TOWARD A NEW TESTAMENT MODEL FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING [112]

by

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I. Introduction

The topic of a biblically-based philosophy of leadership is complex and in addressing the topic here, we will simply scratch the surface and leave many things undone and unspoken. That is the main reason behind the "towards" in the title. Please do not judge this paper by what is not said....but use what is said to stimulate reflection, discussion, and any God-directed change of which we are convicted in the process. Three concerns lie behind the writing of this presentation. The first is the idea that "Leadership is a gift". This idea is usually based on Romans 12:8 which places leadership in a list of gifts. The second is the idea that "We need more Leaders, not Pastors". This idea is sometimes spoken, often inferred, and based on the idea that a certain style of leadership is what the church needs today for it to move ahead. The third concern lies in the area of "Models for Church Leadership" which come more from the Social Sciences or from Business Management theories than they do from Scripture.

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II. Addressing the Concerns

A. "Leadership is a Gift"

In Romans 12:8, the Greek word *proistemi* is translated as "leader" in the NRSV and "leadership" in the NIV. This word can mean to oversee, to preside, or to rule. In this verse it is seen as one of the gifts that God gives. This same Greek word is used in I Thessalonians 5:12 and is translated in such ways as "over you" or "have charge over you". In I Timothy 3:4 it is translated as "ruleth his own house" or "manage". In I Timothy 5:17 it is rendered as "rule well" or as "direct the affairs". In Titus 3:8 it has the idea of "devoting themselves to good works". The verb *proistemi* literally means "to stand before" and has specific meanings relating to either management or administration or maintenance, both in a church and in a family. It is also interpreted as "giving aid".

Is there a so-called "Gift of Leadership"? If there is a Gift of Leadership, we need to be training those who "have it", and only those who "have it", as this would become the only criteria which we would look for in potential church leadership. However, three points come to mind.

First, there is the concept of *"charismata"*. It is possible that we need to have a more fluid understanding of the idea of gifts. Are there certain gifts as limited by the lists of Romans, First Corinthians, and Ephesians? It seems that it is more likely that these are some examples of manifestations of the Holy Spirit for ministry of God's people (I Corinthians 12:7).

In commenting on Paul's use of the word *charismata*, Kevin Giles states, "It is a rare word before Paul, but in his writings it appears some sixteen times. It is a form of the word *charis* (grace). In choosing this term, Paul emphasizes that every ministry is a gift from God."[113] Giles further suggests that the idea of *charisma* covers everything that the Spirit wishes to use for equip-

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[113] Kevin Giles, *Patterns of Ministry Among the First Christians* (Collins Dove, 1989), 16

ping and up-building the church.[114]

In discussing this particular passage from Romans 12, John Stott talks about the difference between the lists in First Corinthians, Ephesians, and Romans, and then concludes, "It is evident that we need to broaden our understanding of Spiritual Gifts."[115] It is probable that Paul is saying, "No matter what you do, see it as from God, empowered by the Spirit, for the common good...so do it well." It is also probable that the gift mentioned in Romans 12:8 is a specific function of leadership, namely management or administration. Some are more gifted in this area than others but this is not the only function of leadership. This probability fits the specific meaning of the word, *proistemi*. The Pastoral Epistles do not call for Timothy or Titus to look for the gift of leadership in the appointment of such, but instead to look for Godly character and qualities and the ability to teach.[116]

The call to leadership is not a call to those with the "Gift of Leadership", but a call for people to use their giftedness for leadership functions, to lead people in the quest of knowing God and making Him known. This idea comes quite clearly through an understanding of Ephesians 4:11 which the NRSV translates as follows: "The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers." If this rendition is correct, then Paul is suggesting that the functions of leadership listed here were not the gifts themselves but that gifts were given for the exercise of these roles. Further, the objectives of such leadership are equipping, edification, unity, and Christlikeness.[117]

The idea of a "Gift of Leadership" moves us toward the institutionalization of leadership offices and away from the idea of Body ministry and "lay" leadership. The concept of "giftedness for leadership" highlights the need of Body ministry and generalizes

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[114] Ibid., 16

[115] John Stott, *The Message of Romans* (Leicester: IVP, 1994), 328-29.

[116] Cp 1 Timothy ch.3, Titus ch. 1.

