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EQUIPPING CHURCH LEADERS IN TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP THEORY AT ESSENTIAL CHURCH,
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

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Timothy Scott Milner
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EQUIPPING CHURCH LEADERS IN TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP THEORY AT ESSENTIAL CHURCH,
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Timothy Scott Milner

Read and Approved by:

Faculty Supervisor: David A. Bosch

Second Reader: Oren R. Martin

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For the glory of God

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PREFACE

This project was birthed from my passion for developing leaders. Many people I love have made sacrifices of time, money, and attention to develop me. While I still have a long journey ahead to become the leader I would like to be, I would never have come this far were it not for the generosity and patience of others. Specifically, I thank God for the privilege to lead his people and for the privilege to further my education at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The progress I have made is thanks to those who have invested in me.

Specifically, I want to thank Tim Plant of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who trained me on the ropes of church leadership. I wholeheartedly thank James Welch of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who disciplined me and taught me church planting, usually while enjoying a long walk in New Orleans. No one has modeled and stretched me more in the art of leadership than Ben Pilgreen of San Francisco, California. Without the investment of these men, I would not be half the leader I am today, and this project would not have happened.

I must also say a special thank you to my father, Tom Milner, who gave me my first leadership book, John Maxwell's *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, when I was fifteen years old. That book started within me the desire to grow as a leader. Thank you to my mother, Pam Hill, who took on one of the most difficult leadership tasks I have personally witnessed as a publicly elected school board member.

Finally, thank you to my wife, Kristin. She has sacrificed many of her own ambitions so that I could pursue this degree. I am convinced no one has done more to develop me as a leader than Kristin. She encourages me, motivates me, inspires me, and holds me accountable on a level no one else can.

My greatest desire is that the Lord would use this project for his glory in the lives of the people of Essential Church in Huntsville, Alabama. I love the people of our church, and it is a joy to lead beside you.

Tim Milner

Huntsville, Alabama

December 2022

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Everyone influences. Some people are in a position to influence more than others. This influence is leadership. Leadership is essential for the local church. Unfortunately, many churches do not have an intentional plan to develop the leadership competencies of members in formal leadership positions. This lack of development dampens spiritual maturation, exhausts current leaders, and impedes the mission of the local church. This project aimed to develop a curriculum that equipped members serving in formal leadership positions with essential competencies to ensure they influence the right people at the right time and in the right way. This project's purpose was to take advantage of a great opportunity to take new leaders and equip them to influence their teams in a way that increased the spiritual maturation, health, and missional effectiveness of the local church.

Context

Essential Church was founded in 2015 in Huntsville, Alabama. Essential Church was started to reach people who thought the church was not for them. The Huntsville area has many healthy churches. However, the demographics of Huntsville have been steadily changing. For example, in 2015, the city of Huntsville was increasing by fifteen new people every day, with the following characteristics: (1) they were typically younger in age; (2) they were well educated; (3) they were politically progressive; and (4) they were unlikely to be already part of a church. Due to these changing demographics, there is a specific need for more churches to intentionally reach people who think the church is not for them. The need for new churches to reach the

unchurched has been confirmed by Essential Church's sustained growth.

Two hundred people attended Essential's first weekly service in February 2016. After several weeks, the worship attendance averaged one hundred, which was expected because many people who come to the first service do not intend to stay long term. Over the next several months, attendance slowly increased. In August 2016, Essential Church moved from renting a middle school to a more permanent storefront. The church continued to grow to an average of two hundred attendees at Sunday morning worship.

In turn, the need for lay leaders increased. For instance, the children's ministry initially needed a staff member who supervised around six volunteers. As the children's ministry grew, the number of volunteers increased. Eventually, several volunteers became leaders responsible for other children's ministry volunteers. A similar scenario played out in various ministry teams, including the greeting team, small groups, and the band.

In 2018, Essential Church was gifted a building; this created significant enthusiasm and excitement and led to further growth. By the beginning of 2020, Essential Church averaged 340 attendees on a Sunday morning.

As Essential Church continues to grow, there is an increased need for trained leaders. As Sunday morning attendance and the required number of volunteers increase, staff can no longer be in every ministry environment (e.g., children's rooms, small groups, or band practices). Lay leaders have taken on the responsibility of leading, shepherding, and ministering in these environments. These leaders need to be equipped to lead well.

Historically, the plan to equip leaders was to find those who served well and promote them to leadership positions. Unfortunately, those promoted to leadership positions had no systematic training or development. There was no plan to develop those stepping into leadership roles, and the problems became evident. For instance, Essential

Church's vision and values were rarely communicated, championed, or guarded when lay leaders oversaw a particular event, such as a small group meeting or leadership huddle. This lack of vision was not the lay leader's fault, but a systemic problem caused by the lack of leadership training for those who serve.

Any training a leader did receive was by chance and not premeditated. This lack of a plan for leadership development resulted in lay leaders operating with a variety of competencies. Thus, Essential Church had a team of leaders who loved the church, loved Jesus, and were serving in important positions and yet were given almost no guidance on how to lead their teams.

Finally, Essential Church experienced a high turnover rate within leadership positions. Many of the church's leaders over its first five years are no longer at Essential Church. Conversations within the staff suggested they left the church because of frustration within their leadership roles. Therefore, Essential needed a leadership development plan for the health of current and prospective lay leaders, the staff, those they served, and the church at large. Specifically, we needed to decide what our core leadership competencies were, determine how leaders operated within those competencies via a pre-training survey, train leaders using a curriculum, and then complete a post-training survey to determine if the leader understood the core competencies.

Essential Church has several strengths worth noting. First, Essential Church has a strong, driven, and focused staff. While currently averaging around 340 people on Sunday mornings (before Covid-19), Essential has nine people on staff, seven of whom are paid. The staff represents a diverse set of strengths. While the diversity of strengths creates conflicts from time to time, overall, the staff work well together.

Collectively, the staff has a strong vision for Essential Church. An important piece of this strong vision is our shared specific and attractive goals for the future. These goals include starting a business, starting one thousand churches around the world,

creating a safe place for people to explore Jesus, and discipling our people. At any given time, the people at Essential Church have at least one reason to be excited about the future. Attractive goals are proving to be one of Essential's most attractive strengths.

In addition to the strong vision and goals, Essential has well-stated and inspiring values. In 2020, the staff collaborated to discover what makes Essential Church "tick." The months-long exercise produced several leadership values. Overall, the staff does a great job at modeling the values. However, these leadership values do not always trickle down to lay leaders. This leads to the greatest weakness within Essential Church: the ability to develop leaders.

Very few members talk about leadership or have leadership experience. Even compared to other churches in the Huntsville area, Essential seems weak in developing leaders. As lead pastor of Essential Church, I have noticed that when I talk about leadership, I am met with blank, non-curious faces. While there is a strong culture of serving at Essential, anytime someone is placed in a management or leadership position, it is usually one of the first times, if not the very first, that person has been in any leadership position. It has also been noted that Essential's prospective leaders often do not have any management or leadership experience. This lack of experience has caused various problems, especially when one volunteer needs to correct another volunteer doing their position incorrectly. This lack of leadership training has also been a repeated problem when asking a volunteer to go over and beyond to complete a task. Furthermore, many of Essential's lay leaders are not equipped or prepared to encourage, motivate, or cast a vision for their areas. Essential's current leaders are simply unprepared to lead at the level of competency needed. When leaders are put into a position to lead but do not have the competencies, it creates missed opportunities and frustration for the leader and followers, leading to burnout.

As a general rule, Essential desires to build upon its strengths first and foremost, even at the expense of working on its weaknesses. However, among these

weaknesses, one stands out as having the potential to become a great strength. It is also the weakness of greatest concern to Essential's staff: leadership development. Given the staff culture of valuing leadership, Essential believes that if focused, determined, and intentional, an emphasis on leadership development training addressing leadership competencies could turn its greatest weakness into one of its greatest strengths.

Rationale

Essential Church's most concerning weakness has been the lack of leadership development. Only a few of those involved in Essential have practiced leadership in a reliable and ongoing way. The primary cause of this lack of leadership was the lack of a plan to develop leadership within Essential Church. It was necessary to address the lack of leadership development for the following three reasons.

First, Essential Church continues to grow in Sunday morning attendance. This growth means that Essential needs a steady stream of new leaders. Scripture demonstrates a similar need to raise up additional leaders to help carry the ministry burden. The story of Jethro and Moses provides a method of organization that instructs us to delegate ministry when the primary leader is overwhelmed by the tasks and emotional burden of leadership (Exod 18:13–18). The leadership at Essential has been overwhelmed by the demands of ministry and leadership and in need of a solution.

Second, as Essential grows, the expectations for excellence increase. When Essential was smaller, people enjoyed the church because of the family feel. However, as the church grew in Sunday attendance, the expectations for excellence in kids' ministry, youth ministry, first impressions, teaching ministry, and facilities increased. Without a greater emphasis on leadership, there was and is no foreseeable path towards sustainable excellence in key areas.

Ministry excellence is not for the sake of vanity or for making worship services feel like rock shows. Excellence is important because excellence is the removal of

distractions that prevent people from doing or experiencing what they should be doing or experiencing at worship services. Furthermore, ministry excellence is the assurance that people do not fall through the cracks and unknowingly disappear from the church or become stagnant in their faith. Finally, ministry excellence should equate to more people growing in their faith. The opposite of excellence is sloppiness. When ministry is sloppy, people are distracted; they fall through the cracks and are not properly disciplined.

Within the Scriptures, there is a clear call to equip the saints to do ministry (Eph 4:12–16). Historically, Essential Church has used paid staff to complete the majority of the ministry. The goal of this project was not necessarily to get the staff to do less ministry but rather to develop a program that enabled more of Essential's laity to begin doing the work of ministry and building up the church.

Third, Essential has been praying about additional campuses in the Huntsville, Alabama, area. In order to have multiple campuses, Essential must have a strong leadership culture. The staff who at this time provide nearly all of the leadership may one day not even step foot in the worship services of additional campuses. Therefore, other leaders must be developed to start these new churches. The Scriptures describe the need to raise up and send out new leaders. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul instructs young Timothy to raise up other men who can go and teach the gospel. For Essential to accomplish what it feels led to do requires an ongoing plan to train and develop leaders.

For these reasons, it was critical to define leadership development, how it can be measured, how leaders should be held accountable for leadership development, and how Essential can multiply leadership development across multiple campuses.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to equip church leaders at Essential Church, Huntsville, Alabama, in Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT).

Goals

The following three goals determined the successful completion of this project.

1. The first goal was to administer a survey to at least twenty-five current leaders at Essential Church and ask each leader to assess themselves on a pre-determined set of leadership behaviors.
2. The second goal was to train church leaders in Transformational Leadership Theory.
3. The third goal was to reassess the church leaders who completed the training in Transformational Leadership Theory.

A defined means of measurement and a benchmark of success determined the successful completion of each goal. The following research methodology and instruments used to measure the success of each goal are detailed in the next section.¹

Research Methodology

The first goal was to administer a survey to at least twenty-five current leaders at Essential Church and ask each leader to assess themselves on a pre-determined set of leadership behaviors. This goal was measured by presenting current church leaders with a pre-training survey and recording the results.² The pre-training survey was based in part on the Global Transformational Leadership (GTL) scale and in part on original questions that I developed for this project. This goal was considered successfully met when forty-one current leaders completed the pre-training survey and the data had been analyzed, yielding a clearer picture of current leadership behaviors demonstrated by Essential church leaders.

The second goal was to train church leaders in Transformational Leadership Theory. This sixty-minute training focused on the “Four I’s” of TLT: (1) Idealized Influence, (2) Inspirational Motivation, (3) Intellectual Stimulation, and (4) Individual

¹ All research instruments in this ministry project were utilized in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the project.

² See appendices 1 and 2.

Consideration. This goal was measured by the completion of the design, development, and delivery of the training to Essential Church leaders. This goal was considered successfully met when thirty-five church leaders completed the video curriculum.

The third goal was to reassess the church leaders who completed training in TLT. This goal was measured by having the participating church leaders re-assess TLT behaviors using same survey used at the beginning of the project. The results of the second survey were measured against the results of the first survey.³ This goal was considered successfully met when a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive, statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-training survey scores among the content questions.⁴

Definitions and Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms were used in the ministry project:

Leadership. John Maxwell says, “The true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less.”⁵ I agree that the measure of leadership is influence, but for the purposes of this project, I added the element of initiative. Thus, I defined leadership as taking the initiative to influence someone or something. For example, if a friend asked another friend to come to a worship service, that was considered leadership. When a small group leader asked group members about daily Bible reading, that too was considered leadership if it in some way influenced a member of the group to read the Bible.

Christian leadership. There is an important distinctive when it comes to leadership that is Christian. Matthew 20:25–28 teaches that those who wish to lead within

³ See appendices 3 and 4.

⁴ See appendices 5 and 6.

⁵ John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1940), 11.

God's Kingdom must lead as Christ led. Christ did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. Therefore, Christian leadership is modeling the ways of our Lord Jesus Christ. Essential to modeling the ways of Jesus is the centrality of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the basis of determining what Christian leaders believe and how Christian leaders behave. Furthermore, the Scriptures are the primary tool used by Christian leaders to lead others. The greatest tool a Christian leader has is taking the initiative to influence someone or something with God's Word.

Leader. While anyone can be a leader with or without a formalized position, "leader" is used throughout this project to refer to someone who serves in a formal, recognized leadership position within Essential Church. Leadership positions at Essential Church include (1) team leaders who supervise the volunteers, (2) coaches who supervise the team leaders, (3) directors who supervise the coaches, (4) staff who supervise the directors, and (5) the advisory council, which supervises the staff.

Prospective leaders. Prospective leaders are those who aspire to lead at Essential Church but have not begun serving in a formal leadership position. This could include current volunteers who are doing an outstanding job and are under consideration by another team leader to become a fellow leader. A prospective leader can also be someone who has taken the initiative to apply to be a leader.

Four delimitations applied to this project. The first delimitation was the understanding that developing as a leader is a lifelong journey. Furthermore, leadership development can consist of one's education, experiences, relationships, and mental exercises. However, this project was limited in scope to making incremental progress in the lives of leaders over the course of four to ten weeks using a video-based curriculum. The purpose of this project was not to take someone who is a "zero" in leadership and turn them into a "ten." Rather, the purpose of this project was to give a leader the tools they need to develop as a leader over the course of their lifetime at a rate and trajectory better than they would have grown without the curriculum.

A second delimitation was the decision that this project would only involve twenty-five current leaders. In order to complete this project within the given time frame, only twenty-five leaders would be given a pre-training survey, trained in the curriculum, and then given a post-training survey. The leaders were selected based on the likelihood they would both desire the training and complete the surveys and curriculum.

The third delimitation concerned the survey and development of leadership competencies. There are an endless number of competencies, skills, knowledge, and experiences that could be considered leadership competencies. However, the scope of this project necessitated that the survey and curriculum be limited to the competencies within the Four I's of Transformational Leadership Theory.

A fourth delimitation was that this project would only seek to assess and develop team leaders, coaches, staff, and advisory council positions at Essential Church. Everyone at Essential Church leads something—if only oneself. However, this project assessed and developed those serving in specified positions of leadership.

Conclusion

Essential Church needs more competent leaders if it wants to continue to reach an increasing number of people. Chapter 2 presents the biblical and theological basis for this project. Chapter 3 investigates the theoretical and practical basis for this project. Chapter 4 provides the detail and description of the project implementation. Finally, chapter 5 evaluates the project results.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
FOR EQUIPPING CHURCH LEADERS IN
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP
THEORY

Chapter 1 described the basis for this project at Essential Church. This chapter focuses on the theological and biblical guidance for equipping church leaders with essential leadership competencies. Better equipping of church leaders benefits the church's maturation, the health of the church, and the missional effectiveness of the local church. In this chapter, I will exegete three passages that speak to the importance of equipping church leaders: Ephesians 4:11–15, Exodus 18:13–14, and Acts 6:1–7.

**The Local Church Matures as Christ-Followers Are
Equipped to Serve (Ephesians 4:11–15)**

The local church matures as pastors equip Christ-followers to better minister to one another. In this instance, maturity means the church will increasingly be faithful to what God has called the church to be. This maturity is best seen when an increasing number of Christ-followers *do* the serving and are not simply served. An immature Christian is one who cannot help others. Eric Geiger notes, “Just as a baby can only be helped and cannot help others, a childish Christian continually consumes without ever contributing. A mature Christian does both, continuing to feast on the good news of Jesus and the encouragement of others while simultaneously serving as Christ has served him or her.”¹ A church where only a few do the ministry is an immature church. It is commonly said that pastors should see people move from *watching* to *participating*. It

¹ Eric Geiger, “3 Signs of an Immature Believer,” *Outreach Magazine*, last modified October 19, 2017, <https://outreachmagazine.com/features/25095-immature-believer.html>.

can also be said that pastors want less *consumers* and more *contributors*. Ultimately, a church cannot be mature unless the culture of the local church is focused on equipping each Christ-follower to minister within the local church. However, this mark of maturity will not be seen—or at least not sustained for long—if pastors do not actively and systematically equip the church to do the ministry of the church.

Furthermore, the very act of equipping a Christ-follower to minister to another in any act of service, great or small, is an act of leadership. Leadership is understood as initiative and influence. Don Howell elaborates, “One sees a need and, based on one's governing convictions, exercises initiative to address that concern; influence is then brought to bear on others to join in and contribute to the accomplishment of a stated objective. Whether the exercise of such leadership is constructive or unhealthy depends on the leader's character, motive(s) and agenda.”² Therefore, when a pastor initiates and influences a lay leader to minister, that pastor is practicing leadership. For a church to mature, pastors must lead the church by ensuring that each Christ-follower under their care is equipped to do the ministry. This paper argues that from a biblical perspective, equipping the church to be the church is the chief end of pastoral leadership. Leadership should not be seen as an end of itself, but rather a means of equipping the church to serve.

Pastors Should Ensure Christ-Followers Are Equipped to Serve

It is tempting for a pastor to think he will simply handle the ministry work himself. It is often easier to do so in the short term. The pastor who insists on personally handling the ministry could convince himself that he is doing the church a favor. He may think that he will do the heavy lifting of ministry so as not to put too heavy a burden on

² Don N. Howell Jr., *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 1.

those he is called to shepherd. Unfortunately, as noble and purely motivated this thinking is, it creates death within a church.

