



DEVELOPING LEADERS

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Ten Lessons from the Church at Ephesus



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By

Bruce Zachary

Eccl. 12:12-14 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books *there is* no end, and much study *is* wearisome to the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Lesson 1: Be a Developer [overview] [Ac. 18:18-19:10].....	7
Lesson 2: Be a Mentor [2Tim. 2:2]	11
Lesson 3: Be a Leadership Development Culture [Eph. 4:11-16].....	14
Lesson 4: Be Intergenerational [1Tim. 4:12, 5:1-2].....	17
Lesson 5: Be Strong [Eph. 6:10]	20
Lesson 6: Be a Balanced Worker [Ac. 20:32-35]	23
Lesson 7: Be Your Best [Ac. 18:24-28].....	26
Lesson 8: Be a Person of Prayer [1Tim. 2:1-8]	29
Lesson 9: Be Qualified [1Tim. 3:1-7]	32
Lesson 10: Be an Example as a Next Generation Leader [1Tim. 4:12-16].....	35

Introduction

Important Lessons To Learn From The Church At Ephesus

Why should I bother reading this? The purpose of “Developing Leaders” (and the companion resources, “Reaching the Lost” and “Making Disciples”) is to create a Biblical and practical tool to help church leaders more effectively do those things. This resource is a tool to help you to actually do what you, and every other spiritual leader, are called to do.

1. What are the primary functions of The Church? You could easily defend the ideas of worship, evangelism, glorifying Christ, loving God, loving others and living His word, knowing Christ and making Him known, etc. Nevertheless, I would suggest all of these goals and others flow from what **the primary functions of the Church are: to reach the lost, make disciples, and develop leaders.** All true Church growth happens when we reach the lost, but to effectively make disciples of these new converts, we must develop committed leaders. If we want to expand the kingdom, and engage in the essential functions of the Church, we must discover how to more effectively reach the lost, make disciples and develop leaders.

2. Where should be the primary place we look to discover how to more effectively reach the lost, make disciples and develop leaders? There are countless leadership books, blogs, vlogs, and podcasts available to us, and information in a host of formats. Many of these resources are offering to help church leaders, “Break the 200, 500, and 1,000 barrier.” Realize I’m not suggesting these resources should be avoided. There are undoubtedly insightful ideas to help church leaders to overcome a host of problems, but many of the proposed solutions appear to reflect solutions that have been cultivated from the marketplace rather than from the pages of Scripture.

What I am suggesting is, the **primary** place we should look to discover what the Church is called to do, and how to do it most effectively, is the Bible. I presume that Jesus intended the Bible to be a sufficient resource for the job [2Tim. 3:16-17]; and that Church leaders have liberty to supplement their toolbox with lessons learned from their cultural context. A challenge of relying primarily upon the Scriptures is the material is not organized to be a primer for church leaders. Nevertheless, if you decided to use the Bible for your primary resource it would be reasonable to ask, **“What church in the pages of Scripture seemed to most effectively reach the lost, make disciples, and develop leaders?”**

3. What evidence do we have that the church at Ephesus is an effective model for reaching the lost, making disciples, and developing leaders? About one-third of the New Testament books are connected to the Church at Ephesus: Ephesians, Acts, Revelation, 1st and 2nd Timothy, and 1st 2nd and 3rd John. The effectiveness of the church at Ephesus is noted in a summary statement in Acts, *“And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks”* [Ac. 19:10]. Space will not allow me to fully develop the idea here but suffice it to say the church at Ephesus not only proclaimed the gospel

to the local metropolis, but also the surrounding region of Asia Minor. They not only reached the lost, but made disciples and developed leaders by establishing neighboring churches in Asia Minor as referenced in Revelation 2 and 3 [effective church planting].

As we will see in the following lessons, the church at Ephesus is arguably the most effective biblical model for reaching the lost, making disciples and developing leaders. Our hope is to learn principles from this church that can be applied in a practical way to our cultural context so that we too can be effective in what God has called us to.

Lesson 1: Be a Developer [overview] [Ac. 18:18-19:10]

When Calvary Chapel of Camarillo [aka Calvary Nexus] first began, almost 20 years ago, it seemed like I was doing “everything.” On Sunday mornings, I would greet people, play drums on the worship team, teach the message, pray for people, and help serve refreshments. During the week I would try to provide all the pastoral care, love my family, and work in the marketplace. The church wanted to be cared for, and I wanted to be a loving pastor. I confess that for me, in the early stages of the church’s development, I wanted to be needed, and that fueled a desire to care for all the needs. *But I couldn’t do it all ...* The dynamic was unhealthy for the church, unhealthy for my family, unsustainable for me, and hindered truly advancing God’s kingdom.

When a pastor attempts to provide all the care for a group of people, he assumes the generally overwhelming task of counseling the struggling, responding to countless emails, texts, calls, and instant messages, officiating every wedding and funeral, and visiting the infirm. As a result teaching preparation is compromised, and leadership development and vision are rarely contemplated. In a model where one person is primarily responsible for caring for people and making disciples the church is likely to remain small. The Barna Group reports that the average Protestant church in the U.S. has 89 adults, 60% have less than 100 adults in attendance, and only 2% have over 1000 adults attending. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with a small church, but many leaders would like to see their local church grow. There are undoubtedly countless factors contributing to Barna’s findings but a dominant issue is the lack of leadership development.

The primary dashboard indicators that will quickly reveal whether a leadership development culture exists in the local church are:

1. What percentage of the staff come from within the church as opposed to outside hires?
 2. What percentage of people with the title “leader” in their role actively mentors an assistant?
- The higher the percentages the more likely a true leadership development culture exists.

If we are going to reach the lost and make disciples we need to be intentional to develop leaders. The church at Ephesus reveals the importance of developing leaders. Paul began the work at Ephesus and was well received by Jews at the synagogue, and they invited him to remain with them. Paul was unable to stay since he needed to travel to Jerusalem, but affirmed that he would return Lord willing [Ac. 18:18-21]. God was opening a door for the gospel to be proclaimed, but Paul was unable to personally do the necessary work of ministry in Ephesus at that time.

