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DESIGNING AND TEACHING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
COURSE FOR STUDENTS AT SÉMINAIRE BAPTISTE
ÉVANGÉLIQUE DU QUÉBEC

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DESIGNING AND TEACHING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
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For the glory of God

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PREFACE

This project was a God-given opportunity to clarify my understanding of biblical ecclesiology for the course I teach to emerging pastors and leaders at Le Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec. I am thankful to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for accepting me in the program as a foreign student and helping me bring this project to completion.

I want to express my gratitude to my wife, Nathalie. Because of my absences while I pursued my studies, she has graciously accepted the sacrifices of life with a husband in ministry. Your love is precious and made this study program possible.

I want to acknowledge the complete support of Le Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec, which provided both finances and time off to work on this project. They were supportive from the start and never doubted the benefit for the seminary that would result from the influence of my studies in my life and ministry.

My personal and close friends have been precious for me in prayer, thoughtful listening, caring for me, and helping me face a great challenge by faith, I want to thank Stéphane Gagné, Yanick Éthier, Pat Murphy, Richard Campeau, and Louis Bourque.

I want to offer my profound gratitude to my writing coach, my editor, and the professional doctoral staff of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I want to give a special mention to my supervisor, Dr. Gregg Allison, for his incredible investment in my work.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Every pastor needs to know what to do when he receives the task of being the shepherd of a local congregation. Many elements will be involved in his preparation for this great challenge. One element is solid biblical instruction on ecclesiology, not only the theory of it but also his practical responsibilities. This project provided a course to well equip men to face leadership responsibilities as leader of a Baptist congregation.

Context

Le Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec (SEMBEQ) is a seminary serving Québec Baptist churches, primarily those affiliated with the Association des Églises Baptiste du Québec (AEBEQ). The seminary was founded fifty years ago by missionaries who came to preach the gospel and plant churches to this unreached field. When these men came, there were about two hundred French-speaking Christians in the province and almost no organized churches. These church planting missionaries quickly determined that local churches would be best served by a seminary that trained future pastors in the context of their own churches. SEMBEQ was established to train leaders for the churches that eventually joined together as the AEBEQ. In that context, they could learn church leadership and be mentored by experienced pastors as they prepared for ministry. Even though SEMBEQ's students stayed in their local churches, they created friendships during the intensive courses provided once a month in the seminary building. The initiative on the part of the seminary had the effect of creating a denomination (association) where many of the pastors are closely connected. This church and mentor-based approach became a foundational value that SEMBEQ still believes in and practices today. SEMBEQ is the

primary source of theological education for the seventy-nine churches that now make up the denomination. In 2016, I became president of the seminary.

The first strength of the seminary is its strong relationship with the churches of the denomination. SEMBEQ is seen as an extension of their local ministry and a catalyst of ministry for the churches. It provides the churches the resources needed for theological education and the preparation of elders and biblical counselors. Many churches have entered into official partnership with SEMBEQ with the intention of becoming leadership training centers from which multiple servants of Christ will emerge. These types of interactions open doors for strong partnerships.

SEMBEQ's second strength is its holistic vision of ministry training. The seminary helps local churches educate by offering programs that include academic, character, and ministry objectives. Every developing leader who wants to be equipped for the ministry, to which God has called them, not only participates in a series of academic courses but must also meet requirements for ministry skills and personal character. An experienced church mentor accompanies the leader in the acquisition of ministry competencies and growth in godly conduct.

The third strength of the seminary is its competency-based programs for developing leaders. A variety of programs are designed to prepare leaders for service to the church as pastors, elders, biblical counselors, and for other types of service. Curriculums of competencies are hosted on a web-based platform where students and mentors have access to follow-up, comments, support, and evaluation. Each student has an assigned team that includes both a church and an academic mentor who meet regularly with the student to master specific ministry competencies. Each competency includes elements of knowledge, character, and ministry components. Most of the competencies require the student to attend an academic course which provides the knowledge necessary for the competency being developed.

Like any system, nothing is perfect. SEMBEQ is not an exception to this rule, so it faces different challenges. Its first weakness is that the first generation of pastors will retire in the next decade. This means that many experienced leaders will soon be leaving full-time ministry. After a revival during the 1970s, the founding missionaries trained a number of young men as pastors. These men served faithfully for more than fifty years but are all in the process of retiring at the same time. As a network of churches and a seminary, SEMBEQ must make sure it transfers the deposit of the gospel (2 Tim 2:2) to emerging leaders who are preparing for ministry.

SEMBEQ's second weakness is a lack of rigorous criteria to evaluate prospective mentors. The seminary has developed a culture of mentoring that is serving leaders across the seminary and denomination. The quality of church mentors has been inconsistent depending largely on the mentors' giftedness and ministry context. SEMBEQ needs to develop an assessment program to identify qualified church mentors for students, who would enable the seminary to better control the quality of mentors and, therefore the fruitfulness of graduates. A team of gifted men will address this need in 2025.

To understand the third weakness, one needs to know, that the gospel history in Quebec is only fifty years old. The denomination is still quite young, and yet it is confronted with many different philosophies when it comes to the understanding and practice of biblical ecclesiology. Most of the established pastors have not varied in their practice of ministry for a long period of time. Both the general ministry of churches and their weekly schedules have not changed much over time. Most pastors had identical ministry approaches. In the last ten years, things have changed. A variety of books and the extensive material available on the internet have confronted pastors with an array of approaches to ministry. Many young leaders have tried these new church paradigms without careful study of the implications for a theology of the church. As president of the seminary, I need to serve in this denominational context as I prepare men for ministry.

Rationale

As seen in the previous section, evangelical churches in Quebec minister in a time of transition. In the near future, many present pastoral leaders will retire, and much younger leaders will replace them. In light of this reality, it is a good time to teach solid ecclesiology to these soon-to-be leaders.

As the denomination churches strive to reach the very complex mission field of Québec, some young pastors are adopting new church practices. They do not seek to evaluate these new ideas with older pastors because they believe that those leaders served in another cultural setting. Consequently, they think that these older pastors will not be able to understand their questions and preoccupations. For example, young leaders are transforming the Sunday morning celebration into seeker-sensitive services with preaching focused mainly on non-Christians. Membership is neglected. Some churches make their staff the only members of the congregation. Others have membership practices, but no one in the church knows what these practices are or the reason they have been installed in the church. Other churches have invited women to preach. The Lord's Table is served in small groups, not during the main worship service. Seeking to contextualize ministry is good, but it is at the same time a challenge. Churches need to avoid a pendulum reaction. This project taught a course to create a space for discussion on how future pastors can faithfully minister in the Quebec Baptist church context without losing key biblical principles.

As president of the seminary and a key leader in the church denomination, I feel strongly called by God to leave a legacy of church practices that are solidly based on Scripture. I want to see developing leaders who begin their training with a superficial understanding of their role grow and develop a clear Baptist ecclesiology. As Paul said, "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" (Eph

4:14).¹ This is why I want to invest in the training of future pastors by leading them to a biblical applied ecclesiology.

For all these reasons, this project equipped SEMBEQ students to lead their churches in a biblical understanding and practices of Baptist ecclesiology. Investing in students has been a great privilege for me. This course had a strategic role in the preparation of future leaders for the denomination as well as those who are already actively serving in various churches. Upon completion of this course, these students would acquire solid convictions. I wanted them to move from church leadership undergirded by a superficial understanding of ecclesiology to a role animated by a clear perspective.

This course is mandatory for all students in all programs of SEMBEQ. I began to teach this course on a regular basis as one element of the larger effort to train competent pastors, but it needed to be improved to be effective in light of ongoing changes in my denominational church context. This project was designed and taught in a way that would bear fruit and achieve its goals. Since over the next decade, students who have taken this ecclesiology class will replace experienced pastors who are retiring, this is a critical moment for the development of applied Baptist ecclesiology at the seminary. May God allow this project to create such momentum in this exceptional time.

The course on practical ecclesiology that I teach regularly covers a broad spectrum of topics related to church practices. This project measured and evaluated the students' development of knowledge of practical ecclesiology in a limited period of time. The course on ecclesiology covers more than pastoral leadership. To finish the project on time, I limited my goals and evaluation to the subject of pastoral leadership, which is one of the topics included in my ecclesiology course.

¹ All Scripture quotations are from English Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train developing leaders in pastoral leadership through the Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec.

Goals

Three goals were established to determine the successful completion of this project. The first goal created adequate andragogy and teaching content that would increase knowledge in the students' ability to lead in the context of their local church. The second was an inventory for SEMBEQ students. The third goal served to measure the students' knowledge pre- and post-course.

1. The first goal was to develop a six-hour course on pastoral leadership to enable students to know healthy leadership in their local church.
2. The second goal was to assess the current knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students.
3. The third goal was to increase knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students by teaching the course.

A specific research methodology was created that measured the successful completion of the three goals. This methodology is described in the following section.

Research Methodology

Successful completion of this project depended upon the completion of the three goals. The first goal was to develop a six-hour course on pastoral leadership to enable students to know healthy leadership in their local church. The course was built around key New Testament passages, theological principles, and Baptist ecclesiology practices. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, the teaching methodology, and the content organization of the course.²

² See appendix 1. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

This goal was successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level.

The second goal was to assess the current knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students. This goal was measured by administering the Pastoral Leadership Inventory (PLI) to a minimum of thirty SEMBEQ students.³ The goal was considered successfully when thirty students completed the survey. This survey provided a picture of the knowledge of the students on their ecclesiological leadership practices.

The third goal was to increase knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students by teaching the course. This goal was measured by administering the PLI before the course and again after the course was completed to determine the change in their pastoral leadership knowledge. The goal was considered successful when the *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive, statistically-significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores. The PLI provided a picture of the knowledge of each student on their pastoral leadership practices before and after the course.

This goal was also measured by administering one-on-one interviews with five students taking the course on pastoral leadership. I utilized a rubric as an evaluation tool for the interview responses.⁴ This goal was successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

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

Pastoral leadership. *Pastoral leadership* refers to oversight of a local church in terms of directing, preaching and teaching, praying, equipping, shepherding, and providing Christlike examples. It is mediated by the elders of a local congregation and means more than basic intellectual knowledge of biblical eldership. *Pastoral leadership*

³ See appendix 2.

⁴ See appendix 3.

requires pastoral wisdoms to lead the church in healthy biblical practices. First Timothy 5:17 says: “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor.” These elders are then expected to rule well. In summary, Benjamin Merkle writes, “The elder is called to be (1) a leader, (2) a shepherd, (3) a teacher, (4) an equipper.”⁵

One limitation of this project could be seen in the profile of the participants. While I could have a broader spectrum of participants for the survey (I could have extended it to all pastors and pastors in training in the denomination), participants were limited to SEMBEQ students who voluntarily agreed to complete the survey online. To mitigate this limitation, I mentioned to the students that they were helping me by supporting my study process. I shared with them the benefit of helping develop a future solid class on ecclesiology for their ministry.

One delimitation with this project was time. There is a limited amount of new practical learning that a leader can grasp in one seminary semester. For example, if students want to lead the church in a new direction, they may not be able to have the new knowledge apply in their ministry context before the end of the semester.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to train developing leaders in pastoral leadership through the Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec. Learning to lead a local church in biblical ways is not easy and cannot all be done in a short period of time. Even if the challenge was great, I desired to see these men grow and learn in the precious work of shepherding. The next section of this project includes the biblical and theological content which served as foundational principles for the completion of this project.

⁵ Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 89.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Scriptures reveal that gifted elders are God’s instruments to equip his church for his glory. Before going in deeper detail considering pastoral leadership, this chapter will offer three New Testament passage for biblical teaching on the subject. From Paul’s discourse in Acts 20, I will argue that God appointed leaders for his church to shepherd the flock. From Ephesians 4, I will show that these leaders are men with different gifts who are called to work as a team to equip the church. Finally, I will look at the Pastoral Epistles to see how Jesus uses leaders in a local congregation to face practical ecclesiastical challenges. These leaders have clear pastoral leadership responsibilities, especially in training emerging leaders. Even though it would be possible to discuss the universal church, I will focus on pastoral leadership in the local church context.

Elders Are Established by God: Acts 20:28

Acts 20:28 says, “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” The first main idea of the verse is that God appoints elders to provide shepherding and oversight for the church that Jesus Christ bought with his own blood. This section will begin with the context of this passage and the structure of Paul’s speech.

As a missionary, Paul ministered in Ephesus. According to Acts 19, after three months of teaching in the synagogue, he took the disciples and trained them every day for two years. For Paul to devote that much time to this ministry amid his missionary journey demonstrates that he prioritized training elders. *Elder* is a word borrowed from the Jewish

synagogue; Acts 20:17). From details in Acts 20, Paul got to know these men deeply. When he travelled to Jerusalem, he could not stop in Ephesus as he needed to reach his destination before the feast of Pentecost. So, he decided to meet at least the elders of the Ephesian church in Miletus (vv. 13-36). Paul's speech to them is the longest addressed to Christians. It is a farewell to these elders, full of rich relational memories. Following Ben Witherington's argument, this text in Acts is Luke's summary of Paul's speech to these leaders.¹ From his example as an apostle, Paul shares with them many pastoral insights.

The structure of Paul's speech is a matter of debate, with different scholars proposing different structures. Jo Cheryl Exum and Charles Talbert see a chiasm, with verse 25 in the center.² A more common approach is that Paul begins with his personal experience, culminating with the declaration that it might be the last time they see each other because of the trouble awaiting him in Jerusalem. After this announcement, Paul strongly exhorts the elders to protect their flock. He concludes by coming back to his own experience to give general advice. Paul's example must have been such an inspiration to the Ephesians elders. In light of these indications, and following John Kilgallen who uses Greek particles to structure the speech, one can confidently say that verses 25 and 28 are central to the discourse.³ They may never see Paul again, so these Ephesian elders must be serious about maintaining sound doctrine. They must understand the seriousness of their function and responsibilities. The next section will focus on verse 28.

¹ I choose the position offered by Ben Witherington that this is a Lukan summary of the Pauline message. For his defense, see Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles; A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 612-18.

² Jo Cheryl Exum and Charles H. Talbert, "Structure of Paul's Speech to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20:18-35)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (April 1967): 233-36.

³ John J. Kilgallen, "Paul's Speech to the Ephesian Elders: Its Structure," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 70, no. 1 (1994): 112-21.

God's Holy Spirit Has Appointed Elders

As the first element, Acts 20:28 affirms that the Holy Spirit has appointed these elders. Similarly. This emphasis on God as the one who appoints elders confirms that they are not in their position solely by man's will or election. Christ entrusts his flock's care to those he chooses.⁴ God appoints elders; eldership is a serious responsibility before God. John Stott notes that remembering that the Trinity calls elders "should have a profound influence on one's ministry."⁵ This truth should humble, encourage, and inspire elders. Elders are not in function because of a human succession imposed on them. God, the Spirit, has placed a call on their lives. Witherington adds, "There is nothing in this speech about Paul's passing the torch of leadership to these elders by some sort of ceremony or bequeathal."⁶ Even if elders are appointed by God, it does not exclude the process of a local church voting for their elders. These two notions are not mutually exclusive. Church members and elders needs to remember that these men are in this office because God wanted them to be in that office. When a man with adequate qualifications becomes an elder, it is because God has ordained it.

There is a glimpse of the Trinity at work in appointing elders. The father has sent his son, the chief shepherd to redeem his church. Now that Christ is seated at the right of the father in the heavenly realm, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit is appointing elders for the church's ongoing mission until Christ's return.

Clear Instructions Given to Elders

The second element is that elders appointed by the Spirit have received clear instructions for their ministry. It is their responsibility to pay careful attention to themselves

⁴ David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 568.

⁵ John Stott, "Ideals of Pastoral Ministry," in *Vital Ministries Issues: Examining Concerns and Conflict in Ministry*, ed. Roy B. Zuck (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1994), 73.

⁶ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 623.

and to the flock. God appointed them as overseers; therefore, they must care for the church of God.⁷ To watch, to pay attention, or to oversee are responsibilities connected to the function of bishop in this passage. Paul introduces a new title for elders when referring to the tasks mentioned in this verse. They are bishops (*episkopos*), a title used five times in the New Testament. William Mounce says it means overseer, a watcher, a guardian.⁸ It is a synonym for elders since Paul speaks to Ephesians elders in the context. As an apostle who had the mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God, he proclaimed the whole purpose and will of God to the people of Ephesus. He played the role an apostle has to play in reaching new territory. Like Ezekiel's trustworthy watchman, he has sounded the trumpet.⁹ Stott writes,

God appointed the prophet a watchman over the house of Israel, telling him to warn the people and that if he failed to do so, their blood would be required at his hand (Ezek. 33:1-9). Paul had been a faithful watchman. He had been conscientious in both teaching and warning the people. So, he was innocent; no one's blood would be required at his hand.¹⁰

It is now the role of elders to carry on this ministry in their local church. Darrell Bock says elders "are the guardians of the tradition of the apostles."¹¹ Elders should prevent false teaching. Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders concerning their present and future tasks and responsibilities in the church.¹² Elders can understand how important it is to understand who they are and their role in God's mind. Eckhard Schnabel mentions that

⁷ John Stott, "Christian Ministry in the 21st Century Part 4: Ideals of Pastoral Ministry," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 146, no. 581 (January 1989): 4.

⁸ William D. Mounce, *Mounce Complete Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 1154.

⁹ F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, International Critical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 392.

¹⁰ Stott, "Christian Ministry in the 21st Century Part 4," 6-7.

¹¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Evangelical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 631.

