–11). Yet church members living in covenant relationships with one another tell one another and the world that Jesus is able to transform Christians and bring victory over sin. Further, they affirm that God is holy and is very concerned about the lives of his people. While reminding church members of their commitment to one another and clearly stating the qualifications and responsibilities of membership, church covenants help churches show the world that there is a distinction between those who belong to Christ with those who do not.

"By the seventeenth century, church covenants continued in use not only among Independent congregations in England and America but also among Baptists who adopted their usage, especially Particular Baptists. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, church covenants, often accompanied by a statement of faith, acted as the most basic document of a Baptist congregation."¹¹

- ❖ If you grew up going to church, what is your recollection of your church's use of its church covenant?

2.5.4. **Congregational Government** – no authoritative entity above the local church (Implication: each congregation has the responsibility of accepting new members and disciplining erring members). We will examine this more closely in a moment.

- ❖ What is the impact on congregational government if these Baptist marks of a church are not carefully pursued?

¹⁰Quoted in Allison, *Historical Theology*, 581.

¹¹Dever, *The Church*, 115.

3. Three types of church government

3.1. Episcopalian

- 3.1.1. Prototypical form established in 2nd century by Ignatius
- 3.1.2. Ultimate authority resides in Bishop who exercises his authority by ordaining other bishops & people under him like presbyters & deacons

3.2. Presbyterian

- 3.2.1. Only out of expediency did early church appoint bishops to stamp out heresy & ensure unity.
- 3.2.2. Ultimate authority resides in the elders – representatives of the church.
- 3.2.3. 2 types of elders:
 - 3.2.3.1. Teaching elders – seminary training, teach, sacraments;
 - 3.2.3.2. Ruling elders – non-seminary trained, assists pastor in ruling church.
- 3.2.4. Some elected for higher level governing bodies – presbytery, synod, general assembly – in authoritative courts above local church level
- 3.2.5. Instituted by Calvin

3.3. Congregational

- 3.3.1. Form of government found in early church – “choose for yourselves the leaders in your church” evidenced in early church writings.
- 3.3.2. Reappeared in London in 1611 by Thomas Helwys and others (led to London Confession of Faith in 1644, 46).

“The number of Baptist churches in London increased, and in 1644 (modified, 1646) the *London Confession of Faith* of the Particular Baptists became their charter, setting forth congregationalism as their form of government: “Every church has power given them from Christ for their well-being, to choose among themselves qualified people for the office of elders and deacons, being qualified according to the Word, as those whom Christ has appointed in his testament for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of his church. No one else has power to impose on them either these or any other leader.” The *Second London Confession of Faith* specified

that “a local church, gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members. The officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered) ... are bishops or elders, and deacons.”¹²

3.3.3. Congregationalism in the New Testament (Merkle, *40 Questions*, 38–45)

3.3.3.1. Congregations Choose Their Leaders

3.3.3.1.1. Select leaders (Acts 1:23; 6:2–3)

3.3.3.1.2. Send missionaries (Acts 13:3; 14:26–27; 15:3)

3.3.3.1.3. Affirm theological positions (Acts 15:22)

3.3.3.2. Congregations Exercise Discipline (Matt 18:15–18; 1 Cor 5:2, 4; 2 Cor 2:6)

3.3.3.3. Congregations receive apostolic letters (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:2; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; *cf.* Rev 1:4)

3.3.3.4. Congregations are full of priests (1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 1 Cor 11:17–34; Gal 1:8–9; 1 John 2:27; Rom 15:14; Jude 3)

3.3.3.5. Congregations are to be governed by servants (Luke 22:25–27)

3.3.4. Prominence of elders among Baptists

3.3.4.1. W. B. Johnson, the 1st president of the SBC, strongly advocated plurality of elders in a local church.

Dever warns to not let the idea of soul competency (priesthood of the believer) cause elders to pull back and defer too much to the congregation, but to properly exercise authority as undershepherds under Jesus Christ. “Leadership is a gift from God and should be received by churches as a gift”¹³ (156).

3.4. **How congregationalism works at Crosspoint Church** (See also *Display*, 44ff)

¹²Quoted in Allison, *Historical Theology*, 606.

¹³Dever, *The Church*, 156.

“Christian proclamation might make the gospel audible, but Christians living together in local congregations make the gospel visible. The church is the gospel made visible.”¹⁴

3.4.1. Regenerate, Baptized persons in covenant with one another

3.4.1.1. Review Crosspoint Church Covenant

3.4.1.2. Review Crosspoint Church Constitution

3.4.2. Congregational Rule—Elder Led

The final responsibility of the congregation does not contradict or undermine the elders’ general leadership, but it provides an opportunity to confirm it when it is right and to constrain it when it is in error.”¹⁵

3.4.3. The congregation appoints elders for its oversight and shepherding, who then in turn exercise care and leadership over the congregation. The elders, however, are ultimately subject to the authority of the congregation should matters arise where correction needs to be made.

3.4.4. At Crosspoint, the congregation votes on

3.4.4.1. Appointing elders

3.4.4.2. Annual church budget

3.4.4.3. Acquisition of property

3.4.4.4. Amendments to the constitution and by-laws

3.4.4.5. Adding and removing members

3.4.4.6. Other matters that the elders (pastors) deem necessary

3.4.5. Deacons: The deacons, likewise, are identified and appointed by the congregation and also fall under the direct leadership of the elders.

3.4.5.1. Deacons are leading servants.

And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of Spirit and of wisdom, who we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6: 2–4)

3.4.5.2. See also 1 Timothy 3:8–13 for the qualifications of deacons

¹⁴Ibid., xi.

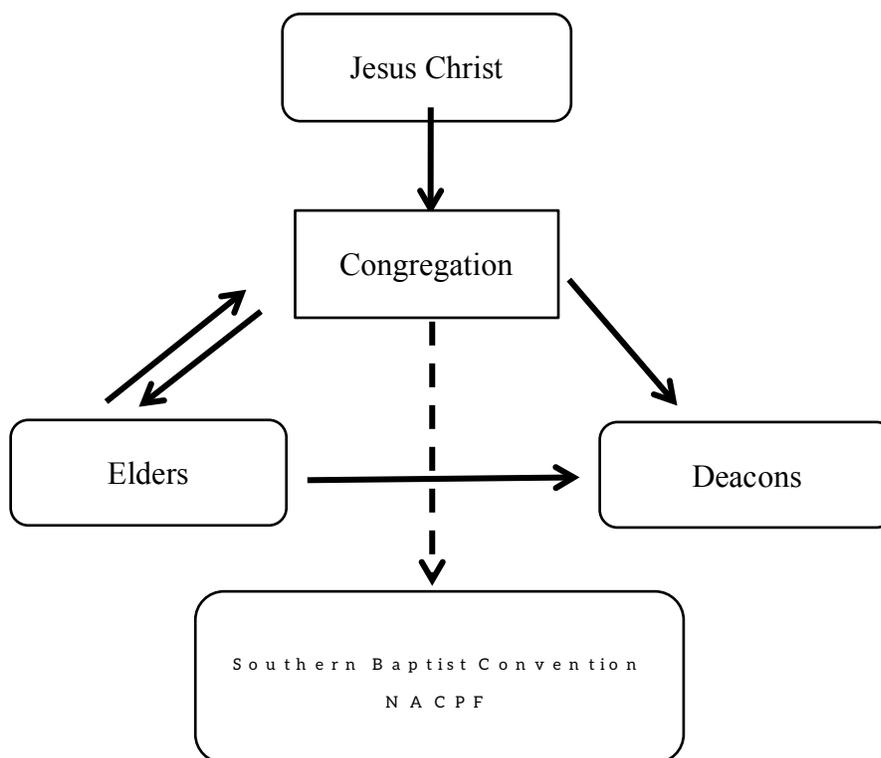
¹⁵Ibid., 60.

3.4.5.3. List Current Deacons:

3.4.6. Crosspoint Church's relationship to the denomination and other cooperative churches

The congregation voluntarily associates with the Southern Baptist Convention and the related entities therein (SC Baptist Convention, Pickens-Twelve Mile Association). Crosspoint also associates with a church planting association in the Southern Baptist Convention called the North American Church Planting Foundation (NACPF).

Crosspoint Church's Structure



3.4.6.1. Agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention¹⁶

3.4.6.1.1. SBC Executive Committee: The Executive Committee exists to minister to the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention by

¹⁶The descriptions listed for each entity taken from <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/entities/>, accessed February 12, 2014.

acting for the Convention ad interim in all matters not otherwise provided for in a manner that encourages the cooperation and confidence of the churches, associations, and state conventions and facilitates maximum support for worldwide missions and ministries.

- 3.4.6.1.2. Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission: The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission exists to be a catalyst to connect the agenda of the kingdom of Christ to the cultures of local congregations for the sake of the mission of the gospel in the world.
- 3.4.6.1.3. GuideStone Financial Resources: GuideStone Financial Resources exists to assist the churches, denominational entities, and other evangelical ministry organizations by making available retirement plan services, life and health coverage, risk management programs, and personal and institutional investment programs.
- 3.4.6.1.4. International Mission Board: The International Mission Board exists to assist the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention to be on mission with God in penetrating the unevangelized world outside the United States and Canada with the gospel and making Christ known among all people.
- 3.4.6.1.5. LifeWay Christian Resources: LifeWay Christian Resources exists to assist churches and believers to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best provider of relevant, high quality, high value Christian products and services.
- 3.4.6.1.6. North American Mission Board: The North American Mission Board exists to work with churches, associations and state conventions in mobilizing Southern Baptists as a missional force to impact North America with the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism and church planting.
- 3.4.6.1.7. Theological Seminaries: Southern Baptist Theological Seminaries exist to prepare God-called men and women for vocational service in Baptist churches and in other Christian ministries throughout the world through programs of spiritual development, theological studies, and practical preparation in ministry.
- 3.4.6.1.8. Woman's Missionary Union: Woman's Missionary Union assists churches in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy of missions in order that a church can fulfill its total mission in the world. Woman's Missionary Union challenges Christian believers to understand and be radically involved in the mission of God.

3.4.6.2. South Carolina Baptist Convention

- 3.4.6.3. Pickens–Twelve Mile Association
- 3.4.7. North American Church Planting Foundation (NACPF)
- 3.4.8. Strategic International Missions Partnerships (India & Honduras)
- 3.4.9. Clemson Presbyterian (PCA) and other local churches: Co–host annual discipleship conference called the Restore Conference; partner on other large scale evangelistic events.

These partnerships beyond our local congregation are for the sole purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission. As in Scripture churches partnered together for the sake of mission and ministries of mercy (Acts 11:29; Rom 15:28; Phil 4:14; 2 Cor 9:1–5), by partnering with churches around the world, we can accomplish more for the Great Commission than we can on our own.

(10 minutes)

- ❖ Divide Class into small groups and evaluate one of the following definitions in view of the historic marks of the Church. (BF&M 2000; Crosspoint statement of faith; Mark Dever’s definition from *The Church*) Report observations.

From Article VI. The Church, in the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000:

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15–19; 18:15–20; Acts 2:41–42,47; 5:11–14; 6:3–6; 13:1–3; 14:23,27; 15:1–30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4–5; 7:17; 9:13–14; 12; Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:19–22; 3:8–11,21; 5:22–32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9–14; 3:1–15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39–40; 1 Peter 5:1–4; Revelation 2–3; 21:2–3.

From the Crosspoint Church Statement of Faith:

G. The Church

The Lord Jesus is the head of the church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. We believe there is one universal church which is comprised of all who place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular, local churches; and to each of these churches He has given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a church are elders (pastors) and deacons; the regular ordinances of a church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Mt. 26:26–29, 28:19; Jn. 10:16; Acts 2:38, 20:17, 28; Rom. 6:3–5; 1 Cor. 10:16–17, 11:23–34, 12:13; Eph. 1:22–23, 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:1–13, 5:17–18; Tit. 1:5–9; Heb. 10:25)

From *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* by Mark Dever:

The church is the body of people called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify him together by serving him in his world.

(20 minutes)

- ❖ Divide the class into four groups and assign each group one of the dichotomies as presented by Mark Dever on pages 91–95 of his book, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. After allowing each group to read and discuss the dichotomy assigned to them, have each report to the class a summary of the dichotomy and its importance to a right understanding of the church.

Four Dichotomies in the Church

1. Visible or Invisible?
2. Local or Universal?
3. Militant or Triumphant?
4. True or False?¹⁷

¹⁷Dever, *The Church*, 91–95.

Session 2: The Elder as Shepherd

Session Goals:

1. Student will gain a biblical understanding of the nature of elder leadership in the church through examining God's leadership of His people and His appointment of human undershepherds to lead his people on his behalf. (Objective 3)
2. Student will be able to explain how Crosspoint Church expresses Baptist ecclesiology (Objective 6).

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read in its entirety *The Deliberate Church* by Mark Dever
2. Read in its entirety "The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000"
3. Turn in 1–2 page handout defending Baptist ecclesiology

(15 minutes)

- ❖ What comes to your mind when you think of the agrarian concept of a shepherd?

- ❖ Read the following Psalm aloud then take two minutes of silent meditation and journaling. Then, discuss responses to the passage and pray together.

Psalm 23

A PSALM OF DAVID.

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Before understanding the role of Christian elders, it is important to place this calling in view of God's nature. Then, a survey of Scripture will show the development of the office of elder as God's appointed undershepherds of his covenant people.

(10 minutes)

1. God as Shepherd

Assign the following passages of Scripture to different class members to read aloud:
Gen 49:24; Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:11, 12

God's covenant people are blessed by virtue of being God's people. The Apostle Peter writes, "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people" (1 Pet 2:10). God loves his people with a distinct love (Deut 7:7) and takes responsibility to provide, care for, and lead his covenant people. God is the ultimate shepherd of his people, and the standard for which all other shepherds are to emulate (1 Sam 12:14). Psalm 80:1 calls Yahweh Israel's shepherd: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock." It is Yahweh himself who, "will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young" (Isa 40:11)

- ❖ In light of the human experience of shepherds as a oft-marginalized people in society, why is it surprising that God chooses this concept to describe *Himself* in Scripture?

In his book *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, Timothy Laniak demonstrates that the shepherd metaphor is essential to understanding God's leadership of his people in the Bible. In Scripture, he writes, we find "a persistent, fully developed narrative of the divine Shepherd who, with his undershepherds, looks after the needs of his vulnerable flock as they wander along the margins of settled society."¹ As Laniak observes, a primary way God shepherds his people is through raising up human leaders from among his people to protect, lead, feed, and care for them. These divinely appointed leaders are

¹Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 20 (Downers Grove, IL: Apollos: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 41.

described as **undershepherds**, for they are shepherds under the authority of God himself.

In Scripture, a prominent title of God’s human undershepherds is that of elder. In *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons*, Thabiti Anyabwile provides the following description of elders:

As a gift to his flock, the Chief Shepherd appoints godly men as under-shepherds to tend the flock that he purchased with his blood (Acts 20:28). We know these under-shepherds by various titles used interchangeably, including: pastors, overseers, bishops, and elders. Like the Chief Shepherd, elders or pastors watch over the flock entrusted to their care (1 Pet. 5:1–3) by leading, feeding, and protecting the sheep.²

Why is this important? In the new covenant community of the church, the faithfulness of elders significantly influences the health and faithfulness of the church. Therefore, it is crucial that God’s appointed shepherd leaders carefully follow His design and calling. Mark Dever explains that faithful leadership in churches is more than mere practical concern, but has significant gospel implications: “Our conduct in the church in regard to this matter of leadership is to be such that the Gospel is not brought into disrepute but rather is held up to be the glorious light of hope and truth in the world.”³ Scripture reveals that churches need a plurality of qualified and trained men serving together as God’s undershepherds in the office of elder.

(20 minutes)

2. Undershepherds in the Old Testament

- ❖ What are the various offices by which God cared for and led his people in the Old Testament?

God has worked through history to redeem for himself a people in covenant relationship with himself. As such, God has always provided human undershepherds to lead and spiritually oversee his people. When observing God’s leadership of his covenant people through the Old Testament, God raised up men in several offices, including prophets (*navi*, Deut 18:18), priests (*kohen*, Mal 2:7), kings (*melek*, 2 Sam 24:21), and elders (*zaqan*, 2 Kgs 12:6–8). While each of these offices had distinct responsibilities and differing levels of authority, each was fundamentally a means the Lord provided to give leadership and spiritual oversight to his covenant people.

²Thabiti Anyabwile, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2012), 49.

³Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 242.

Whereas Jesus distinctly fulfilled the offices of prophet and priest and king,⁴ the New Testament writers chose to continue using the term “elder” in the office of oversight and spiritual leadership of local churches (Acts 11:30; 15:4; 20:17, 28; 1 Tim 5:17; James 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1–4). Even in Revelation, the term “elder” continues to describe men who represent leadership and spiritual oversight of God’s covenant people (Rev. 4:4; 11:16). With this continuous use of the term “elder” throughout the canon of Scripture, it can be demonstrated that the Old Testament institution of elder serves as a forerunner of the new covenant office of elder.

- ❖ Read Psalm 77:20, 78:70, 72; 2 Sam 5:2. What do these verses teach us about the nature of God’s leadership of his people in the Old Testament?

Moses is the first explicit example of a shepherd–leader. Moses was a shepherd of sheep before becoming leader of the Israelites (Exod 2:15–3:1). One of the psalmists ascribed God’s leading of his people precisely in the same way: “You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron” (Ps 77:20).”

The most prominent shepherd–leader in the writings is King David. David is the one whom God “chose... and took ... from the sheepfolds ... to shepherd Jacob his people” and who tended the Israelites “with upright heart ... and guided them with his skillful hand” (Ps 78:70, 72). David’s very leadership is described as shepherding. This is evidenced as the people of Israel remind David, “And the LORD said to you, ‘You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel’” (2 Sam 5:2). Though God promised to always have a descendent of David on the throne shepherding his people (2 Sam 7:12, 13; Isa 55:3), David likewise proved unable to shepherd God’s people completely in uprightness and honor to the Lord (2 Sam 12:13; 24:10). A future Davidic king was promised to come and shepherd by “bringing the divine instruction or Torah (Deut 17) to Israel and, indeed, to all the nations (2 Sam 7:19).”⁵

- ❖ Another office of leadership in the Old Testament is called elder. Think about what you know of the elders of the Old Testament and New Testament Judaism. Are these elders related to the elders of the church?

⁴Jesus fulfills the office of prophet as he speaks the very words of God (Matt 7:24–29); the office of priest because he offered a perfect sacrifice for our sins bringing us to God (Heb 6:19–20; 9:24; 10:4); and the office of king as he will rule over God’s redeemed people for all eternity (Matt 26:64; Rev 19:16, 22:3–5).

⁵Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical–Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 421.

It must readily be acknowledged that, as history unfolded, these elders of Israel, much like the nation itself, did not remain to have their hearts set on the glory of the Lord. Indeed, this instance of the Spirit's indwelling was temporary and was not passed on through subsequent generations of elders. Apart from the permanent regeneration of the Spirit, these men could not set their hearts to obey the Lord. In fact, in the Gospels, the Jewish elders are the very ones who *opposed* Christ (Matt 16:21, 27:1). Further, in Acts, the first four and last four occurrences of "elders" (*presbuteros*) refer to Jewish elders opposing the church,⁶ while the middle ten occurrences refer to the elders of the Christian church.⁷ Indeed, the Christian elder is a distinct office compared to the Old Testament and first-century Jewish practice. However, the greatest difference between the offices of the Christian and Jewish elders seems to be their response to Jesus. Only those who are regenerated by the gospel, qualified by the Spirit, and called out by the church may serve as elders in the church. Manfred Brauch helpfully observes, "since the primitive church eventually regarded itself as the new Israel (Mt 21:43; Gal 6:16) it is easy to see why it should gradually adopt the institution of elders."⁸ Alexander Strauch agrees, explaining that, "For Israel, a tribal, patriarchal society, the eldership was as basic as the family. So when the New Testament records that Paul, a Jew who was thoroughly immersed in the Old Testament and Jewish culture, appointed elders for his newly founded churches (Acts 14:23), it means that he established a council of elders in each local church."⁹ As has been observed from the appointing of the seventy elders in Numbers 11:16–30, God's gives to his covenant people a plurality of men to share the burden of leadership and spiritual oversight. The Old Testament institution of elder is indeed a forerunner to the Christian office of elder.