1. Developed leaders are needed to do the work of ministry [Ac. 18:18-23]:

Paul left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus while he traveled to Caesarea, Antioch and Galatia to strengthen the disciples [22-23]. Aquila and Priscilla would seek to reach the lost, make disciples, and develop leaders at Ephesus. They were fellow leather workers (or tentmakers) who were likely mentored by Paul. They served with him at Corinth for a year and a half after

Emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome [18:11-19]. Paul referred to them as *fellow-laborers* suggesting that they played in same league.

The work at Ephesus was able to progress, because Paul had mentored Aquila and Priscilla, and they were able to do the work of ministry despite Paul's absence. Essentially, without developed leaders, the work of ministry at Ephesus would have been delayed until Paul's return. Furthermore, if all of the work of ministry rested on Paul's capable shoulders the scope of the church's ministry would have been limited. *Every leader, no matter how gifted they are, has a limited ability to care for people's needs.*

The gift to care for (shepherd) people is good, noble, and Christ-like. But if you don't also develop leaders, like Jesus did, you will undoubtedly limit the size of the church to about 150 or fewer people. There is a reason for this phenomenon.

People want the pastor to care for them, and pastors want to care for the people. Pastors struggle at the notion of disappointing people, especially people they care for. There may even be a co-dependent element. The people look to the pastor to care for all their needs, and the pastor relies on the people to provide some sense of value and worth. But as the group grows the pastor can't keep up. So the pastor and the people become frustrated. Either the pastor or some people are likely to leave in that scenario. So the church shrinks to a manageable size until a leader learns to develop others to do the work of ministry.

Another element in this dynamic is the congregation's desire to have their proverbial cake and eat it too. Many people want the pastor to be loving, caring, available, friendly, and compassionate. They also want the church to be a vibrant, thriving community of faith where disciples are made, leaders are developed and the lost are reached for Christ. If a church is going to grow, congregations have to let go of the expectation that their pastor will be available for every perceived pastoral need. Furthermore, this is often most difficult for those who have been part of the church community when the congregation was small and the pastor was able to be more intimately involved in their life.

And pastors and leaders need to develop more leaders to care for people and do the work of ministry, and learn to say "no" even though it is difficult.

2. Developed leaders are needed to develop prospective leaders [Ac. 18:24-28]:

Aquila and Priscilla were not only capable of doing the work of ministry, but they were able to develop Apollos a high-capacity prospective leader [24-28].

Apollos was from Alexandria, Egypt the great learning center of the ancient world. He was eloquent, a trait that was highly esteemed in the ancient Greco-Roman world (the church today also tends to esteem eloquent speakers). He was mighty in Scripture or well versed in the Old Covenant. He was instructed in the way of the Lord, or a disciple, but his knowledge of the New Covenant was limited. Finally, he was fervent in spirit or passionate and zealous [24-25].

In baseball the expression is a "five-tool player" a position player who can hit for power, average, excels at throwing and fielding, and has speed on the bases. A five-tool player may not

be ready for the major leagues, but their potential is evident. Apollos was a five-tool leader, he wasn't ready for the majors yet, but the high capacity was obvious.

When Apollos began to preach the potential was demonstrated, but so too were some areas of doctrine that needed refining. So Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and helped to clarify doctrine and the mentor regarding the gospel of grace [26]. As Apollos was further developed he was prepared to go to Achaia (Corinth) where he would continue to expand God's kingdom as he vigorously refuted the Jews and publicly demonstrated from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ [27-28]. It was undoubtedly bittersweet to see a capable developed leader like Apollos leave the church at Ephesus, but this is part of every church's story.

The local church needs a pipeline of developing leaders like a major league baseball team needs a healthy minor league system to develop potential. Inevitably, leaders become unavailable because they leave the geographic area, retire, experience a life change that precludes them from continuing in their leadership role, or choose to attend another local church. A great way to create a healthy development model is to develop leaders and empower them to develop prospective leaders. The more leaders capable of developing prospective leaders, the more attractive the work will be to more high capacity leaders. Leading leaders involves a different set of skills than leading people generally or serving. Aquila and Priscilla had the ability to lead leaders, and certainly so did Paul. But the work in Ephesus was not hindered by the fact that Paul was unable to develop Apollos, because there were other developed leaders capable of developing prospective leaders.

3. Developing leaders need the work of the Holy Spirit and an intentional process [Ac. 19-1-9]:

The need for the Holy Spirit is revealed by Paul's encounter with certain disciples upon his return to Ephesus [19:1-6]. Prior to any effort to develop them as disciples or leaders there was a need for them to be empowered by the Spirit. The filling of God's Spirit is essential, and no amount of self-discipline or man-made effort can replace it. The need for an intentional process is revealed by the verses that follow [Ac. 19:8-10]. Paul began training the disciples at the synagogue for three months; and then spent the next two years training daily at the school of Tyrannus. This process developed people from converts, to mature followers of Christ, and undoubtedly developed leaders.

4. Developed leaders are needed to reach the lost [Ac. 19:10]

The result of making disciples and developing leaders is highlighted in the summary declaration, "all who dwelt in Asia heard the word" [10]. The spread of the gospel was accelerated such that the region had been exposed to the gospel in two years. Furthermore, it is reasonable to presume that the seven churches of Asia Minor [Rev. 2-3] traced their inception and development to the church of Ephesus. Essentially, the region was saturated with the gospel as a by-product of a true leadership development culture.

5. How to create a leadership development culture:

The hallmarks of a leadership development church culture are a very high percentage of: staff from within the church as opposed to outside hires, and leaders mentoring apprentices. Here is how we get there:

a. Biblical training to promote Christ-like character. This is accomplished in part via expository bible teaching when the assembled gather to worship, and in smaller groups. However, the process is accelerated through a **School of Ministry** [SoM]. There are models available that are ideal for any size church. A SoM can be easily developed in a smaller church and does not require the same critical mass that is generally required to support a Bible College. As an aside, I wholeheartedly endorse Bible College training, but I simply recognize the time commitment required limits the number of people who can participate.

b. Encourage missional living (personal evangelism) and equip for service.