[117] Ephesians 4:12-13.

leadership to some extent – the emphasis is on the gifts of the individual being used in some form of leadership capacity. Jim Petersen addresses the problem of institutionalization of leadership when he talks about the measures that Early Church Fathers and Apologists took to preserve the Gospel and to protect the unity of the church. He states: "The intentions of the Church Fathers seem clear. They were concerned about unity and order within the church and were looking for a system of defence against heresy from without. They achieved their goals, but at an awful price. They created a clergy-laity caste system, which put the average believer out of business in terms of his or her ministry in the Gospel. The freedom experienced in the New Testament period vanished as the authority of the Bishops grew"[118]

This is *not* a call for leaderless churches or for all members to have the same function-role of leadership. These are determined by giftedness, opportunity, and call. Again, we turn to Jim Petersen:

> I'm not saying that organizations and institutions are wrong. Life would be maddeningly chaotic without them, but they are often misused. I believe that what we saw in our review represents a misuse. To begin with, these men took their cues for organizing and administrating the church from the model of the Roman Empire rather than from Christ and the Scriptures. But their more serious error lies in the fact that they counted on the structures they had created to preserve the Saints and their faith.[119]

For the church to grow, it needs to be healthy. A healthy church has God-gifted leadership fulfilling their functions of equipping all of the Body of Christ to be leaders by using their giftedness for and in ministry. To do that, we do not look for the Gift of Leadership, we help people discover and develop their

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[118] Jim Petersen, *Church Without Walls* (NavPress, 1992), p.89
[119] Ibid., p.96

unique giftedness and help provide opportunity for the expression of those gifts.

B. "We Need More Leaders, Not Pastors"

Some of the concerns behind this statement have already been mentioned. I simply want to address two more concerns under this heading. First, such a statement usually refers to the style of leadership which is more a product of personality than it is of giftedness. It is often felt that a "*leader*" is somebody who is entrepreneurial, visionary, motivational, enthusiastic, confident, extravertish, goal and task oriented, initiatory, and pro-active. This type of leader in current literature is often referred to as "The Rancher." In these terms, a "*Pastor*" is often seen as being relational, personal, introvertish, having a caring and counselling ministry, and being more involved in maintenance of programs and the status quo. He or she is often portrayed as "The Shepherd." In literature on these types of leadership, Paul is often seen as the ideal type of the Leader and Barnabas as the ideal type of the Pastor.

My second concern is to bring the reminder that the use of the terms "Pastor" and "Shepherd" are biblical to the core! A Pastor is a Shepherd who models his or her life on Jesus as "The Good Shepherd". The way he or she leads (shepherds, pastors) is dependent upon a number of factors including personality, models, training, and circumstances. Consequently, to suggest that the church does not need Pastors is a move away from the biblical model. The dichotomizing of Leader and Pastor is false and can be very damaging to the church when one is played off against another as being "better" or more needed today.

III. Models for Church Leadership

Models for leadership abound in the world today and the church is buying into the debates quite vigorously. Leadership needs are often determined by organization models and so one's perception of the church will greatly influence one's perception of

leadership, function and style. Church structural models today have been influenced by therapeutic and business management theories and these in turn have been foundational in the model of leadership presented as "best" for the church. Allow me to turn to three of my favourite authors for help in introducing and addressing this concern. First of all, Eugene Peterson in his book, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*.

Pastoral work is that aspect of Christian ministry which specializes in the ordinary. It is the pragmatic application of religion in the present....Pastoral work properly originates, as does all Christian ministry, in the biblical sources. But for at least two generations the perspective generated by recent behavioral sciences have dominated the literature directed to pastors....When I look for help in developing my pastoral craft and nurturing my pastoral vocation, the one century that has the least to commend it is the twentieth. Has any century been so fascinated with gimmickry, so surfeited with fads, so addicted to nostrums, so unaware of God, so out of touch with the underground spiritual streams which water eternal life? In relation to pastoral work, the present-day healing and helping disciplines are like the River Platte as described by Mark Twain, a mile wide and an inch deep. They are designed by people without roots in an age without purpose for a people without God....

When I go to my library for instruction and nurture in my preaching and teaching I readily put my hands on volumes by Karl Barth and C.H. Dodd, John Bright and Donald Miller, George Buttrick and David Reed, Brevard Childs and Gerhard von Rad. The scholars, theologians, and preachers who lead, support, and encourage me in proclaiming the biblical message and who instruct me in biblically informed understandings of the Christian faith are a magnificent company......But when I get up on Monday to

face a week of parish routine, I am handed books by Sigmund Freud and Abraham Maslow, Marshall McLuhan and Telcott Parsons, John Kenneth Galbraith and Louis Mumford. It is a literature of humanism and technology. The pulpit is grounded in the prophetic and kerygmatic traditions but the church office is organized around IBM machines. The act of teaching is honed on biblical insights....while the hospital visit is shaped under the supervision of psychiatrists and physicians. The sociologists, psychologists and management consultants and community organizers of the twentieth century are brilliant. Their in-sights are dazzling and their instruction useful. I have profited a great deal under their tutelage, but I am ill at ease still. I can demonstrate acceptable competence in the skills I've been taught, but am I a *Pastor*? I function adequately in a variety of dovetailed roles, but is there a biblical foundation providing solid, authoritative under-pinning for what I am doing so that my daily work is congruent with the daily ministries of prophet, priest, and wiseman to which I am heir? My instructors frequently lift a text from the Bible to assure me that they are on my side, but the plain fact is that I never seem to meet pastoral companions, living or dead, in the culture that they nurture....The pastoral work that results is not lacking in skills or usefulness – but I have little sense that it is indigenous to the world of faith, no feeling of having my practice developed from within the biblical world.... Instead of subtly nuanced abilities in pastoral visitation we get training in mass visitation movements, misnamed evangelism, that promise to fill the pews on Sunday.