Summary of the duties Old Testament elders

In the face of the shepherd-leaders' unfaithfulness, the prophets look forward to a time when the scattered remnant of Israel will be gathered again as a flock into a place where there is ample provision (Mic 2:12–13).¹⁰ Among the divinely appointed authorities of

⁶Benjamin Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008), 63. See Acts 4:5, 8, 23; 6:12; 22:5; 23:14; 24:1; 25:15.

⁷*Ibid.*, Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18.

⁸Manfred Brauch, "Elders," in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 680.

⁹Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), 39.

¹⁰As in Ezek 34, Jer 23:1–8 vividly describes the failure of Israel's shepherds who scattered God's people. God will repay their deeds and bring back the remnant of his fold and set shepherds over them who will care for them, ultimate under the righteous Davidic ruler.

the people of Israel (prophets, priests, kings, and elders), the only one to maintain a presence among all the people across the towns and villages of the nation throughout the history of the nation was the institution of elders. The elders were identified from each clan and community. Their responsibilities were to provide local leadership of judicial matters, give spiritual oversight of the people through preserving and applying Torah, and give account for the people to God (Exod 19:7–8; 1 Ki 8:1). As Old Testament elders maintained a judicial role, modern readers must be careful to not apply the contemporary judicial system onto their reading of the work of elders in the Old Testament. For the theocratic nation of Israel, the preservation and application of the law correlated directly to the spiritual well being of the people.

Under the old covenant, keeping God’s law ensured the covenant blessings of God (Deut 6:42–25) and breaking God’s law forfeited God’s covenant blessings (Jer 11:9–11). Elders were accessible and involved with all the people of Israel, being described as overseers “in the gate” (Deut 21:19). It is noteworthy that the Old Testament institution of elders existed after the collapse of Israel’s political monarchy and in times void of prophets. Elders had an active presence during the exile (Ezra 8:1; 14:1; 20:1–3) and following the return to the land of Israel (Ezra 10:16). Even into the New Testament period, the Jewish office of elder continued, remaining closely tied to each community with judicial responsibilities under Roman authorities.

- ❖ Amidst the failure of God’s appointed undershepherds to faithfully tend to his sheep in the Old Testament, how do the following passages anticipate the future hope of Israel?
 - Ezekiel 34:23, 24
 - Jeremiah 3:15
 - Micah 5:2–4.

Out of this situation comes the promise of a shepherd from the line of David who will genuinely care for the people. After disciplining Israel’s bad shepherds, Ezekiel points forward to the true shepherd to come: “And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd” (Ezek 34:23). Thus, God promises he will be their God and “shepherd” begins to be used as a title for the coming Messiah, the Son of David who will be shepherd over his people (Ezek 34:23, 24). God promises to provide faithful shepherds “after [his] own heart” (Jer 3:15; 23:4) who are concerned for his people. He explicitly promises that he will be their God and will set the Messianic Son of David as shepherd over them (Ezek 34:23, 24).

Thus, after centuries of God’s appointed shepherds failing, God gloriously points forward to His Divine shepherd who will be a shepherd for all the nations! “From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is

from of old, from ancient days. . . And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth” (Mic 5:2, 4). In this way, the prophets end with a tenor of anticipation for the coming shepherd.

(20 minutes)

3. Human Undershepherds in the New Testament

3.1. Jesus, the good shepherd

- ❖ Read Matthew 9:35–36. What does this reveal about the nation of Israel and heart of Christ?

As Jesus taught and performed miracles from town to town, crowds of Jews gathered. Matthew records, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Jesus was burdened, for this covenant people were “harassed” and “helpless.”

- ❖ Think | Pair | Share: Jesus is “the good shepherd” and the ultimate example after which all his appointed undershepherds are to follow. Examine the following passages for traits of faithful shepherding from Jesus’ life:

- John 10:9–11
- Matthew 26:31
- John 13:1–14
- Matthew 9:36
- Matthew 18:12–14
- Matthew 25:32
- Rev. 7:17

Jesus is “the good shepherd” because he is intimately acquainted with his sheep and will provide for, protect, and even lay down his life for his sheep (John 10:9, 11; Matt 26:31). Jesus is a humble (John 13:1–14), compassionate shepherd (Matt 9:36) who seeks the lost sheep (Matt 18:12–14). Jesus’s judgment of men will also be as a “shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matt 25:32).

In Rev. 7:17, Jesus is revealed as the exalted shepherd who redeems his saints through the great tribulation: “For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living

water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Rev 7:17). Thomas Schreiner explains, “In a striking image, Jesus as God’s Lamb is also the shepherd of God’s people. We again have an echo of John’s Gospel, where Jesus describes himself as the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14). Jesus’ role as the shepherd points to his deity, for in the OT the Lord shepherds his people and leads them to watering places.”¹¹ Indeed, Jesus as the eternal shepherd will satisfy his people in every way. J. Ramsey Michaels adds, “While the reference to the first ‘appearing’ presents Christ as ‘lamb,’ or innocent victim, the reference to the second presents Christ as ‘shepherd,’ or glorious victor, who rewards the faithful.”¹²

Jesus’ ministry on earth was largely devoted to developing human undershepherds to carry out the Great Commission.

Mark 3:14 “And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach.”

John 21:15–19 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”¹⁶ He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.”¹⁹ (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

When Peter was restored by Jesus after the resurrection, Jesus used shepherding language to commission his apostolic ministry (John 21:15–19).

Timothy Witmer observes,

In *all three* imperatives the risen Christ calls Peter to the work of caring for the flock. The response of Jesus to Peter’s affirmations of love and affection *could* have included three *different* charges. For example, he could have said “preach

¹¹Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 218.

¹²J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 49 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), 287.

the Gospel,” “make disciples,” or “love one another” or any other combination of imperatives. Instead, . . . he responded in each case with imagery related to shepherding the flock: “Tend My lambs,” “Shepherd My sheep,” and “Tend My sheep.”¹³

3.2. What terms has the Christian church used to describe its undershepherds?

In the New Testament, the key terms used to refer to the shepherd–leaders of God’s people are elder (*presbuteros*), overseer (*episkopos*), and shepherd (*poiemen*). Numerous passages, such as Acts 20:17–28, Titus 1:5–7, and 1 Peter 5:1–2, provide “strong evidence that the three are interchangeable terms for one office. . . .”¹⁴ in the church. John Hammett observes, “the term to be used for the leaders of the church does not seem to have been a major concern of the writers of Scripture.”¹⁵ Tom Schreiner agrees, noting “the author of Hebrews is not interested in the titles that leaders bore, for he simply calls them leaders (*hegoumenoi*). This does not mean, of course, that the leaders lacked titles, but only that it was not part of the author’s purpose to communicate whether they had titles.”¹⁶

Further, these terms for God’s appointed shepherd–leaders are never given separate qualifications in the New Testament while generally maintain the same duties as one another.¹⁷ Though the term for “elder” appears frequently in the both the Old and New Testaments, the New Testament office of elder is quite unlike the elders of the Old Testament and Jewish culture in New Testament times.

It is noteworthy that the majority of occurrences of *presbuteros* in the Gospels are in association with chief priests or scribes – the very ones antagonistic to the ministry of Jesus. Further, in Acts, the first four and last four occurrences

¹³Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2010), 36.

¹⁴John Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2005), 161. This position of the interchangeable terms used in Scripture which describe the office of elder is also affirmed by Gene Getz, *Elders and Leaders: God’s Plan for Leading the Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishing, 2003), Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, and Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2012).

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 163.

¹⁶Thomas Schreiner, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 741.

¹⁷Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, 80–81.

of *presbuteros* refer to ones opposed to the church,¹⁸ while the middle ten occurrences refer to the elders of the Christian church.¹⁹

3.3. Why does the indwelling Holy Spirit—God’s very shepherding presence within all believers—not render void human undershepherds over his people?

After Pentecost and the indwelling Holy Spirit, with the dawn of era of the “last days” (Joel 2:28–31; Acts 2:17), God now shepherds his people actively by His indwelling Holy Spirit. The sheep are no longer a mixed community as in the old covenant, but, through union with Christ, exist as God’s regenerate covenant community. “All of this understanding of the church is basic New Testament ecclesiology. And all of it is true because Christ Jesus has come and through his cross work has inaugurated the new covenant age... And we, as the new covenant people of God, receive the benefits of his work in only one way—through individual repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁰ The church presents a foretaste of the consummate reign of Jesus.

This does not, however, remove from God’s design to continue to send shepherd leaders to care for and protect His covenant people in this present age of the church.

- Jesus provides for the ongoing care of his people through elders who are called to shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:1–2; Heb 13:20, 21). The Apostles and early Christians were scattered by persecution all over the world. As they went, they made disciples by proclaiming the gospel of Christ. Yet, as Allen Myers states, “Almost from the birth of the Church there were elders who offered leadership (e.g., Acts 11:30; 21:18; cf. Jas 5:14). The book of Acts cites their influence on the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem (15:6, 22) and afterward (16:4).”²¹ This perhaps is best summarized in Acts 20 in Paul’s farewell to his beloved elders of the church in Ephesus. Here, “Paul connects the work of shepherding with leadership, particularly with the office of elder.”²² His farewell concludes, “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own

¹⁸Ibid., 63. See Acts 4:5, 8, 23; 6:12; 22:5; 23:14; 24:1; 25:15.

¹⁹Ibid. See Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18.

²⁰Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 691.

²¹Allen Myers, “Elder,” in *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1987), 319.

²²Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 37.

blood” (Acts 20:28). “When called to summarize the work of the elders in these final moving words, he returns to the imagery of shepherding. The elders are to be vigilant in ‘watching over’ (*prosecho*) not only themselves but also the believers at Ephesus. It is noteworthy that they are described as overseers (*episkopous*). Calvin observed that ‘according to the use of the Scripture, bishops (*episkopoi*) differ nothing from elders (*presbuteroi*).’”²³

- Paul was not merely concerned for the spread of the gospel, but carefully established healthy churches in good order with healthy leadership modeled after Jesus, the good shepherd (1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17). Paul’s epistles are filled with references to these various words for the function of shepherd leaders in the church (1 Cor 3:2; Gal 6:6; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 2:7; 4:6–16; 2 Tim 1:6; Titus 1:7). In Paul’s letters, elders are qualified as men living exemplary lives following Jesus.
- In addition to leading, teaching and protecting the flock, elders in Paul are commissioned with the task of purposefully equipping the next generation of shepherd leaders in the church (2 Tim 2:2). However, this calling of shepherd leader will increasingly grow difficult in this present age, and elders must be willing to risk even their own lives for the name of Jesus (Acts 14:22; 21:13; Rom 8:17; 1 Thess 3:4; 2 Tim 4:3).

(10 minutes)

3.4. Attributes of Christian elders

- 3.4.1. Elders in the church are plural.** Scripture never instructs for a specific number, but regularly refers to them in the plural.

Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. (Acts 20:17)

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. (James 5:14)

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you... (Titus 1:5)

- ❖ Reflect on the practical benefits of a plurality of elders in Dever, *The Deliberate Church*, 133–35. Describe a time you have seen these benefits either notably present or notably absent.

²³Ibid., 38.

3.4.2. Elders in the church are qualified

1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9. We will zoom in on this next week. For now, observe that Scripture repeatedly is concerned with *who* leads the church just as much as *what* these leaders do.

3.4.3. Elders in the church are Men (see Danver’s Statement in appendix 3)

❖ (15 minutes)

Read the following article. Discuss what insight stands out to you.

The Pattern of Male Eldership by Alexander Strauch

There is much about biblical eldership that offends churchgoing people today: the concept of elders who provide pastoral care, a plurality of pastors, and the idea of so called “lay” or non clerical pastor elders. Yet nothing is more objectionable in the minds of many contemporary people than the biblical concept of an all male eldership. A biblical eldership, however, must be an all male eldership.

For the Bible believing Christian, the primary example of male leadership is found in the person of Jesus Christ. The most obvious point is that Christ came into the world as the Son of God, not the daughter of God. His maleness was not an arbitrary matter. It was a theological necessity, absolutely essential to His person and work.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus trained and appointed twelve men whom He called “apostles” (Luke 6:13). Jesus’ choice of an all male apostolate affirmed the creation order as presented in Genesis 2:18–25. Luke informs us that before choosing the Twelve Jesus spent the entire night in prayer with His Father (Luke 6:12). As the perfect Son, in complete obedience and submission to His Father’s will, Jesus chose twelve males to be His apostles. These men were God the Father’s choice. Jesus’ choice of male apostles was based on divine principles and guidance, not local custom or traditions.

As we’ve seen, the Twelve followed the example of their Lord and Master by appointing seven men, not seven men and women, when they needed to establish an official body of servants to care for the church’s widows and funds (Acts 6:16). Thirty years after Christ’s ascension into heaven, Peter wrote to the churches of northwestern Asia Minor and exhorted his Christian sisters to submit to their husbands in the same way the “holy women” of the Old Testament age did (1 Peter 3:5). He also exhorted husbands to care for their wives and reminded them that their wives were fellow heirs “of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7). Thus Peter continued to follow His Lord’s example and taught both role distinctions and male–female equality.

The biblical pattern of male leadership continued throughout the New Testament era. Regarding the marriage relationship, Paul could not have stated more pointedly the divine order of the husband–wife relationship. In complete agreement with Peter’s instruction on the wife’s marital submission, Paul teaches that the husband is empowered and commanded to lead in the marriage relationship and that the wife is instructed to submit “as to the Lord.” The following texts speak for themselves:

- “Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord” (Eph. 5:22).

- “But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything” (Eph. 5:24).
- “For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church” (Eph. 5:23).
- “Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord” (Col. 3:18).
- “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine . . . that they [older women] may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored” (Titus 2:1,4,5).

Just as Paul teaches male headship in the family, he teaches male headship in the local church (1 Tim. 2:83:7). Because the family is the basic social unit and the man is the established family authority, we should expect that men would become the elders of the larger church family. Consider Paul’s instructions in 1 Timothy 2:12: “But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man.” In the same way that every individual family is governed by certain standards of conduct, so the local church family is governed by certain principles of conduct and social arrangement. The letter of 1 Timothy specifically addresses the issue of proper order and behavior of men, women, and elders in the local church family. To his representative in Ephesus, Paul writes, “I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, *I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God*, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:14, 15; italics added).

A major aspect of the church’s social arrangement concerns the behavior of women in the congregation. In the church in Ephesus, as a result of false teaching that may have challenged the validity of traditional gender roles, Christian women were acting contrary to acceptable Christian behavior. In order to counter improper female conduct in the church, Paul restates Christian principles of women’s conduct: “Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression” (1 Tim. 2:11-14).

First Timothy 2:11–14 should settle the question of women elders. Paul prohibits women from doing two things: (1) teaching the men of the church; and (2) exercising authority over the men.

Note that immediately following his instruction in 1 Timothy 2:11–15, that prohibits women from teaching and leading men, Paul describes the qualifications for those who oversee the local church (1 Tim. 3:17). Significantly, the qualifications assume a male subject. Thus the overseer is to be “the husband of one wife” and “one who manages his own household well” (1 Tim. 3:2b,4a). Paul gives no suggestion of women elders in this passage.²⁴

²⁴Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership Booklet: Restoring the Eldership to Its Rightful Place in the Church*, rev. ed. (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1997), 7–8.

(10 minutes)

4. How did the church come to understand the offices of leadership through its history? A brief survey of human undershepherds in the history of the church

4.1. Early Church: Twofold pattern of leadership: Elders and Deacons

Didache: “Appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord.”²⁵

4.2. Ignatius: Elevated Bishop over Elders and Deacons

Jerome: “When subsequently one presbyter was chosen to preside over the rest, this was done to remedy schism and to prevent each individual from rending the church of Christ by drawing it to himself.”²⁶

4.3. Fourth Century: “The church had become a highly organized, hierarchical institution with the responsibilities of its offices of bishop, elder, deacon, and deaconess specifically delineated. And the unity of the church was found to exist in its bishops, whose office was thus elevated and accorded great authority.”²⁷

4.4. “During the tenure of Gregory the Great (590–604), the term *pope* was applied almost exclusively to the Roman bishop. Gregory himself argued that the bishop of Rome exercised supreme authority throughout the world. Thus, these early Roman bishops contributed to the development of the supremacy of the bishop of Rome.”²⁸

4.5. Middle Ages: Reiterated Papal Supremacy

4.6. Building on Calvin’s vision of the church, the Westminster Assembly Directory for Church Government articulated the Presbyterian government, featuring a hierarchy under a plurality.

4.7. Rejecting the church–state reality of the Catholic Church and the new Protestant churches, the Anabaptists spearheaded the early congregational churches.

²⁵ Quoted in Gregg Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 589.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 592.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 595.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 598.

“John Calvin underscored the fact that God could have chosen to rule directly over the church. Yet God opted to govern the church through ministers in order to foster humility, godliness, obedience, teachability, mutual love, and unity.”²⁹

(20 minutes)

- 4.7.1.** A Warning from 1 Peter: Elders are not faithful merely by virtue of their appointment.
- ❖ Read 1 Peter 5:1–4. List the various dangers and temptations and their corresponding encouragements with which Peter charges the elders. Then, define each.

 - ❖ Why is Peter concerned with the character and attitude of the elders? What other things could he have addressed that he didn't?

 - ❖ In the face of serving as an elder, what present and future promises are ours with Jesus as our “chief shepherd?”

 - ❖ Read the following segment. What is your reaction to this?

What sacrifices may be required of a man in order to faithfully serve as an elder? And for tentmakers to survive three fulltime jobs (work, family and ministry), they must also adopt a sacrificial lifestyle. Tentmakers must live a pruned life and literally find leisure and rest in the rhythm of serving Christ (Matt. 11:28). They must be willing to forego a measure of career achievement and private leisure for the privilege of gaining the prize (Phil. 3:14). Many would like to be tentmakers if they could be wealthy and live a leisurely and cultured lifestyle. But the truth is that a significant ministry in the church and the community can only come by sacrifice.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., 602.

– Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership Booklet*

Principle: being a shepherd–leader is hard; may be lonely; requires sacrifice; self–neglect; care for others

- ❖ If time allows, read the article, “How Much Time Can a Lay Elder Give to Ministry” on the next page. If not, encourage the men to read and journal or discuss with mentor.

(5 minutes)

- ❖ In light of your desire to become a faithful shepherd leader in the church, write several brief phrases that describe ways God is encouraging you or challenging your life or character as a result of today’s class discussion.

³⁰R. Paul Stevens, *Liberating the Laity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1985), 147, quoted in Strauch, *Biblical Eldership Booklet*, 5.

Session 3: The Elder's Life

Session Goals:

1. Student will conduct self examination in view of the Scriptural qualifications for the office of elder (Objective 4)
2. Student will identify traits needed to serve well with the other elders at Crosspoint (Objective 6)

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read *The Shepherd Leader* chs. 1–4
2. Read 1 Timothy in its entirety
3. Read “How Much Time Can a Lay Elder Give to Ministry?”

(20 minutes)

❖ Think | Pair | Share

Read aloud the following passage and give two minutes for silent meditation and journaling on the passage. Then, pair up classmates to share with each other things that impacted them from this passage.

2 Tim 3:10–17

¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- ❖ How may God use the church body for your continued growth as you serve as an elder?
- ❖ How does God desire to use you to promote spiritual growth among church members?

(10 min)

1. The Call

“God isn’t haphazard in who he calls.” –Dave Harvey¹

Read the following article on the “internal” and “external” call by Albert Mohler aloud. Use the following questions to discuss.

1.1. Internal Call

Consider Your Calling: The Call to the Ministry by Albert Mohler

Thursday • July 15, 2004; by Albert Mohler

(<http://www.albertmohler.com/2004/07/15/consider-your-calling-the-call-to-the-ministry/>)

Has God called you to ministry? Though all Christians are called to serve the cause of Christ, God calls certain persons to serve the Church as pastors and other ministers. Writing to young Timothy, the Apostle Paul confirmed that if a man aspires to be a pastor, “it is a fine work he aspires to do.” [I Timothy 3:1, NASB] Likewise, it is a high honor to be called of God into the ministry of the Church. How do you know if God is calling you?