Disciples need to be equipped to share their faith in Christ, and be mobilized to serve whether in the church or beyond the walls [Eph. 4:11-16]. In essence, once people are out of park and in gear then traction and momentum are developed. Continually encourage, equip, and celebrate these actions.

c. Establish meaningful accountability through mentor relationships that develop leaders, and promote Bible learning, missional living, and equip for service. Each leader needs to disciple an assistant (apprentice). And each of the assistants needs to be equipped and empowered to find a prospective leader and repeat the process [2Tim. 2:2]. A simple model for this process is available on the Velo church leaders tools tab <http://velochurchleaders.org/project/velo-church-leadership-development-model/>.

Lesson 2: Be a Mentor [2Tim. 2:2]

One of the most effective ways to develop leaders is to utilize a mentor process that provides relevant experience. If you don't know how to get to where you want to be, it is wise to ask someone who has been there before.

You will learn more if you receive directions and drive yourself than if someone drives you there. Mentoring is not only beneficial for the one being trained, but also for the mentor. Peter Drucker observed, "No one learns as much about a subject as one who is forced to teach it". On the other hand, one of the least effective ways to develop leaders is to rely upon lecture or passive learning environments, or formal training alone.

Mentoring as Jesus' method of developing leaders:

In Mark 3:14 we read, "*Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach...*" Jesus utilized a typical rabbinical model of His day that we refer to as practical proximity. He selected prospective leaders so that He could impart lessons to them as they spent time together. Some lessons were taught and others caught during the three years that they spent most of their waking hours with Him. They would not only passively learn, but they would also experience on-the-job-training as they were sent out to preach, heal, and exercise authority over demons [Matt.10]. The goal of this mentor model was that the apprentice is able to replicate what the mentor does. For example in Matt. 9:18-26 we see Jesus miraculously restore life to Jairus' daughter as Peter, James, and John observed. Later, we see Peter used by God to miraculously restore life to Tabitha [Ac. 9:36-42]. Peter repeats what He observed Jesus doing before in a similar situation. Jesus' method of mentoring is an ideal process, but is extremely time intensive. Unfortunately, the time required for this type of practical proximity is unavailable in many instances in the local church.

Mentoring as Paul's method of developing leaders:

At Ephesus, Paul was in a Gentile culture that lacked the rabbinical model of practical proximity as a norm for mentoring. So he began to teach disciples daily utilizing space at the School of Tyrannus [Ac. 19:9]. Since many businesses were closed during the warmest part of the day, disciples were able to attend, and this became an effective model to impart learning in a school of ministry. If the school was the classroom, then the church and community was the lab. A reading of Paul's letters to Timothy reveals that leaders were developed and deployed at the church and in the community to actually put in practice what they learned.

Paul, synthesizes his model in **2 Tim. 2:2, *And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*** The mentoring model identifies four links in the chain: Paul, Timothy, faithful leaders, and prospective leaders. At face value the model is simple, reproducible, and certainly effective. The idea could be stated as follows: a leader mentors an apprentice, then the apprentice finds a prospective leader and mentors him or her, and then that leader repeats the process with another potential leader. Not a single leader I know struggles to understand this mentor

concept. Furthermore, church leaders seem to regularly expound the model. Unfortunately, finding churches where this is actually taking place is seemingly as rare as a Bigfoot sighting.

How to create a mentoring model (and leadership development culture):

The goal: Establish meaningful accountability through mentor relationships that develop leaders, promote Bible learning, missional living (personal evangelism), and equip for service.

A process: A simple process that encourages *relevant experience* can be summarized as follows:

1. I do. You watch.
2. I do. You help.
3. You do. I help.
4. You do. I watch.
5. You do. Someone else watches.

A simple process that creates *accountability* is critical. Whatever values, attitudes, and behaviors you determine are critical need to be reinforced regularly or they are unlikely to actually be developed. In an effort to keep the process simple, you should consider keeping the list of targeted values brief (generally less than five). Our *targeted values* are: Bible learning, personal evangelism, equipping for service, and leadership development. So, our mentor process reinforces these values [a sample of this model is available on the Velo church leaders tools tab <http://velochurchleaders.org/project/velo-church-leadership-development-model/>].

In regard to *duration* we generally create mentor relationships of once a month for six months or a year. Some prefer to meet more frequently and others less often. At the end of the term the participants can review and mutually agree to extend the mentor relationship if they desire.

An approach: First, cast the vision for a mentor process among your core leaders. Model whatever process you utilize with the core team to ensure that they understand the process. Second, share the vision with all of the leaders at the church. The group of leaders should likely include all of the people with the title “leader” in their role at church. Third, each leader will identify and recruit an assistant (if they don’t have one already) and start to implement the process with them. Fourth, about 2-6 months later, each assistant will identify and recruit a prospective leader and implement the process. Fifth and finally, about 6-12 months after the process began, the prospective leaders will have ideally developed as leaders so that they can replicate the process with a potential leader.

Lifework:

1. Research and select a process to utilize for mentoring and begin to develop a leadership development culture through a mentor process that provides relevant experience.

2. Who mentored you to help you to develop as a spiritual leader? If you have not been mentored, pray and seek to establish a mentor relationship in the next 30 days.

3. Who have you mentored to help them develop as a spiritual leader? If you have not mentored, pray and seek to establish a mentor relationship in the next 30 days.

Lesson 3: Be a Leadership Development Culture [Eph. 4:11-16]

Ever dream of a church that is working effectively, growing, and being built-up in love? Ever imagine a church with a thriving pipeline of emerging leaders in every area of ministry? Does it seem too good to be true? Well it doesn't have to be ... The most effective way to make disciples and reach your world for Jesus is to create a leadership development culture. There is a difference between being a leader, developing leaders, and creating a leadership development culture. Although it is difficult to be a leader, and challenging to develop other leaders, creating a leadership development culture may paradoxically be easier, but not without testing.