Instead of letters of spiritual counsel we get slogans designed for the mass media. Instead of models for patience we get pep talks and cheer leader yells to work up church spirit. And if our lumpish congregations refuse to wave their pompoms on signal, we stalk off to another

congregation, and another, until we find some people dumb enough to put up with such inanities.[120]

And now we turn to Os Guinness. He suggests that:

We have uncritically bought into the insights, tools, and general blessings of modernity....This has led us to idolize modern approaches to life, such as politics, management, marketing, and psychology. We also have fallen prey to powerful modern myths, such as change, technique, relevance, and need....

Radical opposition to idolatry is also fundamental to the protestant principle. Confronting idols is the corollary to letting God be God, living by faith alone, and practising the principle of (that)...The church always needs reformation. At the heart of the Reformation was an insistence on the utter dependability of God and an unrelenting protest against any absolutizing of the created, the relative, and the purely human....

On the one hand, in searching for what is best in modernity, we should ask: Where are modern insights and powers legitimate and fruitful? Because all truth is God's truth, we are free to plunder truth wherever it is found. On the other hand, in looking out for what is best, we should ask several questions. First, where are modern insights and powers double-edged? (The double-edge exists because modern insights contain negative and positive aspects, intended and unintended consequences.) Second, where are they excessive? (Useful though they may be, it is possible to trust in them inordinately, making them unbalanced or unbounded.) Third, where are they autonomous? (Their very brilliance and effectiveness encourages us to treat them

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[120] Eugene Peterson, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 1-5,13

separately from other moral, human, and theological considerations.) Fourth, where are they idolatrous? We ask this final question not because the insights and tools are inherently evil, but because – through their very usefulness– they can be points of false reliance and even working substitutes for God.[121]

Guinness goes on to suggest later in the book that the leading sources of contemporary Christian idolatry are the managerial revolution and the therapeutic revolution.[122] We will look more at these models and their implications for leadership below.

Before we do that, however, let me turn to John Stott for some insight from Scripture. Stott suggests that the pastoral ideal in Scripture is exemplified in Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This was the model that Jesus wanted leaders to copy and He talked much about it in such passages as John 10. However, Stott goes on to say that this model needs to be complemented by two other models which He warned His followers to avoid.

First, He said, there are the secular rulers who "lord it over" and "exercise authority over" people. "Not so with you," He added emphatically. Leadership in His new community was to be entirely different from leadership in the world. "Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant"....

Secondly, Jesus urged His disciples not to imitate the Pharisees. They loved both places of honor (at banquets and in the synagogues) and titles of honor... "Do not do what they do", Jesus said. Christian leaders are not to be called "Rabbi" (teacher), "Father", or "Master". That is, we are not to adopt towards any human being in the church, or

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[121] Os Guinness and John Seal, eds., *No God But God*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 23-26.
[122] Ibid., 112.

allow anybody to adopt towards us, an attitude of helpless dependence, as of a child on his or her father, or of slavish obedience, as of a servant to his or her master, or of uncritical acquiescence, as of a pupil to his or her teacher....

Here are two different contemporary models of leadership, one secular (rulers) and the other religious (Pharisees), which nevertheless shared the same basic characteristic: a hunger for power and prestige. Today the most likely model presented to us for imitation is that of business management. It, too, despite some acceptable parallels, is often more worldly than Christian. We have to beware lest, as the status of pastors in society declines, we seek to compensate for it by demanding greater power and honor in the church. The essential mark of Christian leadership is humility, not authority; servitude, not lordship; and "the meekness and gentleness of Christ."[123]

The secular authority model Stott refers to is mentioned in Mark 10:42-45, the religious authority model in Matthew 23:1-5.

In summary, Peterson is suggesting that models for pastoral leadership, outside of the pulpit, are influenced more by the Social Sciences than they are by Scripture. Guinness is stating that our thinking about life in general, and the church specifically, has bought uncritically into modernity and its obsession with technique and technology. Stott then calls us back to Scripture in pointing out that Jesus warned us about faulty models of leadership, whether they be secular or religious.

Let us now take a closer look at the Therapeutic and Managerial Models of leadership.