First, there is an inward call. Through His Spirit, God speaks to those persons He has called to serve as pastors and ministers of His Church. The great Reformer Martin Luther described this inward call as “God’s voice heard by faith.” Those whom God has called know this call by a sense of leading, purpose, and growing commitment.

Charles Spurgeon identified the first sign of God’s call to the ministry as “an intense, all-absorbing desire for the work.” Those called by God sense a growing compulsion to preach and teach the Word, and to minister to the people of God.

This sense of compulsion should prompt the believer to consider whether God may be calling to the ministry. Has God gifted you with the fervent desire to preach? Has He equipped you with the gifts necessary for ministry? Do you love God’s Word and feel called to teach? As Spurgeon warned those who sought his counsel not to preach if they could help it. “But,” Spurgeon continued, “if he cannot help it, and he must preach or die, then he is the man.” That sense of urgent commission is one of the central marks of an authentic call.

1.2. External Call

¹Dave Harvey. *Am I Called? The Summons to Pastoral Ministry* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2012), 20.

Second, there is the external call. Baptists believe that God uses the congregation to “call out the called” to ministry. The congregation must evaluate and affirm the calling and gifts of the believer who feels called to the ministry. As a family of faith, the congregation should recognize and celebrate the gifts of ministry given to its members, and take responsibility to encourage those whom God has called to respond to that call with joy and submission.

These days, many persons think of careers rather than callings. The biblical challenge to “consider your call” should be extended from the call to salvation to the call to the ministry.

John Newton, famous for writing “Amazing Grace,” once remarked that “None but He who made the world can make a Minister of the Gospel.” Only God can call a true minister, and only He can grant the minister the gifts necessary for service. But the great promise of Scripture is that God does call ministers, and presents these servants as gifts to the Church.

Consider your calling. Do you sense that God is calling you to ministry, whether as pastor or another servant of the Church? Do you burn with a compulsion to proclaim the Word, share the Gospel, and care for God’s flock? Has this call been confirmed and encouraged by those Christians who know you best?

God still calls . . . has He called you?²

- ❖ Why are both aspects of the call important?

- ❖ What is the practical impact on one’s ministry of having this calling?

(10 min)

2. Character – Qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3)

According to Witmer, one reason for this errant vision of the leader’s qualifications today is due to our culture’s lack of trust in the authority of the Bible. Indeed, people are skeptical of all authority. “The loss of respect for authority has led to the loss of authoritative standards. The loss of authoritative standards has left each person to be his

²Albert Mohler. “Consider Your Calling: The Call to the Ministry,” <http://www.albertmohler.com/2004/07/15/consider-your-calling-the-call-to-the-ministry/>, accessed February 20, 2014.

own standard-maker. The sovereign authority of God has given way to the sovereign authority of the individual.”³

❖ What is the result of churches not evaluating its leaders according to Scripture?

This lack of qualified leaders has damaged the church. The church in America is full of shepherds who fail to discipline and care for their flocks. Because leaders are not chosen by God’s word, they lead with a vision apart from God’s Word. Consequently, many churches prize unbiblical church growth techniques over faithful biblical practices. Church leaders are often celebrated for innovation and growth over godliness and faithful shepherding. The very name “pastor” is commonly applied to persons without examination of the biblical qualifications.

An old adage says, “As the leaders go, so goes the church.” Recognizing the decline of the church in America over the past century, much of the responsibility must be attributed to the leadership of the church. From search committees to pastoral leadership development, emphasis is often placed on the “what” and “how” of church leadership. Yet, when Scripture speaks to the office of elder, it speaks less to what the elder is to *do* while placing emphasis on who the elder is to *be*. The character and qualifications of the elder are the emphases of the biblical authors. As Thomas Schreiner states, the focus of the biblical writers, “was not on [elders’] skills but rather on their conformity to Christ.”⁴ It is no wonder the church in America is in decline when such little emphasis is placed on what Scripture expresses as most important for its leaders. Paul’s first letter to Timothy is one of several passages (see Acts 20; Titus 1; 1 Pet 5) that emphasizes the qualifications of elders in the church. An examination of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 demonstrates that churches must appoint as shepherds only those men who meet the biblical qualifications of elders.

❖ What is the context of 1 Timothy?

2.1. **Paul wrote to exhort Timothy to vigorously oppose false teachers and their errant doctrine (1:3)**

2.2. **Paul wrote to explain the kind of behavior that was to characterize believers in the church (3:15).**

³Timothy Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2010), 79.

⁴Thomas Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 575.

2.3. **Paul’s concern is not merely organizational health, but for God’s call for the church to faithfully steward and spread the gospel (2:4–6).** Indeed, as the leaders go, so goes the church.

The rise of false teachers in Ephesus is no surprise to Paul. As Thomas Lea observes, “Paul had warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:30 that false teachers would arise from within their own body.”⁵ Therefore, in urging the excommunication of two false teachers in the church, Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:18–20), Paul demonstrates that unqualified leadership is detrimental to the church and must be dealt with. He then goes to great lengths to describe the qualifications that should mark all the men serving as leaders in the church (1 Tim 3:1–13; 5:17–25).

3. Qualifications in 1 Timothy

As has already been noted, when the Apostle Paul writes to Timothy about leadership in the church, he is concerned with their character and spiritual maturity more than their methods and strategy. Elders are not called because they are spiritual gurus or have impressive resumes, but because they are ordinary, godly men who all Christians can and should emulate. D. A. Carson writes, “The most remarkable feature of this list is that it is unremarkable. It contains nothing about intelligence, decisiveness, drive, wealth, power. Almost everything on the list is elsewhere in the New Testament required of all believers.”⁶

It is for this reason that elders, like the Apostle Paul, are to urge other Christians to emulate their character. Paul writes, “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 1:13). For churches to be healthy and faithful in disciple-making, they must appoint as leaders only those who meet the biblical criteria. Let us now examine the qualifications as given by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1–7.

(15 min)

- ❖ Re-write 1 Timothy 3:1 in your own words. Use several sentences if desired. Discuss responses.

⁵Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 42–43.

⁶Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2012), 150.

- ❖ When do you first recall desiring to serve as an elder? What sparked your initial desire?

(10 minutes)

3.1 **Blameless reputation.**⁷ Paul begins his list of qualifications by emphasizing that elders are to be men of blameless reputation. They are to conduct every aspect of their lives in faithfulness to Christ so that all who see them will have no grounds of accusation.

- ❖ What is at stake in the reputation of the elders?

“Therefore, an overseer must be above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2).

Listed first among the qualifications, “above reproach” serves as a simple summary of the remaining qualifications. Literally translated, this word (*anepilempton*) says an elder’s character or reputation “cannot be laid hold of.” It means that churches should only appoint men whose character is blameless and reputation is of the highest integrity. William Mounce explains that an elder will not be perfect, but exude such character that it benefits the church: “It cannot mean that an overseer must be free from any sin, internal or visible, but the emphasis here is on the type of external personal reputation that would be a credit to the church.”⁸

“he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil” (1 Tim 3:7).

Just as the gospel message is for those within and outside of the church, Paul’s concern for the reputation of elders extends beyond believers to those outside of the church. That is why Paul includes among the qualifications that, “he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil” (1 Tim 3:7). One who is “well thought of by outsiders” (v7) gives a beautiful witness to nonbelievers. Indeed, the church is a “pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15) and testifies to the world the character of God. The church must be led and cared for by men who exemplify the veracity of the gospel everywhere they go, showing the truth and beauty of the gospel to all.

⁷Categories for summarizing qualifications adapted from Brian Croft, *Test, Train, Affirm & Send Into Ministry: Recovering the Local Church’s Responsibility in the External Call* (Leominster, UK: Day One Publications, 2010), 43–46.

⁸ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 170.

- ❖ For an elder who works in the business community, what are some specific applications of being “above reproach?”

(15 min)

3.2 Faithful management of his family.

“the husband of one wife” (1 Tim 3:2).

“He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Tim 3:4–5)

“hospitable” (1 Tim 3:2)

- ❖ How do each of these relate to the elders’ character and leadership in the church?

The most difficult place to live out the Christian life is in the home, for this is the place where one’s character is most clearly proven and developed. That is why Paul instructs the church to also look at a man’s domestic life when examining his character. Here, Paul first says that an elder must be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim 3:2). This means that an elder’s marriage will be exemplary to other Christians. Indeed, if the institution of marriage is to be a display of the gospel message (Eph 5:32), those who lead in the church should give most clear evidence of the gospel in their own marriages. This does not mean that an elder must be married, but Paul is assuming that most men would be married and have children. Paul is aware that healthy family relationships evidence the man’s character and ability to lead.

Paul does not restrict evaluation to the elder’s marriage, but includes his whole household. He writes, “He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” (1 Tim 3:4–5). The words “manage” and “submissive” reveal Paul’s concern for the elder’s proper view of authority. Both at home and in the church, an elder exercises God–given authority. This means that while the elder manages and leads, he does so in a manner that aims to please God. George Knight observes, “The argument moves from the ‘lesser’ to the ‘greater,’ in analogous realms, i.e., from the family to the family of God, and states that inability in the former makes ability extremely doubtful in the latter.”⁹ Indeed, an elder will give account to God for his stewardship of this delegated authority (Heb 13:17).

⁹George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 162.

An elder's domestic life is an indicator of how he will lead in the church. That is why Paul includes "hospitable" in this list of qualifications. Just as God has instructed all believers to "show hospitality" (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9), so the elder will model this virtue in his life and home. Hospitality is a trait that verifies the faithful management of one's home. Hospitality not only reveals the elders' care and love for others, but reveals orderliness in the home and is a powerful tool in the ministry of the gospel.

(10 min)

- ❖ Read and discuss the article, "30 Practical Ways For Pastors to Love Their Wives and Families." Which two–three of these ideas strike you as most helpful for your leadership at home?

(5 min)

3.3 Godly character. In 1840, Pastor Robert Murray M'Cheyne wrote to the Rev. W. C. Burns of the great need of an elder to be growing in godly character: "I am also deepened in my conviction, that if we are to be instruments in such a work, we must be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Oh, cry for personal holiness, constant nearness to God by the blood of the Lamb!"¹⁰ Character that reveals inward trust and conformity to Christ is another essential trait of elders.

In verses 2 and 3, Paul lists several evidences of godly character that must mark the life of an elder. He must be "sober-minded" and "self-controlled" (1 Tim 3:2). "Sober-minded" evidences judgment that is not clouded by excessive influences, whether substances, passions, or emotions. He doesn't act rashly but walks carefully. Similarly, he is "self-controlled," which reveals discipline, sensibility, and wisdom. Additionally, he is "not a drunkard" (v. 3) and thus is not in bondage to any substance. One who is "sober-minded," "self-controlled," and "not a drunkard" will also be "respectable." Lea states that this qualification is not reduced merely to good manners, but that this word, "describes a person whose orderly outward life is a reflection of inner stability."¹¹ Indeed, outward vices reveal internal struggle and spiritual unhealthiness.

Godly character is also revealed in how one responds to adversity and conflict. Paul continues by stating elders are "not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome" (v. 3). An elder does not respond to adversity or attack by being argumentative, divisive, or violent, but is a peacemaker. Further, he demonstrates contentment and a heart for God's kingdom as he is "not a lover of money" (v. 3). Through

¹⁰Robert Murray McCheyne and Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne* (Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1894), 248. Logos.

¹¹Lea, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 110.

and through, only men of godly character should be considered for the office of elder.

(5 min)

3.4 Ability to teach. In writing that he must be, “able to teach,” (v. 2), Paul gives one of the few competencies and commitments of an elder. While he may not be one with primary preaching responsibility, an elder must be one who continues to grow in his knowledge of the Bible and is able to explain the Bible with clarity and fruitfulness. Paul later wrote to Timothy an imperative, “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2). Mark Dever explains that the ministry of the elder hinges on this crucial responsibility – preaching and teaching. “Pastors in churches today must recover the understanding that their primary role is to preach the Word of God. . . . Whether or not numerical growth results from biblical preaching in any given congregation at any given time, Christ's church will experience true growth and edification through teaching and instruction.”¹²

(10 min)

3.5 Spiritual maturity. Paul’s final category of qualifications is that elders must demonstrate spiritual maturity. “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim 3:6). Paul reveals that immature or newly converted Christians face a particular danger in the lure of pride and subsequent condemnation of the devil. A mature Christian will fully recognize the dangers of spiritual temptations and the schemes of Satan (Eph 6:11). He will be humble, able to receive criticism, and even submit to other elders who hold a different opinion. William Mounce makes an important observation: “The desire to appoint rich and well-known people into leadership positions, often for the wrong reasons, was as much a problem then as it is today.”¹³ Only men who are deeply rooted in the grace of Christ will make the sacrifices required to faithfully shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet 5:2). This is spiritual maturity.

As has been demonstrated from 1 Timothy 3:1–7, churches must appoint as elders only those men who meet the qualifications of elders. While the *work* of the pastor–elder is important in Scripture, of greater importance to the biblical writers is the *character* of the men the church appoints to be its leaders. Churches will only be healthy when they emphasize what Scripture emphasizes in the identification and training of their leaders. For this reason, Paul’s letter to Timothy is a wonderful gift to the church today.

1 Peter 5:3 – “being examples to the flock”

¹²Dever, *The Church*, 150.

¹³Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 180–81.

At Crosspoint, we want our elders to be the type of men that any parent can say to his or her daughter, “Do you see that elder? That’s the kind of man I want you to marry.”

- ❖ What resources has God given elders to continue to grow in such character?

- ❖ In vv. 6–7, Paul twice warns against elders falling into Satan’s traps. In what ways might you be particularly susceptible to temptation?

(15 min)

4. Chemistry

Although this sounds like a scientific characteristic of elders, there is nothing unspiritual about it.

4.1. Shared values and like-mindedness

Philippians 2:19–22 reveals Paul and Timothy’s shared value and like-mindedness in their partnership in the gospel.

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. ²⁰ For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. ²¹ For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know Timothy’s proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. (Phil 2:19–22)

- ❖ What do you observe of Paul and Timothy’s chemistry?

“In this text from Philippians we see clearly the way that Paul prizes his friendship with Timothy and the way that it is based on a harmony of heart and mind. Without such harmony there can be no intimate friendship.”¹⁴ – Michael Haykin

4.2. Philosophical alignment

“Still another important thing to look for when choosing leaders is philosophical alignment. By that I mean agreement with your basic philosophy of ministry and the direction that God has called your church to take. Just because people are spiritually mature doesn’t mean they’ll work well together. Paul and Barnabas

¹⁴Michael Haykin, *The God Who Draws Near* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press USA, 2007), 76.

were both spiritual giants. But they had mutually exclusive plans for dealing with John Mark. Eventually they split up and went their separate ways, and it wasn't pretty. The Greek word used to describe their parting refers to a sharp and nasty dispute.⁸ It was basically a church split."¹⁵ –Larry Osborne

- 4.3. “Finally, careful reflection on the actual exercise of this office prompts the listing of several additional characteristics that, even if not on the list of biblical qualifications, certainly conform to overall biblical standards and seem to be of great importance if the eldership is to be fruitful: ‘the capacity for hard work and the ability to inspire others to join in; humility when God is blessing one’s ministry; a willingness to take up new challenges rather than becoming complacent; the capacity to continue to love others even when under criticism rather than becoming embittered; and the ability to persevere under pressure and disappointment.’”¹⁶ –Gregg Allison

Crosspoint Church’s unity has been a reflection of the unity of the elders.
Pursuing to maintain chemistry is crucial to the health of the church.

- ❖ What are some specific ways the elders can maintain chemistry?

(10 min)

5. Competency

- ❖ What competencies are required for one to serve faithfully as an elder?
- ❖ What competencies does Dever argue for in *The Deliberate Church*, “Assessing Ability” on pages 145–146?

“Leadership Happens When Character and Competence Are Combined. No leader can be effective without character, but character does not ensure that a leader is effective. There are many people with sterling character who are not leaders. A good leader stands out when character is matched by competence and the central virtue of

¹⁵Larry W Osborne, *Sticky Teams: Keeping Your Leadership Team and Staff on the Same Page* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 55.

¹⁶Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 218)

knowing what to do.”¹⁷

(10 min)

6. Communion with Christ which yields Gospel Motivation

- ❖ What motivations other than the gospel may we commonly adopt?
- ❖ What will result if our leadership is based on these motivations?
- ❖ What observations do you draw from the following passages on how the gospel motivates our lives and ministry?

Romans 1:1–6: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,”

2 Cor 5:14–21

¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Gospel Motivation – frees us from inadequacy, condemnation, self-justification, emotionalism, judgmentalism

¹⁷Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2012), 83.

“So if we take on Christian service, and think of such service as the vehicle that will make us central, we have paganized Christian service; we have domesticated Christian living and set it to servitude in a pagan cause. Our pilgrimage as Christians need not be very far advanced before we ruefully recognize that even our best service, motivated by the highest zeal, is regularly laced with large doses of vulgar self-interest.”¹⁸ –D. A. Carson

¹⁸D. A. Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 58.

Session 4: The Elder's Work, Part 1: Protect

Session Goals:

1. Student will evaluate the elder's responsibility to protect the church through class reading, discussion, and written exercises (Objective 4).
2. Student will explain specific strategies the Crosspoint Church elders employ to protect the church (Objective 6).

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read *The Shepherd Leader* chs. 5, 8
2. Read Acts 20 in its entirety
3. Read "Why Crosspoint Church Should Practice Corrective Church Discipline"

(15 min)

- ❖ Read the following passage, allow three minutes of meditation or journaling on the passage, then read it again and pray together.

Paul's charge to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28–32

"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. ³² And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

- ❖ If you were to give a title to the preceding passage, what would you call it? (creativity welcome)
- ❖ To whom does the word "all" refer in Acts 20:28?
- ❖ When frustration, weariness, or even attack creep in, how might verse 28 encourage you to persevere?
- ❖ How does church membership help guard the flock?

1. Know the sheep

(15 min)

1.1. Discuss Witmer, Chapter 5, 107–137

- ❖ What does Witmer mean that shepherds “know the sheep?”

- ❖ In your own words, define macro-knowing and micro-knowing.

- ❖ What principles on church membership may we draw from this chapter?

2. Guard the flock

(15 min)

2.1. Read the church covenant on the following page.

- ❖ In what way may this help elders guard the flock?

- ❖ What parts of the covenant do you feel need to receive more attention among the congregation?

Crosspoint Church Covenant
Adopted April 6, 2011

Having been, as we trust, brought by the grace of God to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to offer ourselves to Him, and having been baptized by immersion upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, by His grace, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant together.

- I. We will seek to walk together in the unity of the Spirit, praying for one another and exercising mutual care as members one of another.
- II. We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and we will make it a priority to attend corporate gatherings. Under the Word of God, we will work together for the continuance of a faithful gospel ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, doctrines, and the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- III. We will frequently encourage, exhort, and admonish one another to hold to our confession of Christ, remembering that as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us now a special obligation to lead a new and holy life.
- IV. We will work together to support the ministry of the church by: upholding its mission, submitting to our elders (pastors), using our gifts for the edification of one other, and praying for its health. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the needy, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.
- V. We will aim to make Disciples of Christ in our own city and abroad, sending to the nations those from among us and readying ourselves to go when called.
- VI. We will endeavor to bring up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord those who may be under our household. In view of this calling, we will not neglect the Word of God in our homes.
- VII. We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

(5 min)

2.2. Crosspoint Church's membership process

- ❖ Discuss Crosspoint Church's membership process.
- ❖ How do you feel this aids in guarding the flock?