Creating a leadership development culture is critically important because it creates leverage. Leverage increases yield without a commensurate increase in original resource investment. In essence, you can do more to advance Christ's kingdom without more effort, energy, or investment. Most of our time is spent doing things that are insignificant, and some of our time is spent doing things that transcend important. Creating a leadership development culture is arguably the best use of a leader's resources. **So, here is a process to create a leadership development culture:**

1. Encourage: Paul wants to encourage Timothy (and you and I) of God's mission for us. **We are to become mature followers who can lead others to become mature followers. The purpose is to grow up so that Christ's kingdom is built-up,** *"till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ"* [Eph. 4:13-15].

You can almost hear timid Timothy doubting his ability to do this, and you can also imagine Paul encouraging, "You've got the right stuff! You can do this." Encouragement is the starting point for creating a leadership development culture. Consider the likelihood that, husbands don't feel able to be spiritual leaders to their wives, parents don't feel capable of being the spiritual leaders of their children, and that countless Christ loving and committed followers can't fathom the idea that they could lead others in their local church and community.

They need to be encouraged that they can lead others for Christ. I certainly appreciate that there are varying levels of leadership capacity. Very few leaders influence hundreds and thousands. Most are likely to influence a handful, tens, fifty or fewer than a hundred people. Nevertheless, if that influence is helping people to grow in Christ it is spiritual leadership. Start creating a culture that encourages people that they can lead.

2. Equip: mature and capable followers to equip less mature and capable followers to become more mature followers who can influence others towards spiritual maturity. Paul describes it this way to Timothy, *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets,*

some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” [Eph. 4:11-12]. Jesus has given the Church certain leaders who have the mission to equip Christ’s followers to do the work of ministry. The purpose is to build-up the body of Christ.

This mandate provides insight on **a process to create a leadership development culture.**

Imagine a series of concentric circles like a target. The bull’s-eye, or innermost circle represents the core leaders. The next circle would consist of elders, deacons and perhaps all existing leaders (I.e. anyone with the title leader in their role). The next ring on the target would involve all assistants. Finally, we can envision two more rings representing leadership prospects (some leadership capacity displayed, and potential leaders (those who are presently unknown but will be later identified). **The process calls for each circle or ring to equip the next ring, and ultimately develop prospective and potential leaders.** As previously noted [Lesson 1 “Be a Developer”] the primary areas to focus on are:

1. Biblical training to promote Christ-like character,
2. Encourage missional living (personal evangelism),
3. Equip for service by training for ministry via mentor relationships.

Utilize a process that is relational, and promotes love of Christ and one another as well as equipping for task. You must not forsake love in creating a leadership development culture

A simple model for this process is available on the Velo church leaders tools tab <http://velochurchleaders.org/project/velo-church-leadership-development-model/>.

3. Empower: creating a leadership development culture requires empowering more leaders to develop other leaders. Paul explains that each part is to do its share, *“from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love”* [Eph. 4:16]. We often apply this verse to the person who is part of a local church, but never gets involved to serve or help. In other words, the leader’s job is to equip everyone to do his or her share. Nevertheless, a likely more effective application is to **realize that part of the leader’s role is to empower others to develop leaders.** And, the more that are equipped and empowered presumably the better. The sooner leaders discover that others can develop leaders the better for the local church. Finally, if the leader assumes that no one else can develop others besides him or her than the leader must recognize their short-coming in not equipping and empowering.

4. End Results: Paul reveals the desired results of a leadership development culture, *“effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love”* [Eph. 4:16, emphasis added]. Here are three of many favorable by-products of creating a leadership development culture:

a. Effective working: individuals, the team, and the local church become successful in producing a desired or intended result of making disciples.

b. Growth of the body: the local church, and Church at large, matures and produces more healthy disciples. Local churches will grow, healthy churches will be established, and more of the lost shall be reached fro Christ.

c. Edification in love: Since the process is relational and promotes love of Christ and one another the result is a built-up body characterized by love.

Lesson 4: Be Intergenerational [1Tim. 4:12, 5:1-2]

There are two kinds of hipster churches, and seemingly never the two shall meet. One type of hipster church is replete with skinny jeans, single-speed cyclists, and the aroma of musky beard oils, and Bibles on phones. The other type is full of graying beards, hip replacements, and large print Bibles in the laps. Both are reluctant to engage the other, or glean wisdom from the other. Neither perceives the danger of alienating the other by their tastes, traditions, and template for life and ministry.

I. Why we need to be intergenerational:

The church at Ephesus was apparently an intergenerational church. This is evidenced in the following passages from Paul's first letter to Timothy:

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity [1Tim. 4:12]. Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity [1 Tim. 5:1-2]. Presumably, Timothy's youth would not be a stumbling block to his peers, and those most likely to be offended by his age (likely about 30) would be older saints. Also, the instruction on how to instruct and correct people of varying ages supports the notion that multiple generations were present.

A local church environment where multiple generations are present is multigenerational, but when the varying generations engage and glean wisdom from one another then it is *intergenerational*. I contend that healthy relationships between generations are a key factor in determining the health of a local church. Similarly, the likely spiritual health of the next generation is enhanced by the intergenerational dynamic. Research conducted by the Barna Group, Gallup, and Lifeway Research from 2006-2010 reveals that intergenerational relationships is a key to building faith in students. For example, the more that students are involved with adults (other than their parents) in worship of God the greater their faith in college and young adulthood. The more that High School students serve younger children the more likely they will be committed to the faith as young adults.

II. How to be intergenerational:

The aforementioned research reveals that **the best way to make the next generation feel welcomed and valued is when the prior generations show interest in them.** It is not a program per se, but an attitude that welcomes the next gen into church life. Preliminarily, the local church needs to confront the tendency to completely segregate youth to a separate space such that never the two shall meet. There is value in youth being able to engage in a different environment among their peers. Nevertheless, the key is to also create meaningful interaction between the generations.