¹² Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 844.

the meaning of overseer could be “those who has the responsibility of safeguarding or seeing to it that something is done in the correct way. . . . While elders connote the age, experience, and wisdom of the leaders of the Christian communities, ‘overseer’ underlines the more active side of their work in managing affairs, guarding the group, and directing activities.”¹³ David Peterson advances the same idea, mentioning that it represent the functional angle of the term.¹⁴

After talking about their guarding role, Paul says they have “to shepherd” (*poimaino*) the church, as related to their ministry. To feed, pasture, and tend the flock, says Mounce.¹⁵ Other scriptural references to “shepherd” (cf. John 10) bring in the notion of nurturing and protecting. Jesus, as the head of the church, is the Good Shepherd sent by God to nurture his flock. Elders are under-shepherds following the way of the Shepherd (capital S). They are limited to the flock God has appointed them over. Since the tense of the verb “to shepherd” is in the present infinitive, the idea is that shepherding is a continual action for overseers and also their purpose.¹⁶ Nurturing in the context of this passage includes proclaiming the whole counsel of God to assure that believers receive all God has provided for their transformation into the likeness of Christ. It is also repeated, in different words, in verse 31, where Paul gives his own example of nurturing. F. F. Bruce writes, “During the three years of his residence among them, pointing out unceasingly, night and day, the right path for them to pursue.”¹⁷ They have to teach the Word of God

¹³ Schnabel, *Acts*, 845.

¹⁴ Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 569.

¹⁵ William D. Mounce, *Mounce Complete Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 1249.

¹⁶ Bock, *Acts*, 630.

¹⁷ Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 393-94.

to the people of God. Pastoral ministry is a ministry of the Word.¹⁸ Protecting means ensuring that no false teachers can lead any astray with their venom.

Paul also declares that they must keep watch over themselves and all the flock (all the Christians belonging to their church¹⁹). By expressing that they are to keep watch over themselves, Paul clearly says they are not above the flock but an integral part of it. He gave the same recommendation to Timothy (1 Tim 4:16). They would not be able to lead the congregation well if they did not carefully care for and nurture themselves. Why would they have to watch for themselves? A few words later, Paul answers by reminding them that wolves will come from their ranks (v. 29). The Holy Spirit has appointed them to carry out all these responsibilities.

Elders Shepherd the Church that Christ Bought with His Blood

The third element is that elders shepherd the church of God that Jesus Christ bought with his own blood. It is God's church because he bought it. Even though it is his, he chooses to use men to shepherd it. Overseers are God's instrument to shepherd the church of God.

It is not the elders' church, but God's church. Church members are in their care.²⁰ The church (*ekklesia*) of God²¹ is the congregation redeemed by God for his glory. Even though the *ekklesia* of God is universal, it is also local, and local elders are responsible for shepherding. Hebrews 13:17 stipulates that Christians from one congregation must obey their leaders as those who will have to give an account. They cannot give an account of Christians they do not know.

¹⁸ Stott, "Christian Ministry in the 21st Century Part 4," 4.

¹⁹ Schnabel, *Acts*, 846.

²⁰ Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 569.

²¹ Some manuscripts have the "Church of the Lord."

By mentioning the blood that was shed to purchase the church, Paul emphasizes the value of the church of God. The price paid elevates the church's value and the seriousness of eldership. Now, this text presents a difficult reading referring to God and saying, "with his own blood" (v. 28). In the New Testament, the blood that paid for redemption is always that of the Son. Schnabel writes that one can read this sentence literally as: God provided the blood of "his own,"²² (meaning of his own Son). This reading conforms to the teaching of the New Testament.

God gave elders for the good of every member of the local congregation. They oversee the activities and ministry of the church in light of God's mission for his church. Service is the tone of their leadership. They, too, were bought with the blood of Christ. They do not lord it over the flock but lead them as fellow blood-bought brothers and sisters. Elders do not lead as owners or rulers. Their leadership, says Allan Chapple, "is an authority that is dependent and not inherent; it is exercised in self-giving not in self-assertion."²³ Overseers imitate their Savior in sacrificial service.

Prospective elders need to have in mind that they are spiritual leaders. While serving they should realize that the Spirit himself has appointed them. Christ has called them to take care of a precious body, his body. A praying life is an absolute to seek wisdom and dependence every day. They have received a specific task: shepherding, caring, and feeding Christ's flock. Their agenda should reflect this reality. These truths are included on this project's teaching lessons.

Christ Gives a Diversity of Leaders to Equip Every Church Member: Eph 4:11-16

Ephesians 4:11-16 reads,

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until

²² Schnabel, *Acts*, 846-47.

²³ Allan Chapple, "Leadership in Apostolic Perspective: Acts 20:18-35," *Churchman* 129, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 120.

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, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Having demonstrated that God appoints elders for the shepherding of his church, this section will now present a more detailed overview of the elders' primary work. Paul begins the letter to the Ephesians by describing the beauty of the gospel and how God sovereignly orchestrated the salvation of his children in eternity past. But from their salvation until the resurrection, Jesus established his church. Paul takes from 2:11 to 3:13 to describe how God manifests his infinite wisdom through his new creation, the church. In chapter 4, he explains how this church, this group of believers, will grow into Christlikeness to be ready to be presented blameless to the Father. He starts chapter 4:1-6 describing the unity Christians share. Based on this unity, Paul moves on to explain the reason for diversity in the church. In the passage to be studied, he affirms that Christ, as the head of the church, gives diverse gifts to every member. Some of these *gifts* are distributed to the church in the form of gifted men, leaders (elders), who equip every church member to serve the congregation through their specific gifts. After the apostolic age of apostles and prophets, God use ordinary ministry of pastors. Michael S. Horton writes, "The charismata bestowed on the whole body are orchestrated by the Spirit Through the ordained office-bearers, who differ only in the *graces* (vocation), but not in the *grace* (ontic status) of the Spirit."²⁴ Through this process, the congregation will grow in unity of faith, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Elders have different gifts but work together, ministering to the local body in a way that brings unity and maturity in Christ to the church, according to Christ's eschatological vision for his

²⁴ Michael S. Horton, *People and Place* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 232-33. Eph 4:11 as brought diverse interpretations through church history. In this project, I have developed the one that I choose. I am aware and respect other positions on this passage.

church.

Two Exegetical Alternatives to This Passage

There have been two main exegetical alternatives to understanding what Paul is saying to these church leaders in verses 11-12.²⁵ These two interpretations lead to different understandings of the role of ministers. The first alternative sees the three prepositions of verse 12 as three parallel proposition that coordinate and describe the responsibilities of the four gifted leaders.²⁶ The three prepositions should be read like this: Jesus gave gifted leaders to the church for (1) the perfecting of the saints, (2) for the work of service, and (3) for the building up of the body of Christ.²⁷ This position was the interpretation favored by some church fathers such as Chrysostom.²⁸ Clinton Arnold affirms that this alternative leads to “a strong separation between clergy/laity distinction.”²⁹ Their strong argument would be the usage of a literary style called “[accumulation], which involve expansion of an idea in subsequent parallel phrases or cola.”³⁰ These accumulations fit the stylistic character of the letter (1:14; 1:18; 2:2; 4:2; 4:18).³¹ This position uses the word ministry (*diakonia*), meaning “the ministry of the word.”

The second alternative argues that the second and third prepositional phrases are

²⁵ I affirm, as Clinton Arnold, that Paul is the author of the letter. Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 46.

²⁶ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262. Arnold in his book uses five different leaders but I use the position that pastor-teacher are one gift.

²⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

²⁸ For more details, See Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 277.

²⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

³⁰ Steven M. Baugh, *Ephesians*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016), 337.

³¹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

dependent on the first and that the entire church is responsible for the work of the ministry.³² The saints, having been equipped, can now serve in the ministry, bear fruit, and bring everyone to maturity. This alternate interpretation supports the New Testament teaching of the priesthood of every believer. Arnold affirms that this exegesis has been chosen by most recent Bible translations and is the majority interpretation among contemporary scholars.³³ The first alternative has been more popular in the High Church tradition. In this option, the role of elders is to equip so that the saints can serve, and the service of the equipped saints using their diverse gifts will cause all members to grow in unity and maturity.

There are solid arguments for the second interpretation. Exegetically and syntactically, this alternative takes better account of the change of preposition (from *pros* to *eis*) and the absence of an article for the second and third preposition.³⁴ Steven Baugh, in favor of the first interpretation, uses the absence of the article as an argument to say that even if they are parallel, each preposition brings a new argument.³⁵ It is more convincing than just seeing Paul bring a subsequent construction instead of parallelism. Second, verse 12 is sandwiched between 4:1-6 and 4:13-16, where Paul exhorts every community member and insists that every one of them has received gifts for the good of the community. Paul uses the temple imagery in verse 16 to explain that everyone is essential to the building up of that construction. Each believer is a building block being added to the foundations laid by the apostles.³⁶ This is supported by a text like 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, where the word for “ministries” (*diakonai*) stands parallel to gifts and

³² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

³³ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

³⁴ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

³⁵ Baugh, *Ephesians*, 337-39.

³⁶ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 280.

“activities” and is used to illuminate the service of each other for the common good.³⁷ They must be equipped by gifted men toward a glorious mutual ministry. Third, even if the usage of the noun is rare, Arnold observes that the first alternative would give an unusual meaning to the noun equipping (*katartismos*) in an unusual meaning.³⁸ Most of the time, the verbal usage of this word means to prepare someone, to equip, as in 2 Timothy 3:16. Arnold underlines that the verb for “equip” is followed by the preposition *pros*, which “supplies the completion of the equipping idea.”³⁹ Fourth, on a more pastoral note, Paul practiced this kind of ministry as a preacher and an apostle (1 Tim 2:7). He equipped men so they would be able to equip others (2 Tim 2:2). He ministered in such a way that he could leave a new local church to go plant a new one.

Paul’s Model of Ministry for Church Leadership

Just before verses 7-10, Paul reminds his readers that Jesus, through his resurrection, is the victorious King over all opposing forces. He now equips the church to join him in his sovereign reign over all creation.⁴⁰ He is the head (1:22) of the church and the distributor of his gifts. Members of the church receive gifts, and some men are themselves gifts to the church. Christ, by his victory, provided gifts for the Christian community. Using an analogy from a previous king of Israel who foreshadowed the Messiah (Ps 68), Paul builds an argument to affirm that Christ is the ultimate King who provided the ultimate victory for his nation (the church). As a victorious king, he “is in a position to distribute gifts.”⁴¹ He has bought us at a great price; we are His. By His victory,

³⁷ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

³⁸ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

³⁹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 273.

⁴⁰ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 273.

⁴¹ Baugh, *Ephesians*, 329.

Christ the King provided gifts to every member and some men to lead and equip his church. So, these special officers are themselves gifts to the church. Their office is a gracious gift from Christ.⁴² Using another analogy, not only is he the King, but he is also the head of his body, an analogy for his church. It builds on what the previous study of Acts 20:28; Christ gave and appointed leaders for the good of his body. The purpose of this varied distribution of gifts is not to differentiate the individuals but so that each may contribute to the overall unity and growth of the body.⁴³

The first preposition of verse 12 mentions that Christ has given gifted leaders to the church not merely to do the ministry by themselves but to equip their members, to invest their time heavily in developing and preparing fellow believers to engage in ministry to the body. Or, as Peter O'Brien specifies, they are "given by the ascended Christ to his people to enable them to function and develop as they should."⁴⁴ As mentioned, equipping is then a work of preparing the saints to participate in the ministry, to prepare Christians adequately,⁴⁵ and to serve the Lord by enabling others.⁴⁶

These gifted men are themselves differently gifted. If one separates shepherds from teachers, then Paul lists five different types of leaders: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds (pastors) and teachers. Most commentators agree to say that this list is exhaustive.⁴⁷ One thing needs to be clarified, however. How many types of gifted leaders

⁴² Baugh, *Ephesians*, 320.

⁴³ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 297.

⁴⁴ Peter O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 297. I am aware of the controversy on the use of O'Brien's commentary. I have chosen to still use his work. Though I used this commentary, I do not approve his plagiarism.

⁴⁵ O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 303.

⁴⁶ O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 303.

⁴⁷ It is beyond the scope of this project to describe what type of service is offered by each of the gifted leaders in this list. My main point is to underline that they are given to equip the saints to do ministry instead of for them to do ministry for the saints.

are still offered by Christ to today's church? The four listed, or two, if apostles and prophets were only given for the founding of the church? This is a much-debated question, and it is not possible to cover it here at length. Most of New Testament uses of the words *apostle* and *prophets* are talking to men who serve as apostles and prophets as an established title given by God himself. They refer to the ones God gave in the first century to establish the church on the Cornerstone. In some occasions, one can find a larger meaning of the word *apostle* (Rom 16:7; 2 Cor 8:3; Phil 2:25), but if using the letter as the literary context, Paul has twice already used *apostles* and *prophets* in the narrow sense (see 2:20 and 3:5). I would not exclude the possibility of seeing leaders today that have been gifted *like* apostles or prophets, who serve the church with similar gifts but without the specific authority given to those called by Christ in the first century.

Even if pastors and teachers are presented in the sentence by only one article, it is still possible that these are two different types of gifts since Paul uses the same construction in 2:20 for apostles and prophets. Frank Thielman mentions, "The evidence is not clear enough to allow us to consider pastors and teachers as a single group."⁴⁸

The second preposition, "for the work of service," is related to the first, indicating the goal for which the believers have been equipped. Arnold explains, "The saints are the ones who are prepared by the gifted leaders to carry out much of the ministry of the church."⁴⁹ The word for "work" is defined by a genitive of apposition, "ministry," so they are equipped for the work of ministry.⁵⁰ The model Paul presents is, therefore, one of mutual service in the community and not one of professionals serving a group of consumers.⁵¹ A community of believers serving each other through their gifts

⁴⁸ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 275.

⁴⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁵⁰ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁵¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

will be a key element for the church to grow and see the mission of the church accomplished.

The third prepositional phrase describes this ministry's goal: the "building up (*oikodomé*) of the body of Christ." In verses 13-16, Paul explains what he means by "building." This building is Jesus's project for his church. Arnold goes back to 2:20-22, where Paul has rooted this building project, the church, in using a building metaphor, the construction of Jesus's temple.⁵² From a local perspective, modeled by their shepherds, each member of a local church builds together a community of saints where each member becomes more and more united by faith and becomes more mature, reflecting Christ. Thielman adds, "The picture is of all believers employing the gifts Christ has given in order to reach a goal that will likewise involve them all."⁵³ The use of the verb "to build" makes it difficult not to think of Jesus's declaration in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church." O'Brien mentions, "It expresses the idea that as the Messiah Jesus is the one who builds or establishes the renewed community of the people of God."⁵⁴

The goal of building the body of Christ is detailed in three successive prepositions: "until we all attain [1] to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God; [2] to mature manhood; [3] to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (v. 13). These three concepts are interconnected. Arnold rephrases the first one by saying that the goal is to "achieve a unified understanding of the faith."⁵⁵ In other words, each member of the church has a common set of core beliefs, especially about Christ. Here, "faith" should be understood in the objective sense of the doctrine Christians believe.⁵⁶ It

⁵² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁵³ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

⁵⁴ O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 305.

⁵⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 264.

⁵⁶ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 264.

is acknowledging a particular body of doctrine.⁵⁷ Earlier, Paul says that they have to maintain unity as a goal. One can see a clear tension between the “already and not yet.”⁵⁸ O’Brien follows with this idea: “The apostle, then, has in view an ongoing appropriation by believers, in fellowship together, of all that is involved in the salvation which centers in Christ.”⁵⁹ Second, Paul envisions a unified church but also a community of believers that becomes like Christ in his fullness. Each one in the community is an accomplished man, a perfected man (*teleion*). *Telos* is used in the Scriptures for either a perfect animal for sacrifice or a fully grown man, a mature man compared to a child.⁶⁰ This “perfected man” will be in contrast to children tossed by the waves in verse 14. A ship tossed by the waves would be an especially poignant illustration for Paul.⁶¹ Christians cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that the Spirit will transform them toward perfection, as Paul said in 1:4, and as Jesus commands in the Sermon on the Mount. The third proposition insists on maturity up to the stature of the fullness of Christ. By using the word “stature” to refer to human size (Luke 19:3), it is as if Paul were saying: “all believers grow, but to attain the “size” of Christ, that is, to reflect his virtues and likeness in their lives.”⁶² Baugh rephrases the idea by saying, “He is the maturity by which all Christian maturity must be measured as the fountain and standard of the new human race in the new creation inaugurated in the Firstborn.”⁶³ Harold Hoehner has to be quoted here for his clarity: “Hence, if every individual believer allows the Spirit to use that gift to the measure given to him or her,

⁵⁷ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

⁵⁸ O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 306.

⁵⁹ O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 307.

⁶⁰ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 554.

⁶¹ Baugh, *Ephesians*, 342.

⁶² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 266.

⁶³ Baugh, *Ephesians*, 341.

then all the body of Christ will grow to the measure of Christ's full stature."⁶⁴ Using the negative approach in verse 14, Paul tells what would happen if elders did not equip the church to do the work of ministry. Christians would not be rooted in sound doctrine and would be tricked by false teachers. Most of the time, wrong beliefs lead to instability and immaturity.

In verses 15-16, Paul returns to his main argument. By speaking the truth in love, the whole body, made up of every Christian, will be built. Instead of the translation "speaking the truth," Arnold proposes "confessing the truth." Considering the context of verses 4-6 and 13-14, and knowing that the true gospel rests on specific truths, he proposes that here Paul is conveying "the more specific sense of accepting the truth of the gospel, speaking it out loud in the corporate gathering of worship, talking about it with fellow believers, and upholding it firmly."⁶⁵ The "in love" qualificative added reemphasizes that all the actions mentioned must to be done with charity, humility and gentleness. Paul, staying with the metaphor of the body being built up by the active participation of all believers, reminds them of what is essential. Thielman details, "Commentators do not think Paul has a specific human body part in mind, but he pictures [every connection] in the body as performing its work of assistance."⁶⁶ Christ is not only the initial source of the creation of the church, but he is also the essential active element making all this adventure possible. All growth into Christlikeness comes from Christ using the faith transmitted once and for all. Nothing could be done without Christ, and Christians could do nothing alone. Christ provides everything the church needs for its "unity, nourishment, and progress."⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 558.