A. The Therapeutic Model

Pastoral Leadership is carried out in many functions – in

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[123] John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian*, (Leicester: IVP, 1992), pp.290-91.

and out of the pulpit. Much of what is done during the week involves helping people apply the Word of God to their lives and this is carried out in such functions as counselling and visitation. Eugene Peterson suggests that both of these weekly functions of pastoral leadership have been secularized, one by psychology and the other by the public relations industry.

Counseling has become secularized under the influence of the psychological sciences and visitation under the influence of the public relations industry. By learning how to use them as a means for story-telling and story-making, they can easily be restored to their original settings and do good service as biblically informed pastoral work.

As a counselor, the pastor is secularized away from being a friend in Christ into functioning as substitute for God, which is, in effect, an act of idolatry. It is an extremely difficult process to resist, who does not like to be treated as a god? The person who comes for counseling has the expectation that he or she, the weak one, will be helped by the strong pastor. The inferior comes to the superior. Persons look for experts to solve their problems for them so that they will not have to acquire competence to live authentically and responsibly. They are used to deferring to experts in every other area of life – why not here?....

The secularization of pastoral visitation takes place when the pastor gives up the uncertain and somewhat modest work of being a companion to persons in pilgrimage and takes on the job of public relations agent for the congregation; the job then is to whip up flagging enthusiasm, raise money for the budget, promote new programs, and "get out the vote" on Sundays....Under the pressure of such expectations, visitation ceases to be pastoral work.[124]

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[124] Eugene Peterson, pp. 91-95

Peterson goes on to say that both counseling and visitation can be reclaimed as pastoral work if the pastor uses them in biblically-prescribed ways. He gives some very good examples of what this might look like. I recommend this book for your perusal.

In another place, Eugene Peterson talks about the pastor's role of making saints.[125] One of the problems that the Therapeutic Model brings with it is the idea that a pastor should be a "doctor fix-it" because there are hurting people who demand that they feel good. Peterson suggests that people today are not hurting any more than past generations (even though some of the issues may be different). The main difference is that people expect to get things fixed and the pastor is expected to make them feel good. Peterson states, "The pastor's primary responsibility is to lead people into worship to re-orient themselves (so that they come to see that)....this problem is not the whole world even though it feels that way." Worship becomes a place where we have our lives redefined for us. In the light of this the pastor's primary job is not to fix problems but to make saints – we are in the saint-making business, not the human-potential business.

However, Peterson is quick to add, that to be this type of pastor one needs to give up many things held dear: efficiency, control, quick returns, and the satisfaction of pleasing people, to mention a few. He states that pastors are better off without these things because it forces them to adopt a work that is slow, hard to measure, and that people don't necessarily want – a tough sell, and not many are buying it, but very necessary. The bottom line is that the pastor is not called to be a therapist. He or she is called to be the pastor, to help people live in the grace of God no matter what.

Os Guinness addresses the Therapeutic Model specifically when he states:

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[125] Eugene Peterson, "The Business of Making Saints", *Leadership Journal* (Spring 1997), 20-28.

In the 1990's, the roving spotlight of national attention is on the recovery movement. The twentieth century is closing with the same national nervousness and psychic epidemic as did the nineteenth century. But the recovery movement is only the latest, fastest growing, most popular, most accessible, and most religious of the many therapies that make up the broader therapeutic movement. So dominant have these therapies become – so self-evident in their claims and so seemingly effectual in their cures – that they have been well described as "the therapeutic revolution". And when Christians handle them thoughtlessly and uncritically, they easily become "another gospel"....

In some, where the American Church at large and the evangelical community in particular have been unguarded about the therapeutic, they have been caught in the toils of a new Babylonian captivity. But this captivity is enforced on couches instead of brick kilns and experienced in affinity groups instead of chaingangs.[126]

Indeed, the Therapeutic Model has offered the church a way of being in control and a leadership function she feels is needed. This Therapeutic Model has suggested that leaders should be counsellors, people who are there to fix other people's problems and help them to be happy. This is a far cry from the servant leadership model we see in Christ, a leadership that is not so much given to the alleviation of suffering as it is to finding God in the midst of life's pain. This model will be addressed more fully later in this paper.

B. The Managerial Model

The second model that has heavily influenced church structure and church leadership is the Managerial Model. This has come to us mainly through what is known as the "Church Growth

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[126] Os Guinness, *No God But God*, 112, 115.