For instance, within Ephesians 4, the first function of shepherds and teachers (pastors) is to equip God's people for service—not to do their duties for them as if they were incapable, but to enable them to become God's ministers within and through the life of the church. All Christians are called to the work of *diakonia* (ministry).³ Inadvertently, many pastors have robbed Christ-followers of their calling to serve others. A pastor who does the lion's share of ministry within a church is equivalent to a parent always cleaning up after his young child without the assistance of the child. Many parents would agree it is usually easier to do the cleaning themselves. There are rare instances when this is appropriate, including a child's illness or quickly cleaning before unexpected company. However, many parents would agree that the best solution would be cleaning with the help of the child. As a child learns to clean, he is given additional responsibilities to clean. Eventually, the parents can fully trust the child to do the agreed upon cleaning. This enables the parent to focus on other responsibilities such as training a younger child to clean. A pastor should see ministry in a similar light.

Biblically, the pastor is not the one called to do the ministry. Rather, the pastor is called to equip each Christ-follower to do the ministry. Ephesians 4:13 speaks of a movement in which all saints participate in the ministry. They are depicted as people moving on a road towards a certain goal.⁴ That goal is for each Christ-follower to have an active role in serving.

³ C. Leslie Mitton, *Ephesians*, New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1976), 151.

⁴ Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4–6*, Anchor Bible, vol. 34a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 485.

Pastors Recognize That Christ-Followers Have Been Given Gifts to Use in Ministry

Not only should pastors resist the idea of doing the ministry themselves, but they should also remember that each Christ-follower has been gifted by the Holy Spirit with the raw materials needed to do the ministry. Harold Hoehner shares, “Paul states that God has appointed people with various gifts to the church (v.7). In verse 10 Paul states that Christ ‘ascended above all the heavens, in order that he might fill all things,’ and the present verse gives the details of that filling, that is, gifted people to the church.”⁵ Any pastor who refuses to share the ministry work with others in the church is depriving them of the opportunity to use the gifts Christ gave them. Vincent Smiles reminds us of “a theme well-known in Paul’s own writing, namely, that ‘to each one’ in the church God has given some ‘measure of Christ’s gift.’”⁶ It should not be surprising that so many churches today are immature. Pastors have simply refused to share the ministry with Christ-followers. No matter the sincerity of their motivations and intentions, a pastor clutching the lion’s share of ministry has inadvertently thwarted God’s intended plan. The result will always be the same: an immature church drowning in good intentions.

The Church Matures as More Christ-Followers Learn to Minister

Pastors should seek to equip as many as possible of the Christ-followers within a church to do the ministry. A church where the pastor currently does most of the ministry work should celebrate *any* increase in the equipping of the church. However, the pastor should not be satisfied until each Christ-follower under his care is ministering. The immediate purpose of God’s provision of the teaching gifts is to equip the saints. The

⁵ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 538.

⁶ Vincent M. Smiles, *First Thessalonians, Philippians, Second Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians*, New Collegeville Bible Commentary: New Testament, vol. 8 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), 106.

ultimate purpose of God’s provision of these gifts is to build up the church, which is an “every-member ministry.” It follows that when this intermediate step is not taken and the clergy tries to do the whole work, the church stagnates, and divisions occur.⁷

Furthermore, many pastors are tempted to think that only certain roles within the church should be delegated to the laity. For instance, a pastor may be tempted to delegate leadership of a small group or a hospitality ministry but not delegate other roles such as teaching or hospital visits. However, we do not see any biblical limit on what could be delegated. Tasks as large as preaching or as seemingly small as administrative work should be given to trained and equipped Christ-followers within the church. This training or equipping is for ministry. Service is the most straightforward translation of the word Paul uses, *diakonia*. Although it refers to such things as teaching the Scripture and missionary work, whatever is done for God and in his name for people is a ministry.⁸ Pastors today would be wise to take a fresh look at each task they do during the week and begin asking how they can equip Christ-followers to do these tasks.

Pastors Are to Look for Opportunities to Equip Christ-Followers

Pastors may become excited when someone joins their church and has an extensive background in serving and leading within the church. Often a pastor’s mind will begin to jump to the many roles that could be delegated to an experienced leader. When those people join the church, it should be celebrated. However, the pastor should remind himself that his role is to develop people like this individual has been developed by someone else. It is his role to equip the church to do the ministry; if he does not do it, it should not be expected that another will do it for him. Many pastors are tempted to look

⁷ James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians, An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 141.

⁸ Walter L. Liefeld, *Ephesians, InterVarsity New Testament Commentary Series 10* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 107.

for those who have been equipped by other pastors instead of doing the hard work of developing those under their charge. Paul’s aim in Ephesians 4 is to strengthen the position of the preachers, pastors, and teachers in the congregations—especially those facing attacks on their unity. Thus, these are theological expositions of great consequence. Paul names these people side-by-side with the old authorities, the apostles and prophets. He describes their functions as “gifts” assigned by Christ to the post-apostolic church.⁹ Pastors have indeed been given a high calling when they are named beside the prophets and apostles of generations past. They have a responsibility to enable their laity to fulfill their spiritual calling, the work of service. This service is for the edification of the body of Christ.¹⁰ Pastors should become proficient in looking for opportunities to equip Christ-followers within their congregation to take on ministry roles.

How Equipping Matures the Christ-Follower and Builds the Church

It is generally accepted and understood that pastors are to equip the church to be the church. However, many forget what equipped means. Surprising to some, the same verse instructing the shepherd and leaders to equip the church also tells the reader what this equipping should look like. Ephesians 4:12 instructs “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”¹¹ Pastors are to equip the saints to do ministry. The ministry will then have its effect of “building up the body of Christ.” It is tempting to read Ephesians 4:12 and see this as a call to training in Christianity’s teachings. And that *is* part of it, but simply teaching the ways of following Christ is not

⁹ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Epistle to the Ephesians: A Commentary*, trans. Helen Heron (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 191.

¹⁰ Thomas B. Slater, *Ephesians*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2012), 113.

¹¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the *English Standard Version*.

what Ephesians 4:12 states. Instead, Ephesians 4:12 clearly states that this equipping is leading Christ-followers to do ministry. This will of course include many aspects of discipleship, but the aim should not be missed: to do “the work of ministry for the building up the body of Christ.”

Within the book of Ephesians, there are several examples of how the body of Christ was being equipped. The vision to build up the body of Christ certainly provided a sense of mission for anyone serving within the church. With Paul laying out such a clear sense of purpose, no one cleaning the meeting room could see it as *only* cleaning but rather as an act of ministry that was one piece of a greater puzzle in building up the body of Christ. The entire book of Ephesians holds all who follow Christ to a high standard. Consider Paul’s next admonition in Ephesians 4:13–15:

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

These are quite high standards. Paul tells the saints that as they are equipped that they will attain the unity of the faith, mature manhood, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and more.

The book of Ephesians provides substantial teaching to help make Christ-followers more competent as they minister. For example, Paul writes, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:32). This exhortation would be greatly needed as the early church began ministering alongside one another, many from different social and cultural backgrounds serving in team settings (Acts 6). Furthermore, as in several other letters, Paul models Individual Consideration, identifying specific people and highlighting their strengths. He writes, “So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. I have sent him to you for this very purpose,

that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts” (Eph 6:21–22). Paul masterfully models how to equip the Christ-followers to do ministry by casting a large vision, setting high standards, instructing, and giving Individual Consideration.

Concluding Thoughts on Ephesians 4:11–12

A church will struggle to grow to maturity when Christ-followers are not intentionally equipped to do ministry within the church. This does not mean every Christ-follower must do every ministry; it means every Christ-follower must be equipped to do some form of ministry, with particular consideration given to how the Holy Spirit has gifted them to minister. Christ, the victor over all opposing forces and the sovereign over all of creation, is the one who now equips the church to join him in his sovereign reign. He gives gifts to discrete groups of people (v. 11) so they in turn can equip others to serve and edify the church (v. 12).¹² One could argue that Paul provides pastors with a one-sentence job description in Ephesians 4:11–14. Pastors—the shepherds and teachers—are to equip the saints for ministry, to help them mature and build up the body of Christ. Pastors should seek a mature church, which requires mature Christ-followers.

The Church Is Healthier When Lay Leaders Are Equipped with Essential Competencies to Lead (Exodus 18:13–14)

When pastors equip each Christ-follower and help them and the church grow to maturity, the church also becomes *healthier*. A healthy church is one in which ministry work is done in a sustainable manner. It is conceivable that a church could mature while being unhealthy, but this is unsustainable and undesirable. It is also possible a church could collapse due to poor health before it ever has a chance to mature. Said differently, the maturing of a church is not “a race against the clock” *per se*. However, a church

¹² Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 273.

becoming healthy is absolutely a race against the clock. By closely examining the lessons in Exodus 18, this section will explicate how leadership structure affects the health of a church.

There are many factors affecting the health of the local church, but the scope of this project, and specifically this section, focuses on what the church needs from a leadership perspective to be healthy. A healthy and sustainable leadership structure empowers others to carry the ministry load within the local church.

Today it is desirable to be the hero—to save the day. This is also seen within the church. Pastors are frequently tempted to see themselves as the savior of their church, but this line of thinking can extend to almost anyone within the church. It is possible for one person to do *too much* ministry. Conceivably, there are exceptions for emergencies, but one individual doing too much of the ministry will rot the church. Furthermore, when an individual falls into the trap of doing a greater share of the ministry than they should, this can result in burnout and create a dangerous culture. Conversely, when leaders develop a healthy leadership structure, it decreases the possibility of burnout and a negative workplace. It frees the leaders to do what God has called them to do.

Unhealthy Churches Burnout Lay Leaders

In a recent informal meeting of several pastors, an older pastor and one of the members of his church expressed concern about the state of their church. The older pastor lamented that after years and years of faithful work, the church kept shrinking in attendance and was now at the point of not being able to afford needed building maintenance. He said he simply could not understand why the church was shrinking; he had done everything he knew to make it grow. The church member who accompanied him exclaimed, “It just doesn’t make sense. Our pastor never tells anyone, ‘No.’ Our pastor does everything—I haven’t ever seen a better pastor. Our church should be growing.” Sadly, many pastors walk straight into the trap they try to avoid. Of course,

pastors want their churches to be healthy. So, pastors “work like the devil” to keep their churches healthy. Unfortunately, this “working like a devil” speeds up the disease within the church. Many pastors reason this task must be done, so I will simply handle it myself. Not only does this rob a lay leader from becoming more mature, but the pastor’s habit of handling it himself creates an unhealthy church. The older pastor’s church was on the verge of collapse because the pastor would never tell anyone “No” and would simply do the work himself so as to not be a burden to others. He thought this would grow his local church, but it killed it.

Overworked pastors and underutilized laity are not modern developments, however. Exodus 18 describes a strikingly similar situation. R. Alan Cole says that, like many Christian leaders, Moses was wearing himself out unnecessarily by trying to do everything single-handedly (Exod 18:18). Overworking is not always a mark of ambition; it is sometimes the mark of the overconscientious and the overanxious. Moreover, it was wearing out the people, a sometimes-overlooked aspect.¹³ Cole says, “Moses was wearing himself out unnecessarily.”¹⁴ Many church leaders are tempted to think that burnout is the norm and that being overwhelmed by ministry demands is *their calling*. Cole avers that it is far from a calling (in most cases) and is indeed unnecessary.¹⁵

Furthermore, Cole correctly notes that pastors tend to take on more than their calling’s worth of ministry tasks because they are either ambitious, a perfectionist (“overconscientious”), or overanxious.¹⁶ Christian leaders would be wise to identify which temptations are causing them to handle more of the ministry than they should. As the opening story of this section showed, it may seem heroic to “never tell a member, ‘No,’”

¹³ R. Alan Cole, *Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 140.

¹⁴ Cole, *Exodus*, 140.

¹⁵ Cole, *Exodus*, 140.

¹⁶ Cole, *Exodus*, 140.

but this attitude may be killing the church. Its root is not in helping a church member but instead in the pastor's own ambition, perfectionism, or anxiety.

Many pastors also burn themselves out when they overcomplicate determining to whom they should delegate ministry tasks. Exodus 18 shows very few restrictions on who can be a leader: "Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe" (Exod 18:21a). More simply, Mark S. Smith suggests all of these requirements could simply be summed up as "the judicial appointments to be made are 'God-fearing' (v. 21)."¹⁷

When a pastor begins to feel burnout, it is easy to fall into the trap of analysis paralysis. He may reason that it would be quicker to handle the matter than to identify and train someone to handle the situation. This line of thinking is deadly for churches and immediately precedes a pastor's burnout. This project proposes an alternative: the pastor should find lay leaders within the church who, if nothing else, are God-fearing and begin to disciple those people by asking them to help with tasks. For instance, it may take one hour's worth of work to identify, contact, meet, and equip a lay leader to handle a task that would have taken the pastor ten minutes to handle personally. If the lay leader is given six more opportunities to perform this task (however great or small), the lay leader's total ministry has now "saved" the pastor time to do other ministry. Unfortunately, most pastors today think too small, never considering the long-term benefits of equipping the laity. Yes, training lay leaders takes more time in the short run, but the long-term investment pays off for the pastor, the lay leader, and the church. It is rarely short-term pressure that burns out a pastor, but rather long-term pressure. Therefore, pastors would be wise to accept Jethro's advice and make a short-term investment today to alleviate long-term pressure tomorrow.

¹⁷ Mark S. Smith, *Exodus*, New Collegeville Bible Commentary: Old Testament, vol. 3 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 74.

If a leader accepts Jethro’s advice to bring others into the ministry to share the load, this will be one of the pastor’s greatest defenses against ministry burnout. Rabbi Samuel ben Meir writes of “Jethro’s *prediction* that as Moses follows Jethro’s advice, then God will give him sufficient strength to bear up.”¹⁸ In a similar way, pastors who resist the self-righteous temptation to do all the work themselves and are faithful to equip lay leaders to do the ministry will find themselves and their churches becoming increasingly healthy.

Unhealthy Churches Create Dangerous Cultures

Podcasts such as *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill* spotlight how horribly unhealthy church cultures can become.¹⁹ Exodus 18 models how unhealthy the culture within God’s people had become. Desmond T. Alexander notes that the people are not only grumbling against and testing God and Moses; they are also not getting along with one another.²⁰ Moses spends all day judging the people’s cases against one another. Many modern readers of Exodus 18 perceive Moses as a leader buried beneath his ministry load. However, it would be wise to step back and imagine the culture within this group as they wander through the wilderness. The people stand all day waiting for justice. Moses is worn out, and so are the people. By God’s grace, Jethro arrives and questions his son-in-law as to why he ministers alone. Moses’s response centers on how he is uniquely placed to make known the decrees of God and his instructions (Exod 18:16). Moses’s response to Jethro is basically: I am the one who makes God known to these people.

¹⁸ Samuel ben Meir, *Rashbam’s Commentary on Exodus: An Annotated Translation*, trans. Martin I. Lockshin, Brown Judaic Studies 310 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 197.

¹⁹ Mike Cospers, “Who Killed Mars Hill?,” June 22, 2021, in *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill*, produced by Erik Petrik, podcast, 60:00, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/who-killed-mars-hill/>.

²⁰ T. Desmond Alexander, *Exodus*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 351.

Now, consider the leadership structure within most local churches today. Ask a pastor why he insists on taking so many of the pastoral counseling sessions or why he preaches more than forty-five weekends a year. Many pastors would likely respond similarly to Moses: “I am the who is to make known the decrees of God.” While true, this sort of thinking can be dangerous to the church’s culture. If pastors not only train themselves but also their congregations to believe this, it is difficult to imagine outcomes far different than the outcomes warned against in *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill*.

A leadership culture built around one man as God’s mouthpiece can be easily abused. However, even if a pastor has the maturity level as to not abuse this, this attitude can still create a deadly culture within the church. Consider H. L. Ellison’s insight on this passage:

Moses allowed himself to be regarded as omniscient and responsible for all the problems that might arise among the people. There were three bad results. Moses himself was overworked and could not cope with all he had to do. The people were deprived of the swift justice that was needed. Finally, the elders and other competent individuals were deprived of the opportunities of using their talents.²¹

The three consequences of a leader thinking of himself as “omniscient” are alive and well within local churches today. While the consequences may not lead to one of the churches vanishing virtually overnight, as happened to several of the Mars Hill church locations,²² the damages can be just as serious: a culture of leadership burnout, people’s needs falling through the cracks, and lay leaders not equipped to do their God-given ministries.

There are implications to failing to create healthy and sustainable leadership structures by equipping additional leaders. Cole provides a biblical example: “Delay in justice, arising from similar reasons, was one of the causes of Absalom’s revolt in later

²¹ H. L. Ellison, *Exodus*, Daily Study Bible: Old Testament (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1982), 97.

²² Cospers, “Who Killed Mars Hill?”

centuries (2 Sa. 15:1–6).”²³ Today, it is unlikely for there to be a bloody revolt over ministry leaders trying to handle all the ministry. However, there are serious consequences that have eternal implications. First, people fall through the cracks when leaders become the bottleneck by failing to equip lay leaders to do the ministry. For instance, imagine a church member with a need who contacts the church. The pastor thinks to himself, “I’ll contact them on my drive home today.” As the afternoon gets busier, the pastor forgets to make the call. Days turn into weeks, and the person is never contacted. The individual with the issue eventually concludes the pastor simply does not care and silently leaves the church. Or consider another all-too-common consequence of leaders creating unhealthy cultures: the population of college students begins to grow rapidly within the church and requests funds, training, facility use, announcement time on Sundays, etc. However, the pastor is too busy dealing with an overwhelming day-to-day ministry. Eventually, the under-resourced college minister decides to leave the church and start another church in town, taking the college students from the first church with him. Being overwhelmed is no excuse to not handle ministry. Instead, the feeling of being overwhelmed should be a warning to the pastor and those around him: danger is imminent.

Ellison observes that “Jethro realized, however, that there were situations which only Moses could deal with. Many a church would be happier if this lesson were learnt by its members, and above all that the most ‘charismatic’ is not always the wisest.”²⁴ Ultimately, Moses accepts and implements Jethro’s advice. In Deuteronomy 1:9–18, Moses states his inability to judge the people alone, and in view of this limitation he selects judges.²⁵ Moses realizes he needs help, and he does something about it.

²³ Cole, *Exodus*, 140.