⁶⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 269.

⁶⁶ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 287.

⁶⁷ O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 313.

In conclusion, not only has God appointed elders as a gift to his church, but he also reveals to them in the Scriptures the philosophy of ministry that brings God’s intended fruit. This truth gives explicit direction for future elders. They need to understand their goal as equippers and not only doers. It is a philosophy of ministry; it should be central for them. The way elders minister, will add more leaders, and build the community are all included in the correct understanding of Ephesians 4. Equipping members will eventually lead to equipping leaders that God has given to the church. Future leaders are in congregation but need to be prepared. All this construction needs teaching, preaching, exhorting, coaching, mentoring, and much more. Thielman writes, “Those gifted in the ministry of the word and those whom they equip for ministry works together to build up the body of Christ.”⁶⁸ All this is possible because Christ has brought his church to life and provides all the gifts and nourishments needed. As Thielman puts it, “Christ creates in himself one new human being.”⁶⁹ May all the glory be given to Him.

The Pastoral Epistles: Central Principles for Pastoral Leaders

This project’s biblical foundation chapter concludes with the Pastoral Epistles. They are essential in the study of pastoral leadership. Even though the epistles are written to specific individuals, they are models for all pastoral authority. Timothy was leading the church in Ephesus when he received the first letter addressed to him. As a young pastor, he needed the apostle Paul’s advice. The letters present three central principles of pastoral leadership.

Before examining these three central principles of pastoral leadership, one must understand the framework Paul gives them. The gospel (1 Tim 1:15-17) is foundational to the church’s existence, central to the faith, and central to pastoral leadership. Elders are not

⁶⁸ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 280.

⁶⁹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 262.

the leaders of a moralistic religion but of a gospel community who worships an incarnate Saviour. Every desire to flee sin and grow in godliness depends on this good news. The way pastors teach and minister should be rooted in and motivated by the gospel. Paul encouraged every minister he trained to promote Christlikeness through the power of grace found in the story of a beloved Lord and Saviour. Ten times, Paul anchored his teaching in the gospel itself.⁷⁰ His conversion, call to ministry, leadership of the church, and teaching and church discipline, and the reason for the church, are all rooted in the good news. The gospel is the ecosystem of ministry. John Hammett writes that the gospel “underlies, shapes, and frames the church’s unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity; it is the message preached and presented in the sacraments. It is a true *sine qua non* of a true church.”⁷¹

Direct the Affairs of the Church Well (1 Tim 3:15-16; 5:17)

The first principle is related to the general oversight of a congregation. Elders are called to preside over their local assembly (1 Tim 5:17). Directing the affairs of the church well means presiding, governing, and superintending. Elders gifted by God to rule well are called to give the church direction through their teaching, through their shepherding, through their organization, and through their ability to lead the leaders in the mission of the church. Teaching and preaching are certainly central to the elder’s role but not the only way. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12, Paul speaks of “those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and admonish you” (NIV). Clearly, Paul has elders/leaders in mind since he always speaks of them when he uses the word “work or labour hard” (1 Tim 4:10; 2 Tim 2:6). Elders will complete each other depending on their gifts. I. Howard Marshall mentions that, among the elders, some have “fuller duties than

⁷⁰ First Tim 1:15-17; 2:5; 3:16; 4:10; 6:14-16; 2 Tim 1:10-14; 2:1; 2:8; Titus 2:11-15; 3:3-7.

⁷¹ John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019), 73.

others.”⁷² Those who labor well, and are dedicated to preaching and teaching, are eligible for financial support from the church. The expression “double honor” could mean that all elders receive honor, but some will also receive a remuneration,⁷³ especially in light of verse 18. First Timothy 3:4-5 helps to see another angle of the usage of the verb *proistémi*. That list of criteria for selecting elders states that they must govern their families well to prove their ability to lead the local church. These home responsibilities, which include caring, nourishing, educating, and rebuking, are an illustration of the pastoral call. The role of a father over his house illustrates how leaders are to conduct themselves in the house of God (1 Tim 3:15). From this passage, one can conclude that churches were under the authority of multiple elders, not just one. This presbytery of elders is a continuity from Judaism.⁷⁴

To complete the necessity of directing the affairs of the church, Paul teaches about this general oversight by using other terminology previously used in the same letter. Paul did not know if he would come to Ephesus soon, so he decided to write to help Timothy and, indirectly, every Christian in Timothy’s church. In this middle section of the letter, Paul states the goal of his epistle: how the church should behave under Timothy’s pastoral leadership. First Timothy 3:15 reads, “If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.” Either Timothy himself, as a model for the congregation, or the congregation itself taught by its elders, will know how to conduct themselves in the church. The focus is on Timothy as the leader, but not exclusively on him. As a leader of the congregation, Timothy must know how people should behave in God’s household. He

⁷² I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 611.

⁷³ Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 288.

⁷⁴ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), 155.

will provide instructions and leadership toward this way of life that originates in the gospel. George Knight mentions that when Paul's writes, "I am writing these things," he is referring to that which precedes.⁷⁵ It is possible to include chapters 2 and 3 since they relate to conduct in God's house.⁷⁶ Now one must understand why "these things" are so important. Knight states, "The seriousness concerning the conduct is determined by the fact that the place of such a conduct is the church, which is the possession and dwelling place of the living God."⁷⁷ Robert Yarbrough points to the "assembly where [the living God] is known and worshiped."⁷⁸ Paul wants "Timothy and the church [to] know what is proper conduct for God's household."⁷⁹ To behave (*anastrepho*) is used here in a passive, reflexive and figurative sense to be used in reference to human conduct.⁸⁰ The church is described as the place (temple) where the living God dwells with his people (1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:21-22). One cannot make an absolute distinction between house and household since the New Testament authors use the metaphor for the building and the people almost interchangeably.

In this context, since conduct is in view, Paul is referring to members of the community of Jesus. Just as a private household must be ordered and well managed, so should the church as a household of households. This household is the church of the living God. This expression brings the seriousness of the church by linking the present New Testament congregation to its roots in the old covenant people. The phrase "of the living God" echoes the Old Testament (e.g., Hos 2:1). The one true God, the living God, is the

⁷⁵ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 178.

⁷⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 178.

⁷⁷ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 178.

⁷⁸ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 219.

⁷⁹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 179.

⁸⁰ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 179.

one who dwells with his church. Knight declares, “The standards of conduct prescribed are no mere etiquette, they are standards for the household that is none other than God’s. They provide direction for conduct in his temple.”⁸¹ Yarbrough adds, “A shallow moralistic understanding of conduct should be resisted.”⁸² The use of the verb *anastrepho* in moral discourse “denote not simply certain acts one performs, but, more important, one’s [manner of life] as informed by [guiding principles].”⁸³ Knight affirms that not only in this text, but in the letter as a whole, “the emphasis on order and oversight, on godly conduct and on God’s people upholding his truth, and on caring for those in need is striking and noteworthy.”⁸⁴ The way people live out their discipleship, and the way the ministry of the church is exercised, should reflect God’s revelation. Marshall expresses, “It is the church’s relationship to the truth that demands a certain kind of behavior from its members.”⁸⁵ Seeing the church as a visual temple with its columns, Paul goes on to say that the church is the pillar of truth. *Alétheia* is used here for the objective content of faith. The church is a structure that upholds the truth. Yarbrough puts it well: “In connection with the [truth], [pillar and foundation] likely points to the church’s role (through their confession of Christ; see v.16) in combatting soul-destroying error.”⁸⁶ It is also a household called to manifest this truth by behavior.⁸⁷ For Yarbrough, the meaning is that “Paul wants Timothy to

⁸¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 180.

⁸² Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 218.

⁸³ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 218.

⁸⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 181.

⁸⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 511.

⁸⁶ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 219.

⁸⁷ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 181.

minister a message that changes lives.”⁸⁸ The next verse, verse 16, tells that the central truth is that of Christ and his gospel. Jesus’s ministry is the reason the church exists.

To conclude this section, I will, from the Pastoral Epistles, list some of the various ways elders are called to exercise leadership and oversight. It is the church leaders’ responsibility to order the church’s life. If they lead and conduct themselves well as models for their congregation, then their assembly will be well-ordered. They must teach (as will be seen in detail in the next section) and also prevent false teaching (1 Tim 1:3), warning and disciplining false teachers if they are unrepentant (Titus 3:10). They must prepare and present elders, deacons, and deaconesses for the church to install them (1 Tim 3). They must ensure that everyone knows how to behave and exemplify honorable relationships. They must model wisdom in their relationships and admonish the people to seek holiness. They must ensure that widows are served and treated well (1 Tim 2:19-21; 5:6). They have to instruct the believers regarding prayer (1 Tim 2), money (1 Tim 6:17-19), and suffering (2 Tim 2:10; 3:12; 4:5), to stir up and equip the saints for every good deed (Titus 3:16). And, only when necessary, they must lead the congregation in church discipline (1 Tim 1; 2 Tim 2:25; Titus 3:10). The task is immense, but Paul admonishes them to be found faithful in it (1Cor 4:2).

The Indispensable Role of Preaching and Teaching (1 Tim 4:6, 13-16; 5:17; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-4:2)

The teaching ministry is prominent in the Pastoral Epistles. Teaching is the authoritative communication of biblical truth and sound doctrine. The main goal of teaching is transmission of the whole counsel of God transforming people into Christlikeness. In the Pastoral Epistles, it is connected to reproofing false teachers, and in so doing protecting the church. Elders must teach. They must be diligent and invest themselves seriously in this ministry. Teaching the Scriptures allows the elders to teach,

⁸⁸ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 218.

preach, reprove, offer correction, and train believers into righteousness. Marshall states that it is hard to draw a hard-and-fast line between the verbs *kéru* and *didaskalo* in the New Testament.⁸⁹ One may bear a stronger tone of exhortation. What is clear is the final word of the apostle in the second letter to Timothy: “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead . . . preach the word; be ready in season and out of season” (4:1). Yarbrough writes, “The exercise of oversight takes place in significant measure through congregational leaders like Timothy administering the grace Scripture mediates through its exposition to the assembly.”⁹⁰

Next is a discussion on two passages that present the task of teaching. While this task is given to Timothy, it can apply to all elders (1 Tim 4:13-16; 2 Tim 2:15). In 4:13, Paul urges Timothy to be devoted to the reading of Scripture, to exhortation, and to teaching. Public reading (*anagnorisis*), a practice brought from the synagogue and still practiced today, was particularly necessary at a time when few saints had a scroll of the authoritative texts.⁹¹ The reading was followed by an exhortation/encouragement (*paraklesis*),⁹² as in Act 13:15, and by the teaching (*didaskalia*) of the inspired text. It is implied that Timothy had to prepare for this responsibility by spending time studying the text. Knight synthesizes all these elements: “Paul urges a public ministry that reads the scriptures to the gathered Christians, exhorts them to respond appropriately, and teaches them its principles.”⁹³ Marshall adds, “It may be that in the present context [exhortation]

⁸⁹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 518.

⁹⁰ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 250.

⁹¹ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 249.

⁹² This word is frequently used by Paul in his writings, it is found nineteen other times.

⁹³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 208.

has more to do with life-style whereas [teaching] has to do with expounding the true faith over against the opponents.”⁹⁴

The call to teach is related to the gift Timothy received from God and confirmed by the church when they laid hands on him (v. 14). The practice in today’s context would be ordination. Elders are called to teach the Scriptures with zeal, and to give themselves wholly to them (v. 15 NIV). Knight believes that the text: “express total involvement and intensity of the exhortation.”⁹⁵ Since he is devoted, the congregation will be able to see the progress. Yarbrough adds, “And if a leader is not engaged in growing, how can he lead other in that direction?”⁹⁶ In other words, teaching is “indispensable.” Teaching is Timothy’s calling, and Paul charges him to do it. He must be devoted to this task, even if and when the hearers do not love the content. Paul wanted Timothy to be committed to growing in his teaching and also in his moral conduct. Paul uses the word progress (*prokothé*) here and in the inverse meaning for his opponents who are progressing in the wrong direction (2 Tim 3:16; *prokophousin*).⁹⁷ Knight notes that Paul exhorts Timothy not only for his sake but for the sake of his congregation “because what is at stake is salvation for Timothy and his hearers (v.16).”⁹⁸ Real faith in the true gospel will bring perseverance in the teacher’s life as well as in the lives of the believers. Most commentators⁹⁹ understand the verb “save” (*sozo*) to have a soteriological meaning, as it does elsewhere in the letter as the soteriological meaning. If, humanly speaking, Timothy had stopped teaching the true gospel and been found teaching a false gospel, he would have shown that he was not

⁹⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 563.

⁹⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 210.

⁹⁶ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 253.

⁹⁷ Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 155.

⁹⁸ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 210.

⁹⁹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 211.

a true believer and would have put his hearers in danger. It is always a temptation to teach what a congregation loves to hear. This appeal by Paul is thus relevant to Timothy and all teachers in any generation. Yarbrough thinks that “Paul wants Timothy to be ministerially self-aware.”¹⁰⁰ Issues of doctrine could be issues of salvation.

The importance of teaching in the ministry of Timothy (and of elders in general) is also highlighted by 2 Timothy 2:15. Again, the context of verse 15 is a pericope in which Paul contrasts true and false teachers. Andreas Köstenberger mentions, “Believers today should avoid those who are self-absorbed, love to hear themselves talk, and are more interested in minor quibbles than in evangelizing the lost or building up the church.”¹⁰¹ Paul then exhorts Timothy to teach the word adequately, bearing in mind that he should present himself without reproach before God. Careful and accurate teaching is essential to his ministry. Knight adds, “Paul urges Timothy to handle accurately “the word of truth” and thus to be a positive example to those he mentored (2:2).”¹⁰² Paul gives this instruction with the same intensity as in 1 Timothy 4:13-16; to make every effort to zealously devote himself to his teaching ministry. Guthrie says that the word *spoudason* “contains the notion of persistent zeal.”¹⁰³ Knight writes, “Paul seeks to instill in Timothy a sense of urgency.”¹⁰⁴ He will present himself and be examined by God. This makes the task of an elder extremely serious. A teacher should therefore be trained and equipped to do it well. Intentional mediocrity should be avoided. The primary motivation to accurately handle the Word of truth is related to God himself, even before the congregation’s welfare. The way Timothy will labor to correctly (*orthotomeo*) handle the Word of truth will allow

¹⁰⁰ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 254.

¹⁰¹ Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 242.

¹⁰² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 411.

¹⁰³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 411.

¹⁰⁴ Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 242.

him to be found unashamed. This relates to Paul's exhortation in 1:6-7. The participle *orthotomounta* qualifies the word for worker, *ergates*. Thus, one can link orthodox teaching with the fruit of being found unashamed. Yarbrough declares that the worker's task "is one of arduous productive labor, grinding out hard-won grains like a tradesman or farmhand."¹⁰⁵ The "word of truth," only used here in the Pastoral Epistles, bears the meaning of the gospel. It is similar to the expression used in Colossians 1:5 and Ephesians 1:13, where the "word of truth" speaks of the gospel.¹⁰⁶ Knights says, "To handle this word correctly is to handle it in accord with its intention and to communicate properly its meaning."¹⁰⁷

The Necessity of Training and Appointing Elders (1 Tim 3:1-7; 2 Tim 2:1-7)

Quality leaders are required for church ministry to flourish and expand.¹⁰⁸

When Paul instructs Titus what to do on the island of Crete, he tells him to appoint new elders (Titus 1: 5-9). This task is to be done with intentionality and training because he asks Timothy not to be hasty to lay hands on new elders (1 Tim 5:22).

The main exhortation to train new elders is in 2 Timothy 2:2: "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." The strength to accomplish this transmission ministry comes from Jesus Christ and his grace, as Paul explains in verse 1. To keep, teach, and transmit the gospel is hard work. Keeping the gospel pure and central is always challenging.

Pastors tend to make secondary things, primary things. To fight against this, elders must sometimes correct and discipline men that they worked with. This cannot be done without

¹⁰⁵ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 386.

¹⁰⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 412.

¹⁰⁷ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 412.

¹⁰⁸ Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 287.

suffering. Paul’s exhortation can only be followed by serving closely together. Preparing for pastoral ministry in the context of a local church is ideal because church leaders can mentor future elders. It was now time for Timothy to take what Paul had entrusted to him and ensure the faithful transmission of that true deposit to the coming generation.

“What you have heard” and what Timothy needs to “entrust to faithful men” in 2 Timothy 2:2 probably refers to the apostolic message he had received through oral preaching or teaching.¹⁰⁹ It is possible to make a parallel with passages in the Thessalonian or Corinthian letters where Paul uses the word tradition (*paradosis*) to refer to what was received, taught, and held firmly.¹¹⁰ The word “entrust” to others echoes the language of “deposit” (*paratheke*) and “guarantor” introduced in 1:12:14.¹¹¹ In light of the central place of the gospel in the Pastoral Epistles, and in light of the fact that the gospel is central in the apostolic message, it could be said that in this verse Paul exhorts Timothy to teach and transmit the gospel and its implications.¹¹² This gospel and its implications need to be transmitted to ensure the integrity of the gospel message.¹¹³ This deposit is a message made visible by the appropriate conduct. Therefore, it takes time and close relationship. The transmission Timothy himself received was public. Many witnesses saw it, both at his ordination and in his church and his ministry.

Knight affirms that the deposit must be entrusted (*paratithémi*) for safekeeping and transmission.¹¹⁴ Nothing in the text or the context suggests that apostolic succession is

¹⁰⁹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 389. See Phil 4:9; Col 1:16.

¹¹⁰ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 390.

¹¹¹ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 490.