2.3. Crosspoint Church's membership interview orientation (5 min)

MEMBERSHIP INTERVIEW ORIENTATION

1. Why do membership interviews?

To discern if people are believers

- Protect flock
- Purify flock
- Health of Body
- Give no one false assurance
- Get to know people

2. Discuss: Matthew 16: 15-19 and Matthew 18: 15-18

3. What are the standards on how to rate a candidate's gospel presentation?

A clear gospel presentation has the following elements:

God: Creator/ Holy/ Judge

Man: Image bearer/ rebelled

Christ: God/ Man

- Fulfilled law perfectly
- Substitutionary atonement
- Died for our sins and rose again

Response: Repentant/ Faith

**** Most common false beliefs to listen out for include:**

- Works
 - Saved because of conversion experience
 - "I walked the aisle in '89"
 - Baptismal regeneration
- Family/ Genealogy

4. What happens if the candidate contradicts or outright denies a point of biblical truth during the interview?

A. Discern the person and his heart.

B. Use diagnostic questions:

a. Kennedy questions:

- i. On a scale of 0-10, how confident are you that you would go to Heaven if you were to die today?
- ii. If you were to stand before God and he asks, "Why should I let you into Heaven?" what would you say?

- a. F.A.I.T.H diagnostic question
 - i. In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for someone to go to Heaven?
- B. If unclear on gospel, shut down the interview and disciple/evangelize:
 - i. Tools:
 1. 2 Ways to Live
 2. Just for Starters
 3. The Story
1. What if a person has not been baptized following regeneration (i.e. baptized as infant, or confesses coming to true faith after a previous confession of faith and baptism)?
2. What if something comes out in the person's testimony of either residual grievous sin, past abuse, criminal activity, etc...?
3. When the interview is over, what's next?
 - Introduce the person to ministry leaders of areas of interest
 - Help them get in CP group
 - Follow up email- Thank them

(5 min)

The following form is the interview form used for data gathering during membership interviews.

Membership interviews are conducted by two church members, one of whom is typically an elder or ministry staff. The elders desire to involve non-staff church members alongside in membership interviews for their discipleship, relational connections, and ministry involvement.



MEMBERSHIP INTERVIEW

Candidate: _____

Date: _____

Introductions

Testimony: _____

What is the Good News of Jesus Christ?

How clear was Gospel on scale of 0-10? ___ What areas were unclear or left out? _____

Have you been baptized by immersion following regeneration? When & by what church?

Previous Church: _____

Reasons for Leaving: _____

Talked to Pastor? _____

Family Information

Married? _____ Wedding Date: _____

Separated / Divorced? _____

Children & DOBs? _____

In what areas might you be interested in serving? In addition, would you serve up to once per month in the nursery? _____

Have you joined a Connecting Point Group yet? Group Leader: _____

Do you fully affirm our doctrinal statement & church covenant? _____

Are there any concerns or things you'd like to see changed at Crosspoint? _____

Are you willing to submit to the leadership in spite of these concerns or preferences?

Members' meetings and churchwide fellowships are important in the life of our church. Will you make every attempt to attend these, in addition to corporate worship? _____

Do you have any questions for me about Crosspoint (ministry, leadership, vision) or your walk with Christ? _____

How can I pray for you today? _____

Thank you for spending time with us today. Our church values regenerate church membership and we want to ensure that those who become members understand the gospel biblically. I will share the notes from our time today with our elders. Oftentimes, one of the elders or I may want to meet again for a follow-up, whether for further clarity or to help resource you for continued growth in Christ.

Interview Completed by: _____

Recommendation:

(include any concerns for candidate's spiritual vitality, recommendations for his/her growth, follow up steps, etc . . .)

(15 min)

3. Defend the doctrine

1 Tim 6:20–21: “O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,”²¹ for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.” [see also 2 Tim 1:8–14]

3.1. Defend the gospel by confronting cultural challenges to the Gospel

- ❖ What are some cultural challenges to the church family’s confidence in the gospel you are currently aware of?

- ❖ What are some practical ways elders can stay abreast of challenges to the church family’s confidence in the gospel?

Gal 1:6, 7 “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—⁷ not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.”

3.2. Defend the gospel from false teaching and teachers

Romans 16:17–18

¹⁷I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

- ❖ Describe a false teacher or teaching you feel would pose a threat to our congregation.

3.3. Courage is required

Heb 10:39 “But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.”

Eph 6:20 “For which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”

1 Thess 2:2 “But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.”

God’s appointment of men to the office of elder is a call for courageous leadership of the church in holiness & obedience. Elders do not have the option to back down to

cultural pressures, but are entrusted with authoritative, trustworthy, and clear directives in the Bible. Elders are entrusted as stewards of the message of the gospel (Eph 3:1–13; Titus 1:7). Likewise, elders are entrusted with sheep to feed, lead, and protect (John 21:15–19; Heb 13). D. Martyn Lloyd–Jones connects the courage elders are to exhibit to the authority they are under:

The preacher should never be apologetic, he should never give the impression that he is speaking by their leave as it were; he should not be tentatively putting forward certain suggestions and ideas. That is not to be his attitude at all. He is a man, who is there to ‘declare’ certain things; he is a man under commission and under authority. He is an ambassador, and he should be aware of his authority. He should always know that he comes to the congregation as a sent messenger.¹

Elders will undergo criticism and coercion, both from without and within the church. Is this not what Moses, David and the Apostles experienced? Elders today are too short–tenured in churches and fail to guide churches through long–lasting change. This trend must be broken.

One further warning must be issued about the courage God’s shepherds are to possess: it is easy to become courageous about the wrong things. Our courage must be applied to the one message in all the world that matters and to no other issue. Spurgeon entreats, “Remembering then, dear brethren, that we must be in earnest, and that we cannot counterfeit earnestness, or find a substitute for it, and that it is very easy for us to lose it, let us consider for a while the ways and means for retaining all our fervor and gaining more. If it is to continue, *our earnestness must be kindles at an immortal flame*, and I know of but one—the flame of the love of Christ, which many waters cannot quench.”²

(15 min)

4. Pursue the hurt and straying

4.1. The Father’s heart is for the weak and distant

Luke 15:20 ²⁰ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

- ❖ Discuss insights from Witmer’s *The Shepherd Leader* that instruct or aid elders in pursuing sheep in need of care.

¹D. Martyn Lloyd–Jones, *Preaching and Preachers: 40th Anniversary Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 97.

²Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students: Complete and Unabridged* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1954), 313. Logos.

4.2. Compassion is required

“Every shepherd leader is first and always a sheep who relates to God as ‘my Shepherd.’”³ – Timothy Laniak

1 Thes. 5:14 ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

4.3. Individual sin affects the whole body

1 Cor 5:6–7 “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.”

1 Cor 12:27 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

(10 min)

- ❖ In his article, “Sexual Sin is a Corporate Affair,” Harry Schaumburg helpfully applies this principle of individual sin affecting the whole body to sexual sin. As it relates to the role of an elder, what most stood out to you from this article?

(5 min)

4.4. A tool to help elders pursue the hurt and straying: Internal Care List (Kept among the elders)

“In an effort to provide the best care for the congregation, the elders identify members who need particular care. The various categories of care include those living in unrepentant sin and those in some type of circumstantial, financial, or physical trial. The elders use this list to discuss how to best care for these members and then to pray for each of them.”⁴

(10 min)

4.5. A tool to help elders lead the congregation to pursue the hurt and straying: Public Care List

³Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 20 (Downers Grove, IL: Apollos: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 248.

⁴Matt Schmucker and Nick Roark, “The Contents and Purposes of the ‘Elder Packet,’” *9Marks Journal*. Lay Elders: A User’s Guide Part 2 (January–February 2013): 33–36.

- ❖ From Matt Schmucker’s article, “Cleaning Up the Rolls (Part 2): The Care List,” what benefits are there of practicing a care list? What challenges do you anticipate in this practice?

5. Discipline the rebellious

5.1. Discuss “Why Crosspoint’s Congregation Should Practice Corrective Church Discipline” article

- ❖ What was your reaction to this article?

5.2. Read Crosspoint Church Discipline Policy on the following pages.

- ❖ What is at stake if elders handle discipline in a haphazard manner?

5.3. Crosspoint Church Discipline Policy

CROSSPOINT CHURCH DISCIPLINE POLICY⁵

We must love each other with a biblical love – a love that discerns, desires, and does what is best for another person, according to Scripture. We have to value each other’s holiness more highly than we value our own comfort. Even more importantly, we must value the approval of our Lord more highly than we value each other’s approval. Otherwise, we will be unwilling to do the right thing when we fear that it might upset someone.

- Biblical Church Discipline Manual

God’s desire for His children here on earth is purity of life. It is impossible to study Scripture attentively and not be overwhelmingly convinced that God seeks above all else for His people to be holy and that He is grieved by sin of any kind. Directly quoting God’s command to His Old Covenant people Israel, Peter wrote the same command to Christ’s church: ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’ Because God is so concerned for the holiness of His people, they should be equally concerned. The church cannot teach and preach a message it does not live, and have any integrity before God, or even before the world.

- The MacArthur New Testament Commentary

⁵Adapted from North Wake Church Discipline Policy, Wake Forest, NC. Used with permission.

Pursuing someone in sin is the most loving thing that can be done for that individual, the body of Christ, and the name of Christ.

- Shepherding the Church Family

Church discipline at Crosspoint is founded upon the holiness and the love of our glorious God, the Lordship of Jesus Christ who is the head of the church, and an understanding of the church as the Body of Christ. (Eph. 4–5; Col. 1.9–29)

Discipline is a courageous and compassionate act of love, desiring only good for the person caught in sin. Its aim is rescue, restoration, and reconciliation. Just as discipline is a mark of a healthy family, church discipline is a mark of a healthy church. The context and prerequisite for church discipline is authentic Christian community. (Prov. 3.11–12; 1 Cor. 5.5, 11.32; 1 Tim. 1.20; Heb 12.5–11; Rev. 3.19)

The primary teaching and hopeful desire of the elders at Crosspoint is for believers to develop self-discipline, so that they may be lead godly lives characterized by obedient faith. We believe that love for God, the first and greatest command by our Lord Jesus Christ, is manifested primarily through diligent obedience to the Word of God and love for other believers. (Rom. 12.1–2; 2Cor. 7.1; Col. 3.5–10; 1 Thess. 4.3–8; Heb 3.12–15, 12.14–17; 1 Pet. 1.13–16; 2 Pet. 1.3–11; Rev. 3.14)

Church discipline has 3 purposes: 1) To glorify and honor God through obedience to His Word. 2) To protect and maintain the purity of the local church by pursuing individual and corporate holiness. 3) To rescue and restore believers overtaken by sin.

We believe that church discipline should be exercised in every case of substantiated, habitual, willful, unrepentant sin when the erring party is not willing to make any attempt to resolve the matter. Though not an exhaustive list, the following sins are addressed by the New Testament church: divisiveness (2Thess. 3.11; Titus 3.10–11; Rom. 16.17–20), irresponsible and undisciplined living (1 Thess 5.14; 2 Thess. 3.6–15), sexual immorality (1Cor 5.1–13), doctrinal heresy (1 Tim 6.3–5; 2 Tim 2.16–18; 2 John 1.10–11; Rev. 2.14–16).

The actions and heart attitude of the church, particularly the elders, are to be characterized by humility, compassion, mercy, gentleness, and fairness (Gal. 6.1–2; James 5.19–20; 2 Thess. 3.15; 1 Cor. 5.2; 2 Cor. 2.4–8; Micah 6.8). Elders and deacons are held to an even higher standard of accountability (I Tim. 3.1–7, 5.17–22; James 3.1).

We believe that church discipline is applicable to all members and believers who fellowship with us. Withdrawal of membership or fellowship does not necessarily negate the process of church discipline, particularly where it appears that a person has done so to avoid church discipline. Such requests may not be honored until the disciplinary process has been concluded. If a believer fails to discipline himself and demonstrates no evidence of repentance, the Scriptures clearly indicate that loving confrontation is the responsibility of the church. Church discipline is a biblical process that is to be handled

prayerfully, carefully, and justly and only after several individual attempts at correction have been attempted and have failed.

The basic stages of church discipline, according to Matthew 18.15–20, are as follows.

FIRST: If a Christian fails to discipline himself and is trapped in unrepentant sin, Christ commands (“Go and show him his fault, just between the two of you”) the individual who is aware of the matter to go to him in private to lovingly confront, counsel, and encourage him to repent.

SECOND: If he will not listen to the one person, especially after several attempts, and there is no evidence of repentance, “take one or two others along with you” to further address the matter and to continue to encourage him to repent. The intent of others being involved is to guarantee clear communication and to enlist others for prayer and discernment.

THIRD: If these personal and informal steps do not elicit repentance, Jesus says we should “tell it to the church”. Tell it to the church necessarily involves bringing the elders into the process and requesting their direct assistance in resolving the problem, if they were not involved in the previous steps. In some cases, one or more elders may repeat the previous steps and try to persuade the offender to repent. The elders, after confirming the information, a proper process, and continued refusal to repent may then inform the church when it is assembled.

The elders will send a letter by registered mail warning the individual that the third or fourth step of church discipline will be taken if they have not received significant evidence of repentance by a specific date.

“Telling it to the church” means that the congregation will be informed about the general nature of the sin, given a general description of the process that has taken place, and about the refusal to repent. They will be asked to pray for and plead with the offender to repent and to pursue the person for the purpose of restoration.

Personal visits, telephone calls, and letters are examples of what it means to “pursue” them. The church is to keep on loving them and seeking their restoration.

FOURTH: If the offender refuses to submit to the caring admonition of the church and continues to harden his heart, then Jesus says we are to “treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector”. This means that the person is publicly dismissed from the church with the hope of future repentance and reconciliation. In addition, this means that the person will be denied Christian fellowship, treated as an unbeliever, and delivered over to Satan in the hope that his soul will be saved (Romans 16.17; 2 Thess. 1.20, 3.6,14; 1Cor. 5.1–5; 1Tim 6.3–5; Titus 3.10).

If at any point during this process, the offender demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect will also be made publicly so that the church may rejoice and gently and judiciously restore the repentant believer to the fellowship of the church.

We accept these stages as principles prescribed by our Lord and our Scriptures. The elders of the church, after prayer and consultation with one another and the Holy Scriptures, may eliminate, compress, contract, or combine into one any of these stages. Elders are commanded to protect the flock and some forms of sinful conduct deemed harmful to the flock may require immediate action (Acts 20.28–31; Titus 3.10; 1 Cor. 5.1–5).

5.4. Congregational misconceptions of church discipline

Many Christians have a negative perception of church discipline because their only exposure to it is from such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. In his book, *The Church*, Dever clarifies that the scarlet "A" on Hester Prynne's clothes, America's most popular example of church discipline, "was a product of novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne's historical imagination and not an accurate record of either a historical event or of the general practice of church discipline in colonial New England" (122). Citing Greg Will's historical research on church discipline, Dever reminds churches and church leaders that, "Baptists, being committed to regenerate membership in the visible church, were vigorous practitioners of church discipline" (123) yet were growing in excess of the population growth trend.

When the leaders of the Reformation began to recover a more biblical understanding of preaching and administering the sacraments as the two marks of a true church, the recovery of church discipline as a consequent mark followed. Implied in the right administration of the sacraments was the correct practice of church discipline. After all, if marking out the church from the world is one function of the sacraments, then discipline becomes the mechanism for enforcing that mandate. The right discipline of the church became so significant that it began to be presented as a third mark of a true church.⁶ –Mark Dever

5.5. Nonattending Church Members – Read and discuss “Those Toxic Nonattenders” Article by Matt Schmucker

- ❖ What is Schmucker's argument to support his title that non-attenders are “toxic?”

⁶ Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2012), 121–22.

- ❖ What current realities and challenges do you see Crosspoint facing regarding non-attending members?

5.6. Unrepentant Church Members

- 5.6.1. God calls the elders to lead the congregation in lovingly confronting and restoring fellow church members caught in a sin.

Gal 6:1–5

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ² Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.”

5.7. Elders should have a great heart of motherly love

1 Thess 2:7–8: “But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. ⁸ So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”

“Men who hold the office of the ministry should have the heart of a mother toward the church. Unless your heart toward the sheep is like that of a mother toward her children—a mother who walks through fire to save her children—you will not be fit to be a preacher. Labor, work, unthankfulness, hatred, envy and all kinds of sufferings will meet you in this office. If, then, the mother heart, the great love, is not there to drive the preachers, the sheep will be poorly served.”⁷ –Martin Luther

(5 min)

⁷Quoted in R. Albert Mohler, Donald S. Whitney, and Dan Dumas, *The Call to Ministry* (Louisville: SBTS Press, 2013), 91.

Hebrews 13:17 says, “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

- ❖ According to this passage, what responsibilities do church members have?

- ❖ What responsibilities do elders have? On what basis?

Session 5: The Elder's Work, Part 2: Feed

Session Goals:

1. Student will evaluate the elder's responsibility to feed the church through class reading, discussion, and written exercises (Objective 4).
2. Student will explain specific strategies the Crosspoint Church elders employ to shepherd the church with God's Word (Objective 6).

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read *The Shepherd Leader* ch. 6
2. Read 2 Timothy, Ephesians 4
3. Read "Elders—The Church's Lead Disciple-Makers" by Jeramie Rinne

(5 minutes)

❖ Read | Meditate | Pray

Read aloud the following passage and give students one minute to meditate on the passage. Then, lead the students to pray through the passage together.

Colossians 1:28

"Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ."

(5 min)

- ❖ Think about men who've taught you the most. What was it about these men that made them such good teachers?

- ❖ From Chapter 1 of *The Deliberate Church*, What "Four P's" should a pastor be armed with?

(10 min)

Crosspoint's Mission: We exist to make disciples of all people for God's glory.

Crosspoint Core Value #1: Scripture Reveals Truth

1. Elders feed the flock through the public ministry of the Word (macro-feeding)

2 Tim 4:1-2 "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."

❖ What are some examples of the public ministry of the Word?

1.1. **Expository preaching:** "Preaching that takes the main point of a text of Scripture, makes that the main point of the sermon, and applies it to life today. Expository preaching is preaching that *exposes* the meaning of Scripture and brings it to bear on our lives." Bobby Jamieson, *Hearing God's Word*, 15.

❖ Witmer lists a number of benefits of expository preaching on pp. 142-146. Which of these do you find most compelling or important?

1.2. Word-saturated worship services

1.2.1. Sing the Word

1.2.2. Read the Word

1.2.3. Pray the Word

❖ Read aloud the following quote from D. A. Carson.

Leaders: Prepare Your Public Prayers Helpful Counsel from D. A. Carson

If you are in any form of spiritual leadership, work at your public prayers. It does not matter whether the form of spiritual leadership you exercise is the teaching of a Sunday school class, pastoral ministry, small-group evangelism, or anything else: if at any point you pray in public as a leader, then work at your public prayers.

Some people think this advice distinctly corrupt. It smells too much of public relations, of concern for public image. After all, whether we are praying in private or in public, we are praying to God: Surely he is the one we should be thinking about, no one else.

This objection misses the point. Certainly if we must choose between trying to please God in prayer, and trying to please our fellow creatures, we must unhesitatingly opt for

the former. But that is not the issue. It is not a question of pleasing our human hearers, but of instructing them and edifying them.

The ultimate sanction for this approach is none less than Jesus himself. At the tomb of Lazarus, after the stone has been removed, Jesus looks to heaven and prays, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me” (John 11:41–42). Here, then, is a prayer of Jesus himself that is shaped in part by his awareness of what his human hearers need to hear.

The point is that although public prayer is addressed to God, it is addressed to God while others are overhearing it. Of course, if the one who is praying is more concerned to impress these human hearers than to pray to God, then rank hypocrisy takes over. That is why Jesus so roundly condemns much of the public praying of his day and insists on the primacy of private prayer (Matt. 6:5–8). But that does not mean there is no place at all for public prayer. Rather, it means that public prayer ought to be the overflow of one’s private praying. And then, judging by the example of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus, there is ample reason to reflect on just what my prayer, rightly directed to God, is saying to the people who hear me.

In brief, public praying is a pedagogical opportunity. It provides the one who is praying with an opportunity to instruct or encourage or edify all who hear the prayer. In liturgical churches, many of the prayers are well–crafted, but to some ears they lack spontaneity. In nonliturgical churches, many of the prayers are so predictable that they are scarcely any more spontaneous than written prayers, and most of them are not nearly as well–crafted. The answer to both situations is to provide more prayers that are carefully and freshly prepared. That does not necessarily mean writing them out verbatim (though that can be a good thing to do). At the least, it means thinking through in advance and in some detail just where the prayer is going, preparing, perhaps, some notes, and memorizing them.