Here are seven ideas on how integrate the generations:

1. Youth Sundays: On the *first* Sunday of the month, we have Junior and Senior High students join with the adults for worship. They often sit together, or with their parents if they prefer, but they are integrated with the adults. Students volunteer to serve in several areas such as greeters and ushers, along with adults. The sermon illustrations are sensitive to students [e.g. school vs. work]. Also, we ask discussion questions during the teaching that are designed for students to participate, and their answers are affirmed.

Whenever there is a *fifth* Sunday, the students lead the service. The students lead worship, the youth leaders and students teach, share the program announcements, greet, usher, etc. Adult leaders are available to mentor, train, and assist the students, but the students are the leaders. This empowers the students, and equips them for their faith. It helps them to realize that they are not only future leaders, but that they are leaders now. In addition it stirs the prior generations by the zeal of the youth, and helps to integrate the generations as they interact.

2. Mentor relationships: create opportunities for adults and students to enter a six-week, one hour a week, mentor relationship. Invite adults interested in being mentors to youth gatherings such as youth group, BBQ, or retreat. Let the adults be interviewed with a host of standard questions. For example:

1. What was your first car?
2. How did you receive Christ?
3. If you could do your teen years over again what would you do differently?
4. What were some of the challenges that you and your peers dealt with when you were the students' age?
5. What is your favorite verse and why?
6. What is something that you like to do?

Encourage interactions with students interested in a mentor re. Consider using a standard curriculum such as foundations of the faith or a discipleship resource.

Advise participants to discover differences and respect values such as a strong work or relationship ethic. Affirm mutual mentoring such that the next generation teaches the prior generation too. You can create mentoring related to common interests such as cycling, surfing, hiking, sports, crafts, art, music, etc.

Design the duration to last six weeks and then the participants can evaluate whether to continue their relationship, start a new mentor relationship, or take a time out.

3. Learn the same portion of Scripture and discuss the application together: students and adults learn the same portion of Scripture each week, whether in separate spaces or together. Once a month create a space for them to interact after the service [e.g. fellowship hall, café, energy lounge, sanctuary, courtyard, etc.]. Encourage students to discuss with adults who are not their parents on those days. Each generation can share how they plan to apply what they learned. Remind the students and their parents that they should be discussing the application together every week with their family.

4. Mission trips: serving God together in a foreign culture is a catalyst to form special bonds that generate relationships that last. Create trips that are intergenerational, and provide opportunities to work, pray, learn and share together.

5. Youth Center: develop a youth center or after school program where junior and senior high school students gather for activities such as: sports, games, chapel, tutoring, art and music lessons. Adult volunteers engage with students. Older students engage with younger [e.g. college with high school, and senior high with junior high].

6. Baptism service: include youth and adults at the service, and their leaders should both participate in baptizing together. Have the leaders pray and baptize people from the other generation.

7. Service projects at Senior Center: having all generations of the church serving senior adults who live at assisted living facilities in the community reminds them of the reality of aging, and the biblical command to honor the generations that have preceded them.

Lifework:

1. Would you describe your local church as mono, multi, or inter-generational, and why?

2. What are some of the perceived benefits and burdens of being inter-generational?

3. Review the list of ideas to integrate the generations at your local church. Which of the ideas are you likely to implement (and when will you do so)?

Start the conversation with varying generations interested in leadership development at your local church. And please share your ideas and experiences with us at velochurchleaders.org.

Lesson 5: Be Strong [Eph. 6:10]

"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal."--Vince Lombardi

There are countless times that I've wanted to give up ...

Being an effective spiritual leader isn't easy. **The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.** It is always challenging to lead, regardless of the arena. Nevertheless, spiritual leaders face the real and difficult challenges of spiritual opposition. God is real and His love and affection for you are real. Similarly, Satan and the rebellious fallen angels aligned with him are real, and their desire is to destroy and neutralize. The answer is found in Paul's exhortation, ***"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" [Eph. 6:10].***

Paul's reference to "finally" reminds us of what he wrote in the preceding chapters. To summarize, Paul encourages Christians about their unique blessings and identity in Christ [Ch. 1-3]. Then he exhorts us to live like followers of Christ in the various realms of life: personal, community, calling, marriage, family, and career [4:1-6:9]. The Christian life is experienced by being yielded to the Holy Spirit [Eph. 5:18]; and by being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might [6:10].

Why do you need to strengthen yourself in the Lord? We must stand strong in the whole armor of God in order to *stand against the wiles of the devil* [6:11].

Self-discipline and determination will be inadequate for the task. What are the wiles of the devil? The Greek word that we translate "wiles" is *methodeia* from which we derive our English methods, and could be translated schemes or strategies. **Let's consider five of the enemy's tactics, and five tactical responses:**

1. Distraction: existing and emerging leaders will be distracted from the mission of leadership development. There are so many matters that matter to leaders. Leaders are pulled in several directions by their spouse, family, career, personal, and ministry (calling) needs.

A tactical response: devote a fixed amount of time each week to the calling of developing spiritual leaders. Set appointments in the calendar and create patterns of time devoted to leadership development each week. Use the time to learn from others and also to mentor others. Preserve and protect that time from distractions by remaining strong in the Lord.

2. Discouragement: if you seek to lead and develop other leaders you will be discouraged. The good news, developing leaders will have great influence for the kingdom. The difficult news, many people will be reluctant to lead, and will resist accountability. There have been countless times when I wanted to give up, and I felt so discouraged. Times when the enemy seemed to

whisper in my ear, “You’re wasting your time, energy, and life. And you’re not making any difference.” It seems that the devil is particularly interested in discouraging leadership development. The devil realizes that when shepherds and leaders are struck the sheep tend to scatter [Zech. 13:7]. If the enemy neutralizes a leader then those that follow tend to be neutralized.

A tactical response: In the midst of discouragement, cling to the encouraging truth that as a leader, you are called to develop leaders, and the Lord’s strength is sufficient for this task. Then consider whether your expectations of others are reasonable. Since you are leading them, it is presumed that you are ahead of the curve. Therefore it doesn’t seem reasonable to expect those that you lead to perform at the same level that you do, or to necessarily be as motivated. Finally, take some time to reflect on what is going well and rejoice in those victories for a while.