¹¹² Towner in his commentary affirms that the gospel is what Paul has in mind for “the things.” Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 489.

¹¹³ Mounce, *Complete Dictionary*, 504.

¹¹⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 391.

in view; instead, it is a multiplication of leaders for the needs of the church's mission.¹¹⁵ To succeed, Timothy will choose, teach, and mentor trustworthy men so they can entrust the pastoral message to others also. Because some will go astray of the faith, it is essential to ensure that those who will bear the apostles' teaching be found faithful. Because they will be able to teach, minister, and refute false teachers, the men Timothy will equip must themselves be able to teach.

Köstenberger explains, "Essentially Paul, the seasoned apostle, seeks to impart to Timothy, his foremost disciple, the same mentoring mind-set that had characterized his own apostolic ministry."¹¹⁶ Köstenberger also writes, "While often lacking in the contemporary church, such emphasis on mentoring the younger generation is vital and grounded in the precedent of Jesus's close mentoring of the Twelve as a main priority of his earthly ministry."¹¹⁷ This process is vital to provide for the continuation and expansion of the ministry.¹¹⁸ Ministry brings suffering, and ministry combined with mentoring is not exempt from these hardships. From the example Paul shared in Acts 20, one can see how hard and rewarding training men for ministry can be. Elders will find the strength for this task in the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹¹⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

¹¹⁶ Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 228.

¹¹⁷ Köstenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, 156.

¹¹⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 491.

Conclusion

This chapter included a review of Scripture's clear instructions for pastoral leadership. As head of the church, Christ elects some men to lead his people by providing elders for local congregations. As a team, they are responsible for equipping all the members of the congregation with the gifts they themselves have received. They must shepherd, order, teach, and mentor for the gospel to be received, believed, and faithfully transmitted.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

This chapter considers theoretical, practical, and historical issues related to pastoral leadership. Also, this chapter is based upon and builds upon the biblical exposition of the previous chapter. Solid pastoral leadership is fundamental to obtaining healthy churches. To practice healthy leadership in a Baptist church some key elements are essentials. Pastoral leaders need a deeper understanding of gospel clarity, a mastery of Baptist distinctives, an understanding of Baptist church governance, and a philosophy of ministry that leads to mentoring emerging leaders.

The Necessity of Gospel Centrality in the Life and Ministry of Pastoral Leaders

The gospel is central to Christian faith and ministry. The gospel is the unique good news that brings salvation for those whose put their faith in Christ. The good news also means that every Christian should walk in newness of life. Titus 2:11-12 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.” Ray Ortlund adds, “The gospel is not law, demanding that we pay our way. The gospel is a welcome announcement, declaring that Jesus paid it all.”¹ This is why, as Timothy faced difficult times, Paul issued this special exhortation: “Remember Jesus Christ” (2 Tim 1: 8). Ministry is all about Jesus and his gospel. Pastoral leaders

¹ Ray Ortlund, *The Gospel: How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 15.

should be characterized by a gospel centrality in their life and ministry. They should also lead in building a gospel culture for their congregation.

Pastoral Leaders Should Lead the Church toward a Gospel Culture

A church can believe the truth about the gospel and still be unfruitful. Ortlund specifies, “A church with the truth of the gospel in its theology can produce the opposite of the gospel in its practice.”² Pastors must lead and serve in such a way that ensures that this does not come to pass. If the pastoral team is functioning as a gospel community, it will create a gospel culture. But this may be more challenging than one might expect. Churches, through the ministry of their pastors, should portray the attributes of Christ. Churches should manifest the flavor of Christ as he himself would be physically present. Paul David Tripp writes, “It’s the gospel that tells us who leaders are, what leaders need, how leaders should relate to one another, how the leadership community should function, what its values should be,”³ Ortlund notes, “The doctrine of grace creates a culture of grace. Without the doctrine, the culture will be weak. Without the culture, the doctrine will seem pointless.”⁴

Members of a congregation should see Christ’s life in the life of their pastors. This gospel culture starts with pastors who are amazed, crushed, and revitalized by the incommensurable love of Christ for them. Through their ministry, pastoral leaders can embody the beauty of holiness; gospel beauty is seen into the greatness of Christ’s. Ortlund mentions, “A Gospel defined church is a prophetic sign that points beyond itself.”⁵ This

² Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 17.

³ Paul D. Tripp, *Lead: 12 Gospel Principles for Leadership in the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 54.

⁴ Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 21.

⁵ Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 51.

type of church generates hope and endurance for the future and a desire to live by faith while waiting for things to come.

Gospel culture creates a community that pictures a diverse people unified, where people are free to open up, a safe space for confession and repentance.⁶ People will be available to spend time with people, not just time for ministries. A pastoral leadership team models transparency for its congregation. Such leaders confess their sins, express their fears, and provide consolation. In this culture, members and leaders make Christ shine through their speech and by their presence. Their lives are hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3). A gospel culture church replaces criticism, guilt, and self-justification with a heavenly atmosphere, the fragrance of Christ.⁷ Such leaders find strength in Christ's grace. Seventeenth-century puritan pastor John Flavel describes Christ's love: "His excellencies are pure and unmixed. He is a sea of sweetness, without one drop of gall."⁸

Pastoral Leaders Should Submit Their Lives to Gospel Ethics

Every pastor is foremost a Christian who needs to believe the gospel for every aspect of his life. He needs to be personally invested by Christ's love and transformed into Christ's image. To be a model, he must believe that a qualified character is essential in order to serve God's church. It is of utmost importance for gospel leaders, far greater than the strong personalities of highly gifted leaders. Without godly character, there is no gospel leader. This section will develop some ethics implication originating from gospel truths in the life of pastoral leaders.

⁶ Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 72.

⁷ Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 90-91.

⁸ John Flavel, "His Altogether Lovely," in *The World Works of the Reverend Mr. John Flavel* (London: Thomas Parkhurst, 1701), I:332, quoted in Ortlund, *The Gospel*, 111.

Pastoral leaders should take time to invest in their communion with God. He leads from a deep devotion to the Savior and shares this deep devotion with his team. Such a devotion causes leaders to serve for the glory of God, whatever the circumstances. Tripp states, “It is love for Jesus that has the power to crush leader’s pride. It is love for Jesus that ignites and protects our love for one another.”⁹ Communion with God fills such a leader with grace and hope for every challenge he may face. Through such communion, he learns to fix his eyes on Jesus Christ’s promises. Pastors must experience anew the beauty of the gospel and recommit themselves to the gospel every day. It is so easy for leaders to skip personal devotional times for ministry needs, but this trend could be dangerous if it becomes a pattern. The temptation for leaders to skip personal devotions with God is sometimes caused by an identity issue. These leaders are nourished by their performance instead of being nourished by Christ. Seeking gratitude, compliment, or joy through service can lead to idolatry. Intimacy with God is essential to leading well, as well as to keeping one’s eyes focus on the Lord. Pastors need to lead out of their identify in Christ, with the Father’s love in mind. Pursuing continuous education and reaching for new resources to grow in godly character should be pastoral leader’s conviction.

Another key gospel ethic for pastoral leadership is humility. James 4:6 says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Tripp declares, “Humility is a fruit of the rule of the gospel in your life.”¹⁰ Gospel-transformed leaders must run to God as they realize that their greatest danger is not outside of them but rather within.¹¹ Scott Thomas writes, “Pride leads to every other vice: It is the complete anti-God state of mind.”¹² Humility brings pastors to dependence on God and their community; they refuse

⁹ Tripp, *Lead*, 56.

¹⁰ Tripp, *Lead*, 59.

¹¹ Tripp, *Lead*, 59.

¹² Scott Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader; Leaning on Jesus to Shepherd His People* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2021), 106.

to become independent. Through the gospel, pastors learn to be patient and to lead from a framework of forgiveness. They are prompt to offer grace since they have received it themselves. Tripp mentions, “Forgiveness serves, anger dominates.”¹³ Humility and pastoral leadership go hand in hand since humility is others-centered.¹⁴ The following thought by Thomas, concerning Christ’s beauty, is noteworthy: “Gospel-shaped leaders do not revel in greatness; they strive to reveal the treasure.”¹⁵

A gospel-shaped leader accepts to be nurtured by the community of leaders that surround him. Tripp writes, “Every leader needs to have his heart, life, and ministry firmly planted in the right-now nutrients of the gospel of Jesus Christ, so that he gets his identity, meaning, and purpose, inner sense, and sense of calling from the gospel.”¹⁶ Pastors surrounded by pastors who have their meaning rooted in the gospel creates an opportunity to minister with honesty, transparency, and security. A gospel team will listen and respond with candor to every pastor who needs to share his own heart. Pastors need solid gospel clarity to live this candor, otherwise they will unintentionally choose to be proud, minimize sin, or fear losing face. In contrast, gospel practices offer fresh starts and new beginnings.

Some pastoral leaders can clearly see their own challenges and easily share adequately with their colleagues. But, since all leaders have blind spots, they need their teams to enlighten and protect them. Another gospel ethic that needs to be mentioned is intentional friendships. Friends or colleagues are a means of grace for leaders. Each leader should have one or two close friends to sharpen them, to receive great gospel

¹³ Tripp, *Lead*, 65.

¹⁴ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 106.

¹⁵ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leaders*, 108.

¹⁶ Tripp, *Lead*, 55.

fellowship, and be keep them from discouragement. Intentional friendship is a must for gospel discipline in the life of pastoral leaders.

Gifted leaders with strong a desire to build do not like to be limited by earthly realities. They should learn to love these human limits because it helps remind them that they are not God. Tripp mentions that leaders have four kinds of limits: limits of gifts, limit of time, limit in energy, and limit in maturity.¹⁷ The God of the gospel knows about all of them. Pastoral leadership teams should discuss these limits and the specific implications for every team member. All four of these limits are important but I want to highlight the limit of time. The God of rest invites us to rest on the finished work of Christ. Exhaustion diminishes considerably efficiency in pastoral ministry, which is why Thomas says, “Rest makes you stronger.”¹⁸

Godly character is of utmost importance in Christian service. Gospel-shaped leaders needs to pursue holiness and seek personal growth.

Pastoral Leaders Should Minister in Light of Gospel Principles

Christ’s goal was to build his church. He gave a new commandment: “Love one another, just as I have loved you” (John 13:34-35). Pastors are called to lead the bride of Christ, which is why pastoral ministry is so precious and also so challenging. In my first week in full-time ministry, a seasoned pastor in the region, Jacques Alexanian, said to me, “Love them.” This stuck with me. It did not take long for me to understand his exhortation. Loving the church is not always easy, but it is the pastor’s call. Gospel leaders will be driven by this call because Jesus gave his life for his church. Pastors should lead the church as one who reflects Christ’s love for the church.¹⁹ Thomas also mentions, “Christ,

¹⁷ Trip, *Lead*, 71-84.

¹⁸ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 85.

¹⁹ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 102.

through his love, kindness, and mercy, joined himself to us, his cherished bride.”²⁰

Pastors serve the sheep by listening to them, seeking peace and unity with them, and sacrificing themselves for them.²¹

As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, the way I serve should represent the one I represent. Tripp writes, “I will commit myself to faithfully represent the message, the methods, and character of the Savior King, who commissioned me.”²² The ultimate way to be an ambassador is to love the church (Eph 5: 28-29).

Another way to be a good ambassador in pastoral leadership is to submit to the call of sacrifice and service. Tripp mentions, “Servant is the most used term for a spiritual leader.”²³ One of the greatest enemies toward service is the leader himself. Pastoral leaders are naturally self-focused, self-absorbed, and self-defensive.²⁴ Jesus was clear that to lead is to serve (Mark 10:35-45). Leaders must learn that their identity is in Christ. Pastors are servants who sacrifice for the good of others, just as Christ did.²⁵ Leaders must learn to serve with joy. It takes years of ministry to learn this important truth. Gospel leaders sacrifice from the fruit of the real and all-satisfying sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Denying himself is the call for those who serve. Tripp adds, “Suffering servanthood is at the very heart of the redemptive story and the gospel message.”²⁶

²⁰ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 98.

²¹ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 99.

²² Tripp, *Lead*, 107-8.

²³ Tripp, *Lead*, 129.

²⁴ Tripp, *Lead*, 130.

²⁵ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 20.

²⁶ Tripp, *Lead*, 142.

The Necessity of Understanding Baptist Distinctives

In the first section of this chapter, the focus was on the gospel implications for church leaders themselves. This second section will define the need for good practices of pastoral leadership. This time it is about their understanding of church polity. They need to lead their church with a clear awareness of governance issues. A Baptist pastor should be convince and able to lead his congregation into Baptist distinctives.

To understand the notion of Baptist distinctives, some church history background is needed. From the period of the late primitive church to the Reformation, Roman Catholicism shaped Christian church governance. Even if the Reformation clearly offered enlightenment to the soteriological doctrine of *sola gratia* to Christian faith, Reformers did not address some central issues concerning ecclesiology and church governance. European churches were still governed through either Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Reformed mode of governance. In these churches, newborns were added to church membership through infant baptism. When some Christian leaders questioned these ecclesiological issues and eventually became convinced that churches should be governed differently, they had to leave their denomination. As ordained servants of a state church in which they were set apart to serve, they could no longer serve as bishops. So, they began serving independent churches in which then had to create, defend, and write new church governance polity. Going back to the New Testament, they had to answer many questions, such as, who has authority in a local church? Who should be baptized? Who should be a member? Who votes for new members? They wanted to know how to organize a church by looking into the New Testament. In England, some of these separatists, would later be called Particular Baptist.²⁷ In that same period, this Baptist group started to name their new type of church governance “congregationalism.” The

²⁷ Gordon L. Belyea, “Origins of the Particular Baptists,” *Themelios* 32, no. 3. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/origins-of-the-particular-baptists/>.

desire to baptize adult new converts²⁸ and give authority to members of a local congregation became some of the fundamental Baptist distinctives.

The doctrines defended by seventeenth-century English Baptist pastors are called Baptist distinctives. Today, more than just Baptist churches believe these distinctives. However, they are called Baptist distinctives because of the first Baptist pastors who penned them in their writings. Also, because when non-Baptist churches believe in these distinctives they do not believe all of them. They take some and reject others. When a church chooses them all, they are normally from a Baptist denomination. This section will cover seven Baptist distinctives and the next section will cover three more.

The Authority of Scriptures

The Reformation era brought Protestant churches under the banner of *sola Scriptura*. Baptists are grateful for and indebted to the Reformers who fought to defend the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures. They desired to separate the Scriptures from church traditions, which they insisted were not at the same level of authority as of the Scriptures themselves. The Bible, they held, stood as the only source of religious authority.²⁹ From this distinctive, Baptists went on to reject experience or reason as a source of final authority for developing convictions. The authority of the Bible is the authority of God himself.

In this same spirit, early Baptists sought to keep the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture as a central distinctive. From this angle, they defined their ecclesiology from the Scripture rather than Middle Age church traditions. They kept the same spirit of the Reformers but applied it also to the doctrine of the church. They sought to institute church

²⁸ A similar movement of adult new converts being baptized by immersion appears in Switzerland, called the Anabaptist.

²⁹ Catholics still believe in Scripture and tradition as of the same level of authority.

practices that could be defended only by the Scriptures, which was why they go on to reject infant baptism and state-led churches. One of their convictions was that the Bible was the best to interpret the Bible.³⁰ Catholic church traditions were not necessary to be able to interpret the Bible. Leaders, Bible scholars, church councils, and catechism should always come as supportive elements only.

R. Stanton Norman writes, “As New Testament believers, Baptists believe that the Old Testament is fulfilled in Christ.” The New Testament is now the new lens to interpret Old Testament regulations. Paul defines himself as under the law of Christ (1 Cor 9:21). Even if various Baptists have come to different conclusions in terms of the strength of discontinuity of the New Testament, Henry Cook says that all Baptists affirm that “Christian faith and practice must be found in conformity to the mind and will of Christ as revealed to us in the New Testament.”³¹ This element of discontinuity is one of the reasons Baptists differ from Presbyterians. The latter holds to Covenant Theology, which teaches continuity from Old to New Testament and explains why they still pursue a mixed congregation of unsaved and saved people in the church today.

Liberty of Conscience

Baptist ancestors strived to defend the doctrine of the liberty of conscience. People are free to choose for themselves what they believe in matters of faith and practice. Today this seems to be obvious, living in a cultural context where everyone has almost unlimited freedom. However, history shows that state churches persecuted separatist believers for almost two hundred years in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Because Baptist leaders defended liberty of conscience, one can observe, though indirectly, the fruit of this theological doctrine in Canada’s founding religious spirit. The opening of the Canadian Charters of Rights and Freedom mentions that everyone has the fundamental

³⁰ R. Stanton Norman, *The Baptist Way* (Nashville: B & H, 2005), 13.

³¹ Henry Cook, quoted in Norman, *The Baptist Way*, 26.

freedom: (1) freedom of conscience and religion; (2) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression; (3) freedom of peaceful assembly; (4) freedom of association.³²

Christians should be thankful to these brothers and sisters who persevere in what they believe. Canadian Christians live in a special moment in history where they have freedom of religion. This may not be the case in the centuries ahead, but believers can be grateful at least for the centuries where this type of freedom was experience on a national level.

Liberty of conscience originates from the supremacy of Christ over his creation, his church, and human conscience. He is the only sovereign judge (Jas 4:12).

Early Baptists once said that all believers are free to interpret the Scriptures so as to apply them to their hearts, and to profess them and to worship according to what Scripture reveals. Everyone will also one day stand before God to give an account of faith and practice. The Baptist confession of 1612, written by Thomas Helwys³³ (1575-1616), states,

That the magistrate is not by virtue of his office to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, to force and compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine; but to leave Christian religion free, to every man's conscience, and to handle only civil transgressions (Rom. xiii), injuries and wrongs of man against man, in murder, adultery, theft, ect., for Christ only is the king, and lawgiver of the church and conscience (James iv. 12).³⁴

Pastors should inform their congregations of the importance of founding the practice of their faith on their own work and conscience. They should teach or preach on this topic to express gratitude for the liberty of religion Christians continue to enjoy today.