Public praying is a responsibility as well as a privilege. In the last century the great English preacher Charles Spurgeon did not mind sharing his pulpit: others sometimes preached in his home church even when he was present. But when he came to the “pastoral prayer,” if he was present, he reserved that part of the service for himself. This decision did not arise out of any priestly conviction that his prayers were more efficacious than those of others. Rather, it arose from his love for his people, his high view of prayer, his conviction that public praying should not only intercede with God but also instruct and edify and encourage the saints.

Many facets of Christian discipleship, not least prayer, are rather more effectively passed on by modeling than by formal teaching. Good praying is more easily caught than taught. If it is right to say that we should choose models from whom we can learn, then the obverse truth is that we ourselves become responsible to become models for others. So whether you are leading a service or family prayers, whether you are praying in a small–group Bible study or at a convention, work at your public prayers.¹

¹D. A. Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 34–35.

❖ Why do some react against preparing a public prayer?

❖ What are the benefits of preparing for a public prayer?

(10 min)

1.3. How does Scripture inform the elements in Crosspoint’s worship gathering?

“Everything that happens up front in a corporate worship service gathering is part of the teaching ministry of the church.” Dever, *The Deliberate Church*, 90.

❖ From chapters 6 and 7 of *The Deliberate Church*, how does Dever define the regulative principle?

❖ What are some elements you have seen in a worship service not prescribed nor forbidden in Scripture?

❖ What might motivate church leaders to include elements not prescribed in Scripture in Worship?

(5 min)

❖ Survey this article from Jonathan Leeman, observing the differences between the Regulative Principle and the Normative Principle.

Regulative Like Jazz

By Jonathan Leeman

Instinctually, I have never been crazy about the *regulative principle*. Somehow it feels overly prescriptive.

The principle teaches that everything a church includes in Sunday’s order of service must have scriptural warrant. That warrant, says Ligon Duncan, “can come in the form of explicit directives, implicit requirements, the general principles of Scripture, positive commands, examples, and things derived from good and necessary consequence” (*Give Praise to God*, 23). But the point is, churches shouldn’t do it if the Bible doesn’t say to do it.

A looser approach, and one that appeals to many evangelicals, is found in the *normative principle*. The normative principle certainly affirms that churches must do what Scripture enjoins—like preaching, praying, and singing. But it also makes space in the order of service for practices not forbidden in Scripture—whether that’s illustrating the sermon with a skit, finger painting your response to a Bible reading, or swinging an incense censer.

Now, I’m not looking to swing a censer or paint a picture, but the non-conformist in me wants to lean normative. I admit. But the Bible-conformist in me believes we should keep to the regulative principle. In fact, the fact that it is more restrictive for the church means it offers more freedom to the Christian. May I try to persuade you, too?

THE KEY IS WARRANT

The key is the word *warrant*. The regulative principle does not only require churches to heed biblical commands in their gatherings, it requires them to *only* heed biblical commands. Which is to say, churches must only do what they have been authorized or licensed to do. Any and all corporate activity must have a *warrant*...²

(10 min)

1.4. The aim of corporate worship: Man or God?

Crosspoint’s Core Value #2: Worship Exalts God

1 Pet 2:4–5, 9

“As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

“Throughout the Bible, acceptable worship means approaching or engaging with God on the terms that he proposes and in the manner that he makes possible.”³ – David Peterson

² Jonathan Leeman, “Regulative Like Jazz,” *9Marks Journal*, (July–August 2013), 39.

³ David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1993), 283.

- ❖ What was your reaction to chapter 12, “Music,” in *The Deliberate Church*?

(5 min)

1.5. Teaching

Matt 28:20 “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Acts 20:18–20 “And when they came to him, he said to them: ‘You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia,¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you *in public* and *from house to house*,²¹ testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.’”

Teaching occurs at Crosspoint through Discipleship Seminars, trainings, Restore Conference, and other special events.

2. Elders feed the flock through the personal ministry of the Word (micro-feeding)

Crosspoint Core Value #3: Fellowship Encourages Growth

- ❖ What are some examples of the personal ministry of the Word?

(15 min)

Discuss the article, “Elders—The Church’s Lead Disciple-Makers.”

- ❖ How can Crosspoint’s elders guard this value to be disciple-makers?

Biblical counseling is one example of this “micro-feeding” or the personal ministry of the Word. Just as the preacher minister’s God’s Word and grace to a crowd, so the biblical counselor ministers God’s Word and his grace to an individual. Just as the preacher is convinced the gospel is the root of change, so the biblical counselor believes the gospel is the root of change.

MANDATORY REPORTER – An elder or pastor is considered by SC Law to be a “mandatory reporter.” If in any counseling (or any other situation) one becomes aware of child abuse or receives information that a child has been or may be being

abused or neglected, he is required by law to inform the legal authorities immediately.

WHEN COUNSELING NON-CHURCH MEMBERS – On occasion, non-members will seek counseling from elders from the church. Since these persons do not fall under the church covenant and informed consent of the church’s constitution, they must complete a release form prior to receiving counsel.

(15 min)

3. Elders feed the flock through training and sending leaders:

Crosspoint Core Value #4: Sending Advances the Gospel

2 Timothy 2:2 “You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

3.1. The true mandate of 2 Timothy 2:2

Scripture has a word for the training of men in the church to grow in the grace of Christ Jesus to increasingly reflect the qualifications of an elder. That word is discipleship. As the mission of the church, the work of disciple-making is to be the driving effort of every elder in every church (Matt 28:18–20). Apart from the slow growth in godliness that occurs over time through the ministry of the church, there is no training plan for developing elders.

3.2. Recognize Elder-Like Men

Paul eagerly desired to see Timothy (1:4) and encouraged him to finish up some responsibilities in Ephesus that his “child in the faith” (1:2, 2:1) may come and encourage him (4:9, 21). Before leaving Ephesus to visit Paul, Paul’s greatest concern for Timothy was to see that the church continued in faithfulness to the gospel. To ensure faithfulness to the gospel, Paul urged Timothy to ensure that men of character are trained and entrusted to continue to teach the same gospel in the face of adversity and persecution (2:2).

Paul instructs Timothy to “entrust to faithful men” (2 Tim 2:2) the things that he learned from Paul. In contrast to the men in Ephesus who were devoted to myths, Paul emphasized looking for “faithful men” (*pistoi*). He was concerned that these men would faithfully represent the Lord in their character and in their teaching. In other words, Timothy was to recognize and train elders in Ephesus. Mounce observes that Paul’s choice of the term “faithful,” “is a one-word summary of the condition for overseers and deacons in 1 Tim 3.”⁴ George Knight agrees, adding that, “it is certain that they are the same group of whom Paul wrote in 1 Timothy, the presbyters who

⁴ William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 506.

‘work hard in word and teaching’ (5:17), and also in Titus, the presbyters/overseers who are ‘holding fast the faithful word that is in accordance with the teaching’ so that they are ‘able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict’ (1:9).”⁵ Timothy was to recognize elder–like men that could be entrusted with the stewardship of the gospel in the church.

3.3. Train Elder–Like Men

Those who are faithful must be trained for effective and lasting shepherding in the church. Paul’s charge in verse 2 is to “entrust” to elders the stewardship of the gospel and the leadership of the church. This is the totality of that which Paul had taught and entrusted to Timothy over the years. Written in the aorist tense, “entrust” is an imperative that reveals the need to train and transfer responsibility for the truth to more leaders. Alexander Strauch states, “A good eldership will be praying and looking for capable men to join them and will be conscientiously training and preparing men for future leadership. What Paul told Timothy applies to the eldership.”⁶ George Knight adds, “Plummer is correct in suggesting that this brief reference to men being taught so that they can teach others gives evidence of ‘the earliest traces of a theological school.’”⁷ Elder–like men of faithful, godly character are to be trained for their stewardship of the gospel and the church.

3.4. Send Elder–Like Men

As elder–like men are recognized and trained with the stewardship of the body of the Apostolic teaching, they are to be sent to continue making disciples and shepherd the church. Paul wrote, “entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2:2). Though application of this verse is not limited to training and sending elders, it is yet another evidence that Paul is primarily referring to the office of elder in the church. Mounce observes, “Paul is thinking of male elders, who were repeatedly required to be able to teach and who had to be able ‘to exhort with healthy doctrine and to rebuke those who oppose [it]’ (Titus 1:9).”⁸ This is indeed the pattern modeled by the Lord Jesus, who, after training those he called, sent them to preach and disciple others (Matt 10:16, 28:19; Mark 3:14; Luke 24:49; John 20:21). In his *Training of the Twelve*, A. B. Bruce writes, “‘Follow Me,’ said Jesus to the fishermen of Bethsaida, ‘and I will make you fishers of men.’ These words. . . show that the great Founder of

⁵George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 162.

⁶Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), 278.

⁷Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 392.

⁸Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

the faith desired not only to have disciples, but to have about Him men whom He might train to make disciples of others.”⁹

With many responsibilities and busy schedules, intentional training of future elders will not occur by happenstance. Elders must deliberately plan to train and shepherd future elders. Kenneth Gangel points out, “The key to reproducing leadership is to clearly plan for it.”¹⁰ Just as Paul recognized, trained, and sent Timothy, so was Timothy to train faithful men, so that when the Lord called him to leave, there would remain in Ephesus trained men ready to guard the flock and train other faithful men. Indeed, elders must be determined to train other faithful men for shepherding and leadership in the church. In his book *Elders in Congregational Life*, Phil Newton urges elders to, “Nurture, therefore, the spiritual development of men that show promise for future service as elders.”¹¹ Unless elders intentionally plan for the future leadership of the church beyond the current generation, the church will fade away with the existing leadership. 2 Timothy 2:2 demonstrates the responsibility churches have to train elder-like men for future leadership. The life and the future of the church depend on it.

3.5. Seven Elements of Effective Shepherding Ministry

- ❖ According to Timothy Witmer, what are seven elements of an effective shepherding ministry?

(15 min)

4. Elders feed the flock through the proper administration of the ordinances.

Christ instituted two ordinances by example and command that would serve as visible signs of his special presence and relationship with the church.

The faithful practice of the ordinances of Christ in the church portrays the gospel – the death & resurrection of Christ – and serves as a testimony of the church’s new life in Christ and future hope in Christ.

⁹A. B. Bruce, *Training of the Twelve: Principles for Christian Leadership*, eBook (Chandler, AZ: Brighton Publishing, LLC, n.d.).

¹⁰Kenneth O. Gangel, *Feeding and Leading* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 313.

¹¹Phil Newton, *Elders in Congregational Life: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 137.

4.1. Elders feed the flock through the proper administration of Baptism

How is a new believer's regeneration to be communicated to church?

A believer's public entrance/initiation into the church is baptism (Acts 2:41–47).

4.1.1. **Baptism Defined** – The ordinance of Christ that serves as the initiation of a believer into the church by immersion into water.

“Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life. It is prerequisite to church membership.” (Crosspoint Church Statement of Faith, G.1)

4.1.2. **Baptism...**

- Symbolizes cleansing from sin by work of Christ (Acts 22:16)
- Symbolizes the gospel – union with Christ by faith (Rom 6:3–5; Col 2:12)
 - His death – substitute receiving God's just judgment against our sin
 - His resurrection – new life in Christ
- Symbolizes the beginning of one's Christian life & identification with the church (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 2:38, 41)

4.1.3. **Baptism Practiced**

4.1.4. **Who is to be baptized?**

Only those who have repented and believed in the Lord Jesus for salvation are to be baptized.

4.1.4.1. Jesus only commands to baptize those who repent & believe (Matt 28:18–20; John 4:1–2).

4.1.4.2. The only recorded subjects of baptism in the book of Acts are individuals who have repented & believed and no children are ever recorded as being baptized (Acts 2:37–41; 8:12–13, 36–38; 9:18; 10:47–48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5).

4.1.4.3. The New Testament maintains twin assumptions that those who have believed have been baptized & those who have been baptized believe (Rom 6:1–5; Gal 3:26–27; Col 2:11–12).

4.1.4.4. The Apostle Peter associates baptism with salvation, not as a cause of salvation but as a contemporaneous occurrence (Acts 2:38; 8:1–2; 8:36–39; 9:17–18; 10:47–48; 1 Pet 3:21).¹²

¹²Brian Payne, "God's Eschatological People—The Doctrine of the Church: Redemption Signaled and Extended." (Handout received in Ecclesiology in the Local Church 80472. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. July 19, 2013), 26.

4.1.5. By what mode is baptism to be administered (i.e. sprinkle, pour, immerse)?

In the Bible, baptism is “immersion into water.”

4.1.6. Word meaning (lexical)

4.1.6.1. Baptism/baptize is transliterated from the Greek word – *baptezain* and *baptize* which mean to “immerse” or “plunge.” Very few scholars dispute this.

4.1.6.2. The natural, straight-forward reading of the word means “to immerse.”

4.1.6.3. The Eastern Orthodox Church (Greek-speaking) have always understood *baptizo* to mean *to immerse* and continue to practice baptism as immersion.

4.1.7. Theological meaning

4.1.7.1. No other mode of baptism better displays the death, burial & resurrection of Christ as immersion.

4.1.7.2. The only mode of baptism described in the New Testament is immersion. [“came up out of the water” (Mark 1:10); “went down into the water...came up out of the water” (Acts 8:38–39)].

4.1.8. Summary

Properly stated, it’s not “baptism by immersion” but “baptism, *which is* immersion.”

We don’t practice immersion because we are Baptists but because it is biblical.

4.1.9. Common questions

4.1.9.1. “Who can baptize?” Those recognized by the church, which typically is the elders.

4.1.9.2. “Can children be baptized?” Although Scripture records no children being baptized, baptism is to be administered to someone when the church can affirm a credible profession of faith. (see 4.1.12)

4.1.10. Second London Confession of Faith (1689) on baptism:

4.1.10.1. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be to the person who is baptized – a sign of his fellowship with Christ in His death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into Christ; of remission of sins; and of that person's giving up of himself to God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.

- 4.1.10.2. Those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects for this ordinance.
- 4.1.10.3. The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, in which the person is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- 4.1.10.4. Immersion – the dipping of the person in water – is necessary for the due administration of this ordinance.

4.1.11. **Caution: Don't add to or reduce Scripture's teaching on baptism**

In the thief on the cross, we have at least one example in Scripture where a person seems to be saved apart from baptism. In *Believer's Baptism*, Ardel Caneday warns against dumping the biblical pattern of baptism and conversion because of the exception of the thief on the cross. We should continue to teach and practice baptism based on the overwhelming pattern of Scripture, while being okay that Scripture gives a rare exception of salvation apart from baptism. Stein insightfully adds, "to establish an understanding of the normal conversion pattern based on extremely rare or unusual experiences is to emphasize the abnormal."¹³

In view of what Scripture says about baptism, it is easy to see how many within the Stone–Campbell Restoration Movement (Christian Church and Disciples of Christ traditions) misinterpreted Alexander Campbell and went too far by affirming baptismal regeneration. Further, many evangelicals overcompensated to Restoration Movement mis–teachings and reduced baptism to a mere symbolic act of obedience that is non–essential. There is Scriptural tension that we must be willing to accept as to the meaning of baptism.

"One cannot choose to repent and not be baptized or *vice versa* and receive the forgiveness of sins. They are inseparable. . . . water–baptism. . . . is understood as an essential part of becoming a Christian."¹⁴

"Baptism is an indispensable aspect of conversion along with at least four other elements: repentance, faith, confession, and regeneration."¹⁵

4.1.12. The challenge of discerning credible professions of faith among children.

¹³Ardel Caneday, "Baptism in the Stone–Campbell Restoration Movement," in *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, ed. Thomas R Schreiner and Shawn D Wright (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006), 317.

¹⁴Robert Stein, "Baptism in Luke–Acts," in *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, ed. Thomas R Schreiner and Shawn D Wright (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006), 50, 63.

¹⁵Caneday, "Baptism in the Stone–Campbell Restoration Movement," 313.

There are many difficult questions church leaders must answer in the proper application of baptism in the church. Dever's chapter in *Believer's Baptism*, "Baptism in the Context of the Local Church," deals with important practical applications of the ordinance of baptism. One issue Dever spends a great deal of time on is whether baptism should ever be delayed. This is of importance for Baptist churches because, before one is baptized, the church must be able to affirm that the person is, "a publicly demonstrable believer."¹⁶ Yet, as this startling statistic demonstrates, contemporary Baptist churches are often not seeking public demonstration of regeneration: "between 1977 and 1997 there was a 250 percent increase in the number of baptisms in Southern Baptist churches of children under the age of six."¹⁷ It is extraordinarily difficult to identify in a five year old public demonstration of regeneration. Every church and pastor must find the balance on this delicate issue of when to delay baptism after a profession of faith in Jesus – particularly for children. We must carefully shepherd children and parents so we do not give false assurance of salvation by baptizing an unregenerate child or discourage a regenerate child wanting to obey Jesus.

(15 min)

Crosspoint practices training opportunities around several key milestones for parents and children.

Milestone #1: Prior a parent–child dedication, parents are required to attend a "Parenting Foundations Seminar."

Milestone #2: Prior to a child being baptized, parents are required to attend the "Baptism and Children Seminar."

- ❖ Survey the following "Crosspoint Church Pathway to Baptism for Children"

¹⁶Mark Dever, "Baptism in the Context of the Local Church," in *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, ed. Thomas R Schreiner and Shawn D Wright (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006), 344.

¹⁷Ibid., 346–47.

Crosspoint Church

Pathway to Baptism for Children

Why is such a pathway needed?

With the continuous growth within our membership of families and the increasing fulfillment by parents of their God-given responsibilities to be the primary disciple-makers within the home, Crosspoint parents have expressed interest in baptism of children who have repented of sin and turned to Christ in faith as Lord and Savior. Previously, there has been no clear pathway or communication to parents as to the appropriate age or evidence of repentance needed for Elders to affirm baptism of believing children. Additionally, it is sometimes difficult to discern a credible profession of faith in the life of a child who is under the authority of believing parents. The Elders are convinced that the haphazard administration of believer's baptism to young children has been one of the greatest challenges to Baptist churches in the 20th century, causing more confusion and spiritual damage than the practice of paedobaptism among the reformed tradition. However, the fact remained: without a clear pathway to baptism for children, parents were left feeling inadequate in shepherding children who are professing faith and they are left with several questions including:

1. At what age do the Elders affirm the baptism of a child?
2. What does the Bible state is the appropriate age for baptism of a child?
3. Why does a child need to wait for baptism when the examples of Scripture are of those repenting and believing being immediately baptized?
4. What evidences of repentance and faith are required for baptism of a child?
5. What steps do parents and the believing child need to take for baptism at Crosspoint Church?
6. What should a parent do when a child is not ready for baptism but professes repentance and belief?

We are a church passionate about proclaiming the gospel, and this passion should rightfully be modeled and seen first in the families of our membership. As such, we should expect and long for with great confidence that God will indeed call unto Himself children at a young age to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. When children, entrusted to us by the Lord, repent and believe, it is necessary that we provide a clear pathway to baptism as a means of equipping parents for shepherding their children well and as an encouragement and affirmation to children of God's work in their lives in calling them to Himself.

Introduction

Crosspoint Elders expect with confidence that God will awaken a believing faith in the hearts of our children as parents faithfully raise their children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord consistently calling children to repent of sin and believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. In order to assist parents as the primary disciple-makers of their children, the Elders have created the following "Pathway to Baptism" for children. These

guidelines and tools are designed to assist parents in discerning the readiness of a child for baptism.

How do I know if my child is ready for baptism?

Following the pattern for baptism in the New Testament, baptism should occur immediately after conversion when there is a credible profession of faith accompanied with discernable signs of regeneration. The fruit of a changed heart becomes evident over time, so the Elders recommend parents patiently continue to encourage, affirm, and talk with their child about what God is doing in their lives.

How can I discern if I should seek baptism for my child?

Parents are often the most capable of discerning the work of the Lord in a child's heart. Parents are in daily contact with the child and have the ability to see fruit of regeneration blossom in a child. The Elders encourage parents to look for specific signs of regeneration.