3. Distress: is characterized by anxiety, sorrow, pain, agony, torment, heartache, and heartbreak. As a leader who develops emerging leaders you will discover that people in a fallen world experience distress. Chances are if you don’t personally experience distress, the people you are developing will.

A tactical response: Be sensitive to how you and others that you influence are feeling. Ask people, “How are you (really) doing?” Create an environment through relationship that encourages you and those that you are developing to communicate with vulnerability. Let people know that you care, and pray with and for them. Ask, “How can I help?” Don’t ignore distress. Recognize when you and others are overwhelmed, and avoid pushing forward when people need time to be strengthened in the Lord before advancing.

4. Doubt: all leaders will at one time or another doubt whether they have the right stuff. We wonder whether we are really called to lead and whether we have exceeded the scope of our God-given capacity. Leadership is a spiritual gift [Rom. 12:8] and is likely distributed in varying measures such that some are called to lead thousand, hundreds, fifties, and tens [Ex. 18:25]. Like all gifts they are to be cultivated and developed towards God-given capacity. For example, someone who is gifted to teach the Bible will presumably be more effective after five or ten years of experience than they were in their first year. Nevertheless, there is doubt at all the varying stages.

A tactical response: use doubt as an opportunity to be strengthened by the Lord. Doubt helps us to realize our inadequacies and cultivates dependence upon the Lord. There is nothing wrong with being affirmed by others. But rather than seeking affirmation from people to reduce our insecurities, let’s seek the Lord’s strength as we continue our calling.

5. Division: leaders want to lead. This is generally a good thing, but occasionally leaders sense a different or divergent sense of direction from each other. That can lead to division and disunity. The enemy loves to divide, because Christ has united us and called us to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace [Eph. 4:3].

A tactical response: The answer is to avoid reacting to differences in the flesh and respond in the Spirit as strengthened by the Lord. Seek to work through differences and establish consensus whenever possible. When differences cannot be resolved, look to the situation as an opportunity to advance God’s kingdom rather than a cause to divide [Ac. 15:36-41]. Whenever

possible see how the different plans can be reconciled. Or consider how each can be advanced while minimizing adverse consequences to the other.

Lifework:

- 1. Which of the enemy's tactics have you experienced?**
- 2. How can awareness of the enemy's tactics encourage and prepare you to be strong in the Lord?**
- 3. Which of the tactical responses do you find most helpful in this season of ministry and why?**

Lesson 6: Be a Balanced Worker [Ac. 20:32-35]

Ever dream of having more time to serve Christ and His Kingdom and think, “One day ...”?

Existing and emerging leaders often struggle to balance life in multiple realms: personal, marriage, family, career, calling, and community. Most local churches have people that have demonstrated leadership capacity in the marketplace, or other realms, but have yet to use their leadership gifting in their calling to advance God’s kingdom. Frequently the express or implied reason is the perceived lack of time. They may even long to use their leadership gifts to serve God, and think, “One day, *when I retire* then I’ll be able to ...” Or perhaps, “One day, *when the kids are grown ...*” In my experience, there is a better way than waiting until *one day* (which often never arrives). **So, here are five ways to lead a more balanced kingdom life:**

1. Lead your labor: expect to exert effort and energy to excel in kingdom life. Being balanced recognizes the need for Sabbath rest, but does not encourage being lazy or slothful. Balanced people must still be motivated people to advance God’s kingdom. Paul gathered the elders from the church at Ephesus to provide a farewell exhortation. He reminded them that while he faithfully and daily served the Lord, he also worked in the marketplace to provide for his own needs and the needs of others, “*I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak*” [Ac. 20:33-35]. Paul worked to support himself at Ephesus (and Corinth) so no one could accuse him of serving Christ for financial gain. Paul labored, because he sought to glorify Christ, advance the kingdom, and build-up others. Ultimately, you need to determine if you are willing to exert the effort and labor to serve Christ in the midst of competing interests.

2. Lead your identity: expect to discover that what you do is not who you are. Discovering who you are (and Who’s you are) is often a process. Paul identified himself in many ways including, the least of the apostles [1Cor. 15:9], the least among the saints [Eph. 3:8], and chief sinner [1Tim. 1:15]. Too often, Christ’s followers take their cue from the world and determine their identity from what they do. Identity is thus linked to perceived success in the relevant role. For example, if your identity is connected to your *career* then your salary, title, or sphere of influence in the marketplace, determine your perceived value. If your identity is *parent* then the success of your child determines the perceived value. And if your identity is your *ministry* then the scope of your kingdom influence determines your perceived value. **Leading your identity requires the realization that who you are is not what you do, but “Who’s you are.”** When identity is linked to what you do rather than your relationship with Christ you are unlikely to realize balance

3. Lead your priorities: expect to determine what is truly most important generally, and at a particular time, and prioritize accordingly. Paul was balancing work and ministry. At Ephesus there is no indication that Paul was trying to manage marriage, family, or any personal realm interests like a hobby. On the other hand, many existing and emerging leaders are trying to balance the personal, marriage, family, career, community and calling realms.

There are a several ways to try to identify where your priorities need to be. First, you might consider *what you can delegate*. For example, you can't delegate your role as a spouse or parent. Presumably, there are things at work that you can delegate. Second, *whom do you want as a debt collector?* If you commit to giving more time than you have to spend, you will constantly be running from time debt collectors. Do you want your employer, spouse, kids, or Lord approaching you with an unpaid time debt collection notice? Third, *where is attention or maintenance needed?* Consider your physical, emotional, and spiritual health. If you are married, ask your spouse how he or she believes the marriage is doing. If you have young children, ask your spouse how they believe the kids are doing. If your children are older, ask them directly how they think that you are doing as a parent and how you can improve. Determine from your employer (or employees) how you are doing in the career realm. Talk with spiritual leaders to learn how you are doing in the calling realm. And ask neighbors how you are doing in the community realm. In each conversation, it seems appropriate to seek to discover how you might improve. Determine where there is there need for more attention and what are the priorities generally and in this season.