³² Canada Justice Laws Website, "Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," 1982, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-12.html>.

³³ Thomas Helwys was the first known leader of a Baptist church in England.

³⁴ The Reformed Reader, "Propositions and Conclusions concerning True Christian Religion," accessed May 16, 2023, <https://www.reformedreader.org/ccf/acof1612.htm>, article 84.

Separation of Church and State

“Then he said to them, ‘Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s’” (Matt 22:21). As the resurrected Christ, he is the King over all kings, so he reigns over all of my life. Neither the state nor a state church can legislate a person’s faith; it is between the believer and his Creator. This distinctive naturally connected to the other Baptist distinctives. The church is a collective of believers who organize themselves around the authority of Scripture. Pastors studying this doctrine wanted to express that every believer’s soul is competent to understand the Scriptures and listen to their Savior’s revelation. Believers do not need any intermediate to be able to understand God and his salvation. A local church is free to preach the gospel and people listening are free to accept or reject it (under Calvinist convictions). Conversion is between Jesus and his sheep; the process is not mediated by parents or pastors for someone that has not reached the age of decision.

The separation of church and state was a profound conviction for early Baptists. For Helwys, local churches should be free to practice their faith without government interference. Later, article XXXIII of The London Confession of Faith of 1644 mentions that Christ has purchased and redeemed his church, and article XXXIV says that only believers and elders named by them are called to offer direction, no others have power to impose any direction on that congregation. The Philadelphia Confession of 1742 states the same idea. Even later, a Baptist leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, William B. Johnson, expressed the same principle of separation from church and state in “The Gospel Developed through the Government and Order of the Churches of Jesus Christ” in 1846.³⁵ Also, John L. Dagg mentions separation of church and state in his 1899 work “A Treatise on Church Order,” where he talks about the independent church “giving a full

³⁵ C. Douglas Weaver, “Baptist Ecclesiology in Historic Perspective: The Mid- to Late-Nineteenth Century,” *Perspective in Religious Studies* 41, no. 3 (2014): 279.

scope for the exercise of private judgement.”³⁶ Finally, Edward Hiscox in 1980 affirms the same conviction in “Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches.”³⁷

Government can be good in the economy of God, and God may use it providentially. However, government decisions should be limited to civil issues. In terms of church issues, pastors should instruct their own members concerning the Bible’s teaching on church authority, learning what it is and when it is appropriate to apply. To understand Baptist distinctives, pastors should teach Baptist church history and historical theology because it helps Christians understand the background and development of these doctrines.

Regenerate Church Membership

The following distinctive is the immediate fruit of the one preceding. Since the church is separate from state, membership is no longer decided at the moment an infant receives baptism. Rather, church membership begins at conversion. This may seem obvious to today, but it was a new coming back to New Testament convictions four hundred years ago. Church historians see evidence of infant baptism as early as the fourth century. Baptist founders believed in confessional baptism and decided to go back to biblical baptism.

Going back to their New Testament roots, early Baptists discovered that local churches should be composed of regenerate Christians. The main argument comes from apostolic letters arguing that Christ’s church is alive, holy, and redeemed. Paul speaks of the church at Corinth as being holy, as a declaration of an actual reality for this congregation, not only in a futuristic realization (1 Cor 1:2). The letter to the Colossians tells Christian members of the church to give thanks to the Father who qualified them to

³⁶ C. Douglas Weaver, “Baptist Ecclesiology in Historic Perspective: The Mid- to Late-Nineteenth Century,” *Perspective in Religious Studies* 41, no. 3 (2014): 281.

³⁷ Weaver, “Baptist Ecclesiology in Historic Perspective,” 291.

share in the inheritance of the saints (Col 1:12). The church is alive, and its members are living stones. The movement in Acts 2:41 is quite remarkable. People were saved, baptized, and added to the church. The New Testament metaphor for the church of Christ points toward a people composed of born-again children of God. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel envision a people of God under a new covenant where everyone has received a new heart (Jer 31; Ezek 36).

The meaning of baptism in the New Testament also points to a regenerate church membership. Paul says in Romans 6:1-4 that when a new Christian is immersed in the water, he expresses the spiritual reality that he has been baptized into death with Christ. When he rise from the water, he expresses the spiritual reality of a newness of life. This means that those who are saved by Christ, through baptism, are officially added to the local church.

Baptist confessions of faith include this same idea that church members are baptized believers. For example, Thomas Helwys, who wrote “A Declaration of Faith of English People Remaining at Amsterdam in Holland” in 1611, notes that the church is “a company of faithful people separated from the world by the word and Spirit of God, being knit unto the Lord and one unto another, by baptism.”³⁸ All subsequent Baptist confessions retain the same principle. The Second London Confession mentions that the church is compose of all those who profess faith in the gospel and manifest it by their obedience to the Lord.³⁹ The New Hampshire Confession on the church says, “A visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the

³⁸ Gordon Heath, Dallas Friesen, and Taylor Murray, *Baptist in Canada: Their History and Polity* (Hamilton, ON: MacMaster Divinity College, 2020), 102.

³⁹ Bill J. Leonard and William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd ed. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2011), 283.

faith and fellowship of the Gospel.”⁴⁰ Most Baptist pastors in the seventeenth century practiced closed communion, meaning they required conversion and baptism for membership.⁴¹ It is possible to find open or closed membership in today’s movement.

A true local church is the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit regenerating newborn Christians. The Spirit also sanctifies, seals, and gathers them. Christ and his Spirit provide spiritual gifts to every members of the gathered assembly to equip this congregation toward Christ’s goals for his church. Only regenerate people can be part of it. No local church is exempt to do an error in adding a member that would not be saved, but each local church works to add new members as rigorously as possible to avoid adding an unsaved person to the membership. Practices that could help to add only regenerate members to a church would be to offer a membership class to future members, equip members to discern true conversion, and build a process for membership that is rigorous.

Two Ordinances

Another Baptist distinctive is the practice of only two ordinances: baptism and the Lord’s Supper. This was established by Baptist forebears in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, which upholds seven mandatory sacraments for its adherents. Baptist preferred the nomenclature of ordinances instead of sacraments to avoid confusion with Roman Catholic practices.

As a denomination, baptism is central to its identity. Baptism by immersion was a powerful reason to leave national churches that practiced infant baptism. The mode of baptism became a visual element to clarify the distinctive of a confessional church. It was a tangible way of expressing faith, and it had immediate implications in demonstrating Baptist doctrine of soteriology and ecclesiology. Baptism expresses not only a conversion

⁴⁰ J. Newton Brown, “The New Hampshire Confession of Faith,” 1833, accessed May 16, 2023, <http://baptiststudiesonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/the-new-hampshire-confession-of-faith.pdf>, article XIII. Also Leonard and Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 382.

⁴¹ Heath, Friesen, and Murray, *Baptist in Canada*, 123.

to Christ but also a seal of integration into a local church community. Baptists, therefore, reserve baptism to a born-again believer, practice it by immersion subsequent to regeneration, and display its meaning by performing it as close as possible to conversion.

Baptism and the Lord's table are symbols but are also visual expressions of the gospel. Seen as isolated acts they lose their meaning. Members of a Christian community should see these two ordinances as fully integrated in the ministry of the gospel. The Lord's table, writes Gregg Allison, "is a visual proclamation of the gospel's message of his atoning sacrifice."⁴² Gospel churches should practice these two ordinances as integrated into the proclamation of the gospel. Baptism points to the initial faith and integration of the believer into the body, the table points to a united and real spiritual body seeking to visually express their unity. If church leaders do not use these two ordinances to make the gospel visual for everyone, then something essential is missing.

The Lord's table is a symbol. It is a meal taken by believers in community to celebrate and remember the work of Christ at the cross. Baptists separated from the theological conception of transubstantiation and also from the Reformed tradition that sees in the elements a means of grace. Baptists should know that participation in the Lord's table is participation in the blood and body of Jesus Christ. Participation has a spiritual component that brings seriousness, since the one eating without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself (1 Cor 11:29). Through God's omnipresence, Christ and his salvific benefits are present.⁴³

The Lord's table bears many spiritual objectives: (1) emphasis of the sacrificial work of Christ through his death at the cross and his resurrection for the sins of his children, (2) the establishment of a new covenant between God and his people, (3) the anticipation of an eschatological re-feasting with a triumphantly returned Messiah, (4) a

⁴² Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, Foundation of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 395.

⁴³ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 395.

proclamation and a remembrance of his death, (5) a participation in Christ and all of his salvific benefits, and (6) an expression of unity between members of the church.⁴⁴

Baptists are divided into three groups concerning who should partake in the meal. The three positions are called open communion, close communion, and closed communion. Open communion offers the table to every believer. Close communion restricts the table to baptized believers in good standing who are members of a local church. Closed communion restricts to only members in good standing of the church offering the table.

God is certainly not against Christians examining their spiritual maturity and walk with God during the time around the celebration of the table, but in the context of 1 Corinthians 11, the practice invites partakers to do a self-examination to make sure they are at peace with everyone. Examine themselves to see if there is nothing against a brother or a sister that would need to be confess of forgive. It is a time for each member, to think about their love and service toward other members of the same community. Love for one another should be flowing in the community, and nothing should constrain it.

One pastoral implication of this distinctive is that pastors ensure that both ordinances are well-understood and well-practiced. Pastors need to decide, with the congregation, between close or open communion. They also have to choose when a newly baptized person becomes a member. Members need to be equipped to discern true conversion.

Emphasis on Evangelism and Mission

Baptist churches were known for their clear commitment to Jesus's mission of making disciples of all nations. This included preaching the gospel to local people and casting a vision for international missions. The *Baptist Faith and Message of 2000* reads,

⁴⁴ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 394-95.

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.⁴⁵

This type of declaration is very characteristic of the Baptist evangelistic spirit since the origin of the movement.

As servants of the King, missionaries should be willing to cross any border to be part of God's kingdom expansion. Christians must call people to repentance and faith in Christ as a sign of submission to the true and royal King. This is at the heart of Christ's mission for his church.

Church leadership should be a model in evangelization, each one according to his gift. One member of the pastoral team should be specially gifted in evangelization. A church needs teachers, shepherds, and equippers, but also a leader gifted to guide the church in its mission calling.

Church Discipline

Baptist ecclesiology is well known for its practice of church discipline. Rooted in the conviction of the priesthood of all believers and a regenerate church membership, Baptists hold that each believer ought to take care of his brothers and sisters. Their goal is to preserve the church as a community of faithful saints (formative discipline). Brotherly love supported by a church covenant includes appropriate caring and admonishing. If repentance is lacking among its members, then Baptist churches will practice the principles Christ taught in Matthew 18:15-18. A local church will pray and seek reconciliation, but if this is not possible, they will excommunicate the unrepentant and see him as someone to win for the gospel. At this time the disciplined person is no longer a member of the

⁴⁵ Southern Baptist Convention, "The Baptist Faith and Message 2000," accessed May 16, 2023, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#xi>, Article XI.

congregation. If this person is a child of God, and the Spirit visits him and leads him to repentance, then the local church is to integrate him back into the community. This distinctive builds upon the previous Baptist distinctives mentioned.

God can use pastors to mediate and win such a person back to faithful walking with Christ, but the church and pastors should remember that this process should take place on the level of the entire congregation and not merely at the pastoral level. It is a call for the entire congregation.

This section delineated six Baptist distinctives. Two more distinctives will be covered in the next section. They are also Baptist distinctives, but since they deal specifically with pastoral leadership, I discuss them separately.

The Necessity of Understanding Deeper Two Elements of Church Governance

In this third section of this chapter, I will highlight two elements that are closely related to pastoral leadership in the Baptist tradition. The first one is related to the mode of church governance: congregationalism. The second one is related to those called to be part of the leadership team of a church: the elders and deacons.

Congregationalism

Congregationalism will be explained through different angles. After discussing the reasons for church governance, the origin and particularities of congregationalism will be explored. A historical and biblical survey of this doctrine will be examined. The last angle will be practical implications of this model of governance.

A legitimate question could be asked: why does a local church need governance? Is not Christ the head? This section will start with a philosophical point of view, and the biblical argument for it will come later. As an organism, a church needs organization. A local congregation may be God's church, but it is also an institution. God himself is not a God of confusion, so his people ought to be an ordered community. John Webster says,

“The community which is constituted by the gospel is, indeed, an ordered society.”⁴⁶

Leeman notes that a group becomes a church “when a group submits to an institutional structure that impacts their identity and governs their relationships with another and with outsiders.”⁴⁷ He adds, “A church is born when gospel people form a gospel polity.”⁴⁸

Baptist forebearers were inspired by the principle of *ubi Christus ibi ecclesia*, meaning, “Where is Christ, there is the church.”⁴⁹ They meant that the church is not founded on an organization nor a tradition, but simply on the presence of Christ among his people. For this reason, this gathered people should govern itself. Early in church history, it is possible to find a document like “the Didache”⁵⁰ that discusses the congregation that votes for its elders. When churches separated from the state church in the early seventeenth century, their pastors noted in official church documents that congregations should be independent. For example, Helwys’s Confession of Faith in 1611 says that the church of Christ is “a company of faithful people, organized as a group who have Christ. Therefore, no church ought to challenge any prerogative over each other. Churches constituted in any other manner, or upon other persons, are not according to Christ’s command.”⁵¹ Most if not all Baptist foundational documents that follow bear the same principle on autonomous congregations.

⁴⁶ John Webster, *Word and Church: Essays in Christian Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 192, quoted in Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 250.

⁴⁷ Jonathan Leeman, *Don’t Fire Your Church Members* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 34.

⁴⁸ Leeman, *Don’t Fire Your Church Members*, 71.

⁴⁹ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 277.

⁵⁰ “Didache,” accessed May 16, 2023, <https://remacle.org/bloodwolf/eglise/anonyme/didache.htm>, Article XV.

⁵¹ The Reformed Reader, “Helwys Confession, 1611,” accessed May 16, 2023, <https://www.reformedreader.org/cc/helwysconfession.htm>.

Baptists root the congregational model of church governance in a dozen key passages. I will explore three⁵² of them, beginning with Matthew 18:15-18 in which Jesus describes a procedure for church discipline. He mentions that the last step for the brother who refuses to repent is that he be brought before the whole congregation. The entire church has a responsibility to be involved in a matter of faith. They are then to treat the unrepentant person as an unbeliever, as someone who is no longer part of the congregation. Christ does not delegate this ultimate authority on membership to the elders but to the congregation.

In 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, Paul also mentions that the congregation has the authority to discipline the sinful unrepentant man. Even as an apostle, he does not do so himself. The same issue arises in 2 Corinthians 2:6. This passage mentions that the congregation, united in Jerusalem, made a decision concerning a major doctrinal issue. The apostles were there, and presumably they were the main speakers, but the congregation itself voted on the matter (Acts 15:22).

The young churches of Galatia were responsible to evaluate themselves if the preachers were preaching a true gospel (Gal 1). The apostles asked the congregation in Jerusalem to vote for seven leaders in Acts 6. In Acts 13:1-2, the Holy Spirit moves the whole congregation to set apart Paul and Barnabas for church planting in the Roman empire. To conclude this New Testament survey, notice that in Revelation 2-3 Jesus rebukes seven local churches. Churches as independent organizations receive a letter from Jesus through John. He addresses each congregation personally.

Congregationalism is a combination of many biblical realities that synthesize this model of governance. First, it is a model that the local church is under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ (Col 1:18). The chief Shepherd is working with the Holy Spirit, and they both use the Scriptures as the authoritative text to speak to his church (1 Pet 5:4).

⁵² These three texts are the most referenced in academic resources. Also, there is not space in the context of this project to develop all of them.

Every local church is autonomous (independent) on a human level. A local church is free of any outside hierarchical authority on issues of doctrine and membership. No one from outside a congregation should decide for the church. Every church member has a vote to decide issues concerning the church. Every member is a royal priest (1 Pet 2:9), so every member has the same access to God to seek his direction.

Stanley Grenz mentions, “The entire company of believers discern Christ’s will for his people. Since all the members are regenerate (priest), and thus indwelt by the Spirit, they all have both the ability and the responsibility to hear God’s voice and discern God’s will for the body.”⁵³ Each congregation votes for elders to represent them in leading and teaching the congregation. John Hammett explains the limit of each other’s authority when he writes that pastors “may exercise significant influence and may be entrusted with a measure of authority for acting on behalf of the congregation on certain matters, but, in the final analysis the highest human authority is vested in the congregation, not the leadership.”⁵⁴

In general, the pastoral leadership issues of a church ultimately belong to the elders, and membership and doctrinal issues ultimately belong to the members (Acts 15:22). Using technical terms, it could be said that a congregation is ruled by its members, but led by his elders. Even if congregations are autonomous, they ought to have regular interaction with other congregations of the same doctrinal affiliation. Autonomous does not mean isolated. There is an element of administration in the role of a church member, but when they understand their biblical role of priest and understand their ministry of membership to Christ, the legal administrative element will always be of secondary importance.

⁵³ Stanley Grenz, quoted in John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019), 111.

⁵⁴ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 155.

To conclude, Williston Walker brings together congregationalism as a mixt Government. . . . In respect of Christ, the head and King of the church, and the Sovereign power residing in him, and exercised by him, it is a Monarchy: In respect of the body, or Brotherhood of the church, and power from Christ granted unto them, it resembles a Democracy: In respect of the Presbytery and power committed to them, it is an Aristocracy.⁵⁵

When talking about church governance, the first president of Southern Baptist Convention, William B. Johnson, used the unique term Christocracy.⁵⁶

The beauty of this type of church governance is the direct organic link between Christ and his church. Hammett mentions, “Congregationalism preserves the congregation’s responsibility to submit to Christ’s headship.”⁵⁷ This task entrusted to members is in contrast with other forms of church governance. Other forms of church governance delegate member authority to one pastor or to a group of elders. Congregationalism allows for strong pastoral leadership and a strong membership. The more members of a congregation are mature, the more the congregational governance model bears great fruits. There is no perfect model with imperfect humans, but congregationalism avoids dictatorship and other inconvenient directions.