²⁴ Ellison, *Exodus*, 97.

²⁵ Thomas B. Dozeman, *Exodus*, Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 408.

Equipped Lay Leaders Free Pastors to Focus on What They Are Called to Do

At this point in examining Exodus 18, it must be noted that there is a difference between not *desiring* to do some form of ministry and being *overwhelmed* to the point of not being able to carry out one's God-appointed ministry. In the former case, a pastor's motivation for equipping lay leaders could be abdication of responsibility, an abuse of the application of Exodus 18. A pastor could lean so heavily into equipping others that he becomes lazy. An equally bad outcome would be a pastor delegating all his tasks and only doing "ministry he loves." This could become a case of pastoral exceptionalism.²⁶ However, on the whole, pastors seem to lean towards burnout and being overwhelmed, not laziness or setting themselves as being above certain tasks. In Exodus 18, Moses was legitimately overwhelmed. Victor P. Hamilton points out, "Judging is not an intermittent ministry of Moses. It has become an all-consuming ministry, one that goes on 'all day long.' Even if that is a bit of a hyperbole, it points to judging disputes as something that Moses does not do spasmodically."²⁷ Furthermore, Moses was not delegating to others so that he could work less *per se*. Instead, he empowered and delegated so that he could work on that which was reserved for his role within the people of God.

In a similar way, pastors today should not read Exodus 18 and think "I have found a way that I can get all the ministry done in half the time—more relaxing time for me." Pastors should study Exodus 18 and see a God-prescribed plan to equip others to do ministry, enabling Moses to do what God had truly called him to. There were certain tasks that were neglected because only Moses could do them. However, when Moses was tied up with tasks that were supposed to be handled by others, these critical ministry tasks

²⁶ Pastoral exceptionalism is defined as a pastor refusing to do certain ministry tasks he should simply because he does not care to, in effect communicating "that task is not life-giving to me."

²⁷ Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 285.

were left undone. Martin Noth describes this: “To sacral justice, and thus in the present instance to Moses, is reserved ‘converse with God’ i.e., the proclamation of divine statutes and decisions, the publishing of directives for the right ‘way’ and the ‘inquiring of God’ which was provided for especially in the judging of ‘hard case.’ All the rest is to be handed over to trustworthy men.”²⁸ John Oswalt echoes a similar observation:

Because Moses was freed from the mass of administrative trivia that was engulfing him, he was able to focus on the main thing, communicating the covenant to the people. Furthermore, just as the system of delegation made it possible for the “major cases” (18:22, 26) to work their way up to Moses, so also there was an effective means for passing the words of God from Moses down to the smallest group of people, the “ten.”²⁹

In virtually every church today, there are critical ministry tasks left undone because a pastor is preoccupied with tasks that should have been delegated to others. For instance, consider a church that is purely reactionary, where there is no plan. The pastor is focused on solving problems that arrive via email or private conversations in the hallways on Sunday mornings; he is unable to spend adequate time thinking about the next sermon or a new outreach initiative for the surrounding neighborhood. Conversely, a pastor who heeds Jethro’s advice, equips others to serve, and begins to spend that newly gained time to focus on the tasks he is uniquely called to, is part of a church positioning itself to accomplish its purpose and calling.

How Moses Was Trained in Exodus 18

In Exodus 18, the clearest picture of leadership is not Moses, but Jethro, Moses’s father-in-law. Here, Jethro sets a clear vision and sense of mission: “If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure, and all this people also will go to

²⁸ Martin Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary*, trans. J. S. Bowden, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 150.

²⁹ John N. Oswalt, *Exodus*, in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, vol. 2, *Genesis, Exodus*, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2008), 425.

their place in peace” (Exod 18:23). Jethro makes it clear that doing this would help Moses accomplish what he desired: receiving God’s direction, maintaining endurance, and meeting the people’s needs. Jethro also confronted Moses: “What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. Now obey my voice” (Exod 18:17b–19a). Jethro’s advice would take a lot of work on the front end, but Jethro knew the benefits of this work. He did not simply leave it to Moses to figure this out on his own; instead, he set high standards and provided helpful instruction:

Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. (Exod 18:21–22b)

Finally, Jethro’s entire involvement in Exodus is a case study in Individual Consideration. Jethro noticed that Moses and the people were wearing out, and he took the time to address the issue.

Concluding Thoughts on Exodus 18:13–14

If pastors want to be healthy and have a healthy church, they must equip lay leaders. Failing to do so can result in pastoral burnout, people falling through the cracks, developing a potentially dangerous leadership culture, and the high likelihood that the pastor will not have the time to focus on what God has specifically called him to do. The single greatest leverage a pastor has in creating a healthy church is equipping the lay leaders of the church to do the ministry.

The Church’s Mission Moves Forward When Pastors Equip Lay Leaders with Essential Competencies to Lead (Acts 6:1–7)

Pastors who do not equip lay leaders can unintentionally kill their churches. Pastors who do equip lay leaders give life to their churches. Equipped leaders are

maturing and healthy Christ-followers. Furthermore, equipping lay leaders results in increasing church growth. As others are equipped, the mission of the church moves forward. The local congregation benefits as it is equipped to do the ministry, but the benefits do not remain confined to the local congregation. They begin to spill over into other areas of society as well, resulting in reaching more people with the gospel, making more disciples, and growing churches. A properly equipped church cannot be contained. Churches that have plateaued, are in decline, or feel stuck should study Acts 6 and compare that situation with their own. Pastors may realize their hard work has turned into a ministry bottleneck impeding the church's health and growth. Thankfully, Acts 6 provides God's plan for overcoming such ministry bottlenecks and moving the church forward.

A Case Study in Equipping Lay Leaders

The book of Acts is a case study in equipping lay leaders to do ministry. Acts 6 presents a church in crisis: Hellenist Christian widows were not being fed through the church's ministry. This was an incredibly sensitive situation, and much was at stake. If the apostles had denied serving the Hellenists, this could have split the early church. Furthermore, from an ethical and moral perspective, refusing to feed the Hellenist widows would not have been an appropriate outcome. However, serving the tables would require additional time that the apostles simply did not have. Their primary responsibilities were prayer and teaching, so spending less time on those activities seemed un-wise. The apostles proposed to equip seven men to handle the feeding of the widows, enabling the apostles to fulfill their calling to pray and teach. Settling this issue led to a surprising outcome: the church flourished and grew in number.

This passage makes evident another reason to equip lay leaders to do the work of ministry. Not only will lay leaders increase in maturity and the church grow in health,

but the mission of the church will move forward as additional members are equipped to serve.

The Apostles Took Responsibility for Solving the Problem

Acts 6 demonstrates that internal problems can not only keep the church from growing, but they can also threaten to split the entire church. The problems with the Hellenists and Hebrews ran deep, yet churches today lose their missional effectiveness over smaller issues than those faced by the apostles. Ben Witherington explains the depth of the issue when he states,

The predominant interpretation of Acts 6:1–8 holds that the “Hellenists” and “Hebrews” were separate, ideologically defined parties within the early Jerusalem church. The Hellenists, being universalistic in outlook and liberal in temperament, came after a short time to realize—in a way that the narrow, conservative Hebrew believers could not receive—the full implications of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.³⁰

Consider the depths of this issue. Not only were the Hellenist Christians at odds with the Hebrew Christians, but now even their own church was not feeding their widows. The Hellenist Christians were surely discouraged.

Thankfully and by God’s grace, the apostles intervened. Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch point out, “The grievance was resolved by the Twelve, who served as supervising managers of the Jerusalem Jesus group.”³¹ The apostles had the authority to resolve this problem, and they did. While there are certainly differences between the apostles described in Acts 6 and pastors of local congregations today, what they both have in common is the authority to create solutions within their local churches. The solution the apostles formulated for handling the growing ministry needs was to equip lay leaders to do the ministry; this enabled the apostles to focus on their core responsibilities,

³⁰ Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 129.

³¹ Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Book of Acts*, Social-Science Commentary (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 56.

teaching and praying.

Many point to Acts 6 as the creation of the diaconate. J. B. Lightfoot explains, “Indeed the whole narrative seems to imply that this clash of offices did not exist before. . . . This then was the first establishment of the diaconate.”³² However, not all hold this position. As E. M. Blaiklock notes, “The Seven are never actually called ‘deacons’ and may be regarded as special offices appointed to meet a special need.”³³ Regardless of whether or not these seven men were considered the first deacons, or if deacons are to be a permanent office within the local church, one thing can be known with certainty: those with authority created the solution to handle this issue. The apostles took responsibility for the situation and handled it, and the problem was resolved.

It should also be noted *who* was selected to be equipped for doing this ministry. Scripture says, “Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty” (Acts 6:3). Those appointed to oversee this particular ministry were given an enormous ministry. James D. G. Dunn describes this verse as stressing the need for selecting mature leaders: “This phrase certainly envisages one whose inspiration, insight and discernment was exceptionally well matured.”³⁴ Carl R. Holladay connects the type of person sought by the apostles with the advice Jethro gave Moses. Holladay explains,

Exodus 18:17–23 provides precedent for delegating responsibilities to subordinates. . . . Moses follows the advice of his father-in-law, Jethro, and appoints men who are Godfearing trustworthy, and honest as subordinate judges. Moses’s appointment of Joshua as his successor also offers some parallels (Num 27:15–23).

³² J. B. Lightfoot, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Newly Discovered Commentary*, ed. Ben Witherington III and Todd D. Still, Lightfoot Legacy Set, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 105.

³³ E. M. Blaiklock, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Historical Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 75.

³⁴ James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996), 83.

God instructs Moses to select Joshua, who is spirit-filled (v. 18), and upon whom Moses lays his hand when presenting Israel's future leader.³⁵

Therefore, it should be noted that when equipping lay leaders to do ministry, pastors should use wisdom in selecting people who are the right fit for the specific ministry needs. It should also be noted that while Ephesians 4 stresses the need for *all* Christ-followers to be equipped to do the work of ministry, Acts 6 and Exodus 18 describe equipping people to take *leadership* positions. As did Moses and the apostles, pastors must take special care when considering whom to appoint to leadership positions. Anyone who follows Christ should be equipped for ministry. However, as leadership needs arise, the criteria for those who fill those positions must be tighter.

The apostles in Acts 6 were essentially a bottleneck, preventing ministry from smoothly proceeding because others were waiting on them. This resulted in the neglect of the Hellenist widows. Today, a bottleneck in or backlog of unfinished ministry may mean the pastor's sermon is not finished each week or that people within the church are not being properly cared for. When *ministry* is not happening, it is always a *people* problem. One could be tempted to oversimplify and remove the human element as one reads Acts 6, thinking, "Hellenist widows were not fed." But this misses the weight of the situation: *real* people with *real* names were not fed. Given the differences and possible early hostilities between the Hellenists and the Hebrews, it is easy to imagine them worshipping together in the temple courts and in each other's homes begrudgingly. The Hellenist worshipping beside a Hebrew may have had a difficult time concentrating, knowing that his kind were not being cared for by their church. This sort of tension kills churches even today. Walk into most churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance, and it will not take long before a sense of division is felt, with certain groups frustrated and hurt by other groups.

³⁵ Carl R. Holladay, *Acts: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016), 153–54.

The apostles recognized that they must stay focused on their role: teaching and praying. They also realized the importance of the food ministry, so they equipped others to lead this ministry. Blaiklock says, “The leadership of the Twelve in a thoroughly democratic fellowship (2, 3), and the recognition that an expanding society demanded organization. . . . From their names it appears that those chosen were themselves Greek Jews. If so, the choice reveals the graciousness of the Church.”³⁶ The apostles noticed the issue, addressed the issue, and put into place a viable, sustainable solution. This could have only been accomplished by the apostles equipping the church to be the church. In the same way today, pastors must not allow their own pride or fear to allow them to personally overcommit—even for important ministry. Once a pastor has overcommitted his time, the cost will be the failure of his own duties. However, the pastor today cannot simply ignore ministry needs. The God-given solution is to equip others to do ministry.

Equipped Lay Leaders Move the Mission Forward

In Acts 6, the apostles recognized the division and created a solution. In churches today, it is virtually always the pastor(s) who will be able to not only hear of the problem, but also have the authority to do something about it. The encouragement here is that once this issue was handled in Acts 6, the church began to multiply. J. W. Packer writes, “The church grew rapidly and the inclusions of very many of the priests was, from its particular mention, something of an achievement. It shows that even the temple priesthood was being attracted by the Faith.”³⁷ Furthermore, the seven who were chosen to lead not only played a part in the church expanding, but these men also grew in fruitfulness. James Montgomery Boice points out, “But from this point on we do not find

³⁶ Blaiklock, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 75.

³⁷ J. W. Packer, *Acts of the Apostles: Commentary*, Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 50.

those apostles appearing very much. What happens is that the deacons become the prominent and most effective witnesses.”³⁸ Imagine if pastors today could lay down their pride, stop being the bottleneck, and equip lay leaders. If pastors today would address their current issues by providing opportunities to lay leaders and equipping them to do the ministry, perhaps there would be a multiplication of Christ-followers in our day too.

How Lay Leaders Were Trained in Acts 6

In Acts 6, the apostles established a clear vision and sense of mission. Those who were chosen to serve knew they were both freeing the apostles to teach and pray (v. 4) and ensuring the Hellenist widows were fed (v. 1). Note that this vision was not particularly creative or elaborately shared; the vision was simply, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the Word of God to serve tables” (v. 2). Yet the vision and sense of mission was enough to please the congregation and support the selection of seven men. Though the vision lacked in creativity, it was logical; it was unwise for the apostles to serve food at the expense of preaching and praying. Those chosen were held to a high standard: “Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (v. 3). These men were not only chosen to wait tables; they were chosen to be models of what it looks like to follow Christ.

The apostles also gave instruction to the entire congregation. In relieving giving responsibility to others, one senses that the apostles are making it clear to the congregation that going forward, all questions or concerns about the food ministry should be presented to these men. All questions about preaching and prayer should be presented to the apostles.

Finally, one can argue that the apostles provided a model to the congregation

³⁸ James Montgomery Boice, *Acts, An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997), 118.

of Individual Consideration by describing the characteristics of the right leader and then entrusting the congregation to the selection. The congregation presents each of the seven men to the apostles (v. 5), who pray and lay hands on them (v. 6). One of the seven chosen to wait tables is Philip. After another one of the seven, Stephen, was martyred (Acts 7:59–60), Philip goes to Samaria to preach. His preaching was fruitful, Scriptures teach that “when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent to them Peter and John” (Acts 8:14). While the evidence is not conclusive, it does appear the apostles continued a relationship with the seven men who were appointed to wait tables—to the extent that they knew Philip was now in Samaria and that people there were accepting Christ. The apostles modeled a way for modern pastors to lead their lay leaders when they (1) gave a vision and sense of mission, (2) held the lay leaders to high standards, (3) gave appropriate training, and (4) extended Individual Consideration to those they were leading.

Concluding Thoughts on Acts 6:1–7

Naturally, churches grow. As Christ-followers study the Scriptures and by God’s grace apply the Scriptures to their lives, the gospel spreads, grows, and multiplies as it has done for the last two thousand years. However, within local bodies of Christ-followers, disease can set in and prevent growth. In Acts 6, the disease was manifested in the hostilities between the Hellenists and the Hebrews. Exacerbating the issue were the many tasks overwhelming the apostles and the ministry needs of real people who were falling through the cracks. The apostles recognized they needed to equip others to carry the ministry load. If they did nothing, the entire church could collapse due of the hostilities between the Hellenists and the Hebrews. If the apostles devoted themselves to the serving of food, the church could collapse for lack of prayer and teaching. Thankfully, God guided the apostles to a third solution: equipping others to help with the ministry. As a result, the church thrived and multiplied. Perhaps today, God is guiding

pastors away from overcommitting and away from negligence and towards a third option:
equipping others to serve.

CHAPTER 3
PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL
FOUNDATIONS FOR EQUIPPING
LEADERS IN LEADERSHIP
COMPETENCIES

Chapter 2 described the theological and biblical basis for this project at Essential Church. This chapter focuses on the philosophical and theoretical considerations for equipping church leaders in essential leadership competencies. The benefits of doing so will be the church's maturation, the health of the church, and the missional effectiveness of the church.

**The Local Church Matures as Pastors
Equip Church Leaders to Lead**

This project defines leadership as taking the initiative to influence. The truth is that everyone leads. People lead themselves, family members, coworkers, classmates, and many other categories of people. However, churches rarely train their people on how to lead, even those holding official leadership positions. Amazingly, at any given church, hardworking lay leaders are frequently among the most influential people in the church; they embody leadership, yet they have not been equipped in leadership competencies. Churches can learn from James Kouzes and Barry Posner, who write about individual leadership skills. They note that “in the best organizations, everyone, regardless of title or position, is encouraged to act like a leader.”¹ Bruce Avolio writes that training “can be viewed as a planned intervention in the life stream, where given a particular model, method, time period, and evaluation strategy, we expect to change the course in people’s

¹ James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 14.

mental model, behavior, and direction of the life stream.”² An assumption within this project is that all people lead *something*; therefore, pastors should especially train those holding *official* leadership positions in effective, God-honoring leadership.

Once a pastor determines they want to train their lay leaders in effective, God-honoring leadership, the pastor would be wise to establish a plan for what exactly he hopes to equip their lay leaders with. For the purposes of this project, I chose to equip leaders in the Transformational Leadership Theory model. I selected TLT because it is a leadership model proven effective through academic research.³ This is important because pastors should strive to train lay leaders in a system that is proven to work, not simply the most popular or most recent fashionable trend in leadership. Furthermore, TLT focuses on both the follower’s and the organization’s goals. As chapter 2 demonstrated, there is biblical foundation for the fact that a leader’s need to serve his or her followers is not only important, but essential. Biblical teaching also emphasizes accomplishing the church’s mission, (e.g., the Great Commission). Therefore, leaders today need to both care and develop their followers while achieving organizational effectiveness (i.e., *pursuing* the Great Commission).

TLT has achieved widespread academic approval by demonstrating a focus on its followers *and* promoting organizational success. Peter Guy Northouse defines TLT:

As its name implies, transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and

² Bruce J. Avolio, *Leadership Development in Balance: Made/Born* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 172.