4. Lead your pendulum: expect to be the one who adjusts how you spend your time. Once you discover what your priorities should be, and where you maintenance is required, you need to make adjustments to achieve better balance. If you imagine a pendulum, you are looking to make the incremental shifts to attain equilibrium. Generally, it is best to avoid wild swings of the pendulum, because they rarely produce balance and often result in adverse unintended consequences. So, if you need to carve out more time for your spouse, family, calling, or to care for your own health, you need to take the lead to make the adjustments. Consider incremental changes such as devoting an additional hour or two each week to any particular realm of life. Determine what is the most effective use of the additional time in each realm and then reevaluate at the end of three to six months.

5. Lead your time: expect to protect your time. There is a progression of time leadership that impacts balance. People move from wasting time, to spending time to managing time, and to leading time. Time management and leading are distinct. Time management, for example schedules a one-hour appointment and ensures that it begins and ends promptly on time. Time leadership on the other hand, determines where time is to be invested to attain better balance, and then zealously protects that time. **Learn to actually schedule time in your calendar that reflects your priorities, and better balance.** Time trespassers are always looking to encroach and test the boundaries. The only way to move towards balance is to lead your time. You must decide how you want to spend your time and then protect it! Finally, be sensitive to "divine appointments" where you sense that God is truly leading you to interrupt the time schedule for His purposes.

Lifework:

1. Review the section on leading your priorities, and begin to initiate conversations with relevant people to determine priorities and maintenance needs in this season.

2. Review the section on leading your pendulum, and determine what incremental adjustments that you want to make to be better balanced.

3. Review the section on leading your time. What changes will you calendar to reflect better balance in your life?

Lesson 7: Be Your Best [Ac. 18:24-28]

To develop leaders you must seek to progress from potential to performance, and encourage and equip others to do the same. The objective is to discover and utilize God-given talents and capacity for kingdom calling. We will examine the life of Apollos to discover four essential growth areas to develop effective spiritual leaders

A Case Study of Apollos

“Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; ²⁸ for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ” [Ac. 18:24-28].

1. Learn the word: Apollos is described as, *mighty in the Scriptures* [v.24]. He knew the Old Testament Scriptures. **To develop as a spiritual leader you must grow in your knowledge of the word of God.** You cannot develop Christ-like character without a meaningful understanding of the Bible. It is critical to learn, and keep learning, the Bible to be a true spiritual leader. The greater the influence that you have as a leader the greater the leverage for kingdom work, and the greater the responsibility to help people get to God’s desired destination. The Bible is the only true compass available to an existing or emerging leader. Other leadership resources such as books, podcasts, conferences, etc. can be helpful supplements to equip leaders but they cannot replace knowledge of the Scriptures; and they must be evaluated in light of the Bible.

Ensure that existing and emerging leaders are learning the word. Create accountability among peers, mentors and disciples, coaches and coached, to encourage Bible learning. As a leader, model Bible learning, and discuss your experiences regularly with those you lead. And encourage those you lead to do the same with those that they lead. Create as many opportunities as possible for emerging leaders to learn the Bible through: expository Bible teaching, foundations of the faith curriculum, Bible-based community groups, survey of the Old and New Testament curriculum, School of Ministry curriculum, and Bible College or Seminary options.

In my experience as a teaching pastor, I am constantly immersed in the Bible to prepare to teach on multiple occasions each week. Yet for me, this cannot replace a personal devotional time of reading and reflecting. As an aside, I’m in the midst of a season where my devotional learning has been irregular, and I miss my time of learning as a follower of Jesus rather than learning to prepare to teach.

2. Learn of Christ: Apollos “*had been instructed in the way of the Lord*” [v.25]. At the beginning of his ministry, Apollos’ understanding of Christ and His gospel, and New Testament theology generally, was limited, “*He spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John*” [v.25]. To be an effective spiritual leader you should rejoice at what you have learned of Christ, and continue to passionately pursue Christ. You must grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [2 Pet. 3:18], and take His yoke and learn from Him [Matt. 11:29].

We learn from reflecting upon our experiences. So create a culture where existing and emerging leaders take time to reflect on how they are experiencing and learning of Christ. Develop opportunities to discuss and share together, and promote and encourage growing in Christ. Create accountability among peers, mentors and disciples, coaches and coached, to encourage experiencing and learning of Christ.

Recently, as I was reading from the Sermon on the Mount [Matt. 5:38-48] and was confronted by Jesus, and His standard of loving enemies. I’m marveling at the fact that He constantly displayed this love, and that I’m so incapable of doing this in my strength. And it compels me to appreciate Jesus, the gospel, and how different His kingdom is from this world. Sharing those reflections with others, and hearing their insights, helps me to develop as a follower of Christ and leader.

3. Learn to communicate the things of the Lord: Apollos spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, and also learned the way of God more accurately [25-26]. A leader’s ability to communicate more effectively the things of the Lord is critical to development. Spiritual truth is communicated through the spoken and written word. Assessment of communication is an incredibly valuable tool. Self-assessment is humbling, but can be a good place to start. Re-read your written communications, listen to recorded audio, and if possible watch video of your oral presentations. Receive feedback from others to determine the effectiveness of your written and spoken communications, as well as your ability to listen. And commit to make the effort to improve to be more effective. Create a culture where leaders provide peer review, and mentors and disciples alike are accountable to grow as communicators.

4. Learn from others who have a different perspective: Apollos was an intellectual and academic, raised in Alexandria, Egypt, akin to the Ivy League in the United States. So, it is remarkable that he humbly received correction and instruction from Aquilla and Priscilla who were “blue-collar” tentmakers. To move from potential to progress, and to reach your capacity will require a willingness to learn from others. To reach your capacity, you will likely need to develop different skills in different seasons of spiritual leadership. Usually, different mentors will be needed to equip. Receive from those who have different perspectives and experiences. Seek to be humble and learn. In my experience, I have been very blessed to learn from people who are older and younger, more and less experienced, and from a wide array of backgrounds. Some of the most treasured lessons came from unexpected sources. Thus, I’ve discovered that it is crucial for me to seek to keep learning from as many godly people as I can.