The Office of Elders and Deacons

Baptist churches are convinced that the New Testament describes only two offices. The Pastoral Epistles provide some qualifications for each of these offices. This section will concentrate on their dedicated task. I surveyed three biblical passages on pastoral leadership responsibility in chapter 2, and I will build onto this content to give a synthesized view in this chapter.

⁵⁵ Williston Walker, quoted in Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, 4th ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021), 207.

⁵⁶ C. Douglas Weaver, “Baptist Ecclesiology in Historic Perspective: The Mid- to Late-Nineteenth Century,” *Perspective in Religious Studies* 41, no. 3 (2014): 279.

⁵⁷ Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, 161.

Elders are tasked with at least five main responsibilities in the New Testament. Elders are called to (1) lead the congregation (1 Tim 5:17); (2) shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28); (3) teach and preach the Word of God (2 Tim 4:1-4); (4) lead in prayer (1 Tim 2:1-8); and (5) develop new leaders for ministry (Eph 4:11-16; 2 Tim 2:2). I covered the key passages that support these tasks in chapter 2, and will now develop their implication for pastoral leadership.

Elders who lead well work under the authority of Christ and the mandate they have received from their congregation. Their main goals as a team are to cover the five main responsibilities described above. Ideally, elders should be complementary and cover these tasks in unity. Through this leadership, elders will be able to implement their philosophy of ministry. Their responsibility is to bring this church in line with God's will for his church. There will always be some administration to carry out, but elders should as much as possible place these administrative tasks into the hands of gifted members or deacons/deaconesses.

God uses the preaching and teaching of his Word to lead the church in truth. He must transmit sound doctrine and the ethical Christian life that originates from it. Allison states, "Teaching refers to the communication of sound doctrine and the Christlike practice that flows from it."⁵⁸ Teaching should produce a changed heart and a healthy walk, not merely the transfer of information. There are a diversity of ways to teach in pastoral leadership: preaching, adult Sunday school, Bible and theology classes, equipping classes for new believers, etc. This can take place in front of a crowd, a large or small group, or it could be in a trio or one on one.

Pastors should give themselves to the ministry of teaching; they should seek to progress in their ability to transmit the Word of God (1 Tim 4:13-15; 2 Tim 4:13). Leaders who teach require time for study on a regular basis. A neglect of study time will

⁵⁸ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 219.

lead to spiritual malnutrition. The more shepherds study Scriptures and theology, the more they realize how much more they need to learn and dig deeper. This reality should inspire pastors to keep time for study as a priority in order to pursue teaching on a regular basis. Biblical theology as a theological interpretation of Scriptures is key for teaching the Word with coherence. Pastors should be schooled in it. It provides a way to understand the one story the Scriptures reveal. Biblical theology will help a church stay grounded in God's revelation. For example, theological systems like the "prosperity gospel" use Scripture to defend themselves but can be easily shown false by a clear understanding of biblical theology.

The apostles paved the way for pastors as they chose to focus on prayer and teaching (Acts 6).⁵⁹ Following the same idea, as spiritual leaders, pastors should lead the congregation in prayer. Their personal prayer life is key for fruitful ministry, for themselves, and as a model for the flock (John 15:5). Most leaders in the North American context say that they are not satisfied with their personal prayer lives⁶⁰ and should work on addressing this weakness. Not only are pastors responsible for their personal prayer lives, but they are also responsible to lead the church in corporate prayer during church services and church ministries. Through their prayer ministries they should promote a culture of dependency on God. They should be directly or indirectly involved in any initiative that places prayer as central in the church.

As shepherds, pastors teach, watch over, care for, and admonish the sheep. Their goal is that every believer under their oversight grow into Christlikeness (Col 1:28). They want every member to be ready and equipped to serve through the exercise of their gifts.

⁵⁹ I do not believe that pastors are direct successors of the twelve apostles, but they were forerunners in spiritual leadership in the new covenant, preceding what will become the office of elder. Elders can learn by studying apostolic ministry, but they should remember to apply their learning to the actual context of church leadership.

⁶⁰ Baptist Press, "Most Pastor Unsatisfied with Their Personal Prayer Lives," June 6, 2005, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/most-pastors-unsatisfied-with-their-personal-prayer-lives/>.

Pastors should serve with a humble servant spirit, not for gain nor by dominating (1 Pet 5:1-15).⁶¹

The office of elder is reserved for qualified men called by God. The restriction of a qualified man is rooted in creation of man and woman with complementary roles. Since men are called to lead the church as they lead their families, the same pattern of complementarity in family is applied to eldership. Also rooted in the Genesis account, in 1 Timothy 2, Paul places limits on women in how they teach and exercise authority. This restriction is given in the context of pastoral leadership instruction. Paul instructs Timothy on how to lead the church and how to contradict false teachers. The restriction should only be applied to eldership nomination and regular preaching in Sunday services. I would not add more limitations than the one exposed by Paul in this letter. It should be an honor for pastoral leaders to help and support women of the church to serve with their gifts, even gifts of leadership.⁶²

The Scriptures teach that a plurality of elders is to share the task of pastoral leadership. The New Testament often describes churches led by a plurality of elders.⁶³ Gene Getz gives more than twenty such examples in the New Testament.⁶⁴ The church of Antioch began with only Barnabas and Saul at the helm, but by Acts 13, biblical readers discover that the church has grown to have multiple leaders. In fact, enough leaders have been appointed to be able send the first two church planters on mission. Dave Harvey

⁶¹ Piper has written a tremendously helpful book to equip pastors to be biblical shepherds. John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B & H, 2013).

⁶² This topic is of great dispute among evangelicals, and a complete study of this subject is beyond the scope of this project.

⁶³ I serve in a context where this is the norm. I know many Southern Baptist churches are led by one pastor and a board of deacon. The reasons for this type of congregationalism are presented in Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 287-92.

⁶⁴ Gene A. Getz, *Elders and Leaders: God's Plan for Leading the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2003), 210.

goes further in affirming that the healthiness of such a plurality determines the healthiness of the church.⁶⁵ Harvey mentions seven fruits produced by a healthy church leadership team. One of these fruits within a team of elders is that one elder among them will stand out as a first among equals.⁶⁶ The reality of a “first among equals” can be traced back to Jesus when he asks Peter to take care of the eleven after his resurrection (John 21). Among a group of elders, one leader will be more gifted, and through the exercise of his gift will evolve as a senior leader. This does not occur because of a title or a vote but because of the gift of God. He does not have authority over his colleagues but wields influence through the exercise of his gift manifest. Harvey lists several benefits for an elder board to work with a “first among equals.”⁶⁷ One benefit is that it provides a shepherd for the shepherds. It also helps a church move toward a unified vision. Normally, this gifted leader is the main teaching pastor who gives direction to the church through his teaching.⁶⁸

Deacons are servants who support elders in their ministry. As Paul writes to the Philippian church, he addresses the letter to the elders and the deacons (Phil 1:1). Acts 6 offers a preview of their ministry. Paul delineates their qualification in his first letter to Timothy. One major difference between elders and deacons is that deacons are not required to be able to teach. They are, however, essential for the ministry of a church. They are instrumental in helping care for the needs of many within the flock. In their role, they must strive for the unity of the church.⁶⁹ Deacons serve in a variety of roles in a

⁶⁵ Dave Harvey, *The Plurality Principle: How to Build and Maintain a Thriving Church Leadership Team* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021), 19.

⁶⁶ Some churches intentionally attempt to avoid this model, but I think they miss the fruit of this blessing.

⁶⁷ Harvey, *The Plurality Principle*, 37-50.

⁶⁸ In the next section I will define the pastor as an equipper and leader who develops and mentor new leaders.

⁶⁹ Mark Dever, *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible* (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 53.

healthy church. Most students of the subject say that deacons could be involved in administration, organization, finances, facilities, caring for the poor, visiting the sick, compassion ministries, missional initiative, youth and children's ministry, evangelization and so much more.

In 1 Timothy 3, Paul speaks of women deacons. It could be understood as referring to either the wives of deacons or deaconesses. The stronger position is the latter, and therefore that deacons can be both men and women. One argument in favor of deacons of both genders is that Paul could have used the specific term for wives. Allison argues that 1 Timothy 3:8-10 lays out characteristics for both women and men and that verse 11 specifies characteristics for women deacons.⁷⁰ Furthermore, if Paul does not speak of elders' wives, then why would he speak of deacons' wives? The best exegesis of Romans 16:1 favors women deacons. Therefore, the diaconate is a ministry of service that should not be limited to men.

Understanding congregationalism and knowing how to apply it with wisdom is a needed pastoral competency. Also, pastors should promote a healthy plurality of elders supported by a great team of deacons and deaconesses. Elders as qualified men should serve in their function with Christ's spirit toward the goal of a mature body of Christ.

The Necessity for Pastoral Leaders to Understand Their Unique Role of Equipping Members and Multiplying Leaders

Pastoral leaders have a special responsibility to equip members to be conformed to the image of Christ, but also have a responsibility to raise and develop future leaders. Scripture provides multiple principles that should help a team of pastors promote the glory of God through a gospel movement.

After thirty years of meeting churches in Quebec, Canada, and USA, I have seen many churches that have no intentional strategy for developing leaders Eric Geiger

⁷⁰ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 246.

and Kevin Peck wrote *Designed to Lead* because of this reality.⁷¹ They also mention that only 25 percent of pastors had a semblance of a plan.⁷² This is often because existing leaders are the main obstacle. They struggle with fear, but do not want to be seen as unequipped, so they miss conviction to face and fix the situation. They often feel the work of the ministry will be better done if they do it themselves. In Ephesians 4:11-16 (discussed at length in chapter 2), Paul demonstrates that gifted leaders have the unique mandate to equip each member of their congregation for the service God has called them to do. The Lord has not called elders to do the ministry by themselves but to equip members for service. The goal is a mature body of Christ.

This great task is challenging but worth all the investment. Paul is not only giving instruction but also a philosophy of ministry. In this text is a relationship between a pastoral leadership team equipping members toward unity and maturity and developing future leaders. The former helps the latter. Missing the goal of developing leaders has consequences on the church. A local church may miss the goal of unity and healthiness. This is why Geiger and Peck write, “We are declaring that equipping causes health.”⁷³ Pastors equipping people to minister brings a mature community practicing the “one another’s” of the New Testament.

Every elder should reserve time to intentionally equip members or future leaders. Phil Newton says, “Spiritual leaders working through community train leaders who will shepherd, plant, and revitalize discipling communities, who replicate the same work.”⁷⁴ Elders should prioritize intentional relationships, programs, and resources to reach this goal. God will call some members to serve Christ as pastors or evangelists, and leaders

⁷¹ Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead* (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 9.

⁷² Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 34.

⁷³ Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 36.

⁷⁴ Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 21.

will need to equip them to serve. From this goal of a mature body, pastoral leaders are called to develop leaders. Not all of them will be gifted to do all the work by themselves, but as a team they can complement one another's gifts to reach the goal of multiplication.

Paul is clear in 2 Timothy 2:2 that he expects Timothy to carry out the kind of leadership development that Paul invested in him. Paul asks his protégé to transfer the deposit to faithful people as Timothy himself has received it from Paul. In this verse one can identify four generations of deposit transmission. This becomes a model for actual pastors to imitate to raise up workers for church growth and church planting. Newton adds, "To have served as a pastor but neglect to train up future gospel workers fails at following Jesus's example in ministry training."⁷⁵

Academic contexts and content-driven trainings are great for teaching solid biblical foundations, but they are incomplete. Certain aspects of training must take place in the context of a healthy community. Thomas says, "A person doesn't learn to lead by attending a class or reading a book on leadership. People best learn to lead when they lead while receiving helpful, honest feedback"⁷⁶ Newton declares, "The New Testament demonstrate that the kind of training necessary for healthy pastoral leaders in any setting finds added effectiveness when rooted in the context of healthy models of community."⁷⁷ The local church context is key to effective leadership development. Many apostles and Paul's co-laborers decided to work through established churches (or in mission of church planting for which they were accountable to a church) to mentor emerging leaders. For example, Timothy was sent to serve the Ephesian church. In that context, gifted pastors mentor those future pastors. In the context of a community, older pastors mentor younger ones, where specific learning for pastoral leadership could be achieved.

⁷⁵ Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 40.

⁷⁶ Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader*, 143.

⁷⁷ Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 21.

That model of ministry preparation did not only appear with Paul. Jesus models the same approach with the twelve. As a mentor, he replicates his own life with them, he keeps them close, meets with them, polishes them, and equips them for mission.⁷⁸ Pastoral mentors have much to learn from Jesus's model of mentoring. Jesus did it, Paul did it, and it can be replicated in every generation. The Jerusalem church equipped Barnabas, and he saw there a model to reproduce in Antioch when they later sent him. A complete church-based leadership training program will include instruction in sound doctrine, personal transformation, and the praxis of ministry. Throughout the process, a church should be open-handed in offering young leaders ministry opportunities.

Newton brings together this topic: "The life-on-life relationship of mentors with trainees centered in local communities of Christ-followers remains the best way to shape a new generation of healthy Christian leaders."⁷⁹ Geiger and Peck mention that a church, through its pastoral leadership team, needs to offer "Convictions, Culture and Constructs"⁸⁰ in order to train pastors. This kind of training must include a biblical conviction of God's calling, an environment rooted in a biblical theology of leadership, and certain structures that demonstrate the way it could be done. The cycle remains the same: pastors must pray, recruit, mentor, support, and deploy. Every leadership team must equip members and leaders and must never forget that they work in the spiritual reality that God himself equips his children in all that is good to do his will (Heb 13:20-21).

Conclusion

Some issues are essential for good pastoral leadership among Baptist churches. The gospel is the good news. This good news, this gospel is the one that saves people, transforms them into Christlikeness, gathers them into a community, and creates a culture

⁷⁸ Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 23.

⁷⁹ Newton, *The Mentoring Church*, 26.

⁸⁰ Geiger and Peck, *Designed to Lead*, 14.

to live together as a united family. Pastoral leaders are essential keys to seeing this culture be created. Pastors needs to be transformed by this gospel and manifest a life that reflects Christ's attributes. In addition, to be fruitful in adequately governing their local church, elders should know the most important Baptist distinctives. These pastors are called by God to serve their church following the biblical mandate they have received. They are supported by a group of deacons and deaconesses to focus on their own responsibilities.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to train developing leaders in pastoral leadership through the Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec. SEMBEQ is a church-based seminary serving Baptist churches in Quebec. It offers different types of programs to help churches equip their pastors in training. I was installed as president of this seminary in 2016. In that role, I work with every ministry leader in the denomination. My role in the seminary working with all type of congregations has taught me a lot about the churches in my network. I have always sought to see present and future leaders equipped to lead churches well. In recent years, I have seen the need to add or expand the content of the courses I teach at the seminary. I previously took for granted that future elders know how to lead churches that live out our Baptist distinctives. There is a generation gap in the transmission of these sound principles. It became clear to me that, with our pioneer church planters now with the Lord, the new generation of leaders not influenced by these great men were no longer practicing and transmitting sound ecclesiological principles and practices. Many preferred “missional”¹ ecclesiological systems that push toward fewer distinctions regarding who is or is not part of the church, moved churches from elder-led to elder-ruled polity, gave up on strong membership practices, lost Baptist distinctives, and adopted more neutral ecclesiastical tags.

As I saw the need for young pastors to strengthen their pastoral leadership, I formed the idea for this project. I wanted to offer more robust teaching on issues related

¹ For missional ecclesiology, I mean ecclesiology where “missions” is not only a program of the church but the essence itself of the church. For example, see Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, 2nd edition (Nashville: B&H Academics, 2016).

to pastoral leadership without taking any knowledge for granted. This project became focused on meeting this need. Having established the biblical and theological basis for pastoral leadership, I designed this project around three goals. The first goal was to develop a six-hour course on pastoral leadership to enable students to know healthy leadership in their local churches, especially in the context of a Baptist church. The second goal was to assess the current knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students. The third goal was to increase knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students by teaching the course. To reach these goals, I worked through four phases: (1) curriculum design and curriculum evaluation by experts, (2) creation of the Pastoral Leadership Inventory (PLI) and a pre-assessment of students, (3) teaching the course, and (4) completing a post-assessment of the students.

Phase 1: Curriculum Design

To build the curriculum, the support of my notes in chapter 2 gave me a biblical start, but I needed to dig deeper into what authors expand on these biblical passages and further theological thoughts. Through a literature search I identified the main elements necessary to help a Baptist church's pastoral leadership team flourish. My research and writing started in early January 2023. At a pace of eight to ten hours a week, I found specific books on pastoral leadership that aligned with my biblical convictions. In February I scanned all recurring topics from these books' outlines and main emphases. By the end of February, I had defined an outline of six teaching goals to create six teaching hours. I classified the books into six pastoral leadership categories: (1) Baptist distinctives, (2) congregationalism, (3) Episcopal and Presbyterian governance, (4) gospel-centered leadership, (5) eldership, and (6) the diaconate. I dedicated March and April to reading these books more thoroughly, making notes and gathering meaningful quotes as I went along. I then reorganized my notes into a final form and considered how to teach these truths well and creatively. With the time for the course quickly

approaching, I had to stop digging into more materials and improving my andragogy. These things could continually be improved.

I spent some time in April writing chapter 3. My supervisor reviewed my chapter and made some suggestions, and with these changes in mind, I adjusted my teaching notes.