Movement." Os Guinness states that, "The Church Growth Movement is committed to 'effective evangelism' through such means of 'growing churches' as management, marketing, and mega churches."[127]

Guinness goes on to mention that the use of modernity insights and technologies (which the Church Growth Movement does without apology) could actually lead to a fruitful period of innovation within the church. Guinness suggests that the managerial revolution could provide the church with many needed tools and he is quick to point out that innovation in itself is not a problem. He states, "If Christians would use the best fruits of the managerial revolution constructively and critically, accompanied by a parallel reformation of truth and theology, the potential for the gospel would be incalculable."[128] Guinness then adds that

> Whatever criticisms need to be raised, this point is beyond dispute: the Church Growth Movement is extraordinarily influential and significant within American churches today. At its best, it should be applauded. Where it is not at its best, it requires criticism so that it might be. The Church of Christ concerned for the glory of Christ needs more – not less – of the best of true church growth.[129]

After pointing out a number of concerns that he has with the Church Growth Movement, Guinness indicates that there are three main dangers of modernity upon which church growth seems to be based. These three dangers are secularization, privatization, and pluralisation. He states:

> Unquestionably the component that bears directly on the Church Growth Movement is what Max Weber called

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127 Ibid., 151.
128 Ibid., 154.
129 Ibid.

"rationalization". This is the first of the two underlying dynamics of secularization. (The other is differentiation.)...

For religion, the result of rationalization is what Weber also called "disenchantment" (and C.S. Lewis called "a new enchantment"). All the "magic and mystery" of life is reduced and removed – not so much unwanted as unnecessary. No one in the process is necessarily hostile to religion. Rather, as technique and the "figure it out" rationality spread further and further, the decisiveness of faith is rendered more and more irrelevant.... There is no need for God, even in His church.

The two most easily recognizable hallmarks of secularization in America are the exaltation of numbers and of technique. Both are prominent in the Church Growth Movement. In its fascination with statistics and data at the expense of truth, this movement is characteristically modern. Some people argue that the emphasis on quantifiable measures – on counting – is the central characteristic of a rationalized society. Thus the United States is government by polling, television programming by ratings, sports commentary by statistics, education by Grade Point Averages, and academic tenure by the number of publications. In such a world of number-crunchers, bean-counters, and computer-analysts, the growth of churches as a measurable "fact-based" business enterprise is utterly natural.

The problem with this mentality is that quantity does not measure quality, numbers have little to do with truth, excellence, or character. As one sociologist says, 'Big Mac', even with billions and billions of hamburgers served, need not mean 'Good Mac'. But what is misleading at the trivial level of fast food becomes dangerous as one moves through sports prowess, educational attainment, and presidential character to spiritual depth. For church growth viewed in measurable terms such as numbers, is trivial compared with growth in less measurable but more

important terms, such as faith, character, and Godliness. Having growth in terms of numbers, of course, does not rule out the more important spiritual growth. But it does not necessarily include this type of growth either.

A tell-tale pre-occupation with technique is also prominent in the Church Growth Movement and is linked to secularization. Life is viewed as a set of problems, each set having a rational solution, an identifiable expert, and therefore a practical mechanism to effect it. Take the example of the changing profiles of the pastor. Needless to say, distortions of the ministry are not new....

Anyone who doubts this shift has only to look at church growth literature and check for such chapters as "Portrait of the Effective Pastor". The bulk of such chapters keep theology and theological references to a minimum – little more than a cursory reference to the pastor's "personal calling" and to "God's vision for the church". In their place are discussions of such themes as delegating, confidence, interaction, decision-making, visibility, practicality, accountability, and discernment – the profile of the pastor as CEO....

Those who live like CEO's are fired like CEO's – and spiritual considerations have as little to do with the ending as with the beginning and the middle. Small wonder that one eminent Christian leader returned home from a church growth conference puzzled. There had been "literally no theology", he said. "In fact, there had been no serious reference to God at all."[130]

One of the major problems with selling out to an obsession with technique and technology is the de-mystifying of faith and the elimination of the awe and the mystery of God, who is trivialized in

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[130] Os Guinness, 163-165

the process. This theme is taken up by Donald McCoullough[131] and the problem of the loss of awe is mentioned by Douglas Coupland[132] as he laments the loss of connectedness with the profound with which Generation X has to deal.

Another problem lies in the area of dependency. A church sold out to technique and management models is going to feel self-reliant and able to do anything as long as the _right_ technique/model is found. Scripturally, it is the church who recognizes its own impotence, who will be thrown on to God in utter dependency – exactly where God requires us to be.

The Managerial Model of church obviously has great ramifications for the concepts of leadership. A Business Management Model will demand a leader who is task-oriented and given over to the objective of productivity. He or she will be motivated by success and will have a bias toward action and performance. Competitiveness will be encouraged and independency valued.[133] On the other hand, a Family Management Model (which I believe is the more Scriptural model) will have a leader who is relationship oriented, motivated by love, with a bias toward being and character, who will favour equality and unity and encourage such, and will value interdependency.

Peter Berger states that, "He who sups with the devil had better have a long spoon. The devilry of modernity has its own magic: the (believer) who sups with it will find his spoon getting shorter and shorter – until that last supper in which he is left alone at the table, with no spoon at all and with an empty plate. The devil, one may guess, will have gone away to more interesting company."[134]

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[131] Donald McCoullough, *The Trivialization of God*, NavPress, 1995.