³ For more extensive documentation of the academic research supporting the Transformational Leadership Theory model, see the following studies: Kevin B. Lowe, K. Galen Kroeck, and Nagaraj Sivasubramaniam, “Effectiveness Correlates of Transformational and Transactional Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of the MLQ Literature,” *Leadership Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1996): 385–425; John Antonakis, “Transformational and Charismatic Leadership,” in *The Nature of Leadership*, ed. John Antonakis and David V. Day (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), 256–88; Jay A. Conger, “Charismatic and Transformational Leadership in Organizations: An Insider’s Perspective on These Developing Streams of Research,” *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 145–79; James G. Hunt and Jay A. Conger, “From Where We Sit: An Assessment of Transformational and Charismatic Leadership Research,” *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (1999): 335–43; Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).

long-term goals. It includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings. Transformational leadership involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. It is a process that often incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership.⁴

TLT includes four key components often referred to as the "Four I's." The Four I's of TLT are as follows: (1) Idealized Influence: "Idealized Influence describes leaders who act as strong roles models for followers; followers identify with these leaders and want very much to emulate them."⁵ (2) Inspirational Motivation: "This factor is descriptive of leaders who communicate high expectations to followers, inspiring them through motivation to become committed to and a part of the shared vision in the organization."⁶ (3) Intellectual Stimulation: "It includes leadership that stimulates followers to be creative and innovative and to challenge their own beliefs and values as well as those of the leader and the organization. . . . It encourages followers to think things out on their own and engage in careful problem solving."⁷ (4) Individual Consideration: "This factor is representative of leaders who provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of followers. Leaders act as coaches and advisers while trying to assist followers in becoming fully actualized . . . an example of this type of leadership is a manager who spends time treating each employee in a caring and unique way."⁸ Each of these Four I's is foundational to TLT.

Leaders Should Be the Leader Followers Want to Follow

The first "I" of TLT is Idealized Influence. Idealized Influence should be

⁴ Peter Guy Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 185.

⁵ Northouse, *Leadership*, 191.

⁶ Northouse, *Leadership*, 193.

⁷ Northouse, *Leadership*, 193.

⁸ Northouse, *Leadership*, 193.

understood as being an *ideal* leader. For Christian leaders, this can be understood as being the leader people want to follow. A leader could have an incredible vision, be a wonderful team builder, and even care for each of her followers; however, if she is not personally the type of leader people want to follow, she will be an ineffective leader. Idealized Influence does not mean you have to be a people pleaser, an extrovert, or particularly nice or easy-going. However, it does mean you must practice what you preach and live with integrity. One way to think of Idealized Influence is that a leader should avoid traits and behaviors linked to a lack of character. Saratoga Institute published a list of characteristics known to hurt one's ability to exercise Idealized Influence. The list includes "dishonesty, focus on the past, inconsistency, lack of vision or values, low risk takers, mean, no concern for process, pessimism, satisfaction with status quo, self-centeredness, short-term focus, unfocused; and unwillingness to communicate."⁹ Idealized Influence also fits within the biblical narrative of leadership. Anytime the Bible teaches on the qualifications of leadership, the requirements are virtually always character-based rather than skill-based.¹⁰ This character flows from a leader knowing first and foremost who he is in Jesus. Leighton Ford says, "I am impressed that before Jesus had done a single thing to start his ministry, God said he was pleased with who he was. It says to us that God is far more interested in our being than our doing, in what we are than in our actions."¹¹

For any aspiring leader, the first step in having Idealized Influence would be examining oneself. William L. Gardner and Bruce J. Avolio state,

Knowing oneself and being oneself are essential qualities of authentic leadership.

⁹ Saratoga Institute, *Leadership Development: Programs and Practices, Future Directions, Examples, and Models: A Report* (New York: AMACOM, 1998), 74.

¹⁰ One exception is that elders are required to be able to teach. See 1 Timothy 3:2.

¹¹ Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values, and Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 41.

“Know thyself” was the inscription on a frieze above the Oracle of Delphi, which has been ascribed to Socrates and to whom the concept of personal authenticity may go back to. “Know thyself” appears in the works of Ovid and Cicero, Christian writings, and eastern sacred texts. Abraham Maslow, Warren Bennis, and Stephen Covey, among others, have carried on the tradition.¹²

Therefore, leaders should spend time in self-examination. They should think carefully and soberly in asking the question, “Am I living a life of integrity?” Furthermore, leaders should spend time considering how their own actions are perceived and interpreted from the perspective of their followers.

Today, few desire to have low character; however, they may engage in activities that are easily interpreted as low character to others. For instance, consider a church’s “First Impressions” team leader. He has asked his greeters to avoid talking to friends while serving and to remain diligent in welcoming new people. However, while between important tasks, the volunteers spot their team leader talking to his friends. Perhaps he was not failing to do his assigned role by talking to his friends, as he was between tasks and had the time. However, his actions were perceived as not keeping his own instructions, hurting his ability to have Idealized Influence.

A key component of Idealized Influence is possessing both character and competence. Stephen Covey describes this well:

Trustworthiness is based on character, what you are as a person, and competence, what you can do. If you have faith in my character but not in my competence, you still wouldn’t trust me. Many good, honest people gradually lose their professional trustworthiness because they allow themselves to become “obsolete” inside their organizations. Without character and competence, we won’t be considered trustworthy, nor will we show much wisdom in our choices and decisions. Without meaningful ongoing professional development, there is little trustworthiness or trust.¹³

When a leader seeks to be that *idealized* leader, he must communicate that he can be trusted because of who he is and what he stands for *and* because of his ability to

¹² William L. Gardner, Bruce J. Avolio, and Fred O. Walumbwa, eds., *Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice: Origins, Effects, and Development*, Monographs in Leadership and Management 3 (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2005), 159.

¹³ Stephen R. Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 31.

get the work done. If followers believe a leader has the character but not the competence, they will not follow. Likewise, when followers believe the leader has the ability but not the character, they will not follow. A leader with Idealized Influence will only be considered trustworthy when he has both character and competency.

Leaders Must Cast an Appealing Vision

The second “I” of TLT is Inspirational Motivation. Leaders must connect their followers to a greater purpose. If followers have no greater purpose, the team should consider disbanding. However, within the church setting, ministry teams have significant purpose. That said, few in positions of leadership do an adequate job of connecting the dots between a ministry’s function and that ministry’s importance. For instance, continuing with the First Impressions example, imagine that the team leader tells a volunteer, “Stand there and pass out bulletins to each person who enters.” This command is clear and relevant. However, at some point, the team leader should provide more than clear and relevant commands. He should share why “standing there and passing out programs” is important. He could say, “Stand there and give a bulletin to each person who arrives because we want our church to be welcoming for anyone who may be nervous about coming to church for the first time.” Now, the team leader has given clear, relevant instructions that also inspire the volunteer.

Kouzes and Posner state, “Keeping individuals focused on a common goal promoted a stronger sense of teamwork than emphasizing individual objectives.”¹⁴ A ministry suffers when it is not inspired or not told how its efforts accomplish something important. It is only a matter of time before the team loses interest in serving, working with excellence, and putting up with the oddities of the other people on the team. A

¹⁴ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 232.

strong sense of mission and vision will keep the team more satisfied, focused, and effective.

Leaders desiring to grow in Inspirational Motivation should spend time with the people on the team, asking them about their values—especially values relevant to the ministry. For instance, a First Impressions team leader may wisely ask her volunteers why they signed up to serve on the First Impressions team. Or she may ask volunteers about their personal experiences the first time they showed up at the church. Asking either of these questions could extract valuable information that would help the team leader understand what is important to the people on her team. She could then synthesize the values and create a shared vision for the First Impressions team. Kouzes and Posner posit, “You need to keep in mind that you can’t effectively, authentically lead others to places they don’t want to go. If the vision is to be attractive to more than an insignificant few, it must appeal to all who have a stake in it.”¹⁵ Rick Bellingham and William O’Brien share the following recommendations: “Create a shared vision. Actions: Capture the imagination of others by communicating a clear sense of the organization’s purpose and mission. Set aside time for discussion, reflection, and clarification of the organization’s vision and mission. Ask yourself and others if this vision matches the image you and they hold for the future.”¹⁶

Leaders Must Help Improve the Ministry

The third “P” of TLT is Intellectual Stimulation. It is common for a leader to be able to generate ideas on how to improve his team. However, the best leaders develop teams of people who can generate ideas for improving team effectiveness. A leader can provide effective ministry leadership by helping his team learn to think for themselves.

¹⁵ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 125.

¹⁶ Rick Bellingham and William O’Brien, *The Leadership Lexicon: A Handbook of Leadership Competencies with Skills and Development Actions* (Amherst, MA: HRD Press, 2005), 23.

Kenneth H. Blanchard notes, “Your goal as a manager should be to gradually increase the competence and confidence of your people so that you can begin to use less time-consuming styles—supporting and delegating—and still get high-quality results.”¹⁷

Leaders can provide Intellectual Stimulation by speaking directly to members of their team. A leader should ask probing questions to get the team thinking. Robert Fulmer and Marshall Goldsmith describe this:

The best practice organizations realized that to enable change, the leadership development process must fit the culture of its organization. A first step for those designing the leadership development process was to ensure this linkage by soliciting the direct input of their customers. Input from key customers is an ongoing process for best practice organizations.¹⁸

Here, Fulmer and Goldsmith address how to create change within an organization. They suggest the first step is to go directly to the people who would be impacted by the change. In a similar way, church lay leaders today should go directly to those serving and solicit ideas. This may not only generate useful ideas but also begin to create a culture in which lay leaders begin to think for themselves about how to improve their area of ministry.

Pastors Are Required to Lead Teams of Individuals

The fourth and final “I” is Individual Consideration. The leader must think of both the team and the individuals who make up the team. Carolyn Nilson explains, “The easiest way to reorient your thinking is to think first of the group, the team, as a collection of individuals. Don’t think of your learners as a ‘class.’ Think about how to maximize the diversity of the members. Think up with people, not down to the bottom

¹⁷ Ken Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership* (New York: William Morrow, 1985), 67.

¹⁸ Robert M. Fulmer and Marshall Goldsmith, *The Leadership Investment: How the World’s Best Organizations Gain Strategic Advantage through Leadership Development* (New York: AMACOM, 2001), 13.

line—more like an anthropologist than an accountant.”¹⁹ The best leaders are simultaneously developing the team (Intellectual Stimulation) and developing the individual (Individual Consideration).

One reason why Individual Consideration is so important is that each person on a team is dynamic. Even if the person is successful today, that does not mean he will be successful in his ministry tomorrow. Therefore, the leader must be in the practice of giving constant consideration to each person. In a book on exceptional leadership, the editors consider the historical example of Winston Churchill: “Leadership is highly context sensitive. A great example of this is Winston Churchill, who was praised as a ‘wartime’ leader but was jettisoned by his country and his party once the war was over.”²⁰ If a leader can provide Individual Consideration, he or she will be more effective in helping individuals navigate and manage the changing circumstances the team faces.

The Church Matures as More Christ-Followers Are Trained to Lead

Recall that volunteers in the church are already leading by taking the initiative to influence something. Now they need to be equipped to lead effectively. As they are equipped to lead effectively, the church grows in maturity. For example, consider the single-pastor church. If the church is small enough, the pastor can attend everything—small groups, worship services, volunteer training, outreach events, etc. While at these various events, the pastor can lead, shepherd, and address issues. However, as the church grows, the pastor can no longer attend every event. The pressing question becomes, “Who leads when *the* leader is no longer present?” In church settings, this typically

¹⁹ Carolyn D. Nilson, *How to Manage Training: A Guide to Design and Delivery for High Performance*, 3rd ed. (New York: AMACOM, 2003), 109.

²⁰ Rob Elkington, “Redesigning the Hero Leader: Leveraging Emergent Leadership,” in *Exceptional Leadership by Design: How Design in Great Organizations Produces Great Leadership*, ed. Rob Elkington et al. (Bingley, England: Emerald, 2018), 78.

results in a leadership vacuum in which no one leads. Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck note, “It’s easy to forget that the failure of Adam’s leadership in the garden was passivity, not aggression.”²¹ Unfortunately, in church settings where the one (hopefully effective) leader is no longer present, passivity is exactly what develops. If someone does take responsibly and begins to lead, he may cause further damage if he has not been equipped to effectively lead. When the pastor is intentionally influencing (i.e., leading) lay leaders to effectively lead, the equipped lay leaders can now provide effective leadership even in the pastor’s absence. The goal of equipping lay leaders is that several equipped lay leaders would be present at every ministry event. Imagine these lay leaders were providing Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Consideration. It would only be a matter of time before that church would realize widespread maturing in its membership. In this situation, leaders would be leading with integrity, and teams would be reminded of their mission and have a bigger vision for what God has called them to do. Each ministry would be improving, and people would be cared for and disciplined as individuals.

The Church Is Healthier When Lay Leaders Are Equipped with Essential Competencies to Lead

The work of ministry is never finished. There will always be more ministry needs. Too frequently, pastors burn out from ministry. There are several reasons for this. First, pastors typically feel a deep and personal calling to their work. For instance, Chima Amadi writes, “Genuine leaders operate out of a sense of calling, not a sense of drivenness. . . . A sense of identity, a security that comes from knowing who one is, lies at the very heart of leadership.”²² Because pastors operate from a sense of identity, they are

²¹ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 59.

²² Chima S. Amadi, *Church Human Resources Development Model: Applying Jesus’ Spiritual Willingness Development Model* (Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria: Springfield, 1996), 37.

willing to sacrifice much, even to the point of burnout. Second, many churches have members that do not practice healthy boundaries and severely impose upon the time and energy of pastors. Third, many members do not understand or properly recognize when the pastor is working and when he is not. Fourth, the work of ministry is stressful. In an average day, many pastors deal with church budget issues, counseling those in crisis, and management issues with staff and volunteers. This is in addition to writing their weekly sermon(s). Pastors would join many organizational leaders in agreement with the authors of *Managing Leadership Stress* when they describe that “more than 60 percent of surveyed leaders cite their organizations as failing to provide them with the tools they need to manage stress.”²³

Furthermore, many church leaders have not been equipped to handle the overwhelming weight of ministry. Those who have received training have primarily received their training from reading. Many newly ordained pastors are sobered by the reality of how poorly their reading and seminary coursework prepared them for ministry. Esther Cameron and Mike Green note,

Anyone who has tried to learn how to drive or ski by reading a book will understand the limitations of this. You quickly realize once you get on the road or on the slopes that the real thing requires something much more. And the trickier the territory, the more live practice you need. Reading theory can offer helpful frameworks, tips, and examples, but learning how to do something in practice is likely to be more deeply affecting.²⁴

In addition to the naturally occurring stresses of ministry and a lack of any real preparation, many pastors are incredibly hard on themselves. Charles Mantz writes, “Recently, significant attention has been devoted to a previously neglected aspect of organizational behavior—the influence organization members exert over themselves.”²⁵

²³ Vidula Bal, Michael J. Campbell, and Sharon McDowell-Larsen, *Managing Leadership Stress* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 30.

²⁴ Esther Cameron and Mike Green, *Essential Leadership: Develop Your Leadership Qualities through Theory and Practice* (London: Kogan Page, 2017), 128.

²⁵ Charles C. Manz, “Self-Leadership: Toward an Expanded Theory of Self-Influence

Leaders in general, and pastors in particular, put incredible pressure on themselves to do ministry well. Pastors who lead well and have healthy churches will eventually do one of two things: burnout or learn to equip other leaders to help carry the ministry load.

How Equipped Lay Leaders Make a Church Healthier

When lay leaders are equipped to help lead the various aspects of ministry, the church will become healthier. Churches with equipped lay leaders extend leadership influence where it was not previously and free the pastor to focus his attention where it is most needed. As a result, fewer ministry needs and opportunities fall through the cracks.

When lay leaders are equipped to lead, they are now able to provide leadership to areas of the church where leadership was not previously present. As more lay leaders are equipped, those with the ability to exert leadership are found in more and more places within the church. For instance, as a church grows, the pastor cannot be at every event even if he wants to be. However, with a team of equipped lay leaders, at least one of the leaders (if not more) could absolutely be present at each church event. Of course, the presence of a leader is not enough to make a church healthy. Having a properly equipped lay leader in a ministry environment, however, increases the likelihood that problems will be addressed and opportunities acted on. For instance, a lay leader equipped with TLT will be able to model good and right behavior, bring the vision of the church to the specific ministry event, improve the ministry event, and see to it that people are individually cared for. Having an individual with this training present and active in each ministry event will create a healthier church.

When lay leaders are equipped to lead, it frees the pastor to focus his attention where it is most needed. As a church is small, the pastor can be involved in most aspects of the church. The pastor can be present at all worship services, small groups, special

Processes in Organizations,” *Academy of Management Review* 11, no. 3 (July 1986): 585.

events, small groups, volunteer training events, and the like. However, even if a church is small enough to do this, it will likely burn out the pastor as people come to expect that the pastor will be available and accessible for all church activities. Thus, the pastor is put into the unfair position of always being yoked to the needs and demands of the ministry. This is a sure method to burn out a pastor and have an unhealthy ministry that is overly dependent on its pastor(s).

When lay leaders are equipped to lead, fewer ministry needs and opportunities fall through the cracks. When the pastor is the only one within a church equipped to lead, the pastor's attention will be focused on the most urgent and obvious needs. For instance, if a church member is going through a particularly bad divorce, and one or both parties frequently seek the pastor's help, the pastor will find himself focused on caring for the individual at the expense of other ministry needs. Worse still, the pastor may be so focused on this one obvious and urgent need that many other less obvious needs go unnoticed and unassisted. Furthermore, many of the most important opportunities for a church, such as reaching the lost, improving how one preaches, and building other areas of ministry go untouched for months or years because the pastor never had the margin to address less urgent opportunities for improvement.

Frequently, when the important, less urgent ministry needs go untouched for long periods of time, it can cause the church to become unhealthy. For instance, a church without equipped lay leaders who have the time and energy to address facility needs, may one day become aware of how run down the facilities have become. Or, after months of receiving no vision for her role, a church employee may become disillusioned with her job because the pastor was too busy to guide her and give her the care, directions, and attention she needed. However, a church with many equipped leaders can handle more non-urgent but critically important needs and opportunities. Once other leaders are equipped, the pastor's attendance, and even his focus, is no longer essential to each church event. The pastor is free to rest, spend time with his family, or work on ministry

tasks that do require his attention.