Regarding major books on ecclesiology, John Hammett's *Biblical Foundation for Baptist Churches*, Gregg Allison's *Sojourners and Strangers*, and Edmund Clowney's *The Church* were fundamental.² On Baptist distinctives, *The Baptist Way* by Stanton Norman was useful.³ For congregationalism, I singled out Jonathan Leeman's work in his *Don't Fire Your Church Members*.⁴ Regarding elders and deacons, I found *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, edited by Benjamin Merkle, and Phil Newton's *The Mentoring Church*.⁵ Finally, I looked for a book that connects the gospel with leadership to teach that all leadership principles should be rooted in good gospel leadership. In this regard, three books grabbed my attention: Ray Ortlund's *The Gospel: How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ*; Paul David Tripp's *Lead: 12 Gospel Principles for Leadership in the Church*; and Scott Thomas's *The Gospel Shaped Leader*.⁶

I organized all my material in an outline of six lessons of three hours each. The objectives were to (1) master the Baptist distinctives; (2) master congregationalism;

² John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019); Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, Foundation of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012); and Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995).

³ R. Stanton Norman, *The Baptist Way* (Nashville: B & H, 2005).

⁴ Jonathan Leeman, *Don't Fire Your Church Members* (Nashville: B & H, 2016).

⁵ Benjamin L. Merkle, ed., *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008); Phil A. Newton, *The Mentoring Church* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017).

⁶ Ray Ortlund, *The Gospel: How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014); Paul D. Tripp, *Lead: 12 Gospel Principles for Leadership in the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020); and Scott Thomas, *The Gospel Shaped Leader: Leaning on Jesus to Shepherd His People* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2021).

(3) understand and evaluate two other types of church governance; (4) gain gospel clarity in the life and ministry of an elder; (5) understand the ministry of an elder; and (6) understand the ministry of a deacon.

I completed the curriculum design in May 2023. I used the verb “master” for objectives 1 and 2 because most leaders think they know these things by experience but do not master these topics. They need to be skilled. I choose the verb “evaluate” for other types of church governance because they need to look and realize where they lack biblical support. I used the expression “gospel clarity” for objective 4 because pastoral leaders in my network know the gospel but do not see the link between the gospel and leadership. For eldership and diaconate, I used the verb “understand” for objectives 5 and 6 to oversee all the content included in these two New Testament offices.

With good content and good andragogy, I was confident enough to interchange with experts. I chose three men, each with a doctorate and working in ministry with me at SEMBEQ to evaluate my course content: Patrick Murphy, PhD, Université de Montréal; Alexandre Marquis, PhD, SBTS; and Nicolas Cotnoir, DMin, Masters Seminary. I sent them my notes in mid-April and received comments back just in time to do a final revision. Using the rubrics I gave them, they provided great feedback, the most important of which was clarifying my main teaching objective for each of the six lessons. I adjusted my work accordingly using that feedback. All three evaluators mentioned that my work was generally very good, which encouraged me greatly.

Phase 2: Creation of the Pastoral Leadership Inventory (PLI)

During the curriculum design period, I also considered the questions for my PLI. I wanted to create questions to evaluate students’ knowledge of the six specific teaching topics I planned to cover in class. The number of questions was important as I needed enough questions to allow me to cover six different topics without being too long

(to avoid non-participation). I created a survey that contained twenty questions on issues related to pastoral leadership.

As mentioned in phase 1, the twenty-question survey was built around the topics taught in the six lessons. After a first draft of these questions, I asked my administrative assistant to read and comment on them. We then had a conversation to help clarify my questions and see if each question met my desired outcome. Helped by her comments, I revised the survey for clarity. After completing the final version of the survey, I sent my request for ethics committee approval, which the PDS department granted. I did not need any further approval as the project had already been approved by the SEMBEQ board when I presented my Doctor of Ministry project to them in 2021.

I used this survey to accomplish three objectives. First, I wanted to assess thirty-one relatively new SEMBEQ students' knowledge. These students are emerging leaders of the Baptist denomination to which SEMBEQ is closely related. I specifically chose new students to see what they knew at the beginning of their theological education. These 31 SEMBEQ's students did not take my class, they are different from the 15 students completed the class.

Second, this survey was used to compare their results with students taking my SEMBEQ class and do some comparison analysis. I used the same questions from the same survey for the second goal of this project. I used that same survey for a pre-assessment of the fifteen students who registered to my SEMBEQ course. The survey was done between April 15 and April 20. The survey was emailed to the students a few days before the class started on May 6, along with an explanation that the survey was related to a project I was working on for my doctoral studies. Everyone was eager to participate in support of my studies. The responses of thirteen students were used in the *t*-test because one student did not take the class and another did not take the survey after the class because he did not attend every class.

Lastly, the other objective was a thirty to forty-five-minute verbal interview with five of the fifteen students. The five questions I used in the interviews synthesized the twenty PLI questions. The interviews convinced me even more of the need to teach this course. Four out of five students faced these questions with great difficulty. Most answers were incomplete and unclear. One student did better but was still hesitant.

Phase 3: Course Teaching

Since the curriculum was now completed, I was ready to teach. SEMBEQ offered my course on Ecclesiology during the spring session of 2023 (May-June), which fit well with the rhythm of my program. The format was quite intensive, spanning four Saturdays (May 6, 13, 27, and June 10, 2023), from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an hour for lunch. Fourteen students showed up to the course. While I covered more topics than those included in this project, I limited the supervised content to the six lessons in order to reach my program's goals in time.

Lesson 1

The first lesson intended to master Baptist distinctives. I asked, "What are the Baptist distinctives?" After clear gospel implications for pastoral leadership, I covered eight Baptist distinctives: the authority of Scripture; liberty of religion (conscience); separation of church and state; regenerate church membership; congregationalism; the practice of only two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper; church discipline; and Baptists as a missionary movement.

I taught some historical theology concerning the authority of Scripture to help them understand the controversies around this doctrine over the last four hundred years. I let them know the perils Baptist founders faced and the dangers of compromising on this doctrine today. It is always a special moment when teaching is done in a class to remember how special the scriptures are. They are the Word of the living God revealed to his children. It is good for the class to be reminded of the authority of Scripture. The class

followed my teaching on how Canada was founded on principles of religious liberty. Because of Canadian history, religious liberty is incorporated in the Canada's Constitution. Even if today this principle is facing challenges, the class was able to appreciate those who lived at that period to defend Christian liberty because students could understand the privilege they have to live in a country with this type of liberty. The students also realized that this value benefits not only Christians but many more people in their nation. The class and I studied a portion of English church history to understand why separatists in England wanted a church free of state control. I taught on the price these separatists paid for their conviction on this principle. Separation of church and state led the way to discuss regenerate church membership. If people do not become members through pedobaptism (the state church model), then when, how, and who should be baptized, and who should become church members? If believers are no longer part of a state church led by a clear hierarchy of authority, the question becomes, "Who is in charge?" This conversation led to a discussion of Baptist distinctives on the Lord's table and church discipline. I explained that Baptists are a missionary movement. A key book used for this topic was *The Baptist Way* by R. Stanton Norman.⁷

Lesson 2

The second lesson was on congregationalism. Solid teaching of biblical church governance was needed, as it is a challenging issue in my current Baptist context. Many leaders are attracted to an elder-ruled type of governance for only pragmatic reasons. I first decided to answer the question, why does a church need governance? The kingly-priest function of believers in the New Covenant was central to the treatment of congregationalism. Among many excellent resources, the book *Don't Fire Your Church Members* helped me build teaching notes on this topic.⁸ After discussing the priesthood of

⁷ Norman, *The Baptist Way*.

⁸ Leeman, *Don't Fire Your Church Members*.

all believers, I explained a few verses of Matthew 15 and 18 about Christian authority after the apostle Peter. The class was challenged to look at different New Testament passages in which the local congregation as a whole was involved in making important decisions. It was also necessary to delve into some church history on the question. A question-and-answer time helped students understand how to live out this model practically. To finish, I discussed some of the main arguments in opposition to this model and taught how to foster a healthy dynamic between the authority of members and that of leaders.

Lesson 3

In lesson 3 I offered information on two other prevalent types of church governance: the Episcopal and Presbyterian models. In this class context, flying over some of their main elements was the only possibility. I discussed with the group the origins of these two governance models, their organization, their biblical arguments, and their interpretation of Acts 15. I also spent significant time exegeting 1 Timothy 5:17, which is vital to the Presbyterian system. The class recognized that it is difficult from Scripture to see more than two types of church offices. The class compared the elder-ruled model to these two types of governance. Two books were particularly helpful for this section: Allison's *Sojourners and Strangers*, and Merkle's *Shepherding God's Flock*.⁹ I spend less time teaching on lesson 3 to give more time for lessons 4 and 5.

Lesson 4

Lesson 4 aimed to show that gospel-centrality is essential to pastoral leadership. Three sections were covered: the necessity for pastors to (1) implement a gospel culture; (2) lead with gospel ethics; and (3) lead with gospel principles. The class was equipped to examine what is lost, and how churches can be hurt, when pastors build on any foundation other than the gospel. The gospel has clear implications for how church

⁹ Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*; Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*.

leaders should think, act, and be transformed. Leaders are not everything, but they are key in helping a church grow in gospel transformation of their members. Ortlund's *The Gospel: How the Church Portrays the Beauty of Christ*, and Tripp's *Lead: 12 Gospel Principles for Leadership in the Church* were solid resources.¹⁰

Lesson 5

The teaching goal of lesson 5 was to help elders or future elders understand their identity and function. I covered the necessity and the practice of eldership. I wanted students to understand what an elder is and what the role of an elder is. I used Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:1-5 as touchstone texts to discuss eldership. I demonstrated that it is God's Holy Spirit who appoints elders, and it is the Spirit who has revealed their functions in Scripture. Among other functions, I explained how shepherding is central for an elder. I exegeted 1 Timothy 5:17 to determine its meaning and implications for elders. I asked students to split into three groups to study various New Testament passages to show that elders are mainly called to lead, teach, pray, shepherd, and equip. I biblically supported and applied each of these functions through the teaching sessions. The next element covered was an exploration of the qualifications for elders. In the final section of this lesson, I stressed the need for elders to train other potential elders and leaders. Second Timothy 2:2 and Ephesians 4:11-16 were the primary texts guiding the discussion of this vital issue. I made the case for reserving eldership to qualified men, but also challenged an unwise application of complementarianism that is more restricted for women's service than even what Scripture teaches. This complementarianism view has almost no space for public women ministry toward their congregation. Drawing on Dave Harvey's principles, I defended a healthy plurality of elders, with an elder who is first among equals.

¹⁰ Ortlund, *The Gospel*; Tripp, *Lead*.

Lesson 6

Finally, lesson 6 looked at the role of deacons in the ministry of a healthy church. I defined their primary function as supporting the elders. Their ministries can be varied. The class made a non-exhaustive list of ten ways deacons can serve the church. I also covered some pro and con arguments for including women in the diaconate. Merkle's *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* was useful in preparing this lesson. I closed with a call to not underestimate the importance of deacons for a healthy church.

Phase 4: Student Post-Assessment

After teaching the six lessons, I used the same PLI to interview the students to evaluate their understanding. I conducted the post-assessment on June 10, the last Saturday of the course. I gave them fifteen minutes to complete the survey, and they could take more time at home if they wanted to think more. Fifteen students registered for the seminary course, but only thirteen consistently attended. I received twelve surveys from 12 students before class and only nine surveys after class.¹¹ The nine results from students who completed the PLI before and after the course enabled me to use a statistical analysis tool called a *t*-test. The *t*-test results of my project showed a mean growth from 86.33 to 94.75 and a *t*-stat of -3.81. I will also be informed statistically by the PLI taken by thirty new SEMBEQ students. This other result allowed me to analyze what SEMBEQ students, in general, know at the start of their theological education. Chapter 5 will dig further into this statistical material and draw some conclusions.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the process and implementation of my DMin project. Four major stages were defined. Curriculum building represented the longest of these stages. The next chapter will evaluate the success of the project.

¹¹ One student was an older man who wanted to be in the group but was not an official student. Two other students did not send the PLI after class, even if I emailed them more than once.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This chapter presents an assessment of the effectiveness of the project. I will evaluate if the course fulfilled its purpose, how each of the three goals was met, if the curriculum was helpful, and if the course was useful in equipping students with the knowledge of pastoral leadership. This chapter will also include my evaluation of the impact of this project on my life and ministry and an assessment of future work I should do to improve my teaching.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train developing leaders in pastoral leadership through the Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec. The climax of this project's purpose was reached when I was able to teach my course on pastoral leadership. Statistically, students grew in their knowledge. The project context, however, did not allow me to mentor students to see how well they would apply their new knowledge. It would have been ideal to see if they could move from classroom knowledge to action in the context of their ministry. Many discussions in the classroom gave me clear indications that some of students will effectively apply their new knowledge.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

This project had three goals. A specific means of measurement was defined for each goal.

Goal 1

The first goal was to develop a six-hour course on pastoral leadership to enable students to know healthy local church leadership. The goal was measured by an expert panel that used a rubric to evaluate biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, and course organization. Success of this goal depended on a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion meeting or exceeding the sufficient level. Three experts, fellow SEMBEQ teachers, reviewed and evaluated my work. Two have PhDs in systematic theology, and one a DMin in preaching. The average grade of their evaluation was 92 percent, which indicates that the goal was reached.

It is always good to receive outside feedback and evaluation. My theological content and in-depth treatment of the issues received the strongest positive feedback. I needed to invest more time to support some sections of my notes with biblical text. Sometimes, some biblical clarification, which might appear trivial, is in fact necessary. I decided to rewrite the section on congregationalism after receiving their assessments. While teaching, most students shared how helpful the lessons were for them to understand pastoral leadership. The distinction between the authority of elders and that of members was an element that required a lot of conversation and debate, but students said it was helpful. Most of my book references were in English, but this is part of the theological education challenge in a French-speaking context.

When reading through the expert feedback notes, I realized my pedagogy needed more clarity. This is where I was graded the weakest. My teaching goal needed to be stated more clearly at the opening of each lesson. I crafted more precise teaching goals based on the experts' comments and suggestions. I held many "implied" conversations in my mind that were not in my notes. Because of their feedback, I made these conversations more explicit in my teaching notes.

Goal 2

The second goal was to assess the current knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students. This goal was measured by administering the Pastoral Leadership Inventory to thirty-one SEMBEQ students.¹ The goal was considered successful since more than thirty students completed the survey. This survey showed the students' knowledge of ecclesiological leadership practices. One participant answered negatively on all the questions, which is very unique. He could have chosen not to participate. I do not know why he answered in this way. His responses did not manifest a willingness to engage in the question for me to take profit of his knowledge on the topics. Even though nothing could be taken from his results, his participation was kept into the final calculation of the scores.

The first conclusion I came to on reading the PLI responses was that this course needs to be taught so graduates will be better equipped for pastoral leadership. The course was not delivered in a context that allowed the evaluation of the practical application of lessons learned in the classroom. However, since SEMBEQ students are mentored, qualified mentors could monitor their new knowledge and new pastoral practices.

My goal in surveying new students to evaluate their knowledge before they experience the realities of pastoral ministry was met. While 61 percent of the thirty-one students surveyed seek to serve in pastoral ministry, only 19.4 percent currently serve as elders or ministry staff.

As shown in table 1, at first glance, almost all participants said they agreed that the Bible gives direction regarding church governance, which is a good start. But only half (15/30) are strongly convinced. They need to move from basic knowledge to a establish conviction.

¹ See appendix 2.

Table 1. Survey question on Bible content about church governance

Q. The Bible teaches how a church should be governed	Number of participants
Strongly agree	15
Agree	13
Agree somewhat	2

Most churches in my denomination have been practicing the plurality of elders for forty years, so my question on that topic received only very positive answers; 64.5 percent agreed strongly and 35.5 percent agreed. However, nearly 25 percent of students said they need help defending this practice biblically. Therefore, I included a biblical defense of plurality in my pastoral leadership course. I also asked students to react to the statement: “The senior pastor, biblically, has more authority than other elders of the church.” I was surprised by the diversity of responses (see table 2). The good news is that none of the students fully approved the statement, but four said they partially agreed. Fifteen others disagreed or somewhat disagreed. Analysis from a survey with a choice of answers does not confirm my supposition, but perhaps they wanted to describe the greater influence of the senior pastor but not a greater authority. In any case, it showed that students need to learn and develop a biblical conviction on this topic.

Table 2. Survey question on senior pastor having more authority over other pastors

	Number of participants	Percentage
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	0	0
Agree somewhat	4	13%
Disagree somewhat	5	17%
Disagree	10	33%
Strongly disagree	11	36%

Only 26.7 percent of respondents feel adequately equipped to be gospel-centred pastors who lead gospel-centred churches. This response underscores the great need to define, explain, and provide content so future pastors will not lead in the wrong direction. This result has caused me to include this central topic in the course. Participants felt more

equipped to apply the gospel to their personal lives than to their leadership (61.3 percent strongly agreed).

All of the pioneer Baptist church planters in Quebec are with the Lord now. Current future leaders are either Christians of the third or fourth generation or recent converts. Baptist governance was passed along but is now mostly taken for granted, and what is taken for granted is soon forgotten. The answers to my governance questions clearly expressed a need to teach Baptist governance with conviction, so I devoted a lot of space to this in my course. Only twelve out of thirty-one participants could tell the difference between Presbyterian and Baptist governance models. Even though church polity is not a primary doctrine, it is still essential to the cohesion of the local church. Only two-thirds knew the difference between members' and elders' authority. Even if this seems a positive answer, it could also mean they think they know, but I wonder if they do. They answered that they believe in membership and church discipline and that they know who should be elected as elders, but they do not know much about Baptist governance or distinctives. They are aware of some of the issues but may not be able to connect all the dots and have a clear macro picture. This is my conclusion because only one out of thirty-one participants said he mastered Baptist distinctives. I believe that for these students to become Baptist pastors, they need to master these important distinctives.