1. *The Work of Holy Spirit:* The Lord awakens a believing faith in the heart of a child. The Holy Spirit through the faithful discipleship of parents, and other means of grace such as reading the Bible, participating in corporate worship, participating in family worship, and through the children's ministries of Crosspoint brings about conviction and awareness of sin (2 Kings 22; Romans 7:7–9). The following questions can help to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in a child's life:
 - a. *Does your child demonstrate sorrow and remorse about his sin or disobedience?*
 - b. *Does your child recognize he has sinned against God and not just against others?*
 - c. *Does your child confess his sins to God and ask for his mercy without your prompting?*
 - d. *Does your child demonstrate commitment to Christ in the face of temptation to disobey?*
2. *Hunger and Understanding of God's Word:* The Apostle Paul states that Scripture has the ability to make one "wise for salvation" (2 Timothy 3:15). A parent can rightly expect to see from a child an interest in knowing and understanding the Word of God. The following questions can help discern a child's interest in the Word of God.
 - a. *Does your child pray and read the Scriptures on his own initiative?*
 - b. *Does your child desire to talk about the Scriptures and what they are reading?*
 - c. *Does your child demonstrate an understanding of the Scriptures when they are taught or is your child confused by the Scriptures?*
3. *Interest in Spiritual Things:* Most children have many interests as they mature intellectually and physically. The most meaningful of these interests capture and hold the attention of a child. Parents can expect that a child God has genuinely

brought to faith will have an interest in the things of God. The following questions can help discern a child's interest in the things of God.

- a. *Does your child talk with you about the things of God on their own initiative?*
- b. *Does your child express desire to participate in the ministries of the church?*
- c. *Does your child ask spiritual questions on his own initiative?*
- d. *Does your child ask to pray with you or you to pray for him?*
- e. *Does your child frame his life with a biblical worldview?*
- f. *Does your child demonstrate a genuine desire to tell others about Jesus?*

4. *Understanding of the Gospel:* When the Lord awakens a believing faith in a child he will demonstrate an understanding of the gospel and its effects on his life. While no one can expect a child to demonstrate a deep theological understanding of salvation, parents can expect to see a child begin to respond to their new life in Christ through an understanding of the gospel and how it effects their lives. The following questions can help discern if God has awakened a believing faith in a child.

- a. *Does your child understand that he is a sinner and cannot save himself?*
- b. *Does your child understand that his sins deserve eternal judgment?*
- c. *Does your child understand that Jesus died as a substitute for his sins?*
- d. *What evidence of repentance have you observed in your child?*
- e. *How does your child demonstrate his trust in Jesus?*
- f. *Is there a new pattern of the fruit of the Spirit in the child's life?*
- g. *Can your child explain how a person is saved?*

What age does Crosspoint baptize children?

Crosspoint Church recommends that parents wait until a child is eight years of age before seeking baptism. This is a recommendation from the Elders and not a strict mandate. The Bible does not indicate a specific age at which a child should be baptized, so each child will be interviewed to determine readiness for baptism on a case-by-case basis.

Why do the Elders ask that we wait until age eight?

There is nothing biblical or special about the age of eight, but over time it becomes clearer in discerning the faith of a child as he responds to his parents and the events of life. It is difficult to discern whether a child truly believes in Christ if he is obediently living under the authority of his parents. Once a child begins making choices and decisions apart from his parents, discernable evidence of salvation and trusting in Christ is clearer to his parents and the Elders. Parents are welcome to approach the Elders at any time to discuss the salvation and baptism of their child. The age of eight is a guide and each child will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Pathway to Baptism Steps:

1. **Parents Initiate with an Elder or Minister:** Parents who believe God has awakened a believing faith in their child in which he repents of his sin and believes in Jesus as his Lord and Savior, should initiate with an Elder or Minister a desire to begin the “Pathway to Baptism.”
2. **Child Meets with Family Ministry Leader:** An Elder or Minister will assign a Family Ministry Leader to meet with the child for 2 to 5 sessions walking through the “Who will be King?” children’s brochure. The purpose of these sessions is for the Family Ministry Leader to discern if the child understands the gospel and has a credible testimony of regeneration. With a favorable recommendation to the Elders and approval by the Elders, the child will be scheduled for baptism.
3. **Child Meets with an Elder or Minister Before Baptism:** Following the approval of the Elders, an Elder or Minister will meet with the child to rejoice with the child and discuss baptism. At this time a date will be determined for the child’s baptism and any other discipleship that needs to take place.
4. **Child and Membership:** Children under the age of sixteen, who are baptized by immersion, upon the vote of the church body are welcomed into a “Fellowship Membership” status with Crosspoint Church. The “Fellowship Membership” assumes that a child with the help of his parents will seek a place to serve the church, continue to be discipled by his parents, and will faithfully participate in the ministries of the church. The “Fellowship Membership” does not allow a child to vote nor receive church discipline. Parents are encouraged to continue to exercise their God-given responsibilities by disciplining their child.
5. **Child and Covenant Membership:** Following the sixteenth birthday of a child, he may request of the Elders a membership interview to pursue Covenant Membership at Crosspoint Church. Any child who does not begin the Covenant Membership process will be removed from Fellowship Membership status upon graduation from high school.

Can my child participate in communion before they are baptized?

The Elders do not encourage any person’s participation in the Lord’s Supper before baptism. Children who have not been baptized may be anxious to participate, but parents are reminded of Paul’s warning in 1 Corinthians 11:27–29 for those who participate in the Lord’s Supper. Children may not be able to examine their faith, attitudes, and actions in light of this warning. The Elders encourage parents to disciple their children in understanding the significance of the Lord’s Supper and to make waiting positive for the child in the following ways:

1. *Instead of focusing on why your child should not participate in communion focus on your anticipation of having them participate in the Lord’s Supper after baptism.*
2. *Use the quiet moments of passing the bread and juice to explain what each one represents and to remind your children of the gospel.*

3. *Speak to your children quietly about how you have seen the Lord at work in their lives.*
4. *Encourage your child to continue believing and trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord.*
5. *Talk with your children about using this time to confess and repent of sin, but help your child not to worry about faults but point them to Jesus death for our sins.*
6. *Talk with your children about the work that God has begun in their lives (Philippians 1:6).*
7. *Pray with your child during the Lord's Supper thanking Jesus for dying for your sins.*
8. *Bring your children close and let them see the bread and juice as you participate in the Lord Supper.*
9. *Remember to model participating in the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner with humility and reverence.*
10. *If any sin troubles you or exist in your life, do not participate in the Lord's Supper showing your children the seriousness. You may need to seek forgiveness from your children for impatience, anger, and laziness.*

The Gospel and Waiting: Crosspoint Church and its Elders rejoice in the work of God in saving the children entrusted to us. It is our longing that all of our children would come to faith in Christ and would actively participate in the purposes of God. We pray that God would grant that this generation of children entrusted to us would surpass previous generations in faith, in knowledge, in righteousness, in fruitfulness, in evangelistic zeal and in commitment to world evangelism.

We also recognize that sorrow over sin and an interest in spiritual things alone is not sufficient evidence of a regenerate heart or the work of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a public expression of faith in Jesus and a public declaration of following Jesus as a disciple. Baptism should never be used to give a child assurance of salvation. Our only assurance of salvation is a continuing faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

Jesus says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44). Salvation of any man is wholly the work of God. No man can save himself by works of his own doing (Ephesians 2:8,9). However, this does not mean we are not to labor in proclaiming the gospel to our children.

There is wisdom in waiting for the baptism of a child, and waiting is not passive. Parents can actively wait for baptism and encourage the faith of a child in the following ways:

1. *Pray both privately and with their children for their salvation. (1 Corinthians 3:5-7)*
2. *Talk about and explain the gospel plainly in numerous ways from various passages of Scripture so that a child understands the gospel. (Acts 2:38-39)*
3. *Teach your children God's laws and commands through out the day. (Deuteronomy 6)*

4. *Encourage and assist your children in exercising disciplines such as prayer, Bible reading, and Scripture memorization. (Psalm 119:9–11)*
5. *Establish consistent family worship times that include reading the Bible, singing, and praying together as a family that highlights Jesus.*
6. *As children experience the effects of fallen humanity frame life events and circumstances with a biblical worldview that shows our need for Jesus.*
7. *Express often your personal need of Jesus and your gratitude for His finished work on the cross. Talk about the gospel as a gift from God. (Romans 6:23)*
8. *Worship with your children and talk with them about the worship service afterwards so that you can frame worship in awe and wonder of God’s saving work through Jesus for sinners.*
9. *Teach and talk with your children about the benefits of obeying God and the effects of disobeying God by reading Proverbs together.*
10. *Correct and discipline your children within the framework of the gospel.*

(15 min)

4.2. Elders feed the flock through the proper administration of the Lord’s Supper

- 4.2.1. **The Lord’s Supper Defined:** The ordinance of Christ practiced in the gathered assembly on a regular basis that involves the the eating of bread and drinking of the cup together as a sign of Christ’s redemption of his people.
- 4.2.2. **The Lord’s Supper...**
 - 4.2.2.1. Represents ongoing spiritual growth, or sanctification (John 6:53–58)
 - 4.2.2.2. Represents unity of church (1 Cor 10:16–17)
 - 4.2.2.3. Represents union with Christ (1 Cor 10:16–17) “participation with Christ”
 - 4.2.2.4. Represents accountability within the church, both personally and corporately (1 Cor 11:28–29)
 - 4.2.2.5. Represents ultimate hope at the end of the age (Rev 19:6–9)
- 4.2.3. **The Lord’s Supper involves**
 - 4.2.3.1. Looking back – Participants remember Jesus’ body that was broken and his blood that was shed for our sins. (Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 11:24)
 - 4.2.3.2. Looking in – Participants examine themselves and repent of sin (1 Cor 11:28, see also 1 Cor 10:21)
 - 4.2.3.3. Looking around – Participants share in one bread as one body and are called to a renewal of horizontal love, resolving any hostilities within the body (1 Cor 10:16–17, 11:17–22, 28–29).

4.2.3.4. Looking forward – The church continues this celebration until the Lord returns (1 Cor 11:26) in anticipation of our future destiny in the New Jerusalem where we will eat and drink together in the wedding feast of the Lamb (Rev 19:9)

4.2.4. From Dever’s *The Deliberate Church*, what is the biblical role of the Lord’s Supper (pp 107–08)?

4.2.5. **Lord’s Supper Practiced – Consistent Communion**¹⁸

Our practice of both baptism & the Lord’s Supper says something about the gospel we believe and proclaim.

In the New Testament, there is zero evidence that any unbaptized Christians participated in Lord’s Supper.

Crosspoint’s practice of the Lord’s Supper is called, “Consistent Communion” or “Close Communion.” Consistent Communion is the practice of the Lord’s Supper whereby participants have believed on Christ, followed in obedience in baptism, and are a member in good standing in a church. Transient members of other churches are welcome.

4.2.6. **The Scriptural Pattern behind Consistent Communion**

4.2.6.1. Great Commission: ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19–20).

Verb: “Make disciples”

Three supporting participles describing making disciples:

“go,” “baptizing,” “teaching”

The Great Commission is Jesus’ “final marching orders” from which Crosspoint derives its mission statement.

Here, Jesus outlines a specific order to our ministry:

Go & Make disciples →

baptize them →

teach them to observe all I have commanded

This order of ministry is seen throughout New Testament. In Acts 2:41–47, those who believed were baptized, began to gather together under leadership of the apostles where they were devoted to the “breaking of bread,” which includes the practice of the Lord’s Supper.

¹⁸The following sections through 4.2.8 and phrase “consistent communion” adapted from Dr. Nathan Finn, “Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Gospel Consistency,” Lecture delivered at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina, on October 3, 2013.

4.2.7. To not call persons to be baptized prior to participating at the Lord's Table and treat them virtually independent of each other...

4.2.7.1. ... We would break from virtually every Christian tradition that agrees baptism is prerequisite to participate in the Lord's Supper. We stand in agreement with Presbyterians and Methodists and most other Christian traditions that baptism precedes participation in the Lord's Supper.

4.2.7.2. ... We would sever the ordinance that marks our entry into the gospel community (baptism) is severed from the ordinance that marks our ongoing growth within the gospel community (Lord's Supper). It's like preaching Sermon #2 (the Lord's Supper) without Sermon #1 (Baptism). Something is missing.

4.2.7.3. ... We would smudge the picture of the gospel painted by the ordinances.

4.2.8. Our disagreement with our Presbyterian friends is not around the relationship between baptism and the Lord's Supper, but what is baptism.

4.2.9. Common Questions

4.2.9.1. "How often should we celebrate the Lord's Supper?"

The Bible doesn't tell us how often we are to partake, but assumes that the church does practice it. The early church seemed to practice it weekly. Today, some traditions practice it weekly while others quarterly or even annually. Presently, Crosspoint partakes of the Lord's Supper between 6–8 times per year.

4.2.9.2. "Who can administer the Lord's Supper?"

The New Testament does not prescribe who is to administer or serve the Lord's Supper. Being a significant portion of a service of worship, it should be led by one recognized with authority by the church. At Crosspoint, this ordinarily will be one of the elders.

4.2.9.3. "May we celebrate the Lord's Supper in my small group or some small gathering?"

Crosspoint's elders discourage Crosspoint members from partaking of the Lord's Supper in contexts apart from the assembled body. When practiced outside of the assembled church, the idea of the Lord's Supper as portraying the unity of the body (1 Cor 10:16–17) and our accountability one to another (1 Cor 11:28–29) are not manifest. Thus, the meaning of Lord's Supper only makes sense in a corporate gathering of believers in covenant with one another.

4.2.9.4. "Why do we use grape juice and not wine?"

The biblical emphasis is not on whether the fruit of the vine is fermented or not. The element is typically referred to in the New Testament simply as, “the cup.” The biblical symbolism is not caught up on the fermentation or lack thereof, but on the Old Testament concept of the cup of God’s wrath (Ps. 75:8; Rev. 14:10). Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath (Matt 26:27, 39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 18:11), leaving us only the “cup of blessing” (1 Cor 10:16).

4.2.9.5. “Why do we use leavened bread and not unleavened like the Passover?”

The Lord’s Supper is not the Passover, but an ordinance given by Christ to his new community, the church. The concern of the New Testament emphasizes “one loaf” (1 Cor 10:17). The Lord’s Supper was instituted on the occasion of a Passover meal. The Lord’s Supper is not itself a Passover meal nor is the Lord’s Supper the Last Supper.

“To use unleavened bread in the Lord’s Supper is to commemorate the wrong thing. The purpose of unleavened bread in the Passover is to commemorate the haste with which Israel left Egypt; there was not even enough time to put yeast into the bread dough. In the Lord’s Supper we are NOT commemorating the Exodus from Egypt where unleavened bread makes sense. In the Lord’s Supper we are commemorating the sacrifice of Christ for our sins. In the Supper the bread is broken to recall Christ’s suffering and death, the breaking of His body. Other things could be said, but there is nothing in unleavening the bread of the Supper that would commemorate anything in the death of Christ that is taught in Scripture (unless we really let our imaginations run loose here – and then we are back to conjecture).” – Rev. Robert Grossman

“But the kind of bread, whether leavened or unleavened, is not specified in the command, nor is it rendered essential by the nature of the service.” A. A. Hodge

4.3. For further study on the ordinances

- 4.3.1. Schreiner, Thomas and Shawn Wright, eds. *Believers’ Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006.
- 4.3.2. Schreiner, Thomas and Matthew Crawford, eds. *The Lord’s Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ Until He Comes*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.
- 4.3.3. Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- 4.3.4. Allison, Gregg. *Historical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- 4.3.5. Dever, Mark. *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2012.

Session 6: The Elder's Work, Part 3: Lead

Session Goals:

1. Student will evaluate the elder's responsibility to lead the church through class reading, discussion, and written exercises (Objective 4).
2. Student will explain specific strategies the Crosspoint Church elders employ to lead the church to accomplish its mission (Objective 6).

Preparation for this Session:

1. Read *The Shepherd Leader* chs.7, 9–11
2. Reflection paper emailed to class by noon the day prior to class
4. Read classmates' reflection papers prior to class

(10 min)

- ❖ Read Ezekiel 34:1–10 aloud then pray together aloud.

Ezekiel 34:1–10 “The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? ³You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. ⁴The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. ⁵So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. ⁶My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

⁷“Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, ⁹therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁰Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.”

- ❖ What were Israel's shepherds failing to do?

- ❖ In some circumstances, church members will not respond to elders' pursuits to shepherd them. How might our elders pursue "sheep" who are not responsive to previous attempts to talk or meet?

- ❖ How should our elders handle inevitable occasions of desire to escape or feelings of laziness or discouragement?

(10 min)

1. Lead by example

1 Tim 4:12 "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."

The prophets contain heavy indictments against Yahweh's appointed shepherd-leaders. As Leland Ryken writes, Ezekiel 34 gives

an extended passage of satiric rebuke to selfish and unreliable leaders who have not cared for the people of Israel. From Ezekiel's judgments upon these ignominious shepherds we can deduce that their role was to preserve and care for the people (not exploit them), to strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up the crippled and bring back the stray among them, to guide them gently and keep them together (Ezek 34:2–6). Since the unworthy shepherds care more for themselves than for their charges and have plundered them rather than searched for them, God will hold them accountable, remove them from their posts and take away their livelihood (Ezek 34:8–10).¹

1.1. Following Jesus

- 1.1.1. Christ-like character
- 1.1.2. Meditating on Scripture
- 1.1.3. Prayer
- 1.1.4. Consistent pursuit of other spiritual disciplines

¹Leland Ryken, "Sheep, Shepherd," in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, ed. Jim Wilhoit and Tremper Longman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Logos.

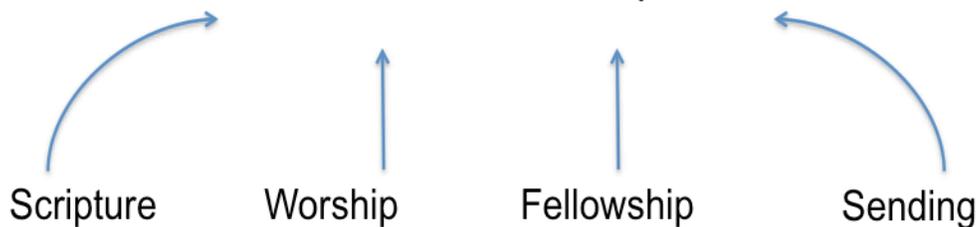
Crosspoint Church's Core Values:

- I. Scripture reveals truth.
- II. Worship exalts God.
- III. Fellowship encourages growth.
- IV. Sending advances the Gospel.

**Our mission is to make disciples of all people for God's
glory**

Our vision is to be a people transformed by the gospel, living daily on mission, and sending laborers to the nations.

**Biblical Worship – Meaningful Membership – Reproduce Groups
Equip Families – Develop Leaders – Plant Churches
Generous Stewardship**



(5 min)

Review Crosspoint's Women's Ministry Strategy below.

- ❖ Where does this fit in the elders' ministry of feeding the flock?

Crosspoint Women's Strategy

Crosspoint Church's Mission: Make disciples of all people for God's glory

Crosspoint Women's Strategy Mission: Is our church's mission: We exist to make disciples of all people for God's glory.

Crosspoint Women's Strategy Vision/Call/Slogan:

Every woman called, encouraged, and sent.

Crosspoint Women's Strategy Core Values:

1. Embracing Biblical Womanhood – Gen 1:27 – “God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

In the church and in the world, manhood & womanhood has been lost. There is widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity. We see tragic effects of this confusion in marriages, families, organizations, culture, and the church.

2. Connecting women across generations – Titus 2:3–5
3. Sharing Christ with women – who better to reach women than women?

Crosspoint Women's Strategy Internal Purpose:

Crosspoint Women's Strategy exists to promote the mission of the church by commending the beauty and truth of Biblical womanhood through connecting women across generations and mobilizing them to share Christ with women.

(10 min)

3. Lead to reach the lost

PRAY | GIVE | GO ← Crosspoint Church's Mission Strategy

3.1. Personally

2 Tim 4:5 “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

3.2. Locally

- ❖ Discuss *The Deliberate Church* Chapter 3, “Doing Responsible Evangelism.” What did you most appreciate about this chapter?