Once lay leaders are properly equipped to lead, the health of the church greatly improves. Without this equipping, both the pastor and the church suffer. Without additional leaders, pastors are often expected to attend every church event and are unable to focus on those tasks only they can accomplish. They find it difficult or impossible to address all problems and opportunities, especially those that are not pressing or obvious. To avoid pastoral burnout and become and remain healthy, churches must equip lay leaders to lead properly. There is no other way around it.

The Church's Mission Moves Forward as Pastors Equip Lay Leaders with Competencies to Lead

Pastors must take personal responsibility for equipping lay leaders. James Berkley writes,

Would any well-run business consider putting someone in a responsible post without first giving adequate preparation and training? Not unless it wanted to invite disaster. Before Jesus's disciples were sent out, they spent a great deal of time with him—observing, learning, doing. To follow this pattern, we could use a three-step approach: preparation, implementation, and evaluation.²⁶

If the mission of the local church is to move forward, the pastor must take the initiative to influence lay leaders with the needed competencies needed to lead. This was the way of Jesus with his disciples, and it should be mirrored by pastors today.

In equipping leaders, the pastor must also be careful not to overuse or abuse lay leaders. The needs of the lay leaders must be a priority for the pastor. For instance, David Young cautions,

It is crucial for servant leaders to keep the needs of people in mind while building a program. So often this is the downfall of a renewal movement. It can be the downfall of a church when it moves from a pastor sized church to a program sized church. So often programs or results are valued above the people being served. In

²⁶ Kenneth O. Gangel, "Volunteer Training," in *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*, ed. James D. Berkley, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 325.

that case, the balance of people and program is easily lost.²⁷

If pastors today are not careful, they will equip lay leaders *only* for the purpose of moving the mission forward. Yet, this can be frustrating for lay leaders. Instead, pastors would be wise to communicate to lay leaders that their equipping is something for the good of themselves and the church's mission. This is not to say the pastor should cater to consumerism within the church.

Indeed, the pastor must call each lay leader to self-sacrifice. Richard Caemmerer writes, "The word 'worship' denotes primarily the sacrificial. Hence the pastor trains his people to bring their sacrifices of themselves, of one another, and of the tokens of their self-giving. They do this in their entire lives, which are a responsible service. But they do this outstandingly in the activities in which they join and stimulate one another to this end."²⁸ The pastor must teach lay leaders to deny themselves and to sacrifice. The equipping they receive will simultaneously help them follow Jesus and move the mission of the local church forward. Due to abuses in the past, lay leaders today could be wary of a pastor who attempts to equip them *exclusively* for the church's mission. Ken Evers-Hood describes the nuances of a leader who helps the individual lay leader see how he can simultaneously accomplish the organization's goals and the individual's goals: "The work was coming from trusted friends rather than being handed down to them by the powers that be."²⁹ In a similar way, lay leaders today need to know that their pastors love them and want something *for* them more than something *from* them. Thomas Peters and Nancy Austin advocate, "The alternative we now propose is leader (not manager) as cheerleader, enthusiast, nurturer of champions, hero finder,

²⁷ David S. Young, *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1999), 114.

²⁸ Richard R. Caemmerer, *Feeding and Leading* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1962), 22–23.

²⁹ Ken Evers-Hood, *Irrational Jesus: Leading the Fully Human Church* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), 1.

wandered, dramatist, coach, facilitatory builder.”³⁰ A pastor who keeps in mind lay leaders’ needs as he equips them to lead with the church’s mission in mind better enables the church’s mission to move forward.

How Pastors Can Equip Lay Leaders to Move the Mission Forward

The first step in equipping the laity is to identify the right lay leaders to equip. Justin Ramirez explains, “Look for the right type of potential leader. A socialized leader seeks to enhance others and society by building institutions and systems that transcend the individual leader, while personalized leaders seek self-aggrandizement, power and control at the cost of others and society.”³¹ A pastor must find socialized leaders who will not use their new skills to serve only themselves but to move the mission of the church forward.

Once lay leaders have been identified, the format for the equipping must be determined. Two forms of equipping are being proposed in this project: formal training and informal training. The formal training includes five videos uploaded to a website. Participating lay leaders can access the videos and watch them on their own time. One video is an introduction, and the remaining four videos are each dedicated to one of the I’s of TLT. Before beginning the videos, each lay leader will be required to complete a survey to determine current leadership competencies within TLT. One month after completing the video training, they will receive the same survey to record progress in learning leadership competencies.

The informal training will include a pastor spending time doing ministry

³⁰ Thomas J. Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence: The Leadership Difference* (New York: Random House, 1985), 265.

³¹ Cristina L. Byrne et al., “What Makes a Great Leader? An Examination of the Outstanding Leader,” in *Public Leadership: Social Justice, Equality, and Empowerment*, ed. Justin A. Ramirez (New York: Nova Science, 2011), 109.

alongside each lay leader as time permits. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of informal training. As Dennis Young, Robert Hollister, and Virginia Ann Hodgkinson write, “Surveys strongly suggest that volunteers learned about their volunteer activities primarily through their existing social contacts and networks and rarely through mass media communication.”³² Most lay leaders develop their own practices of ministry through informal channels; therefore, it is critical that pastors serve alongside their lay leaders—at least on occasion—to informally teach how ministry is done and how the mission moves forward.

While spending time together during worship services, small groups, service activities, and shared meals, a pastor must look for opportunities to reinforce TLT in real-time. Charles Manz and Henry Sims speak to this informal method of teaching:

In our research we have discovered certain patterns of behavior that characterize SuperLeadership. We know, for example, that a few thoughtless authoritarian remarks can destroy any relationship between an aspiring SuperLeader and followers. The most important pillar of SuperLeadership is the use of everyday conversation to enhance the confidence of followers and encourage them to undertake their own self-leadership practices. . . . Decline to directly solve a follower’s problem unless it’s a crisis, a last resort, or unless you alone have critical information. Ask followers to solve problems on their own or in collaboration with their peers.³³

Formal training is critically important, as its purpose is to transfer information (Transformational Leadership Theory) and equip the lay leadership. The purpose of informal training is to reinforce the principles within real-time and real-world ministry environments. For instance, if I am serving alongside an equipped lay leader, I may give the lay leader an opportunity to practice Inspirational Motivation or Intellectual Stimulation. Peter Brinckerhoff warns of a leader missing the many informal

³² Dennis R. Young, Robert M. Hollister, and Virginia Ann Hodgkinson, *Governing, Leading, and Managing Nonprofit Organizations: New Insights from Research and Practice*, Jossey-Bass Nonprofit Sector Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 123.

³³ Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims Jr., *The New SuperLeadership: Leading Others to Lead Themselves* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2001), 128–29.

opportunities to equip:

If you give people just the work and none of the decision authority, you not only shackle them from moving ahead efficiently, but you also tell them clearly that you don't trust them. Also, you ensure that they will keep coming back to you over and over and over for input, diminishing the effectiveness of the time savings that delegation is supposed to bring you.³⁴

Therefore, as a pastor serves alongside equipped lay leaders, he must have an eye towards both moving the church's mission forward *and* teaching lay leaders how to move the mission forward themselves.

The third and final step in the equipping process is to keep challenging goals at the forefront of the lay leadership. Peter Wagner encourages, "An equipper is a leader who actively sets goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtains goal ownership from the people, and see that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals."³⁵ Each year, the church's leadership must determine goals for the local church. These goals should be clearly communicated to the lay leadership to challenge and motivate them. John Gardner notes, "Capacity to motivate, more than any other attribute, is at the heart of the popular notion of leadership—the capacity to move people to action, to communicate persuasively, to strengthen confidence."³⁶ The pastor who carefully prepares for the church's mission to move forward selects the right lay leaders, equips them with formal and informal training, and sets challenging but realistic goals before them.

A pastor who takes the time and energy necessary to equip lay leaders will sometimes be exhausted and at times may think to himself it would be easier to simply do the work himself. However, if he sticks with the laborious work of equipping lay leaders,

³⁴ Peter C. Brinckerhoff, *Faith-Based Management: Leading Organizations That Are Based on More than Just Mission*, Mission-Based Management Series (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 90.

³⁵ C. Peter Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1984), 79.

³⁶ John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 51.

he will find the words of Peter Garber to be true:

A leader sets the direction for others in the organization. Legendary leaders are remembered for the direction they set and the way they led the people within the organization while in authority. Their leadership might have represented the turning point or made the difference between success and failure in a crisis or difficult times. They provided the stability, confidence, and reassurance that people needed so they could look forward to the future.³⁷

³⁷ Peter R. Garber, *Legendary Leadership*, Human Resources Skills Series (Amherst, MA: HRD Press, 2008), 15.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Since Essential Church's founding in 2015, the church has grown from twenty-one adults in a living room to averaging 400 in weekend attendance across two campuses. As the lead pastor, I was able to handle most of the leadership responsibilities in the early days of the church. As the church grew, the need to develop more leaders became obvious. People were falling through the cracks, ministry was not being done with excellence, miscommunications continued to increase, mission opportunities were not taken, and various additional items failed to happen because of a lack of effective leadership.

Prior to this project, I enjoyed teaching staff about leadership principles and lessons. The topic of leadership came up in virtually every one-on-one meeting with staff members. In 2019, it became apparent that the most influential people within the church were team leaders. Team leaders are volunteers who oversee and provide mentorship, management, and leadership to other volunteers; they are arguably the most influential people within the church. Whereas the staff was receiving some training on leadership, team leaders received no training or guidance on management and leadership. From this discovery, this doctoral project began to take shape with a goal to develop and deliver a leadership course to introduce leadership competencies for our team leaders. This chapter addresses the steps taken to implement the project, including project preparation, implementation, and goal completion.

Project Preparation

It was necessary that the course be video-based and hosted online so that leaders across the two campuses could attend training. The course was produced using recording equipment the church already owned. The course was divided into five videos that were uploaded to www.MinistryGrid.com. The church already had a membership to this online volunteer training service.

Additionally, it became obvious that the course would need to be relatively short in duration. Those taking the course were volunteers already serving in various ministries, and their feedback indicated there was not a general desire for an additional class to attend. Furthermore, many of our team leaders had young families and were generally very busy. Therefore, the total course was designed to be completed in approximately one hour and could be started, paused, and finished at a later time. This gave the team leaders the most flexibility possible in completing the course.

Identifying the Participants

The first step in preparing this project was identifying who would be trained. Initially, I focused on team leaders because of their influence in the church but lack of training on how to use that influence. However, as I formulated a list of team leaders, I began to add names of people who should also be trained. Eventually, I determined that everyone at Essential Church who held the following official positions of leadership would be included in the training: advisory council members, staff, directors, coaches, and team leaders. This determination was important because within this project, leadership is defined as “intentionally influencing someone or something.” Many people could, to some degree, be considered a leader and thus benefit from this leadership training. However, the aim of this project was to focus on those with high levels of influence within Essential Church.

Selecting the Training Model

The second step in preparation was to determine what curriculum would best equip those in positions of leadership. Through much reading, praying, and conversation with my project supervisor, Dr. David A. Bosch, and Essential Church staff, I determined that Essential's leaders would be trained in Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT). The principles of TLT are generally known as the Four I's: (1) Idealized Influence, (2) Inspirational Motivation, (3) Intellectual Stimulation, and (4) Individual Consideration. Chapter 2 of this paper makes a case that TLT lines up with a biblical understanding of leadership.

I chose TLT over other models of leadership for two primary reasons. First, researchers had studied TLT in non-academic settings and determined it to be effective.¹ Second, TLT seemed to have the proper balance of the mission's needs and the followers' needs that we see in Scripture. For instance, TLT focuses on both organizational goals and people development. I believe other popular leadership models such as Servant Leadership Theory put too heavy a focus on people development at the expense of organizational goals. Within Scripture, we see the need for developing people (e.g., discipleship) and organizational goals (e.g., the Great Commission). TLT seems to have the right balance of these two biblically mandated objectives.

Developing the Curriculum and Pre- and Post-Training Survey

The next step was to develop a curriculum based upon TLT principles. The

¹ For more extensive documentation of the academic research supporting the Transformational Leadership Theory model, see the following studies: Kevin B. Lowe, K. Galen Kroeck, and Nagaraj Sivasubramaniam, "Effectiveness Correlates of Transformational and Transactional Leadership: A Meta-Analytic Review of the MLQ Literature," *Leadership Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1996): 385–425; John Antonakis, "Transformational and Charismatic Leadership," in *The Nature of Leadership*, ed. John Antonakis and David V. Day (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), 256–88; Jay A. Conger, "Charismatic and Transformational Leadership in Organizations: An Insider's Perspective on These Developing Streams of Research," *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1999): 145–79; James G. Hunt and Jay A. Conger, "From Where We Sit: An Assessment of Transformational and Charismatic Leadership Research," *Leadership Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (1999): 335–43; Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).

curriculum had to be designed in a way that was true to TLT principles and simultaneously relevant to Essential Church’s ministry context. For instance, when considering Idealized Influence, the curriculum needed to present the behaviors of an “ideal-ized” leader while also remaining consistent with biblical commands.

In tandem with developing the curriculum, I designed a survey that would ultimately determine if the curriculum was successful. This survey would be administered to participants pre- and post-training. It was important to base the survey on a research instrument that was already proven effective in this area of study. Therefore, I designed the survey using the Global Transformational Leadership scale by Carless, Wearing, and Mann as a template.² The GTL scale uses seven questions to measure TLT behaviors. To this, I added fourteen questions, for a total of twenty-one questions that measured participants in TLT competencies.

Producing the Leadership Training

We then recorded the leadership training: five videos with a total length of approximately one hour. Each video captured a simple headshot of me reading from a teleprompter in front of a green screen. The background in the final edit of the video was a solid light-blue color. We used a high-quality camera, lighting, and microphone for the recordings.

The first video was an introduction to why leadership is important for the participants at Essential Church. The second video focused on Idealized Influence, or how to become the leader people want to follow. The third video addressed how to have Inspirational Motivation, or how we inspire our teams. The fourth video described how to Intellectually Stimulate team members. The fifth and final video was on Individual Consideration—how to care for, develop, and encourage the people who are on one’s

² See appendix 1.

team. The following paragraphs describe the curriculum and how it was divided and delivered over the course of the five videos.

Video 1: “Why is leadership important at Essential Church?” The first video opens by considering Genesis 1:26 and asking, “Why was man created?” I made the connection that being made in the image of God is related to our call to “rule” or to lead.³ Many of us may be unnecessarily worn out in our ministry, work, school, or even family life because we are not taking personal responsibility to lead the way we were created to.⁴ I defined leadership and shared the vision that Essential Church needs “you, as team leaders, to be further equipped in your leadership.”⁵ I then issued a call to take notes and apply the teachings of this course.⁶

Video 2: “Idealized Influence: Who do you consider to be a great leader?”⁷ This video starts by asking participants to recall who they consider to be a great leader. I then ask why that person comes to mind as a great leader. I introduce the concept of being a leader people want to follow. In other words, leadership is more than *what* the leader does; rather, it is ultimately about *who* the leader is.⁸ From here, I share the importance of a leader taking responsibility for themselves, their ministry, and those

³ Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 113.

⁴ R. Alan Cole, *Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 140; C. Leslie Mitton, *Ephesians*, New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1976), 151.

⁵ Walter L. Liefeld, *Ephesians*, InterVarsity New Testament Commentary Series 10 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 107.

⁶ Bruce J. Avolio, *Leadership Development in Balance: Made/Born* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 172.

⁷ Peter Guy Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 193.

⁸ Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus’ Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values, and Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 41.

on their team.⁹ Leaders should not expect someone else to handle the issues; God has put them in a position of leadership for a reason. I teach TLT behaviors of being passionate, confident, self-aware, and selfless. The video concludes by asking participants to choose one of these behaviors to begin applying to their leadership immediately.

Video 3: “Inspirational Motivation: How do we inspire our teams?” The third video opens with the example of someone who was not excited about their extraordinarily good circumstances. This story is likened to leaders within Essential Church who are given an incredible opportunity to minister to God’s people but see it only as the “same ol’ same ol’.” I discuss several TLT behaviors that can motivate a team, including talking optimistically about challenges, creating a shared vision,¹⁰ communicating clear goals and expectations to those on your team,¹¹ and continuously reminding people of your team’s mission and vision.¹² The video concludes by asking participants to begin working on one of these TLT behaviors at their next scheduled serving.

Video 4: “Intellectual Stimulation: How do we intellectually stimulate team members?” This video is a deep dive on a phrase we use often within Essential Church: “Each day we give it our best, and each day we improve our best.” The phrase is used to challenge our leaders to practice this with their teams—to encourage their teams to give it their best while also improving their best each day.¹³ The team can improve

⁹ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 59.

¹⁰ Rick Bellingham and William O'Brien, *The Leadership Lexicon: A Handbook of Leadership Competencies with Skills and Development Action* (Amherst, MA: HRD Press, 2005), 23.

¹¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1984), 79.

¹² James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 125.

¹³ John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 51.

their best by coming up with new ways to minister more effectively.¹⁴ From this point, I explore a second way to intellectually stimulate teams with another internal phrase we use: “1% improvements.” I explain the concept of how our team makes our ministry at least “1% better” each week. I then ask the leaders to challenge their team with how we would do things differently if we were serving Jesus himself.¹⁵ For instance, how would our nursery workers serve differently if the resurrected Jesus walked into the nursery? I conclude the video by encouraging team leaders to take one of several action steps to begin incorporating some of these TLT behaviors within their team.¹⁶

Video 5: “Individual Consideration: How do we care for, develop, and encourage the people who are on a team?” The fifth video opens by asking if a participant has ever felt used before. I make the point that as leaders, sometimes we use people for their giftings or how we think they can help the team achieve its goals.¹⁷ This video emphasizes how we can ensure we are helping our team reach its goals while also making sure each person on the team is valued and treated with dignity and respect. The video teaches several TLT behaviors, including listening to those on our team, praising them for good behaviors,¹⁸ and growing each person on the team (i.e., discipling and equipping).¹⁹ I conclude the video by encouraging leaders to make an investment in the

¹⁴ Stephen R. Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 31.

¹⁵ Robert M. Fulmer and Marshall Goldsmith, *The Leadership Investment: How the World's Best Organizations Gain Strategic Advantage through Leadership Development* (New York: AMACOM, 2001), 13.

¹⁶ Esther Cameron and Mike Green, *Essential Leadership: Develop Your Leadership Qualities through Theory and Practice* (London: Kogan Page, 2017), 128.