[132] Douglas Coupland, *Life After God*, Pocket Books, 1994.

[133] See Thomas Peters, *In Search of Excellence*, for an elaboration of these characteristics and the modern manager.

[134] Peter Berger, as quoted in Os Guinness, *No God But God*, 5

Os Guinness suggests that "The challenge of modern church growth is the problem of modern discipleship in large, how to engage in the world freely but faithfully." He then tells us that there are at least two cautions that need to be addressed.

The first caution to ponder is historical. In the early 1980's when the Christian Right was the dominant trend, criticism of the movement was often treated as treason. Today, when the trail of its debris-strewn illusions is all too obvious, many former enthusiasts wonder why they did not recognize the movement's short-comings earlier. Could it be that the Church Growth Movement in its present expansionist phase is also a movement waiting to be undeceived. It would be wise to raise our questions now.

The second caution to ponder is theological. If modernity is history's greatest reinforcement of the idol-making factory that is our hearts, nothing can resist it short of the truth of radical monotheism: "There is one God, no God but God, and no rest for any people who have any god but God". Only an impossible God, revealing impossible truths and making impossible demands, can call out an impossible people adequate for this challenge.

For all who are committed to church growth and eager to use the best of modernity, it is sobering to realize the length of God's iconoclasm. As the Scriptures show, God is not only against the idolizing of alien gods, God is against His own gifts when idolized. The fate of the tabernacle and the temple are both a warning to mega churches built not on rock but on sand.

We should therefore remember Peter Berger's contemporary warning: "He who sups with the devil of modernity had better have a long spoon". By all means dine freely at the table of modernity, but in God's name keep your spoons long. We should also remember Origen's ancient principle: "Christians are free to plunder the Egyptians, but forbidden to set up a Golden Calf." By all

means plunder freely of the treasures of modernity, but in God's name make sure that what comes out of the fire that will test our life's endeavors is gold fit for the temple of God and not a late twentieth century image of a Golden Calf.[135]

IV. Towards a New Testament Model

It has been said that to be always relevant you have to say things which are eternal. There are at least two eternal truths that must influence our thinking when it comes to building a New Testament Model for leadership today. The first is that the umbrella term in Scripture for all leadership positions and functions is servanthood.

The idea of being a servant (*diakonos*) or slave (*doulos*) is the dominant theme throughout the New Testament when we think of leadership in the church. These terms occur in the Gospels and the Epistles and are used to describe both function (to serve) and office (servants). Acts 6 uses the term to describe the function of both apostles and deacons. The apostles are to have the *diakonia* (ministry) of the Word (verse 4) and deacons are to have the *diakoneo* (service) of waiting on tables (verse 2).

The second eternal truth that needs to be said is that the context for all ministry and leadership is quality relationship. This relational base for leadership is highlighted in the dominant themes throughout the New Testament of love, character development, exemplary teaching, and other-centredness. Such quality relationship is the cornerstone of all of Jesus' teaching as He summarizes the Commandments in relational terms,[136] and as He gives a Commission to His disciples to love as He has loved them.[137]

All leadership is to be understood in terms of servanthood within quality relationships where sacrificial love is the main

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[135] Os Guinness, 174
[136] Luke 10:27-28.
[137] John 13:34-35.

characteristic. This outlaws utilitarianism, one of the major "relational" sins (in relationship with God and in relationship with others) of the contemporary church. I now turn to four New Testament case studies – Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, and Jesus.

Paul is often seen as the bold, courageous, tough, passionate, exuberant, pro-active, and confrontational leader. These characteristics are seen in many passages, such as the following references from Acts:

8:1	He is seen as giving approval to Stephen's death.
8:1-2	He is breathing out murderous threats and then carrying them out.
9:21	He is raising havoc.
9:17-19	Paul is converted and filled with the Holy Spirit.
9:20-22	He is involved in public preaching and it is described as powerful and as baffling the Jews.
9:28	Paul speaks boldly in the name of the Lord.
13:46	Paul is courageous in his public confrontation.
15:39	Paul is seen in sharp disagreement with Barnabas (and with Peter in Galatians 2:11-14).

In other examples we see him passionately involved in church planting, teaching, and encouragement. We find him confrontational in both religious and civil courts and victorious in spiritual warfare. He perseveres through incredible physical and emotional suffering. One gets the idea of an "A-type" personality, an extravertish style of relating, and a definite tendency towards pro-activity.

It is possible that Paul had a problem with harshness and an abrasive approach as he has to defend his ministry from such criticism. He, also, perhaps had a problem with pride and arrogance.[138] These would be normal weaknesses in this type of personality.