3.3. Domestically

3.3.1. Generation LINK

GENERATION LINK

LABORERS IMPACTING NATIONS FOR THE KINGDOM

Mission: Equipping the next generation of Laborers to Impact the Nations for the Kingdom

Purpose: To train and send out leaders who will impact the nations for God's glory by being intentional disciple-makers for life.

Vision:

Leadership – *Train leaders for a lifetime of ministry in the vocation to which God has called them.*

As a residency rigorously prepares medical students to be doctors, Generation LINK is an intense environment to train leaders for a lifetime of ministry in Christian vocation or the marketplace. Generation LINK staff will be empowered with significant opportunities to lead in an area of ministry while being developed in both life and leadership skills (i.e. team building, time management, communication).

Theological Training – *Equip staff with the tools and resources to think and live from an explicitly Christian worldview.*

Generation LINK is designed to equip pastors and missionaries for a lifetime of Christian vocation. Therefore, theological training is a significant value of our program. Though we recognize that not all Generation LINK staff will complete a seminary degree, we believe seminary is valuable both for vocational ministry and in the marketplace. Along with theological training, staff will be equipped in ministry skills (i.e. strategic planning, discipleship, evangelism, studying God's Word).

Intentional Discipleship – *Disciple staff to grow in Christ, help them discern God’s calling on their lives, and affirm and nurture them in their giftedness.*

One of the highlights of Generation LINK is one–on–one discipleship with a pastor, church staff member, or pastor’s wife who can recognize and affirm spiritual giftedness and also offer wise counsel as major decisions are made in this season of life (i.e. marriage partner, vocation, and walk with God). Those who sense a call to vocational ministry will have the opportunity to see what it is like to serve in the church and will benefit from a season where the church and leadership come alongside to affirm an internal call. While being invested in by an older believer, Generation LINK staff will also be expected to invest in younger believers through one–on–one discipleship to teach these disciples to grow to maturity in Christ.

Gospel Community – *Create an environment where staff will experience authentic fellowship and are equipped to reproduce it.*

Though Generation LINK staff work hard, it isn’t all work and no play! Our prayer is that Generation LINK staff will develop a vision for biblical community and learn how to experience biblical community in relation to other Generation LINK staff, church staff, and the local body of believers. While serving with Generation LINK, our staff will live together. They will also spend intentional time in fellowship with one another through monthly socials and summer and winter retreats.

Ministry Experience – *Contribute meaningfully to the leadership and ministry of a local church.*

Responding to command to share the gospel and make disciples, Generation LINK staff will come alongside the staff of a local church to contribute meaningfully to the ministries of the church and to help the pastoral staff accomplish more for the Kingdom. Generation LINK staff are expected to embrace a lifestyle of evangelism and to live intentionally where they are to reach the unchurched in their community. Generation LINK also recognizes the value of church–multiplication strategies in reaching the world with the gospel and will utilize staff to help local churches plant new churches around the world to take the gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth.

3.3.2. North American Church Planting Foundation (NACPF)

To help plant like–minded Southern Baptist churches in North America, Crosspoint is a Pillar Network member of the North American Church Planting Foundation (www.nacpf.org).

NACPF exists in order to:

- Develop and Resource church planting churches
- Provide a network of like–minded churches and kingdom–minded partners to further church planting and renewal efforts
- Provide greater financial support to existing church plants
- Establish an endowment for continued, long–term, strategic church planting

3.4. Internationally

- 3.4.1. Church Planting Partnership with Crosspoint members serving in South Asia
- 3.4.2. Medical Missions Partnership with a Crosspoint family in Honduras

3.5. Crosspoint giving to missions (present church budget and planning documents)

(10 min)

4. Lead cooperatively

4.1. First among equals

- ❖ Define “first among equals” in your own words.
- ❖ Read Witmer, pages 43–44 aloud.
- ❖ What’s wrong with calling one elder “pastor” and the other men “elders?”

4.2. Plurality of elders is a unity among diversity

- ❖ If applied, what one or two insights from chapter 21 of *The Deliberate Church* would most impact the unity of the elders?
- ❖ What are some inherent risks of plural leadership?
- ❖ What are some inherent benefits of plural leadership?

(10 min)

- ❖ From your past experience in working with groups, which of the following keys from Alexander Strauch would you weigh as areas you need to give particular attention to in order to contribute to effective elders' meetings?

16 Keys to Effective Elders' Meetings

Alexander Strauch

1. Don't underestimate the significance of your meetings.

Elders' meetings are the critical nerve center of the local church. They have a profound effect on the spiritual health of the church. Meetings refine Christian character, build group morale, provide pastoral accountability, sharpen leadership skills, ignite the power of prayer, and provide a training ground for future elders.

2. Demonstrate Christlike attitudes and conduct.

Sinful attitudes result in unpleasant meetings; Christlike attitudes result in productive, satisfying meetings. Christ's attitude of humility should permeate every meeting and shape the attitude of every participant. The new commandment of love sets the standard of conduct for meetings, and elders are to interact as fellow servants and brothers in Christ.

3. Take personal responsibility for each meeting.

When each participant takes responsibility for necessary assignments and decisions, meetings run more effectively. Specifically, this means:

- Helping the group stick to the discussion at hand
- Listening well and asking for clarification when needed
- Expressing opinions without being an "over-talker"
- Diligently helping the group reach decisions
- Graciously accepting and following through on assignments

4. Avoid manipulation.

People who manipulate demean their own character, create distrust among their colleagues, damage relationships, encourage others to manipulate, give Satan a foothold, and open themselves up to further deceit. In contrast, when elders speak the truth openly and in love, no energy is wasted on hidden agendas, politicking, or backbiting.

5. Get the facts before making judgments.

When making decisions, dealing with rumors and accusations, or resolving people problems, it is the elders' responsibility to gather all the facts. Determine to give others a fair, honest hearing. Seek by God's grace to be an objective listener and wise decision maker.

6. Practice confidentiality.

To betray a confidence can ruin an elder's reputation and discredit the entire leadership body. Private statements that are made by elders during a meeting must not be shared outside the meeting. An elder must even think carefully before sharing information with his spouse.

7. Communicate effectively.

Be proactive in your communication. Be aware of potential ways you block communication in your meetings. Speak gently, calmly, graciously, and tactfully. Provide adequate instruction when assigning jobs. Communicate your decisions to all individuals and groups affected by them. Remember that people need frequent encouragement.

8. Be concerned about people.

Spend time in your meetings talking about the needs of God's people. Inform one another about newcomers to the church and lost sheep who need to be pursued. Report on recent visits, urgent phone calls, and people who are ill. Periodically invite key leaders of the church to your meetings to exchange information and maintain accountability. Regular direction and encouragement from the elders will help motivate these leaders to persevere and improve their ministries. Returning missionaries also need private time with the elders to share special needs and to seek guidance.

9. Make prayer a priority.

Biblical elders are praying elders. Actively and consistently seek prayer requests from the congregation. Use a meeting prayer guide. Appoint a

prayer facilitator. As soon as two people arrive, begin praying. Avoid long, drawn-out prayers; pray shorter prayers. Divide into groups of two for sharing personal needs and pray together for ten minutes. Be creative, try new ideas, and continually evaluate the prayer time.

10. Focus on God's Word.

Elders need to define, clarify, and continually restate the church's foundational, nonnegotiable beliefs, doctrinal distinctives, ministry priorities, direction, spiritual values, mission, and vision. The elder council thus will need to define, plan, and continually evaluate its own teaching ministry and all major teaching-preaching services. It will also need to assess and approve all those who teach in the church, set the tone for the way Scripture and doctrine are taught, and plan for both local and global evangelism.

11. Appoint an effective facilitator.

The role of the facilitator is crucial to productive meetings. Though not the boss or sole speaker of the meeting, the facilitator takes charge of its process. Having a facilitator does not exclude other members from actively participating or exercising leadership in the meeting. Different people may even facilitate different parts of a meeting. Before jumping to a new topic of discussion, the facilitator should clearly summarize what has been decided, what needs to be done, and by whom.

12. Carefully plan and follow an agenda.

Adequate time spent in preparing an agenda, talking it over with others, thinking it through carefully, prioritizing items, and eliminating needless items guarantees a more productive meeting. Take control of the content of the agenda; ensure that topics crucial to the spiritual health of the church are not ignored. Several times a year, discuss what major topics need to be placed on future agendas. Consider making a special agenda for guiding major discussions, especially complex, hard-to-manage doctrinal discussions. Also, when key ministry leaders meet to consult with the elders, it is usually a good idea to help them prepare an agenda for their discussion.

13. Summarize accomplishments and assignments.

At the end of each meeting, summarize what has been decided and accomplished. Restate all assignments and who is responsible for them. Three questions that should always be answered are: ■ What specifically needs to be done? ■ Who is responsible for doing it? ■ When will it be completed?

14. Keep good records.

The reading of good minutes provides a regular, formal means of checking on assignments and holding each other accountable. The minutes should include the meeting date, names of persons present, key points of discussion, decisions, action items, and the names of those responsible for carrying out each assignment. In addition, a notebook should be kept detailing all major policy decisions made through the years. This notebook should be at every meeting for reference.

15. Delegate, delegate, delegate.

Avoid getting sidetracked on secondary issues and neglecting the responsibilities the New Testament specifically assigns to elders. Delegate as much as possible to others. The work of the local church is to be shared by all its members. The work of the elders is to teach, organize, and equip the people to do the work of the ministry.

16. Practice self-evaluation.

Good meetings can get better, and good leaders can become better leaders. Create an atmosphere in which self-evaluation is a welcomed, expected, and normal part of the work.

(5 min)

5. Lead through loving service

[see 1 Pet 5:1–10]

Servants

One key metaphor frequently applied to God’s appointed shepherds throughout Scripture and embodied in the person of Christ is that of a servant or slave (Luke 22:26). This metaphor holds instructive value for all Christian ministry. Jesus’ servanthood is dramatically seen in his act of washing the feet of his disciples (John 13:1–15) and is vividly expounded in his *kenosis* described by Paul in Philippians 2:6–11. Paul even used this idea to describe both his submission to Christ as his master and to Christ’s mission for him to the Gentiles (Rom 1:1; 2 Cor 5:14–21). After being made an example by Jesus in his eagerness to serve, Peter urged shepherds in this servant posture (1 Pet 5:2). Shepherding and oversight of God’s people on his behalf is a challenging and costly task. As God’s appointed shepherds, elders must view people through the lens of the gospel. This will allow them to see the sheep as God sees them and compel sacrificial service as modeled by Jesus. “The elders are to be good leaders of their congregations precisely by being good servants, so that the members of the congregation will in turn become servants to each other.”²

Elders are Humble

Another matter of crucial need in the church today is elders who are humble. When elders see their lives and calling as all by the grace of Jesus, they will recognize this calling to lead in the church is a gift from God and allows no grounds for boasting. Scripture is clear that godly leadership is a gift that derives from God and, therefore, is not something about which the leader can boast (1 Cor 1:26–31; 3:21; 4:6–7). In OT times, kings and priests were anointed before God to perform their task of leadership (Exod. 28:41; 1 Sam 15:1; 1 Kgs 1:34).

In the New Testament, leadership is portrayed as a gifting (Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28) and, therefore, should not be grounds for boasting (1 Cor 4:7).³ Apart from ordinary means of grace, a plurality of elders in vital communion with one another offers a powerful tool to aid in waging war against boasting. Elders ought to pursue redemptive relationships with one another through intentionality in their

²J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 49 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), 286.

³A. D. Clarke, “Leadership,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. Brian S. Rosner and T. Desmond Alexander (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Logos.

structured and informal time together. Paul Tripp insightfully interrogates the prideful heart of the elder by commending the gospel message as the elder's essential hope:

As I'm telling the old, old story to others, I must tell it over and over to myself. As I'm studying the ways of grace, I must apply the truths of grace to myself. As I'm preparing to preach grace to others I must pause and worship, recognizing that such grace includes me. As I welcome others to run with confession and repentance to the Savior of grace, I must do the same again and again. My sense of privilege for what I've been called to do must never degrade into the pride of thinking that I'm special or different. I need the rescue I hold out to others. This means I've been chosen to tell God's story and to represent his grace not because I'm worthy or up to the task, but because he is.⁴

(10 min)

6. Lead by overseeing

Acts 20:28 “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”

1 Tim 3:1 “The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.” [see also Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet 5:2]

6.1. Elders oversee

6.1.1. Congregation

6.1.2. Deacons

6.1.2.1. Crosspoint's deacons are not a board in opposition with the elders, but serve to support the elders by meeting physical needs in the church.

6.1.2.2. Crosspoint's deacons are task-specific to be focused on effective ministry.

6.1.3. Other church leaders and teachers

⁴Paul Tripp, “The Beauty in the Busy,” *The Gospel Coalition blog*, January 6, 2013, accessed January 7, 2013, <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/tgc/2013/01/06/the-beauty-in-the-busy/>.

6.2. Communication – among the elders, with deacons, with staff, and with the congregation

*The Leader's Most Essential Skill Is the Ability to Communicate . . . Over and Over Again. So what do leaders actually do? The answer to that question is an ever-expanding list of tasks and responsibilities, but one central duty stands out above all others—the leader communicates. Actually, the truth is even more dramatic. Leadership doesn't happen until communication happens. The leader may have the most brilliant strategy in his mind, the most breathtaking vision in his sights, and an irrepressible passion in his heart, but if these are not communicated to others, real leadership just doesn't occur.*⁵ – Albert Mohler

6.3. Stewardship

Recognize elders do not lead unto themselves, but on behalf of the Lord Jesus.

In his book, *The Conviction to Lead*, Albert Mohler describes the stewardship of a leader. Indeed, a leader is actually a steward of much more than appears on his job description. Mohler frames several categories of this stewardship in the following categories:

We are the stewards of human lives and their welfare.

We are the stewards of time and opportunity.

We are the stewards of assets and resources.

We are the stewards of energy and attention.

We are the stewards of reputation and legacy.

*We are the stewards of truth and teaching.*⁶

(5 min)

6.4. Administration

Driven by vision and Scripture, lead the church operations, organization, personnel, and ministries with order, care, and efficiency.

(See handouts provided for resources related to administrative oversight of the church.)

⁵ Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2012), 91.

⁶Ibid., 137–39.

(40 minutes)

❖ Reflection Paper Presentations

APPENDIX 6

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES INCLUDED IN THE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE NOTEBOOK

- Constitution and Bylaws of Crosspoint Church
- The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000
- The Danvers Statement on Manhood and Womanhood
- Pastoral Theology Book Recommendations
- Personnel Documents
 - Staff Organizational Chart
 - Personnel Policies and Procedures
 - Staff Reflective Assessment and Review
- Financial Documents
 - Weekly giving
 - Yearly giving
 - Current detailed budget
- “Organizational Health Principles for Businesses, Ministries, and Non–Profits” by Matt Perman, accessed December 6, 2012, <http://whatsbestnext.com/2012/11/>.
- Counseling Release for Non–Members
- Baptism and Church Membership Article
- Unpublished Book Review by Jason Finley of *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* by Mark Dever
- Unpublished Book Review by Jason Finley of *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* ed. by Schreiner and Wright
- Unpublished Book Review by Jason Finley of *The Temple and the Church’s Mission* by G. K. Beale
- Unpublished Book Review by Jason Finley of *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Tradition and Leadership in the Bible* by Timothy Laniak
- “Lay Elders: A User’s Guide, Part I,” *9Marks Journal*, Nov–Dec, 2012.
- “Lay Elders: A User’s Guide, Part II” *9Marks Journal*, Jan–Feb, 2013.
- Crosspoint Church Membership Directory

APPENDIX 7

COURSE OBJECTIVES RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXISTING ELDERS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the course objectives of a training course for current and future elder candidates. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____
Date _____

1. Is each objective distinct from the others?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

2. Are the objectives measureable?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

3. Do the objectives utilize active verbs that are not redundant?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

4. Do the objectives present a clear picture of the purpose of the course?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient

2 = Exemplary

5. Do the objectives reveal a set of actions the course participants would understand and readily agree to?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary
6. Are the objectives attainable in this course?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary
7. Do the objectives reflect a logical sequence?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary
8. Are the objectives faithful to Scripture
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary
9. Do the objectives reflect the desired outcomes of training present and future candidates for the work of the elder?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

APPENDIX 8

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC: TO BE COMPLETED BY EXPERT PANEL

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the curriculum for a training course for current and future elder candidates. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____

Date _____

1. Are the objectives clearly located in course materials?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Objectives are found in the beginning of the document.

2. Does the content reflect the desired outcomes of training present and future elder candidates for pastoral leadership?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
1 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Material focused on ecclesiology. Other theological subjects must be used to supplement leadership training.

3. Are participant expectations clearly articulated?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Requirements carefully defined.

4. Does content flow in a logical progression?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Well organized with a good general to specific flow.

5. Are instructions written clearly to ensure understanding?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
1 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Content is good. Some changes in formatting of material would help readability.

6. Are opportunities for self–assessment provided?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
1 = Sufficient
2 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Self assessment is more a by product of the study.

7. Are assignments and materials consistent with course objectives?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Reading & writing assignments are well suited to fulfill course objectives.

8. Do assignments include integration of course content into practice?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Research will have a powerful influence in leadership application.

9. Does the course accurately reflect Crosspoint Church's theological convictions?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Plurality of elders is Crosspoint's position.

10. Is course content faithful to Scripture?
0 = Insufficient
0 = Requires Attention
0 = Sufficient
3 = Exemplary

Comment(s):

- Added a few verses to undergird the points of application.
- Solid foundation in Scripture

Other feedback or comments:

- Excellent work! This should serve your flock well. I pray the Lord blesses it abundantly.
- The structure is logical and the format is easy to follow and read. If elders will put effort to work through this manual they will be encouraged and equipped to shepherd the flock!
- Thorough overview on the subject of church leadership. Should become a useful guide for all churches which embrace plurality of elders. Would recommend consistent formatting & less use of italics, especially entire paragraphs, to promote easier readability.

APPENDIX 9

PRE-COURSE AND POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE: TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE PARTICIPANTS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your knowledge of matters related to the office of elder at Crosspoint Church. This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Pre-Date taken: 2/23/14

Post-Date taken: 4/13/14

Total Participants: 13

Thirteen men participated in both the pre-course and post-course questionnaires. Since the t-stat 6.869 is larger than the t critical two tail value (2.178), the teaching intervention made a difference. Since p value is 0.00002 and less than $p=.05$, the difference was not by chance, which means it can be concluded that the pastoral leadership course made a significant difference in the knowledge gained by the participants.