Most theology students know elders are called to pray, teach, and shepherd. Few are aware of elders' responsibility to equip and multiply leaders. And, if they know that pastors are called to train future leaders, they do not know how to do it. One of my aims in the pastoral leadership course is to impart this biblical conviction to students and teach them how to apply this principle in their local church. Without the multiplication of leaders, churches could die. Table 3 gives results on the affirmation: "I am equipped to mentor a future pastor."

Table 3. Survey question on mentoring leaders' knowledge

	Number of Participants	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.7
Agree	1	3.3
Somewhat agree	5	16.7
Somewhat Disagree	4	13.3
Disagree	8	26.7
Strongly Disagree	10	33,3

Only three felt confident enough to mentor a future pastor, which I expected since they were only at the beginning of their ministry. There is a great need to prepare them to be able to do mentoring. Many pastors I meet do not know how to mentor leaders who are advanced in age and are still serving their community alone. Twenty-one out of thirty-one participants felt able to defend the principle of training leaders in the context of a local church, which is a good start. On the ability to put a model in place to multiply leaders, the statistics dropped to fourteen participants.

The ministry of deacons and deaconesses seems to be better understood. Twenty-four out of thirty-one participants can explain the function of a deacon. Most churches in Quebec have deacons, with varied ministries depending on the church's context. I have spent less time covering the deacons' office than the elders' office.

A lot of information from the survey helped me assess current knowledge and create teaching notes. I would have loved to assess more students, but the constraint of this project limited the possibilities since I needed to move forward and to finish the project.

Goal 3

The The third goal was to increase knowledge of pastoral leadership among SEMBEQ students by teaching the course. This goal was measured by administering the PLI again. The same survey was used for the assessment of goal 2. I gave the PLI before the course and again after the course was completed to see the changes in the students' knowledge of pastoral leadership knowledge. The goal was to be considered successful if

the *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores. The *t*-test scores reveal a mean growth from 86.33 to 94.75 and a *t*-stat of -3.81. The goal was then successfully met. Sadly, not all students redid the test after the course, making the comparison more difficult.

Fourteen students responded to the questionnaire. Nearly half the students are already in pastoral leadership, and every male student not yet in pastoral leadership aspires to be a pastor (eleven of fourteen; three women took the class). Most answers show a knowledge of pastoral leadership since some are already serving. The course reached two objectives: it deepened or challenged the conviction of the more experienced students and gave new knowledge to the less experienced ones.

These students know biblical principles for church leadership and organization (thirteen participants out of fourteen affirm it). When asked if they could biblically defend the role of an elder, only ten out of fifteen were confident, but after the class, all the students who answered felt better equipped to do so (eleven out of eleven students either agreed or strongly agreed). As for the SEMBEQ students in general, plurality is not an issue, but help was needed to defend their convictions. Results look similar before and after, as I did not invest much in this teaching. The number of students who said that the senior pastor is not more authoritative than other elders grew from 66 percent to 72 percent. Confidence to lead with the gospel grew from 78 percent to 91 percent. Insisting on gospel clarity led to edifying class discussions.

Teaching the Baptist distinctives was fruitful. The students did not know much about this topic, and even those who knew more had yet to consider essential implications. The group grew from 35 percent to 82 percent in understanding Baptist distinctives. Also, responses increased from 40 percent to 91 percent in comparing Baptist polity to Presbyterian governance. The course was an excellent opportunity to teach Baptist roots and history, explain the meaning behind the terms, and offer justification for each of these distinctives.

The teaching session on congregationalism was a key moment in the class experience. I defined members' functions and authority and showed practical application in the life of a local church. I also covered the practice of biblical and wise governance, including discussion on church discipline, elders' agenda, and members' meetings. In the survey, those who could distinguish elders' and members' authority grew from 50 percent to 100 percent. As I stated, the office of deacon was a topic on which students were better informed, but even there, the course did help and more students felt confident in their knowledge.

Addressing a biblical defense of the need for leaders to mentor leaders, two students stated that they felt better equipped to provide a biblical defense and employ concrete strategies after the course. Responses of "agree" or "strongly agree" grew from 36 percent to 73 percent. To express a great difference on the practical side is difficult in a class context.

I met the goal of assessing the students' knowledge before class by conducting video conference one-on-one interviews² with five students enrolled in the course on pastoral leadership. I utilized a rubric as an evaluation tool for the interview responses.³ I aimed to assess their prior knowledge in a way that supplemented the multiple-choice survey. This different evaluation method allowed students to take time to reflect on my questions and provide their answers directly to me orally. This setup allowed me to discern the quality and confidence of their responses and helped me plan how to teach these topics.

This goal was to be considered successfully met if five students were interviewed. I interviewed all of them in the days before the class started. I chose a mix of students with more and less pastoral leadership exposure. The more exposure to pastoral leadership they had, the better their answers were, but I expected them to be better. I

² See appendix 3.

³ See appendix 3.

made a good decision by choosing to interview the students. The face-to-face interactions gave me much-needed information. Students had time to express what they know or think they know. Everyone was relaxed enough to share their ideas without constraint. Almost all the answers I received were incomplete. I knew they knew some of the realities of church life by being church members themselves, but none had had the opportunity to dig and build solid knowledge and understand the challenges of church leadership. As per the rubric measurement, their scores were lower than I expected. One student, who came from a different evangelical background, almost knew no answers. The interviews showed me that future Christian leaders need teaching on these topics. Many topics related to ecclesiology may seem obvious on the surface, but the need for further education becomes evident when taking a deeper look. Table 4 shows which question yielded the highest score from these five students, and which had the lowest score. The table shows the highest and lowest scores of the fifteen questions asked.

Table 4. Highest and lowest means

Scores of 5 interviews	Questions	Mean*
Highest score	How would you as a pastor train new leaders for your congregation?	2.8
Lowest score	What is the importance of Baptist distinctives for you as a leader?	1.2

*Mean of the 5 students interviewed.

Fifteen questions were asked in five categories. On average, the gospel and pastoral leadership questions received the highest score. This was expected since this topic is regularly addressed by leaders either in their own lives or in ministry. The questions on Baptist distinctives received the lowest scores. This topic needs to be taught clearly. Members go to Baptist churches without really knowing clearly why. They have some knowledge but must be better equipped to see the importance of these distinctives and have the ability to defend them. This topic needs to be addressed. The second weakest category was eldership. Members see their elders in action but must be equipped to

defend their functions from a biblical perspective. The course offers real support toward the transmission of these important issues.

In conclusion, the students had a better academic knowledge of pastoral leadership by the end of the course. Their reaction and encouragement at the end of the course showed solid appreciation and learning.

Strengths of the Project

I want to underline some of the strengths of this project. I am grateful to the Lord, who allowed me to follow the rhythm of the program and complete it on time. It may seem trivial, but ministry in a mission field context brings many unexpected challenges, so it is a joy to reach the end on time. SEMBEQ gave me time to study and build the curriculum. Thirty-one students agreed to complete the survey. The seminary provided the course on a schedule that perfectly aligned with the project framework. The students were willing to support my requirement for doing a pre- and post-test. They also were willing to do the interviews. I felt supported by SEMBEQ and the student body.

Curriculum building was another strength. I got to dig into ecclesiological issues and had time to read and create notes for my teaching. Throughout the program, my courses allowed me to think, prepare, and write to grow and be ready for the project. Most fundamentally, all the research, reading, thinking, and writing done for the project was tremendously fruitful in my reflection on ecclesiology and pastoral leadership. I wish I could dig even more and deepen my thoughts on related issues, but the clock reminded me that moving forward was necessary. So much material is now in my mind, and my future teaching will benefit significantly from this research time. This project also motivated me to tackle other unsettled issues related to church leadership after the project.

Lastly, I have been introduced to new topics. I discovered the practical theology field of study. I understood more the power and use of historical theology, which has improved my teaching.

Weaknesses of the Project

Through my experience with the project, there are a few weaknesses I want to address. In preparation for the project, much time was required for class and teaching notes, and I should have spent as much energy and time on my survey. The questions were so helpful in showing student progress. When analyzing the results, I began to understand the power of a great question. Sometimes one has to prepare an initial set of questions and then evaluate the answers received. With the fruit of that evaluated work, one can learn how to create a better version. Some learning cannot be done without real life testing. Generally, I could do statistics analysis very well, but I could have gotten even better data and fruit for further teaching sessions. Thirty-one SEMBEQ's students completed the survey that did not took the course. I reached my goal but realized that having more students complete the survey could have helped me see more nuances and challenges.

Another weakness was that not every student who took the Pastoral Leadership course completed the survey after the classes. I would have loved for every student to be included in the *t*-test. Fourteen students completed the survey before the course, but only eleven after. The difference in number of surveys impacted the complexity of interpreting adequality the results. It also affected the validity of my statistics. Instead of having a $P(t \leq)$ as an exponential number of -6 per example, I only have a three-decimal precision. I wrote multiple email to challenge every missing student, but they choose not to respond. I would have preferred that all participants completed for the pre- and post-tests. Since I was finishing my last class homework, writing chapter 3 of this project. and creating teaching notes with expected feedback, I did not see the value of insisting on the quality of the questions and the scope of the data I needed. It was a blind spot.

Another weakness was that throughout this three-year project, I did not physically profit from visiting the seminary library. There is always a benefit to use the library in person, as being there I could have had face-to-face interaction with a librarian to receive their services and support. I am very visual, so looking for books, journals, and

other reference materials in the library would have been easier for me compared to a web search. Asking for copies of extract through online demands is not as fluent as working on library tables with books all open. Studying inside the library was one of my specific goals, especially since I come from a mission field where this kind of opportunity is rare. But the Lord, in his providence, did not allow it. Now that the Boyce Library has reopened, I am glad that students starting now will not face this obstacle.

What I Would Do Differently

Going through a big project generates ways of improvements. The first thing I would change would be to give myself more time to read additional resources when creating my teaching notes. Since the timeframe of the project was very tight, it was difficult to write chapter 3 and at the same time working on my teaching notes. By better realizing the short timing to produce these two-writing documents, I would have started research in advance to have more time for building notes and processing my andragogy.

The second thing I would change would be to include time during class for students to complete their survey in order that I might receive a maximum number of surveys. I first thought that giving them more time at home would help them, but it did not, since no survey was received after class.

Third, I would add two more teaching lessons. The first lesson would be on differentiating clear New Testament functions for the church and the forms that those functions take. Mistaking a form for a biblically established function could create traditions and theological problems. This discerning wisdom is crucial to leading a church. The other lesson would be on the “church life cycle” and important leadership insights that need to be integrated. The church life cycle would explain what a local church is generally going through from birth to maturity. It explains what needs to be done to avoid the death of the local church. It shows how to move adequately in every stage of life and growth. It would be helpful because students could mistake a function for a form and lead the church in giving authority on a temporal format. Also, students

taking my course need to understand where their church is in the cycle in order to apply adequate changes with the adequate timing.

Theological Reflections

Preparing to teach this class showed me a need to be better equipped in other areas of theological expertise that are connected to ecclesiology. I want to improve my grasp of historical theology and practical theology. So much of ecclesiological issues are nested in historical theology, so I want to read more on it. The seminars for this project were my first exposure to practical theology, and it left me with a desire to master more this field of study. Practical theology has pitfalls but also many strengths. New and exciting avenues of learning also opened up in practical theology, and I want SEMBEQ to one day offer a course in practical theology. Case studies gave me categories and methods to deal with various pastoral situations. Ecclesiology is an amazing field of study. I long for more discussion with students about key questions. I came to this project thinking I could face all the angles of this field and set my mind on every question I had, but the time restrictions prevented this.

However, I now have plans to study some issues more thoroughly. The structure of the program was helpful for me. I now know more about organizing a group of students for an academic project. Supervision of similar projects seems more doable than ever before. I know also it is possible to dig into a theological issue even while working full time, the DMin program showed me how it could be done. This project taught me to keep time for reading and writing beyond this project. It created a space where in-depth study is possible for me.

Personal Reflections

Even though it was a long three years of intensive work, I still have a mix of emotions. First, I am happy to be finished. But also, I wish my education would continue and that I would be able to be still supervise in my on-going education, toward the goal of

being every year better and better. Going through an excellent program structure gave me a desire to maybe do another DMin one day. I have been always been attracted to the study of ecclesiology and pastoral leadership. This project brought that love to even a higher level.

Conclusion

This adventure started three years ago. It was a marvelous learning experience. I grew as a pastor, seminary teacher, and seminary leader. Thinking through pastoral leadership realities caused me to re-evaluate my practices in the church I serve as an elder. The content of my course on ecclesiology is now stronger, and my ability to teach these elements is more urgent, nuanced, and profound. This project helped me become a better teacher; this is precious because teachers are indispensable for students studying toward ministry. This project has helped me grow; may God receive all glory.

APPENDIX 1

EXPERT PANEL EVALUATION RUBRIC

This curriculum evaluation tool allowed each panelist to evaluate the quality of the course content through many angles. They supervised (1) the adequate use of Scripture, (2) the organization of the material, (3) the theological orthodoxy, and (4) the validity of the pedagogy.

Name of Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.					
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.					
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.					
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.					
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.					
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.					
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop pastoral leadership					
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better lead their congregation.					

Other Comments:

APPENDIX 2

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP INVENTORY (PLI)

The following inventory was administered to SEMBEQ students to meet two objectives. First, it assessed their current knowledge on Pastoral Leadership. Second, it served as a pre- and post-test to evaluate the increase in knowledge among the students who completed the course.

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP INVENTORY

Date: _____

Control Number: _____

Part 1

1. Are you in a leadership position? _____
2. How long have you been a SEMBEQ student? _____
3. Do you desire to be in pastoral leadership? _____

Part 2

Directions: Based on the following scale, circle the response that best represents your agreement with the statement:

SD = strongly disagree
D = disagree
DS = disagree somewhat
AS = agree somewhat
A = agree
SA = strongly agree

1. The Bible describes the way a church should be governed.
SD D DS AS A SA
2. It is easy for me to biblically defend the different roles of an elder.
SD D DS AS A SA
3. A church should have a plurality of deacons and a plurality of elders.
SD D DS AS A SA
4. It is easy for me to biblically defend the principle of plurality of elder.
SD D DS AS A SA
5. The senior pastor, biblically, has more authority compared to other elders of the church.
SD D DS AS A SA
6. I am confident to lead a church with gospel-centrality principles.
SD D DS AS A SA
7. I am able to preach (or teach) using gospel-centrality principles.
SD D DS AS A SA
8. I am convinced that my personal spiritual growth originates from what Jesus did for me and not what I have to do for him.
SD D DS AS A SA

9. I am able to differentiate Baptist governance from Presbyterian governance.
SD D DS AS A SA
10. I am able to give a clear definition of the church.
SD D DS AS A SA
11. I am able to distinguish between members authority and elders' authority.
SD D DS AS A SA
12. I am able to describe the purposes of the church.
SD D DS AS A SA
13. I am convinced that my local church membership process is rooted in biblical foundations.
SD D DS AS A SA
14. My church elders exercise their function as stated in the Scripture.
SD D DS AS A SA
15. I believe that my church practices church discipline in light of biblical principles.
SD D DS AS A SA
16. I know and can defend Baptist distinctives.
SD D DS AS A SA
17. I am equipped to mentor a future pastor.
SD D DS AS A SA
18. I can present a biblical argumentation for training leaders in the context of the local church.
SD D DS AS A SA
19. I am able to create a program for multiplication of leaders in my local church.
SD D DS AS A SA
20. I clearly know what a deacon role is.
SD D DS AS A SA

APPENDIX 3
INTERVIEW AND RUBRIC

I chose five students from the course to have a one-on-one interview with me. This interview was composed of five open questions. The responses were evaluated by a rubric.

Interview Questions

Question 1: How does the gospel impact your pastoral leadership?

Question 2: What are the biblical functions of an elder?

Question 3: What are important issues related to church polity?

Question 4: Why and how would you be intentionally involved in mentoring future leaders?

Question 5: What are the Baptist distinctives?

Evaluator: François Turcotte

Date: _____

Interview Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
How is the gospel impacting your pastoral leadership?					
In his Personal life					
In his teaching					
In his relationship and leadership					
What are the biblical functions of an elder?					
Biblical references					
Clarity of functions					
Practical implications					
What would you define as important issues related to church polity?					
Membership					
Membership meeting					
Eldership					
Church discipline					
Baptism and Lord's supper					

Why and how would you be intentionally involved in mentoring future leaders?				
Biblical support				
Why, How?				
What are the Baptist distinctives?				
Naming the distinctives				
Manifesting importance				

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ABSTRACT

DESIGNING AND TEACHING A PASTORAL LEADERSHIP COURSE FOR STUDENTS AT SÉMINAIRE BAPTISTE ÉVANGÉLIQUE DU QUÉBEC

François Turcotte, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2024
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Gregg R. Allison

This purpose of this project was to train developing leaders in pastoral leadership through the Séminaire Baptiste Évangélique du Québec. Chapter 1 explains the nature of the project. It provides a context, a rationale, goals, and project methodology. Chapter 2 details major new testaments passages that address pastoral leadership. Chapter 3 shows the essentials theological principles of pastoral leadership. The project highlighted four skills regarding pastoral leadership: (1) the necessity of gospel-centrality in the life and teaching of the leaders, (2) the necessity of a good ecclesiology, (3) the necessity of good church polity, and (4) the necessity of leaders multiplying leaders. Chapter 4 details how the project was built and executed. Chapter 5 evaluates the overall project and provides explanations of the survey's results and *t*-test.

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BA, University of Montreal, 1995
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