¹⁷ David S. Young, *Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1999), 114.

¹⁸ Thomas J. Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence: The Leadership Difference* (New York: Random House, 1985), 265.

¹⁹ Peter C. Brinckerhoff, *Faith-Based Management: Leading Organizations That Are Based on More than Just Mission*, Mission-Based Management Series (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999), 90.

lives of each person on their team—not just in the team itself.²⁰

At the end of production, we uploaded all training materials to www.MinistryGrid.com, an online course delivery portal. These materials included an opening letter with instructions, the pre-training survey, the five videos, and a closing letter to thank the participants.²¹ The final step in the process was the upload of the post-training survey to Google Forms; this survey would be sent to participants at least thirty days after completing the course.

Project Implementation

Once the course was organized in Ministry Grid, the project moved to the implementation phase. The email addresses of each of the twenty-eight leaders identified for participation in the project were added to the course access list. Ministry Grid then notified each of the leaders of their access to the course. I followed up with an additional email to each participant explaining the course and providing simple instructions. Once participants accessed Ministry Grid, they were greeted by the opening letter. They were required to complete the pre-training survey before they could begin the first video training. To ensure participation, I set up weekly reminders to participants for the following two weeks. At least thirty days after a participant completed the course, they received a request to complete the post-training survey. I then compiled and evaluated the results of the pre- and post-training surveys.

Summary of Project Goals

The purpose of this project was considered successful with the achievement of three distinct goals. The first goal assessed the current church leaders' Transformational Leadership Theory behaviors. The second goal was to train leaders in Transformational

²⁰ Charles C. Manz and Henry P. Sims Jr., *The New SuperLeadership: Leading Others to Lead Themselves* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2001), 128–29.

²¹ See appendix 7 for the opening letter and appendix 9 for the closing letter.

Leadership Theory behaviors. The third goal was to reassess leaders who completed the training. The aim of this project was for participants completing this project to increase in their leadership competencies (i.e., Transformation Leadership Theory behaviors). The change in behavior was measured by comparing self-reported pre-training and post-training survey results.

Goal 1 Results

The first goal was to administer a survey to at least twenty-five current leaders at Essential Church and ask each leader to assess themselves on a pre-determined set of leadership behaviors. To determine pre-training TLT behaviors, church leaders were provided a pre-training survey. Twenty-eight church leaders completed this survey.

Collecting a pre-training survey of TLT behaviors was necessary for its eventual comparison to the post-training survey; this was the primary means of determining if the training created any improvement in TLT behaviors. Prior to the project implementation, I hypothesized that the results of the post-training survey could be lower than the pre-training survey because participants may have initially “overrated” their leadership behaviors. After formal training in TLT behaviors, participants may determine their behaviors were not as strong as they initially thought (and rated). Furthermore, I predicted that participants would likely score themselves highly on the pre-training survey due to biases in their current leadership proficiency. Even with these possible outcomes, I planned to note questions with lower-than-average scores as areas of focus in future leadership training.

Participants self-assessed their behaviors using a Likert scale. The scale’s numeric measurements progressed as follows: “1” (Rarely or Never), “2” (Once in a While), “3” (Sometimes), “4” (Fairly Often), and “5” (Very Frequently or Always).

Subsequent to the distribution and completion of the pre-training surveys, I noted that the following questions had the lowest pre-training results. Of the twenty-one

TLT behaviors on the pre-training survey, Essential Church leaders felt these were their three lowest behaviors, providing valuable information for developing future training.

Table 1. Questions with the lowest pre-training survey results

#	Question	Score
12	I remind those on my team often of why serving is important.	3.54
16	I ask others how we can improve our ministry.	3.68
20	I help those on my team personally improve in serving.	3.61

Twenty-eight current church leaders completed the pre-training survey. Based on the completion of the pre-training surveys and the collection of the quantitative data, the first goal was successfully met.

Goal 2 Results

The second goal was to train church leaders in Transformational Leadership Theory. I developed and wrote the curriculum after completing chapters 2 and 3 of this project using biblical principles and various sources on TLT.²² Once the training manuscript was finished, the material was the basis for producing five videos in which I delivered the material. The video delivery format allowed church leaders at different campuses to easily access training online even if they could not attend an in-person training. Based on the design, development, and delivery of the training to the leaders of Essential Church, the second goal was successfully met.

Goal 3 Results

The third goal was to reassess participants who completed the training in TLT.

²² See appendix 8 for the written manuscript of the curriculum.

At least one month after leaders completed the training, each participant received an email containing a post-training survey. This enabled the measurement of the change in understanding of TLT behaviors from before the training to after the training. Questions that did not show acceptable improvement or that continued to show low ratings were noted and will be used to inform future TLT training at Essential Church.

In order to test the statistical significance of the training's effectiveness, I performed a t-test by comparing the mean average of each participant's total score on their pre- and post-training surveys. The t-test results confirm a statistically significant improvement in post-training survey scores compared to the pre-training survey scores. The t-test results for the pre- and post-training survey (all questions) were $t_{(28)} = -3.193$, $p < .005$.²³

I performed an additional t-test on the seven questions from the Global Transformational Leadership (GTL) Scale by Carless, Wearing, and Mann. Performing a t-test on these seven questions is significant because these seven questions have been statistically validated by Carless and other researchers.²⁴ Measuring only the questions from the GTL instrument further suggests that leaders completing this project's curriculum increased in their transformational leadership behaviors. The t-test results of the seven GTL questions were $t_{(28)} = -2.166$, $p < .0393$.²⁵

Based on the statistically significant improvement in post-training survey scores compared to pre-training survey scores, the third goal was successfully met.

Conclusion

This chapter described in detail the steps taken to implement this ministry

²³ See appendix 5.

²⁴ Sally A. Carless, Alexander J. Wearing, and Leon Mann, "A Short Measure of Transformational Leadership," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 14, no. 3 (September 2000): 396–98.

²⁵ See appendix 6.

research project, including project preparation, implementation, and goal completion. Each of the project goals was completed successfully. Twenty-eight individuals in positions of leadership at Essential Church assessed their leadership behaviors prior to attending a customized video-based training based on biblical principles and core leadership competencies described by Transformation Leadership Theory. After training, the same leaders again self-evaluated their leadership behaviors in post-training survey. The results confirmed a positive statistically significant difference, demonstrating that the leaders who completed this project's curriculum increased in their transformational leadership behaviors.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

In this chapter, I will evaluate this project's purpose, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. I will then review what I would do differently if conducting the same project in the future. I will conclude with theological and personal reflections during the process of this project.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to equip church leaders at Essential Church, Huntsville, Alabama, in Transformational Leadership Theory. As Essential has grown from twenty to approximately 400 attendees since its inception in July 2015, there has been an increasing need for properly equipped lay leaders. Furthermore, our leaders need and deserve training in leadership competencies in order to influence their teams in a way that increases the spiritual maturation, health, and missional effectiveness of Essential Church. Response from church leadership to this project's purpose and goals was positive, as twenty-eight church leaders participated in the project from beginning to end. Furthermore, one leader mentioned this was "just the sort of training they were hoping for." One leader expressed thankfulness that we were finally providing some training on the topic of leadership. Another leader was eager to share the training with a prospective leader.

The training needed to be flexible because those needing the training typically identified themselves as too busy for training and unable to pursue outside training. The training needed to be scalable because Essential just opened a second location and plans to open additional locations. Most importantly, the training needed to be biblically based.

It was clear from the beginning that we did not simply want to take best practices from the business world and carry them over to our local church context. There was a strong desire to stay close to biblical teaching on the principles of leading our congregation. That said, sources from the business world on best practices in leadership (as described in chapter 3) were also appropriate for a local church context.

In the end, I was even more passionate about the project's purpose than at the beginning. The further I dug into the project, the more I realized how critical this training was for any church leader. I also became more excited when I realized the ideal timing of the project as we begin the transition to having two campuses. This project accomplished its original purpose: to equip church leaders at Essential Church in essential leadership competencies.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The goals of this project were threefold. The first goal was to administer a survey to at least twenty-five current leaders at Essential Church and ask each leader to assess themselves on a pre-determined set of leadership behaviors. The second goal was to train team leaders in Transformational Leadership Theory. The third goal was to reassess team leaders who completed the training in Transformational Leadership Theory.

Goal 1

The first goal was to administer a survey to at least twenty-five current leaders at Essential Church and ask each leader to assess themselves on a pre-determined set of leadership behaviors. Forty-one team leaders completed the pre-training survey. This survey included twenty-one questions measuring Transformational Leadership Theory behaviors. Overall, the self-assessment scores were high. This is likely due to confirmation bias. From my perspective and experience with them, our leaders objectively are not performing as many TLT behaviors as they reported. That said, the

survey did reveal some patterns. For instance, there were several questions with low average scores. This finding will be used for future improvements to the training.

Goal 2

The second goal was to train team leaders in Transformational Leadership Theory. I used TLT as a model of leadership for several reasons. First, TLT is a research-proven model of leadership. Second, TLT comprises four main principles known as the Four I's. This makes the model easily memorable for our leaders. Third, TLT is consistent with biblical teaching and principles concerning the mission of the local church and the discipling of membership. Arguably, no other leadership model prioritizes goal achievement *and* the development of individuals as well as TLT.

This goal was completed when I completed the curriculum design, manuscript, recording, and delivery of five videos via www.MinistryGrid.com. The videos totaled approximately one hour of footage and were viewed by thirty-five leaders. That said, training someone in leadership in only one hour is about as realistic as teaching someone to love in one hour. I do not believe anyone went from a zero to a ten in leadership competency from this one hour of training. However, the pre- and post-survey results do show that there was an improvement in leadership behaviors. While no one becomes a complete, totally well-rounded leader in one hour, the t-test results showed that each leader improved in at least one leadership competency.

While this video training will not be the only training our leaders will receive in leadership, it has initiated a conversation within leadership. The leaders were trained in a model that is a foundation for future training. TLT is a scalable set of leadership behaviors. For instance, within the Four I's of leadership, there are numerous competencies to learn. This training focused on three or four competencies for each of the I's of TLT. Moving forward, as leaders take on additional responsibility, this training will be the foundation for learning more TLT behaviors.

Goal 3

The third goal was to reassess leaders who completed the training in Transformational Leadership Theory. Forty-one leaders completed the pre-training survey. Thirty-five leaders completed the training. Twenty-eight leaders completed the post-training survey by the due date. The post-training survey revealed positive outcomes. Overall, twenty-one out of the twenty-eight participants reported overall increased TLT scores. Based on the survey results, the training material will be updated to focus on the questions on which the overall participant pool rated themselves lower. One unexpected outcome of comparing the pre- and post-training surveys resulted from evaluating the first question (see table 1). These results showed that between the time they completed the pre- and post-training surveys (approximately one month), participants reported a change in their passion for serving. This finding has sparked interest among our staff. One proposal is to begin sending out the post-training survey on a quarterly basis to all leaders to monitor passion levels among our church leaders.

Table 2. Unexpected finding from the pre- and post-training survey results

Question	Decrease	No Change	Increase
Q1. I am passionate about serving.	4	17	7

Strengths of the Project

This project showed three strengths. The first strength is the usability of this training as a real ministry tool. Even beyond the purposes of this project, this training is currently being deployed at Essential Church. Each week, volunteers are invited to step into positions of leadership. Part of the onboarding process for new leaders is receiving a link to this training. The system is easy enough to use that our staff can set up new leaders with this training without my involvement.

The second strength is that this training has started a healthy conversation about biblical leadership. As a result of completing this training, our leaders now have a common language to use when discussing what leadership should look like in our local church context. Before the training, the only known conversation about leadership or leadership development was among the staff. Now, even our lay leaders are talking about how they lead while serving.

The third strength of this project is how it provided leadership development training and resources for our team leaders. The genesis of this project was the discovery that team leaders were arguably the most influential group of people within Essential Church, yet they were given no training or resources on how to use that influence in ways that are biblical and consistent with the church's mission and vision. This project has now materialized into a resource helping our leaders channel their influence in biblical ways.

Weaknesses of the Project

There are three known weaknesses of this project. The first known weakness was unforeseeable. In the time between the pre- and post-training surveys (approximately one month), Essential Church experienced a crisis. Our worship pastor was fired for significant theological reasons. Our youth leader and administrative coordinator quit under unfavorable circumstances. Our associate children's minister and executive pastor were also in the process of off-boarding. There were several town hall meetings. Several leaders in the church expressed anger, and some of them even left Essential Church. During this period, my own character was called into question regarding how the firing took place. To be fair, we knew of only four people who were angry about the firing, not counting the staff member who was fired. Nevertheless, this was relevant to the project because many of those taking the training were and are learning about leadership from *me*—the one openly accused by a few people of being a bad leader. It is difficult to know how that could have impacted a team leader's response to the training videos. At one

point, it was awkward having to send our leaders reminders to complete the post-training survey during a time of crisis in our church.

The second known weakness is that this project used self-assessment for the pre- and post-training surveys. It is my opinion that our people self-assessed too highly. However, for the sake of keeping this project on schedule and within a reasonable scope, I used self-assessments. Moving forward, we will likely use both self-assessments and assessments from others. For instance, when we assign a new team leader, we will ask three people on the team to complete the survey evaluating their leadership. The results would then be shared with the leader. This review would be done annually to track progress and areas of needed improvement. Realistically, this implementation is in the distant future. However, there are plans in the short term to implement this new plan with our staff.

The third weakness of this project was that a focus on “leadership competencies” was too broad. I should have focused on one TLT area such as Intellectual Stimulation, chosen one Intellectual Stimulation behavior, and then trained everyone in that one behavior. The project attempted to teach people fifteen competencies and behaviors in a one-hour training. The training would have been more effective with a one-hour focus on one behavior from different perspectives. For instance, the project training could have completely focused on this behavior: “I make it clear of what is expected of others when they serve.” There is a reasonable fear that in six months no one will remember any of the behaviors taught in these videos. However, if they had focused on one behavior, the probability of it being recalled would likely be considerably higher.

What I Would Do Differently

There are three things I would do differently if I were repeating this project. The first change would be to incorporate more Scripture into the videos. While each of the behaviors and principles taught in this training was either explicitly biblical or at least

consistent with biblical principles, I did not reference the Bible enough throughout the videos. I quoted approximately five Scriptures throughout all the videos. While I do not believe this is an issue in which I should become legalistic, incorporating more Scripture would reinforce the value Essential Church places on God's Word. Ideally, I would like to incorporate approximately five Scripture passages in each of the five videos.

The second change I would make is to require others to assess the leader pre- and post-training. I am concerned that too many people ranked themselves as a "5" in TLT behaviors when they probably should have given themselves a "2" or "3." I believe having others rate us would be a far more eye-opening experience.

The third change I would make if I were to repeat the project would be to administer the pre-training survey and *then* build the curriculum based on the pre-training scores. The initial plan was to develop a well-rounded leadership training based on TLT behaviors, and the pre- and post-surveys were used to measure the efficacy of the training. The surveys were not initially meant to be a mechanism for designing the training. However, our leaders are stronger on some TLT behaviors than others. I believe the material would have been more useful if it focused time and energy on the areas in which our leadership rated themselves lower. This issue is only exacerbated by the fact that I wanted to keep the total training at one hour. With such limited time for such a broad topic (leadership competencies), the time could likely have been better stewarded if we focused on areas of weakness discovered in the pre-training survey.

Theological Reflections

Throughout my experience working towards a DEdMin degree, and especially while working on this project, I can point to three significant theological reflections. The first was a realization of God's typical pattern for numerical growth among his people. Under normal circumstances, Christians today should expect growth within the kingdom of God. If the church is being faithful to the Great Commission, we should realize

numerical growth in our churches. However, a pastor can only pastor so many people. A leader can only serve so many people. As our local congregations grow, God has provided a solution in three biblical stories. All three of these examples are pointing to the same lesson: God's solution to the (good) problem of growing bodies of believers. The first model we see is in Exodus 18, when Jethro advises Moses to raise up other leaders. The second model is in Acts 6, when the apostles tell the church to raise up other leaders. The third model is in Ephesians 4, when the apostle Paul tells us that pastors and teachers today have the responsibility to equip other brothers and sisters to do the work of ministry.

In each of these sets of instructions, we see God's plan for how to deal with growth. Note, we do not see a model in which leaders should simply work more and more hours to cope with the increase. Nor do we see that leaders should allow ministry to fall through the cracks. Instead, God has provided three models of leaders raising up other leaders to help carry the ministry load. This theological reflection has changed the way I look at my current busy schedule. I used to ask myself what I could drop or defer. Now, I am asking myself how I can equip others to carry this load with me, for the load has become too heavy for me to carry alone.

Second, I have recognized that equipping others to lead is not simply for my sake as the lead pastor. Developing others to lead within the local church is as much for the sake of the individual being disciplined in local church leadership. Yes, as I have others to carry the load, it lightens my load. However, perhaps the greater gain for God's kingdom is that now another has been given a weight to carry—a weight that will allow them to experience God's grace in a way they have never before experienced.

Third, I have reflected on the importance of character over skill. I write this with a heavy heart, wondering why I have been so slow to see this. When founding Essential Church, I often started the search for a new staff member by asking how we can hire the most talented person. I eventually paid a very high price for this mode of

operation. I suppose I thought if someone wanted to work for a local church, they would already have great character. That is simply not the case. Having finished this project, I now see that virtually all biblical prerequisites for church leadership are character-based, not skill-based.¹ Having learned this, a significant part of the interview process is now dedicated to enabling staff to focus on a candidate's character. Furthermore, plans to interview prospective team leaders will now focus more heavily on character than current skill.

Personal Reflections

Throughout this doctoral program and project, I have reflected on three specific ways I have been changed. First, I am walking away from completing this degree with a model of leadership that I have decided to implement when leading myself, my family, and our church. That model is Transformational Leadership Theory. Before this project, I was unaware of this theory. Since my exposure to TLT, I have read countless books and articles on it. I have also compared the theory to biblical instructions. Deciding to adopt this model as my primary model for leadership has given me a lens through which to evaluate how I use my time, where I focus my priorities, and how I work through challenges. For instance, the core of TLT is the Four I's. Now, when at a staff meeting, I keep an eye on practicing what I preach (Idealized Influence). I also spend time motivating our staff by calling attention to our vision and mission (Inspirational Motivation). I am pushing and challenging our team to improve (Intellectual Stimulation). Finally, I am attempting to care not only for the team, but also each individual (Individual Consideration). Using this model has helped me focus on *how* to lead. While I have had a desire to lead myself and others, I frequently found myself in a nebulous state of wanting to lead but not being quite sure how to lead. The Four I's of TLT have given me a useful and effective framework.