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[138] Cp. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

However, there is another side of Paul's leadership that is often times not mentioned when we talk about Paul as an exemplary leader. In his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders,[139] we see him having an attitude of humility, servanthood, and tears. He states that he has not been covetous, that he has been self-sacrificing and not demanding, and that his hard work amongst them has been an example for them to follow. Part of this hard work included his self-giving attitude towards weak people. He is involved in a prayer of humility and much weeping and embracing is included. Perhaps we are seeing here a "softer" side of Paul's character.

This can also be seen in 2 Corinthians 3:6-13 where Paul lists the hardships that he has gone through and describes himself in the following ways:

- understanding, patient, kind and loving (verse 6).
- opened heart wide to them, not withholding affection from them (verses 11-12).
- urging them to open their hearts to him (verse 13).

In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 we have him communicating that learning weakness was a good thing for him and then in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20 he mentions that he has been gentle amongst them, like a mother (verse 7), that he has loved them very much and that they have become dear to him (verse 8), and that he has been involved with them like a father, encouraging, comforting, and urging them to live lives worthy of God (verses 11-12). He now has an intense longing to see them (verse 17).

Paul's "A-type" personality has been moulded by God and he has become more like Jesus. This is further exemplified in his teaching, especially throughout the Pastoral Epistles where he places the emphasis on character development and exemplary teaching as necessary requirements for leadership. I turn now to Barnabas.

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[139] Acts 20:17-38.

Barnabas' name means "Son of Encouragement" and we discover him as a giving, self-sacrificial person. He befriends Saul and is sent to Antioch where he sees evidence of God's grace. He is described as a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith.[140] He and Paul have a team ministry where he is the leader of the team at first and when the team expands to include John Mark, Barnabas is still the leader. He is gifted as a prophet and teacher and is set aside by the Holy Spirit for special ministry, ordained by the church, and sent out on mission.[141]

In Acts 13 the team hierarchy changes where we see Paul assuming leadership and Barnabas staying within the team. After Paul's dispute with Barnabas, Barnabas leaves the team, taking John Mark with him.[142] The outcome of Barnabas' ministry to Mark is profound. As a result of Mark growing and becoming a leader himself we have his Gospel and we have him meeting up with Paul again and being involved in ministry with him as well as with Peter.[143]

In Galatians 2:13 Barnabas is said to have been led astray on the Jewish-Gentile issue, highlighting the fact that perhaps Barnabas had a problem with timidity. Barnabas is often seen as the "pastoral type" and is a good example of a leader who has a very different personality from that of Paul.

Timothy is another example of a "pastoral" model. In Philippians 2:19-22, we see that he is genuinely interested in the welfare of others, not concerned about his own interests, and committed to team ministry and servanthood. The task that he has is the gospel.   In 1 Timothy 4 we see that he perhaps had a problem of inferiority due to his youth and that this could cause him to neglect his giftedness. In 2 Timothy 1 it is suggested that he had a problem with timidity (or at least compared to Paul he did). The answer to these personality problems that Timothy had was not to

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[140] Acts 11:22-24.

[141] Acts 11:25; 12:25; 13:1-5.

[142] Acts 15:36-39.

[143] Philemon 24; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13.

quit, and not to become more like Paul, but to "fan into flame" the gifts that God had given to *him*.

Jesus is the prime example of leadership given to us in Scripture. John Stott suggests that John 10:1-16 is a primary passage for our understanding of leadership principles as based on Jesus.[144] In these verses we see that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and that the Good Shepherd:

- Knows His sheep – personal relationships are essential and they are reciprocal relationships ("I know them, and they know me.")

- Serves His sheep – in Ezekiel 34 and Jude 12, God's chief complaint against shepherds is when they feed only themselves and, therefore, use their position to feed their own egos rather than the people committed to their care. Stott suggests:

> So there is a good deal of dirty and menial work in shepherding; it includes strengthening the weak ones, healing the sick, binding up the injured and bringing back the strays....Pastors need this sacrificial, serving love in their ministry today. For like sheep human beings can often be 'perverse and foolish' and stray from the path. Some can also be demanding and unappreciative, and we will find it hard to love them. But then we will remember that they are God's flock, purchased with Christ's blood and entrusted by the Holy Spirit to our care. And if the three persons of the Trinity are committed to their welfare, how can we not be also?"[145]

- Leads His sheep – "It is our solemn responsibility to lead people in such a way that it is safe for them to follow us. That is,

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[144] John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian*, (Leicester: IVP, 1992), 279-90.