Table A1. T-test: Paired two sample for means

	Pre-Course	Post-Course
Mean	3.7608	5.1786
Variance	0.5307	0.0880
Observations	13	13
Pearson Correlation	0.1499	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	12	
T Stat	6.86889	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.00001	
T Critical one-tail	1.78229	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.00002	
T Critical two-tail	2.17881	

Note: $t(12)=6.869$, $p < 0.0001$

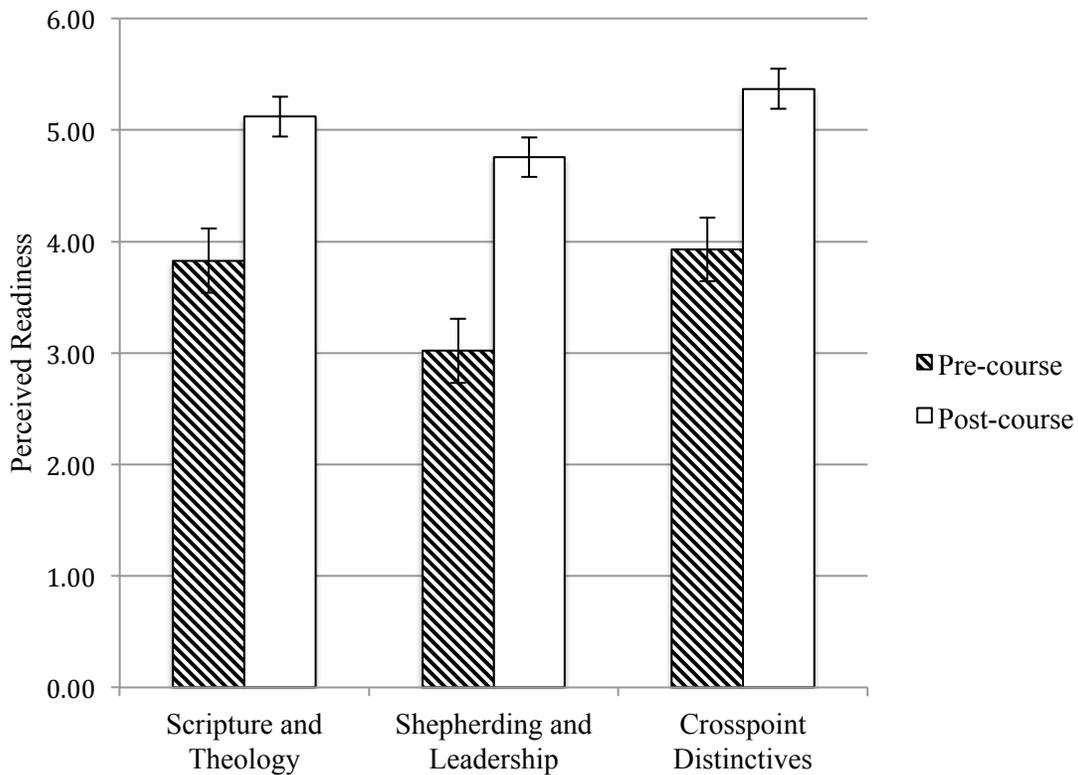


Figure A1. Summary of pre- and post-course perceived readiness

Note: The three categories of the survey are summarized in this graph. In the pre-course questionnaire, the average readiness to teach on each of the three major categories was

3.83 for Scripture and theology, 3.02 for shepherding and leadership, and 3.93 for Crosspoint distinctives. In post-course, average readiness to teach was 5.12 for Scripture and theology, 4.76 for shepherding and leadership, and 5.37 for Crosspoint distinctives. The error bar of each category indicates the variance of participants' responses. The error bars on the pre- and post-course questionnaire averages do not overlap on any of the three categories, indicating that the teaching intervention made a difference on the participants preparedness to teach in all three sections of the questionnaire.

Table A2. Pre–course and post–course questionnaire results

Key: 1=Not ready 4= Fairly ready 2=Mostly not ready 5=Mostly ready 3=Slightly ready 6=Very ready	Response Count: Pre/Post					
<i>Value:</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Section I: Scripture and Theology</i>						
<i>Theology</i>						
1. The Baptist Faith and Message (2000)	2/0	3/0	4/1	1/4	3/8	0/0
2. A specific passage describing God the Father as a shepherd leader of his people	0/0	2/0	1/0	7/1	2/10	1/2
3. A specific passage describing Jesus Christ as a shepherd leader of his people	0/0	1/0	0/0	4/0	7/9	1/4
4. A specific passage describing elders as shepherd leaders of God’s people	0/0	0/0	2/0	2/0	5/7	4/6
5. Biblical complementarianism and its implications in the church and home	0/0	2/0	0/0	2/1	6/8	3/4
6. Two types of church discipline	0/0	0/0	3/0	3/2	6/9	1/2
7. The regulative principle	5/0	0/0	2/0	2/2	1/2	3/9
8. The two types of call to ministry	1/0	2/0	4/0	4/2	2/6	0/5
9. Biblical and theological defense of church membership	0/0	0/0	2/0	6/0	4/6	1/7
<i>Offices in the church</i>						
10. The number of offices of the church and Scriptural distinctions between them	0/0	0/0	2/0	4/1	2/2	5/10
11. Old Testament forerunner for Christian elders	0/0	3/0	5/0	4/3	1/7	0/3
12. Basis for elders in the Gospels	1/0	3/0	3/0	4/3	1/7	1/3
13. Basis for elders in Acts and the epistles	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/1	4/6	5/6
14. Place of elders in Revelation	3/1	2/0	4/0	3/5	1/6	0/1
15. Use Bible to explain the plurality of elders	0/0	1/0	2/0	4/1	5/4	1/8

Table A2 continued

Key: 1=Not ready 4= Fairly ready 2=Mostly not ready 5=Mostly ready 3=Slightly ready 6=Very ready	Response Count: Pre/Post					
	<i>Value:</i>	1	2	3	4	5
16. List and explain Scriptural qualifications of elders	0/0	0/0	4/0	1/0	5/4	3/9
17. List and explain Scriptural duties of elders	0/0	0/0	2/0	2/0	6/5	3/8
18. Two Bible passages stating that an elder must be “above reproach”	0/0	0/0	0/0	4/0	5/6	4/7
19. Biblical and theological defense of congregationalism	2/0	0/0	5/0	1/1	5/8	0/4
20. Theological principles for congregationalism	2/0	2/0	3/0	4/2	2/8	0/3
21. The meaning of “husband of one wife” as a qualification for office of elder	0/0	0/0	2/0	5/0	4/7	2/6
22. If the offices of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Priest are for today	0/0	1/0	5/1	6/5	1/5	0/2
<i>Historical Ecclesiology</i>						
23. The Patristic and Reformation definitions of the church	1/0	5/0	1/1	3/5	3/5	0/2
24. Three major forms of polity	2/0	2/0	2/0	3/1	3/8	1/4
25. Baptist origins	2/0	3/0	1/0	5/2	1/9	1/2
26. The place of plural elders in Baptist history	3/1	3/0	5/0	1/3	0/9	0/0
27. Three Baptist distinctions (What makes Baptists Baptist?)	0/0	2/0	2/1	6/0	2/5	1/7
28. The key ecclesiological contribution Baptists have made in church history	1/0	4/0	3/0	3/3	1/4	1/6
29. Reasons for the decrease of regenerate church membership among Baptists in the 20 th century	1/0	2/0	5/0	4/4	0/7	1/2
30. The origination and agencies of the SBC	3/0	4/0	1/3	2/3	2/5	1/2
31. The single key issue in the Conservative Resurgence of the SBC	4/0	0/0	4/3	1/0	2/5	2/5
<i>Ordinances</i>						
32. Scripturally defend immersion as proper mode of baptism	0/0	0/0	1/0	6/1	3/6	3/6
33. Three practices of the Lord’s Supper among Baptists	0/0	1/0	2/0	1/2	4/5	5/6

Table A2 continued

Key: 1=Not ready 4= Fairly ready 2=Mostly not ready 5=Mostly ready 3=Slightly ready 6=Very ready	Response Count: Pre/Post					
	<i>Value:</i>	1	2	3	4	5
34. The Catholic Church and Lutheran Churches' practices of the Lord's Supper	1/1	2/1	3/2	4/3	2/4	1/2
<i>Section II: Practical Shepherding and Leadership</i>						
<i>Counseling</i>						
35. Articulate your personal philosophy of counseling	0/0	5/0	2/2	3/4	1/5	2/2
36. Articulate legal requirements as a mandatory reporter if I become aware of an abusive situation	4/0	2/0	3/1	1/3	2/4	1/5
37. Effective pastoral visitation	2/0	4/0	2/4	3/3	1/4	1/2
<i>Pastoral Ministry</i>						
38. Describe the duties of an elder at Crosspoint	0/0	2/0	1/0	6/0	3/8	1/5
39. Explain three components of biblical shepherding	3/0	3/0	4/1	1/1	1/3	1/8
40. List seven elements of an effective shepherding ministry according to Witmer	10/1	2/0	0/1	0/7	0/0	0/4
41. Explain four P's of pastoral leadership according to Dever	9/1	4/0	0/1	0/2	0/3	0/6
42. Officiate a wedding and funeral	4/1	4/2	3/2	0/5	1/2	1/1
43. Theologically-driven decision-making in leadership	0/0	1/0	3/0	4/2	2/7	3/4
<i>Personal qualities</i>						
44. Pursue persons who are not responsive to previous attempts to talk or meet	1/0	1/0	2/0	3/5	4/6	2/2
45. Handle occasional desires to escape or feelings of laziness and discouragement	0/0	2/0	4/0	3/4	3/5	1/4
<i>Section III: Crosspoint Church Distinctives</i>						
<i>Crosspoint Church Organization</i>						
46. Constitution, statement of faith, covenant, discipline policy	0/0	0/0	2/0	6/0	2/6	3/7
47. Mission and core values	0/0	0/0	0/0	2/0	6/4	5/9

Table A2 continued

Key: 1=Not ready 4= Fairly ready 2=Mostly not ready 5=Mostly ready 3=Slightly ready 6=Very ready	Response Count: Pre/Post					
	<i>Value:</i>	1	2	3	4	5
48. Philosophy of ministry	1/0	1/0	0/0	3/1	6/9	2/3
49. Newcomer assimilation pathway	1/0	0/0	0/0	2/1	5/6	5/6
50. Church member qualifications & expectations	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	6/4	7/9
51. Practice of the Lord's Supper (open, close, closed)	0/0	0/0	0/0	2/2	5/2	6/9
52. Relationship to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and other local SBC churches	1/0	2/0	1/0	2/1	0/7	6/5
53. The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood	3/0	1/0	3/0	2/2	0/8	3/3
54. Internal and external organizational communication	3/0	1/0	4/0	2/5	1/5	2/3
<i>Crosspoint Church Leadership Structure</i>						
55. Deacon organization	1/0	1/0	5/0	0/0	5/5	1/8
56. Elder organization	0/0	0/0	2/0	1/0	7/0	3/13
57. Practical distinctions between an elder and deacon	0/0	0/0	0/0	2/0	2/0	9/13
58. Relationship between elders and deacons at Crosspoint	0/0	0/0	3/0	2/0	3/3	4/10
59. Relationship between the elders and the senior pastor at Crosspoint	0/0	0/0	1/0	1/0	4/0	7/13
60. Accountability of the elders to the congregation	0/0	0/0	2/0	2/0	5/4	4/9
61. Policy for removing an elder	3/0	3/0	3/1	1/1	1/3	2/8
62. Procedures for counseling in varying circumstances (non-members; pre-marital, etc...)	2/0	5/0	4/1	0/3	2/5	0/4
<i>Churchwide strategy</i>						
63. Determine strategy to accomplish mission statement	1/0	2/0	2/0	2/1	5/8	1/4
64. Select ministry programs and evaluate their effectiveness	1/0	2/0	3/0	2/1	5/8	0/4
65. Leader selection criteria and current leaders across Crosspoint's ministries	1/0	0/0	3/0	3/1	6/6	0/6

Table A2 continued

Key: 1=Not ready 4= Fairly ready 2=Mostly not ready 5=Mostly ready 3=Slightly ready 6=Very ready	Response Count: Pre/Post					
	<i>Value:</i>	1	2	3	4	5
66. Plan preaching and worship services	0/0	2/0	1/0	1/1	4/6	5/6
67. Missions strategy	0/0	1/0	2/0	4/0	4/6	2/6
68. Select missions partners locally & across the globe	0/0	3/0	2/0	4/1	1/5	3/7
69. Church giving toward external missions	0/0	3/0	1/0	3/0	4/4	2/9
<i>Personnel</i>						
70. Staff organizational structure and personnel categories	1/0	0/0	2/0	1/0	5/6	4/7
71. Creating positions, hiring and evaluating personnel	1/0	3/0	2/0	4/1	1/5	2/7
72. Determine salaries, administer benefits, evaluate staff	5/0	1/1	5/0	1/1	1/3	0/8
73. Staff development strategy	3/0	3/0	1/0	3/3	1/5	2/5
<i>Finances, Assets and Capital stewardship</i>						
74. Philosophy of budgeting	3/0	3/0	2/0	1/1	4/6	0/6
75. Budget development	3/0	4/0	1/0	1/2	3/8	1/3
76. Purchasing and reimbursing protocols	3/0	2/0	0/1	1/2	3/4	4/6
77. Risk management	7/0	2/0	0/2	3/6	1/4	0/1
78. Financial accountability	6/0	3/0	0/1	1/5	3/5	0/2
79. Oversight and supervision	4/0	3/0	0/0	2/2	3/5	1/6
80. Property management	3/0	5/0	2/0	1/3	1/6	1/4

Note: Each numerical indicator (1–6) correlates to a statement of a course participant’s current readiness to teach or explain the given topic or question to a small group of inquiring church members at the time of taking the questionnaire. The first number preceding the slash indicates the number of participants who marked the given indicator in the pre–course questionnaire. The second number, which follows the slash, indicates the number of participants who selected the given indicator in the post–course questionnaire.

APPENDIX 10

RESPONSES TO THE POST-COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE SUPPLEMENT

This supplemental questionnaire was administered to all course participants with the post-course questionnaire only.

This supplemental questionnaire was designed to produce information about the course that will help determine what, if any, changes need to be made in future offerings.

1. Please comment on the value this course brought to your development and preparedness for pastoral leadership (including class meetings, assignments, and mentoring).
 - Very helpful. The class meetings added much value especially when we had built in time for discussion.
 - Huge value and resource for planning to be a future elder. Great resources in Appendix, Reading list, and Cpt. practices. I still feel like I need more guidance for shepherding small, rural, or unregenerate churches in need of revitalization.
 - Though we have not yet created our funeral/wedding sermon I anticipate this being valuable. Mentoring was extremely valuable, especially in working through assignment topics, etc.
 - The class was helpful and intensive. I have grown greatly from discussions, elder guide, and completing assignments. I know I will be able to refer back to this elder training manual to find answers for my questions in pastoral ministry.
 - Filled in theological gaps I had and answered questions I had regarding ecclesiology.
 - Helped me understand some important key issues in pastoral ministry and leading a church, especially through the debates we had on some ambiguous or controversial topics. Already has gotten me thinking about my future churches and how change might be necessary
 - I've felt a healthy gravity to the calling, and the dependence upon God that it naturally creates. I've greatly been challenged through freshly seeing what scripture says about God's care of his people and the responsibility of his undershepherds.
 - Discussions, including question and answer time was the most beneficial thing for me. Hearing others opinions and discussing hard questions was challenging and useful.

- Reading recent, practical, and beneficial books was refreshing and motivated me to pursue the read. The Deliberate Church was most useful.
 - The class size allowed for personal questions and valuable insight from current elders.
 - Provided a lot of new thoughts/perspectives on Cpt's strengths/weaknesses & areas that need to be addressed.
 - The assigned readings matched the instructional goals for the class very well. Likewise, the class lectures and practical training manual very helpful.
 - Valuable – excellent Scriptural depth, good practical,
 - Very helpful course. Clear logic. Good resources. Plenty of Additional Resources. Probably too much content for the allotted period of time (both # of classes and calendar days for assignments)
 - This course really helped round out my knowledge of the biblical basis for elders and their responsibilities. Particularly, learning about the responsibilities of elders to lead, feed & protect the flock – and specifically learning about how that is done in Crosspoint's context – was very helpful.
2. Please comment on how this course could have added more value in your preparedness for pastoral leadership.
- This course was very comprehensive so there is little I can think of. The only things that come to mind would be time to process/discern a call to pastoral leadership and/or for self-assessment in my readiness for it (or more time for those things.) Also, I wonder if spreading the course over more than 6 weeks would be helpful – simply in giving more time to learn, process & practice more of the things we learned.
 - Can't think of any.
 - Maybe slow down. Make it 8–10 weeks. Include more case studies on dealing with certain topics with open discussion.
 - More class time, more discussion on topics brought up. It would have been beneficial to be able to sit on more elder meetings, pastoral visits, and sermon prep.
 - I felt as if the first half of the course focused on 'what an elder is' when the assumed scope of the class was 'what an elder does/how he does it.' I would have preferred more material on this by way of examples, scenarios, case studies, etc.
 - Had the class been scheduled for a different time, I probably would have been more attentive.
 - Being able to present more of the papers in class and engage in discussion with them. More hypothetical, but practical situations that we might find ourselves in – how would we respond to those situations, & maybe even critique each others' approach
 - Perhaps more structural mentorship time. Such as certain accountability questions, bible studies, or even exercises, etc.

- Discussing real-life examples more could have helped me more. I feel that I would have benefitted from hearing more real-life experiences. Perhaps discussing hypothetical scenarios [sic] more would help with preparedness.
 - Practically speaking, better understanding of legal & financial pitfalls/issues to protect against.
 - N/A overall, very well taught and administered
 - I personally think more meetings would provide fruitful time for digestion of the topics and allow sufficient time for meditation & application
3. Participants were asked to rank order the three most beneficial areas of the course with 1 being the area of greatest benefit.

Table A3: Weighted rank order responses

<i>Rank:</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Weighted Rank Total</i>
Baptist ecclesiology	1	5	3	16
Offices in the church	1	0	3	6
Pastoral ministry	6	3	4	28
Personal character	4	4	2	22
Crosspoint Church organizational operations, personnel, and finances	1	0	0	3
Crosspoint Church leadership, ministries, and strategy	0	1	1	3

Note: rank 1 = 3 points, rank 2 = 2 points, rank 3 = 1 point

APPENDIX 11

POST-COURSE MENTOR SURVEY: TO BE COMPLETED BY MENTORS

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to gather your feedback on the mentoring component for a training course for current and future elder candidates.

This research is being conducted by Jason Finley for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Name _____

Date _____

Mentor Name:

Name of Course Participant Mentored:

1. How many meetings or supervised shepherding experiences did you have with the course participant during the duration of this course?
 - 1=2 times
 - 2=3 times
 - 4=4 times

2. List key topics of discussion and shepherding experiences from your meetings:
 - Pastor's daily schedule, sermon preparation, officiating weddings, shadow in elders meeting.
 - Sermon preparation and evaluation, planning weddings, premarital counseling, marriage, life decisions, and work.
 - Marriage, family, parenting, work, vision casting, evaluation of participant's teaching and leadership of small group, Clemson football, polity, church discipleship, theological training in church, how lay elders will serve, shadowed elders meeting, sermon delivery, and spiritual health.
 - Courtship and marriage, family, vision casting, ministry strategy, decision making, participant's job responsibilities, shadow in high-level meetings,

sermon preparation, involved in church planting strategy conversations, prayer, planning, spiritual health, exhorted in spiritual disciplines, shadowed elders meeting..

- Marriage, family, parenting, participant's ministry responsibilities, involved in church planting strategy conversations, buying a house, managing finances, sermon preparation, prayer, spiritual health, shadowed elders meeting.
3. Please comment on the value that the mentoring times brought to the development of the course participant's preparedness for pastoral leadership.
- The mentoring times were very beneficial because the participants were able to ask specific questions about ministry they wanted to better understand. It was an opportunity to move to real life examples of pastoral leadership.
 - I think it is very developmental to be able to evaluate experiences in a safe mentoring environment. All of these men were entrusted with significant leadership responsibilities that we were able to evaluate.
4. Please comment on how your mentoring experiences could have added more value to your student's preparedness for pastoral leadership.
- Participants lay out beforehand questions that they have about pastoral leadership and give to the mentor beforehand so he can prepare to lead well in their time together.
 - Include some shadow experiences like hospital visits, membership interviews, leading a ministry event, attend staff meetings.
 - It would have been great to give them a teaching opportunity that we could have sat down and discussed. All of these men have taught in the past, but I don't think they were given a teaching opportunity during the weeks of the class. In general, a six to eight week mentoring experience is not enough. I think walking together over a year or longer is most helpful, which in all three cases I have had the opportunity to do.

Note: This survey includes feedback from mentors who combined to mentor nine of the course participants.

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE AT CROSSPOINT CHURCH IN CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA, FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE ELDER CANDIDATES

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014
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The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a pastoral leadership course at Crosspoint Church in Clemson, South Carolina, for present and future elder candidates. Chapter 1 explains the ministerial context of Crosspoint Church and demonstrates the need for the development of a pastoral leadership course for training and assimilating elder candidates.

Chapter 2 demonstrates that Scripture reveals that churches need a plurality of qualified and trained men serving together as God's undershepherds in the office of elder. Chapter 3 considers how principles from the field of education bring value to an elder training course in the church. Chapter 4 provides a detailed process along with the methodology utilized for this project's implementation. Chapter 5 is an evaluation of the project. This chapter determines if the pastoral leadership course was effective to train present and future elder candidates at Crosspoint Church.

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