¹ The lone exception is that an elder should "be able to teach" (1 Tim 3:2).

Second, this project has given me a newfound appreciation for research. I was introduced to my first leadership book when I was fifteen years old. Since then, I have heard many mutually exclusive views of leadership. This program has equipped me with the mindset and tools to challenge assumptions and test to see what is working and what is not working. One such example would be when our staff was working on improving a current system. After a brainstorming session, we decided to do a trial. We decided that for a period, we would try a new approach. After the set time, we would compare where we were and where we are now to determine if the trial produced any measurable results.

A third way in which this project and doctoral program have helped me is in learning to listen. Before this program, you would not have had to convince me that listening to others was important. Three years ago, I would have told you that I was a very good listener. However, through course readings and implementing class learning in a real ministry context, I have come to learn that I am not a great listener. In fact, it has even come to my attention that some current and former staff have felt hurt or unimportant because they did not sense I listened to them. If any daily habit has changed because of this program, it is that I am now putting a priority on truly listening. However, it has also come to my attention that listening to those I try to lead is not the only area in which I have not done a great job of listening. Throughout this program, I have learned that I must re-focus on and re-prioritize listening to God. Out of all the graces I have received in the last three years, a refreshed walk with God is the gift I thank God for the most.

Conclusion

This project has successfully completed its three goals. At the beginning of the project, forty-one leaders assessed themselves in leadership behaviors. I then trained thirty-five of those leaders in TLT behaviors. Finally, I administered a post-training survey completed by twenty-eight leaders. Comparing pre- and post-training scores

showed the curriculum was effective in increasing transformational leadership behaviors. A variety of secondary successes also resulted from this project. For instance, our leadership has started a new conversation about healthy biblical leadership. This project had its share of strengths and weaknesses. There are also several items that will be improved in future training. Even with the weaknesses and needed improvements, this project has already helped me to lead better. I am equipped to lead and to equip others to lead at Essential Church, Huntsville, Alabama. The Lord has been gracious to me in this endeavor, and my prayer is that others will be equipped to intentionally influence others for God's glory here at Essential Church and beyond.

APPENDIX 1

PRE- AND POST-TRAINING SURVEY

In tandem with developing the curriculum, I designed a survey that would ultimately determine if the curriculum was successful. This survey would be administered to participants pre- and post-training. It was important to base the survey on a research instrument that was already proven effective in this area of study. Therefore, I designed the survey using the Global Transformational Leadership scale by Carless, Wearing, and Mann as a template. The GTL scale uses seven questions to measure TLT behaviors. To this, I added fourteen questions, for a total of twenty-one questions that measured participants in TLT competencies.

Essential Leadership Survey

(Adapted from the Global Transformational Survey produced by Carless, Wearing, and Mann, 2000)

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to help Essential Church's leaders become better leaders. This research is being conducted by Tim Milner for the purposes of training leaders. In this research, you will be asked to rate a certain leader in their leadership ability. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Name of person being rated (if you are completing this survey to rate yourself, please leave this blank):

Your demographic information:

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Age:

- 10–19
- 20–29
- 30–39
- 40–49
- 50–59
- 60–69
- 70–79
- 80–89

Length of time you have served as a leader:

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 to 3 years
- Greater than 3 years

Please read each statement carefully, then rate yourself in terms of *how frequently* you engage in the behavior described.

In selecting the answer, be *realistic*: answer in terms of how you *typically behave*.

1	2	3	4	5
Rarely or Never	Once in a While	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Frequently or Always

#	Question:	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am passionate about serving.					
2	I am clear about my values, and I practice what I preach.					
3	I am confident in my serving role.					
4	I instill pride and respect in others and inspire others by being highly competent.					
5	I am selfless in my serving.					
6	I am self-aware in how I lead.					
7	I foster trust, involvement, and cooperation amongst team members.					
8	I communicate a clear and positive vision of the future.					
9	I speak optimistically about our ministry.					
10	I am aware of why serving is important to those on my team.					
11	I make it clear what is expected of others while they serve.					
12	I remind those on my team often of why serving is important.					
13	I remind those on my team that our serving is for Jesus.					
14	I encourage thinking about problems in new ways and question assumptions.					
15	I challenge others to give their best while serving.					
16	I ask others how we can improve our ministry.					
17	I listen to those on my team about their personal life.					
18	I treat volunteers as individuals, support, and encourage their development.					
19	I give those on my team personal encouragement.					

#	Question:	1	2	3	4	5
20	I help those on my team personally improve in serving.					
21	I give encouragement and recognition to volunteers.					

APPENDIX 2

PRE-TRAINING SURVEY SCORE TOTALS

The following table reflects the data gathered on the pre-training survey administered prior to delivering the video curriculum. Though forty-one individuals took the pre-training survey, only twenty-eight individuals completed the training. Since the t-test results were based on participants who completed the entire training, only the pre-training survey scores for the twenty-eight individuals who completed the training were included in the table. Participants self-assessed their behaviors using a Likert scale. The scale's numeric measurements progressed as follows: "1" (Rarely or Never), "2" (Once in a While), "3" (Sometimes), "4" (Fairly Often), and "5" (Very Frequently or Always).

Table A1. Pre-training survey score totals by Likert scale measure

#	Question:	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am passionate about serving.	0	1	3	11	13
2	I am clear about my values, and I practice what I preach.	0	0	4	10	14
3	I am confident in my serving role.	0	1	1	11	15
4	I instill pride and respect in others and inspire others by being highly competent.	0	2	8	13	5
5	I am selfless in my serving.	0	0	6	16	6
6	I am self-aware in how I lead.	0	2	9	9	8
7	I foster trust, involvement, and cooperation amongst team members.	0	2	1	18	7
8	I communicate a clear and positive vision of the future.	0	3	8	10	7
9	I speak optimistically about our ministry.	0	0	1	11	16
10	I am aware of why serving is important to those on my team.	1	1	10	5	11
11	I make it clear what is expected of others while they serve.	1	0	5	19	3
12	I remind those on my team often of why serving is important.	2	0	13	7	6
13	I remind those on my team that our serving is for Jesus.	0	4	8	7	9
14	I encourage thinking about problems in new ways and question assumptions.	0	1	4	15	8
15	I challenge others to give their best while serving.	0	2	7	14	5
16	I ask others how we can improve our ministry.	0	3	9	10	6
17	I listen to those on my team about their personal life.	0	0	1	8	19
18	I treat volunteers as individuals, support, and encourage their development.	0	1	1	11	15
19	I give those on my team personal encouragement.	0	1	7	9	11
20	I help those on my team personally improve in serving.	1	2	10	9	6
21	I give encouragement and recognition to volunteers.	0	1	8	9	10

APPENDIX 3

POST-TRAINING SURVEY SCORE TOTALS

The following table reflects the data gathered on the post-training survey administered after delivering the video curriculum. Though forty-one individuals took the pre-training survey, only twenty-eight individuals completed the training and completed the post-training survey. Participants again self-assessed their behaviors using a Likert scale. The scale's numeric measurements progressed as follows: "1" (Rarely or Never), "2" (Once in a While), "3" (Sometimes), "4" (Fairly Often), and "5" (Very Frequently or Always).

Table A2. Post-training survey score totals by Likert scale measure

#	Question:	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am passionate about serving.	0	0	2	11	15
2	I am clear about my values, and I practice what I preach.	0	0	1	12	15
3	I am confident in my serving role.	0	0	2	8	18
4	I instill pride and respect in others and inspire others by being highly competent.	0	1	1	17	9
5	I am selfless in my serving.	0	0	1	18	9
6	I am self-aware in how I lead.	0	0	5	13	10
7	I foster trust, involvement, and cooperation amongst team members.	0	0	2	12	14
8	I communicate a clear and positive vision of the future.	0	0	5	10	13
9	I speak optimistically about our ministry.	0	1	3	9	15
10	I am aware of why serving is important to those on my team.	0	0	5	8	15
11	I make it clear what is expected of others while they serve.	0	0	5	13	10
12	I remind those on my team often of why serving is important.	0	2	6	10	10
13	I remind those on my team that our serving is for Jesus.	0	1	5	9	13
14	I encourage thinking about problems in new ways and question assumptions.	0	0	9	12	7
15	I challenge others to give their best while serving.	0	0	3	15	10
16	I ask others how we can improve our ministry.	0	0	9	10	9
17	I listen to those on my team about their personal life.	0	0	3	6	19
18	I treat volunteers as individuals, support, and encourage their development.	0	0	3	8	17
19	I give those on my team personal encouragement.	0	0	4	9	15
20	I help those on my team personally improve in serving.	0	1	5	15	7
21	I give encouragement and recognition to volunteers.	0	1	4	9	14

APPENDIX 4

COMPARISON BETWEEN PRE- AND POST- TRAINING SURVEY SCORES

The following table reflects the data gathered on the pre-training survey administered prior to delivering the video curriculum and the post-training survey administered more than thirty days after curriculum completion. The table contains the average score and change in score (delta) for each question.

Table A3. Comparison between pre- and post-training survey average scores

#	Question	Pre-Training Average Score	Post-Training Average Score	Delta
1	I am passionate about serving.	4.29	4.46	.18
2	I am clear about my values, and I practice what I preach.	4.36	4.46	.11
3	I am confident in my serving role.	4.43	4.57	.14
4	I instill pride and respect in others and inspire others by being highly competent.	3.75	4.21	.46
5	I am selfless in my serving.	4.00	4.29	.29
6	I am self-aware in how I lead.	3.82	4.18	.36
7	I foster trust, involvement, and cooperation amongst team members.	4.07	4.44	.36
8	I communicate a clear and positive vision of the future.	3.75	4.29	.54
9	I speak optimistically about our ministry.	4.54	4.36	-.18
10	I am aware of why serving is personally important to those on my team.	3.86	4.36	.50
11	I make it clear what is expected of others while they serve.	3.82	4.18	.36
12	I remind those on my team often of why serving is important.	3.54	4.00	.46
13	I remind those on my team that our serving is for Jesus.	3.75	4.21	.46
14	I encourage thinking about problems in new ways and question assumptions.	4.07	3.93	-.14
15	I challenge others to give their best while serving.	3.79	4.25	.46
16	I ask others how we can improve our ministry.	3.68	4.00	.32
17	I listen to those on my team about their personal life.	4.64	4.57	-.07
18	I treat volunteers as individuals, support, and encourage their development.	4.43	4.50	.07
19	I give those on my team personal encouragement.	4.07	4.39	.32

20	I help those on my team personally improve in serving.	3.61	4.00	.39
21	I give encouragement and recognition to volunteers	4.00	4.29	.29

APPENDIX 5

T-TEST RESULTS: ALL QUESTIONS

Table A4. T-test results for all questions

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means on All Questions		
	<i>Pre-test total</i>	<i>Post-test total</i>
Mean	4.011904762	4.282312925
Variance	0.3378894768	0.2109563402
Observations	28	28
Pearson Correlation	0.6072727981	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	27	
t Stat	-3.019330045	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002739745718	
t Critical one-tail	1.703288423	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.005479491435	
t Critical two-tail	2.051830493	

APPENDIX 6

T-TEST RESULTS: GTL QUESTIONS

Table A5. T-test results for GTL questions only

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means on GTL Questions Only		
	<i>Pre-Test Total</i>	<i>Post-Test Total</i>
Mean	4.06122449	4.301020408
Variance	0.3906705539	0.2575045891
Observations	28	28
Pearson Correlation	0.4807053844	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	27	
t Stat	-2.165816	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.01966204561	
t Critical one-tail	1.703288423	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.03932409122	
t Critical two-tail	2.051830493	

APPENDIX 7

OPENING LETTER AND INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome!

I couldn't be more thankful that you are taking this course on leadership. If you are an experienced leader, I believe you will find this material thoughtful, practical, and challenging. If you are new to leadership, I think you will find this material mind-blowing (in a good way!) as you learn to *intentionally* lead. You will be shocked at the difference this makes in your life and in your ministry areas.

Here's what to do now:

Take the Pre-test. Answer it honestly and quickly.

Watch the five videos. The total combined time of all videos is about one hour. Take written notes as you watch the videos. Keep these notes in a place where you can review them immediately before you serve at Essential each week.

One month after you finish the videos you will receive an email from me containing a Post-test. I'll be measuring your growth in several key areas of leadership. I do this for a couple of reasons: (1) I want to keep honing this leadership material to be effective and (2) I want to celebrate with you on your growth!

If you have any questions, you can email me at tim@essentialhsv.com.

I believe we are about to see a huge improvement in the ministry we do at Essential.

May God bless you,
Tim

PS: Please take notes as you watch these videos and review your notes before you serve at your next service. Better yet, review your notes the first few times you serve after watching the videos. It will help you internalize the material you are about to take in!

APPENDIX 8

CURRICULUM

Session 1:

- a. Welcome! Let me ask you a deep question: Why were you created? Shout out the answer! Listen to Genesis 1:26: “Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’”
- b. Wait, we were created in the image of God to rule? One of the reasons we were created was to rule. What does it mean to rule? I submit to you it means we are to lead, to influence, to care for, and to take responsibility for; to rule over our environment. Genesis 4:6: “Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.’” This Scripture tells us we are also to rule over ourselves as well. The rest of the Bible points to the fact that we are to lead others as well. To lead ourselves and to lead within our environments and to lead one another in God-honoring ways. God created you to do this.
- c. It’s possible one of the reasons you are stressed or exhausted or frustrated with how things are turning out for you at work, school, church, your family, group of friends, or even personal issues could be because even though you were created to lead, you aren’t, or maybe you aren’t leading quite as effectively as you could be. This video and the next four are going to show you how to lead; how to lead the way you were created to lead.
- d. So, what is leadership? Yell out what the answer is. Leadership is taking the initiative to influence something or someone. You are capable of leading today!
- e. Lean in for a second, yes, your church needs you to lead. But ultimately, this is for you. I want to see you fully maturing in following Christ. I want to see you grow into the man or woman God has called you to become. 80% of leadership skills are transferable. Meaning as you take what we learn together through the next five videos, you will become a better leader in the ministry you serve, and you will be a better leader at work, or school, at your home, and in your community.
- f. My prayer for you is Psalm 78:72, “And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.” This Scripture says that David led with an upright heart and with a skillful hand. Many of you watching this video right now have an upright heart. You love God and you love people. Today, you are going to increasingly learn how to do your ministry with a skillful hand.
- g. Take notes. Apply these teachings to your life. Remember, a short pencil has a long memory. If you take notes, and internalize what you are about to learn, I can’t wait to see how God uses you in ministry.
- h. I believe you are about to enter an exciting new season of ministry as you take the next step in becoming a leader. You will be changed. Lives will be changed. Christ will be glorified.

Session Two:

- a. Welcome back! Who is the best leader you know? What makes them a great leader? All of us will have answered this differently, but one thing will be certain: there was something attractive about them: They may have been strict yet fun or have high standards—constantly demanding you to give your best, or they may have been passionate about what they were doing. But still there was something that drew us to them.
- b. Within leadership we call this Idealized influence. Idealized influence means there was something about them that inspired you. It wasn't just what they did; it was *who* they were. In fact, the word idealized influence means there was something about them that makes them the IDEAL leader. This video is about you becoming the leader people *want* to Follow
- c. Leadership is about taking responsibility. Let me say that one more time. Leadership is about responsibility. And in this video, we are going to see We must take responsibility for who we are.
- d. As the leader, the must understand *right now* the buck stops with you. A follower assumes someone else will handle the issue. Let's say there is an unexpected problem in your ministry area. A follower expects someone else—anyone else—to handle it. A leader knows that someone must handle it and that someone is you. A true leader says, if this challenge is not handled now, then when? And if it's not handled by me, then who?
- e. If you want to be the leader people want to follow here are four principles to being the leader people want to follow:
 1. Be passionate! We become passionate when we have a purpose and talk about it. We become passionate when we know what we stand for and what we stand against: Perhaps the best way for you to rekindle your passion for your ministry area right now, is to take time after this video and ask yourself, "Why do we do this ministry?" Sometimes as leaders we get so bogged down in doing the task, we lose sight of *why* we do the task. As we increasingly lose sight of why we do the task we lose our passion. If that's you, it's time to pause and take the time to consider why that ministry, or work, or relationship is important.
 2. Be confident! One of the quickest ways for you to lose confidence is not knowing what is expected of you. This works in two ways. First, do you know what is expected of you? If you're not crystal clear on what you are supposed to be doing, after this video, send the person you check-in with such as a Coach on your ministry team, or a staff member at the church and say, "Hey, I'd like to talk about what the expectations are for me." Maybe expectations have never been made clear to you. Or maybe you forgot what the expectations are. Either way, if you're not sure exactly what is expected of you, you will lose confidence. Second, the people on your team such as the Difference Makers need to hear from you on exactly what is expected of them. If it's been a while since you've told your team what the expectations are, remind them the next time you see them.
 - i. Pro-tip: Expectations for you, and expectations for your team should always be put in writing.
 3. Be selfless! Leadership is service. When I was getting started in leadership, I first thought about the advantages it may mean for me. It will be cool to be in charge! But now, I know the truth, leadership when done right, when done as Jesus did it, is a calling to carry a heavy burden. Leadership is challenging. It is a service to others. We do not serve so that others can help us, instead as a leader we exist to serve others.
 - i. Matthew 20:25–28 "Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become

great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many’.”

- (1) If you are going to be a leader, you too must be committed that your role as a leader is not so that others may help you; but you are making a commitment to lay down your life for the sake of others.
4. Be self-aware! We must also do the hard work of seeing how others perceive us. For instance, let's say you are a team leader on our First Impressions team. And you tell people to stay focused on greeting people and not get caught up in talking with your friends. Imagine your friend walks up and starts to talk. Now you have a leadership decision to make. Let's say it's slow and the truth is you could talk to them and still not miss greeting new people as they walk up. But how will this be perceived as your team? The moment people on your team see you doing the very thing you asked them not to do, you will lose some of that *Idealized* influence. So, beginning the next time you serve, I want you to be asking yourself, “Am I doing each thing that I've asked my team to do?” Be sure you are modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and actions you want to see in others!
- f. Application Time! From this video what is one practical thing you can do this week to become more passionate, confident, selfless, or self-aware? Put on your calendar when you will do this. Perhaps you've decided you need to remind yourself to be selfless right before serving. Great! Then put a reminder on your phone each Sunday morning “Be selfless!” What is the one thing you'll do this week based upon the info you learned in this video? Put it on your calendar now!
- g. You're on an exciting journey of becoming a better leader; a journey that will impact not only yourself but many others.