[145] Ibid., 283-284.

we have to set them a consistent and reliable example. We need to remember that Jesus introduced to the world a new style of leadership, namely leadership by service and example, not by force."[146]

- Feeds His sheep – "Jesus Himself as the Good Shepherd was preeminently a teacher. He fed His disciples with the good food of His instruction....Indeed, the ultimate goal of our pastoral ministry is both 'to present everyone perfect in Christ' and 'to prepare God's people for works of service'. It would be hard to imagine a nobler ambition than through our teaching ministry to lead God's people both into maturity and into ministry."[147]

- Rules His sheep – This is the overseeing role of leadership where obedience and submission of the people to the leader is always in the context of servant relationship of the leader to his or her people.

- Guards His sheep – especially by opposing false teachers.

- Seeks His sheep – by reaching out to those who do not yet belong to Jesus.

As we imitate the leadership model of Jesus, these functions will be carried out in different ways by different people because of different circumstances and different personalities, not to mention giftedness and training. Such diversity is necessary and, in fact, to be welcomed, but the principles of the model as outlined above will always be evident if our leadership is truly based on Christ's example.

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[146] Ibid., 285.
[147] Ibid., p. 286.

V. Some Conclusions

My call here is "Let's get back to the Book." It is in the Book that we learn what God wants His church and leaders to be and do. For the church to be what God wants her to be, we need more biblical leaders. Let's also recognize the difference between character, function, and style. *Character* is biblically mandated for leadership. It is to be exemplified by the fruit of the Spirit, godliness, Christlikeness, servanthood. *Function* is also biblically mandated and is based on giftedness - Spirit empowerment, through which the character of God is expressed within quality relationships. The task is the gospel and the consequent making of disciples, all to the glory of God.

Style will be the consequence of such things as personality, training (especially from young years), modelling, circumstances, experiences, and growth in grace. Style will include an enormous diversity but always needs to be in line with character and function for it to be Godly.

People who are more "Pauline" in their style of leadership often need to learn about weakness, vulnerability, humility, and patience. People who are more "Barnotim" in their style of leadership often need to learn about strength, confidence, courage, boldness, and passion. The truths of 1 Corinthians 12 (Paul's passage on body ministry) and respect for God's design for diversity in the Body of Christ need to be emphasized and applied to the area of leadership affirmation. The call for leadership is a call for all God's people to live in obedience to Him, allowing God to develop them, and to use their giftedness as He gives opportunity. We must stop all overt and covert denunciation of certain styles of leadership. All of God's varied giftedness and styles of expressing that giftedness need to be affirmed and deeply appreciated. If there are certain styles that are undermined in our culture, perhaps, in the light of 1 Corinthians 12, greater emphasis needs to be given to these.

VI. Some Implications for Training and for Denominational Leadership

A. Training is not Cloning

Expectations of training programs often amount to cloning rather than equipping. Cloning involves taking some raw material and fashioning it to a pre-determined plan, usually to look like, or be like the trainer. Equipping involves taking the raw material and helping it to be what it was designed to be in the first place. The process of cloning often happens by putting the perceived goal ahead of the raw material so that the raw material is shaped to meet the perceived goal rather than it being shaped according to its own uniqueness and strength and seeing the calling flow from God and His involvement in that process.

An example of this would involve a denomination setting a goal such as having more "seeker-sensitive" type churches. The perceived problem could be that we don't have any "seeker-sensitive" type leaders and, therefore, the solution is to get some raw material and instruct the training college to make us some!

The biblical alternative to this is along the lines of recognizing a person's giftedness, taking the raw talent and ability and character qualities that are Godly and continuing the life-long process of shaping this person to be who God has created him or her to be and set him or her free to take up the opportunities that God allows.

B. Character Development is the # 1 Essential

Most leadership models today are either skill-based or personality-based rather than character-based. Scripture calls for character development before anything else and this needs to be taken into account in all training programs for Christian leadership. Skills development in such training programs should give tools for the expression of that character.

C. What About the Area of Giftedness?

Training programs for Christian leadership should help people "fan into flame" the gifts that God has given them. This is the teaching of 2 Timothy I:6-7 and it is in the context of God-given power, love, and self-discipline. The goal of this is to help the individual to overcome whatever inadequacies he or she has due to personality or any other factor.

VII. Discussion Questions

1. Have you had personal experience with any of the "three concerns"? Which ones" What do you feel and think about them?
2. Discuss the use of the term "gift of leadership" as applied to Romans 12:8. What are your conclusions?
3. What are your feelings and thoughts about personality style and leadership?
4. Discuss the Therapeutic and Managerial Models for leadership. What are your conclusions?
5. It is suggested that the concepts of servanthood and relationships are two eternal truths. What do you think? How does this apply to your own leadership?
6. To whom do you relate more: Paul? Barnabas? Timothy? How do you feel about that? Do you get frustrated by the other type?
7. How does Jesus' model of leadership from John 10 relate to you? Reflect on what God is saying to you through this passage. Share your reflections with someone.
8. What implications for training do you see from the conclusions reached through this paper? What are your thoughts of the three implications mentioned in Section VI?