Session Three:

- a. When Kristin and I lived on the west coast, we had something incredible happen to us. We were given a free stay at a hotel in Hawaii, and because we were living on the west coast, the flights were very reasonable in cost. This was a huge deal to us, and we were obviously very excited about the trip. We went there and we got checked into our hotel. We went out to the beach, and it was BEAUTIFUL! There was someone who by his appearance I'm guessing was a local. A young man by himself. He was standing on the beach looking out over the ocean. I commented to him, “It's beautiful here.” You won't believe his response to me. He simply said, “same ol' same ol'.” True story. I thought to myself well I'm not going to waste much more time talking to this guy and Kristin, and I got on enjoying one of the most beautiful places we've ever seen.
- b. In a similar way, if I came up to you on a Sunday morning, and I saw you leading one of your teams, and I said, “Isn't it beautiful what we get to do each Sunday morning!” How would you respond? Would you agree that it's incredible what we get to do? Or would you respond, “eh same ol' same ol'?”
- c. Unfortunately, as leaders, we can be just like the same ol' same ol' guy. Perhaps we genuinely don't care, or perhaps we are afraid about showing our excitement because someone may come and throw cold water on our excitement. For instance, I think a lot of us are reluctant to show our excitement because we don't know how other people will respond. Will they think we're nerds for loving what we get to do for God each week!?
- d. If you are going to be a leader, you've got to be willing to put your neck out there and remind people that this isn't the same ole same ole! This ministry matters!
- e. Let me share with you 4 ways to inspire your Difference Makers:

1. Talk optimistically about challenges! It would not be an understatement to say that if there were no problems, we wouldn't need leaders. One of the chief responsibilities of a leader in a ministry, or home, or work is that they help people figure out problems. As a leader you will constantly have problems and challenges. As the leader, people are looking to you when a problem arises. Let me give two examples.
 - i. Let's imagine you are a team leader on Sunday morning and a Difference Maker calls at the last minute and is sick. Do you communicate to your team in a positive way or a negative way? You could say to your team: Guys I can't believe someone just called in. I don't know what we are going to do. I can't believe they did to us. What's wrong with the people at this church? Well, this Sunday is a dumpster fire.
 - ii. Or you could say to your team: "Guys we had a call-in this morning. Let's keep Bob in our prayers and let's check in on him later today and see if they need anything. Today, we are going to be a little short-staffed, but that's ok. We are going to make a couple of changes and have this covered. Moving forward I'm going to be working to be sure we have at least one extra person so we don't get caught in this situation again. God is not surprised by this. Let's each dig a little deeper this morning to give these kids and their parents a great Sunday.
 - iii. Leaders, speak optimistically. Share the facts; don't cover up bad information. And do not lose hope even in the face of the biggest challenges.
2. Find a shared vision. Several years ago, our staff team sat down with Huntsville's mayor, and I believe he gave us wonderful leadership advice. He said great leaders have a strong vision of where they are headed and then do it! But he said the best leaders have a shared vision and they accomplish the vision with others! For us, this means talking to the difference makers on your team. Why are they excited about serving? What is it they hope to see? Talk to them about this. Write down their answers. Then come up with a statement or two that captures a shared vision.
 - i. An additional reason why having a shared vision is important is because people want to know if this is a good use of their time. And if the only vision you are giving people is hey go to that room and make sure the kids don't cry too much; well friends it won't take long before your DMs find better uses of their time. But if you connect the dots for them and show them why their ministry is so important, they'll get to a place where they can't wait to serve on your team!
3. Know what the goal is and communicate it often! Too many volunteers in churches throughout the world don't really know what they are working towards. They don't know what the goal is. As the leader your job is to be sure everyone who is serving knows what you are aiming for.
 - i. As a team leader, you get to set some of the goals we are headed for. And some of it has already been set by the staff member. For instance, with our groups we have certain goals. If you are a group leader you can't hijack our vision and say you know what instead of studying the Bible, we are going to study national geographic magazines. Sorry, that's not how it works. Instead, ask your leader within the team, perhaps it's a Coach or a staff member and understand exactly what is expected of you and your team. Then understand how your difference makers fit into this. If your job is to be sure each kid's classroom is successful, be sure your DMs know what is expected of them to make their specific classroom successful.
 - ii. Homework: This Sunday, randomly ask some of your Difference Makers, "What is expected of you?" If you are getting blank looks, or different

answers from different DMs it means you have not made it clear to them what is expected of them.

- (1) PRO TIP: As we mentioned in the previous video, if it's not in writing it's not real. You need to have in writing what each person on your team is expected to do. If it's not already in writing, work with the staff member of your area to put into writing what is expected!
4. Vision for you and your team is like a leaking barrel; it must be refilled constantly! Imagine a barrel, and at the bottom of that barrel is a hole. Well as soon as you put water in that barrel, what happens? It begins to leak. As a leader your job is to keep that barrel full! Instead of barrels, it's your DMs. Instead of water its vision—why they are doing what they are doing. Part of your responsibility is to constantly be refilling the vision of your people. You can tell them why it's important and, in a few days, they will begin to forget. Each week you need to remind people of why they do what they do. Each week!
 - i. I've once heard that vision is saying the same thing in a million different ways. Get creative in how you will remind people of why your ministry team is important, what's expected of them, and where you are headed.
- f. Let me conclude by sharing a story. There were 3 men laying bricks on a new construction many years ago. When asked "What are you doing?" The first man said, "What does it look like I'm doing? I'm trying to get my work done so I can get out of here!" The second man answered, "I'm here earning \$12 an hour." The third man answered, "I'm building the most beautiful cathedral in our region. Through the ministry that will happen here, many people's lives will be improved."
 1. Friends, who man best represents you as a leader at Essential?
- g. Application Time! Each time you serve, REMIND your people *why* their ministry is important!
- h. Recap: 1 Talk optimistically. When a problem arises, handle it with optimism. 2. Find a shared vision. Schedule a meeting with your DMs and ask them why this is important to them then communicate frequently a shared vision with your team. 3. Know what the goal is and communicate it! 4. Vision is like a leaking barrel; it must be refilled constantly.

Session Four:

- a. Welcome back! In this video, what we are really talking about is Leaders must take responsibility for their team.
- b. I want to introduce to you a phrase that I hope will become a rallying cry for each of your teams. Here's the phrase: "Each day I give it my best. Each day I improve my best."
 1. Let's break down what this means: First, "Each day." Every time you serve. It is true there are some Sundays that are special. There is nothing like an Easter Sunday or a Sunday where we have a lot of baptisms lined up. But the truth is every Sunday is special. In fact, we may get excited about the Sunday where a bunch of people get baptized, but the reality is most of the people took the first step of faith to sign up to be baptized on an "ordinary" Sunday. Every Sunday is important. If you are a small group leader, every small group is important. Do we like those meetings where we are celebrating something fun like Christmas? Of course! But every day we serve is important.
 2. Next, "I give it my best" All anyone can ask is that you give it your best. I want you to close your eyes for a second. I want you to imagine you are serving in your ministry area. Let's just imagine it's the First Impressions team. Now imagine Jesus himself walks in. How are you going to treat him? How are you going to

- pull out all of the stops to serve him? Ok, now, how can you serve each person like that? Colossians 3:17 says, “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Or in other words, every time you serve someone, EVERY TIME. serve as if you were doing it for Jesus. Take a moment and visualize you serving this next week. How would you treat that person if you knew that person was Jesus in disguise? Treat every person like it’s Jesus in disguise. See some trash on the floor? If you knew Jesus was about to walk in, you’d pick it up. You see a parent struggling to get their kid out of the car, go and offer to help; who knows maybe it is Jesus in disguise?
3. Then the last half, “improve your best.” You can only be asked to give it your best. That said, you can take responsibility and improve your best every day. Let’s say your best is leading an information meeting before your team serves. Go into it prepared and on time. In order to improve how you do, pull aside one of your volunteers privately later and ask for some feedback on what you can do better next time. A phrase that has worked wonders for me is this, “I’m not looking for compliments. I’m looking for cracks. How can I do _____ better next time?”
 - i. “Every day I give it my best. Every day I improve my best.”
 - c. Another helpful tool for improving your ministry area is what I like to call “1% Improvements.” If you looked at our very first service ever at Essential Church, and then you looked at our service from this past Sunday, you’d notice there were some huge improvements along the way. Let me tell you about the secret from where we were to where we are now: We consistently made small improvements. And small improvements over a long period of time turn into HUGE improvements.
 1. Furthermore, if you are talking to your volunteers and you say, “How can we make this ministry 100X better next week.” You will get blank stares. If anyone knew how to make it 100x better, they would have already been doing it. But if you get your team together and say, “How can we make our ministry 1% better next week.” People will start sharing ideas. In my experience, if you are only asking for minor, 1% improvements, every once in a while, someone is going to share an idea that makes the ministry 10% or even 100% better.
 2. An additional reason I believe so much in the value of 1% improvements is that it will cause your team to start questioning things they are currently taking for granted. Virtually every aspect of our ministry could be improved if we would only try. If you are on the First Impressions team, did you know that we could even improve something as mundane as how we pass out the weekly programs. When was the last time someone improved how we pass out programs? My guess would be it’s been a while. But even a slight improvement here could positively affect hundreds of people each week. You will find the same is true in whichever ministry team you serve in as well. There are countless opportunities to make a slight improvement even this week.
 - d. Application Time! This week I want you to do three things.
 1. Remind yourself and each person on your team to see each person who comes through your ministry as Jesus. Give each person your best as if you were serving Jesus himself.
 2. Listen to your team on how you can improve next week. Remember to use the phrase, “I’m not looking for compliments. I’m looking for cracks so that I can improve.”
 3. Schedule a special non-Sunday morning meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm 1% improvement ideas. Perhaps you choose a Saturday morning. Work with the staff member of your ministry team to get money so you can purchase coffee and doughnuts. Get a whiteboard and brainstorm ideas to make your area 1% starting next week.

- i. One example of what might happen is that your team agrees that the main thing that would improve our ministry is we need more people serving. Ok great! You've identified an opportunity. Now work together as a team on how you are going to get more people serving on your team. Perhaps you will all agree to do some "googling" on how to grow a ministry team and meet again with some concrete ideas. Perhaps you'll leave the meeting agreeing that each person will invite two people who are not already serving at Essential to come serve with them. Or perhaps you'll agree that each week for the next six weeks people on your team will take turns walking around Sunday mornings with a clipboard asking people if they are serving anywhere. If the person says, "no" the person from your team will hand them some information about your ministry team and ask them if they have any interest in giving your team a try.
- e. Pick at least one of the best ideas and put it into action immediately!
- f. Let's recap:
 1. "Every day I give it my best. Every day I improve my best."
 2. 1% Improvement
 3. Remind yourself and each person on your team to see each person who comes through your ministry as Jesus.
 4. Talk and listen to your team on how you can improve next week. Remember to use the phrase, "I'm not looking for compliments. I'm looking for cracks so that I can improve."
 5. Send a notification out to your team and schedule a special meeting non-Sunday morning meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm 1% improvement ideas.

Session Five:

- a. Welcome back! In this video, what we are really talking about is Leaders must take responsibility for each individual on their team.
- b. Have you ever felt used? Like someone was just using you for their own purposes? We've probably all felt that feeling, and it doesn't feel good! Using someone can typically go one of two ways. Sometimes people get used because someone is being very selfish and very greedy. You may think of a scene where two stockbrokers are competing to be the highest earner in their company, and they are acting deviously with their coworkers. Or on the other hand, sometimes people use other people to further a worthwhile cause. Perhaps a leader within a church is constantly asking people to go over and beyond so that hurting people can be helped. But the problem with being used for a good cause is that at the end of the day you are still used.
 1. Listen carefully, as leaders at Essential Church we must be sure the church is being used to build up our people, our volunteers, and our leaders. And not fall into the trap of using our people, our volunteers, and our leaders to build up the church.
- c. So how do we make sure we do this? Welcome to the last video on becoming a leader. Today we are talking about individualized consideration. Or what I like to call "No one gets left behind."
 1. If you are going to be a leader, we must be sure that we lead the team, while simultaneously leading each person on our team as individuals. Each person has their own sets of needs, strengths, concerns, and weaknesses.
 2. As leaders it's tempting to always think about the ministry team, and we should! But we must understand that our team is made up of individuals. And we must

- treat each person on our team with the dignity and respect deserved by someone who is made in the image of God.
- d. Let's talk about how to do this. When you think about your team, I want you to be asking how I can do the following three things:
 1. Listen to each person on my team,
 2. Praise each person on my team, and
 3. Grow each person on my team.
 - i. Let's look at each of these carefully.
 - (1) The first is Listen to each person on my team. As the leader, you will need to find time outside of serving to listen to your people. Listen to their concerns. Listen to their excitement. What are they saying? Truly listen to them. Our Difference Makers are going to see things within our church that no one else will. They will know first when our teams are broken. They will see first when someone is being helped by our teams. Listen to them. You can ask questions such as, "How are you for real?" In addition to asking them about how they are in general, ask them how their experience on the team is: "What are you seeing on our team that I might not be?" "Tell me about your experience serving on our team?"
 - (a) Quick note on this: I'd encourage you to touch base with every person on your team once a week in a general way, and once a month in a personal way. For instance, each week send your team a general email or text and let them know what they need to know as well as letting them know you are available if anyone needs to talk. And then once a month, invite them over for a meal, or at the least have a phone call and ask them how they are for real.
 - ii. Second, Praise each person on your team. Let's assume you are on a ministry team that primarily serves on Sundays such as our kids ministry, or band. As a leader, have a way to take notes with you, wherever you are. If you see one of your Difference Makers doing their ministry well, or going over and beyond, or taking the initiative to solve a problem, make a little note. Now once you make that note, I encourage you to build up the person as much as you can with what you've caught them doing. You can thank them privately. You can thank them publicly at the next meeting with your team. You can put it on social media. With our staff we have a segment of our staff meeting called "Caught 'em!" Where we go around, and we publicly talk about the staff being caught in the act of ministering well!
 - iii. Third, Grow each person on the team. This actually goes back to some of our earlier videos. I have encouraged you to give it your best every day and to improve your best every day. I'm trusting you've already taken the next step in challenging you to do so. If you haven't already, make a little note on your going to start improving your best every day. In the same way that I've challenged you on this, I'm asking you to challenge your team in the same.
 - (1) Encourage them to give it their best and to improve their best every day. Part of this is on Sundays when you see someone not quite doing their ministry right, privately pull them aside and remind them of their goals. I know this is challenging, but hey leadership is challenging! Sometimes when encouraging someone to grow, remember the most important word in your vocabulary. The word is "Because." Hey John, remember when you're playing in the band on Sunday, remember to have practiced during the week *because* we will have hundreds of people here and we want to create an environment where they can worship. I absolutely want to see you helping each person on your team do their ministry better and better.
 - (2) But let me call you to something even higher: Help disciple the people on your team. Ask them how their relationship with God is going. One of my

favorite questions to ask is, “What have you been learning about God lately?” As a leader at this church, you don’t have to have all the answers, but you absolutely have permission to encourage people in their relationship with God. And depending on what they say, you can pray for them, or help them find some resources on what they are dealing with, or probably what they need more than anything, is just a friend to listen to them.

- e. I’ll close with this. John Maxwell once said, “People don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.” If we are going to be leaders at Essential Church, we must begin by caring specifically for each person God sends us.
- f. Application Time! Set up a reminder on your calendar to make contact individually with each person on your team. Listen to them, praise them, and help them grow!

APPENDIX 9

CLOSING LETTER AND INSTRUCTIONS

You have now completed the Essential Leadership Course—THANK YOU! As mentioned in the videos, 80% of all leadership competencies are transferable to each area of your life. Not only have you now been equipped to lead better at Essential, but also at your work/school, family, and community.

Here's what to do now:

Any notes you took, review them 15–30 minutes before you serve each week. It will keep this info front and center in your mind. Eventually, leading effectively at Essential will be second nature to you, but for now keep reviewing your notes. If by chance you did not take notes, download the Pre-Test, and use it as a guide to refresh your memory on what you learned.

One month from now you will receive an email from me. It will contain a post-test. The post-test will only take a few minutes to complete. Please open that email and complete the test as quickly as you can. I will compare your results from your pre-test and your post-test. We will celebrate the progress you made!

(OPTIONAL) *IF* you would like to take your leadership deeper, I have an opportunity for you. I can find three Difference Makers that report to you and give them a Pre-test to fill out now. They will be reviewing your leadership skill (it's the same Pre-test you took). I can then give them the Post-Test one month from now. This can help you better understand how your team sees you as a leader. This information can work wonders on your leadership development. That said, this is optional. Let me know if you would like for me to run this test with your Difference Makers.

If you have any questions or comments on how we can make this material better in the future, please email me at tim@essentialhsv.com.

So thankful for each of you,
Tim

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ABSTRACT

EQUIPPING CHURCH LEADERS IN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY AT ESSENTIAL CHURCH, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Timothy Scott Milner, DEdMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. David A. Bosch

This project aims to equip church leaders at Essential Church, Huntsville, Alabama, in Transformational Leadership Theory. Chapter 1 presents the context, rationale, and goals of this project. Chapter 2 studies Ephesians 4:11–12, Exodus 18:13–14, and Acts 6:1–7 to see biblical models for training leaders. Chapter 3 reviews a host of philosophical and theoretical resources for how to train leaders. Chapter 4 discusses the implementation of this project, including development of the pre- and post-training survey, the development of a five-part training video, and the compilation and analysis of the post-implementation data. Chapter 5 examines the effectiveness of this project through the completion of the project's three goals.

VITA

Timothy Scott Milner

EDUCATION

BA, University of Alabama, 2007

MACE, New Orleans Theological Seminary, 2010

MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT

Intern, Harbor Community Church, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2009–2010

Executive Pastor, Epic Church, San Francisco, California, 2010–2015

Lead Pastor, Essential Church, Huntsville, Alabama, 2015–