Lifework:

- 1. How are you learning the word of God and growing in your understanding of the Scriptures?**
- 2. How do you take time to reflect on how you are experiencing and learning of Christ?**
- 3. How do you learn to communicate the things of the Lord more effectively?**

Lesson 8: Be a Person of Prayer [1Tim. 2:1-8]

Today I prayed for my sons and everything changed ... As a parent, or a leader, you will inevitably have the experience where you have tried to encourage change in a host of ways, but to no avail. You have tried to encourage a desired behavior or attitude through promised rewards, through warnings of adverse consequences, and through appeals to love and respect. And despite passionate and persuasive pleas nothing changed (except your increasing frustration). So, **what changed?**

1. My desired request: There was an issue that I was trying to address through all the means that I just described, and nothing was changing. Then I changed my strategy to simply pray, and ask God to produce the desired change. And the very thing that I wanted to see changed suddenly and radically changed. Since all of my other efforts had not produced the change, and the timing of the change was essentially immediately connected to significant meaningful prayer, I choose to attribute the effected change to the cause of prayer.

2. My dependence upon God: I was declaring and demonstrating that God can do more through prayer than I can do in all of my best efforts. This is a reality that I understand as a theological truth, but in practice I often demonstrate a dependence on my efforts. Certainly as I labor, I'm seeking to be inspired and dependent upon God, but prayer takes my efforts out of the equation and establishes greater dependence upon God. I appreciate that God doesn't change things because my prayers are so epic that he had to respond. There is simply a sense that when my prayers are consistent with His will, and produce His glory, that He delights to respond. **I changed to become more dependent upon God.**

3. My devotion to prayer: The experience reinforced something that I know intellectually, but the experience changed my devotion to prayer. As an aside, I regularly pray, and gather with others to pray, but there are certain seasons when I'm changed and my dependence upon God and devotion to prayer increase. **Dependence upon God and devotion to prayer are presumed to be critical to Christian life and leadership because, Jesus declared that His house would be called a house of prayer [Matt. 21:13].** Prayer has the potential to produce powerful change in me, in you, in those we influence, and in the world.

Prayer is essential to developing leaders

What should we pray about? Who should we pray to? How should we pray? Paul's instructions to Timothy in regard to a pattern for public prayer is a helpful case study: *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,* ² *for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.* ³ *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,* ⁴ *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

⁵ *For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus [1 Tim. 2:1-5].*

What should we pray about?

1. Pray for all [1]: Preliminarily, “Therefore” [v.1] flows from the exhortation to fight the good fight [1:18-20]. Prayer is the critical weapon to fight the good fight! We are to *pray for all*: the saved and unsaved, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, and the “good and bad.” In contrast, the Pharisees prayed only for Jews, not Gentiles. Make request for their needs, intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for whom God is and what He does

Pray for leaders [2-3]: We are to *pray for kings and all in authority*. God’s people are likely to bemoan and complain about political (and spiritual) leaders. Generally, there seems to be a lack of prayer for leaders. Paul’s exhortation is even more remarkable when we remember the wicked Emperor Nero was in power. We can be comforted by the truth that God has appointed all leaders [Rom. 13:1]. The state is to provide peace for the church, and the church is to pray for the state. *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God* or is pleasing to God.

Pray for salvation [4]: *God desires all to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*. All of our evangelistic efforts should be built upon a foundation of prayer. The Lord does not will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance [2 Pet. 3:9]. So we know that prayers for salvation are consistent with His will. We will experience the sense of God’s Spirit guiding our prayers for the salvation of souls.

Who should we pray to? *There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus* [5]. **Jesus is the only Mediator. We pray to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit** [Rom. 8:26-27]. It is important that emerging leaders appreciate that we don’t pray to Mary, priests, angels, saints, departed loved ones, but to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit.

How should we pray? Paul describes four keys to help us know how to pray: *I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting* [8].

1. Pray everywhere: God’s people are not to limit their prayers to Jerusalem, the temple, the synagogue, the church building, etc. Pray in the home, the job or school, restaurants and coffee houses, parks and public spaces.

2. Have a holy life: *lifting up holy hands* refers to more than a posture where people stood in the synagogue with palms raised to God. God is more concerned about the position of our hearts than the posture of our bodies. Holy hands are related to a person’s desire to be set-apart to God.

3. Without wrath: God’s people are to offer forgiveness, seek reconciliation and pray for enemies without anger or hatred towards others [Matt. 5:44].

4. Without doubt: finally we pray in faith with expectation that God hears our prayers, and delights to change everything according to His perfect will through prayers.

Prayer changes everything! So what has God called you to change through prayer?

Lifework:

- 1. Why do you believe that prayer is important for existing and emerging spiritual leaders?**
- 2. What has God called you to change through prayer?**
- 3. For a more detailed study on the subject of prayer generally, please download the free book "Prayer" here <http://velochurchleaders.org/tools/>.**

Lesson 9: Be Qualified [1Tim. 3:1-7]

Another mega-church pastor was removed from his ministry because of notorious sin. This time it wasn't embezzlement, or inappropriate behavior with a woman. This time, once again, the life dominating sins were pride and abuse of authority. This time, once again, we were reminded that character trumps talent. This time, once again, we learned that dynamic and talented people unbridled by the Holy Spirit are dangerous and unqualified. Unfortunately, their public disqualification tends to transcend their general sphere of influence. Abraham Lincoln observed, **"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."**

Leadership is at its essence influence. A spiritual leader influences others towards God's desired destination. Therefore, spiritual leaders encompass a much broader group than the roles of pastors, elders, and deacons. For example, parents are called to be spiritual leaders. Influence generally begins with a small sphere, but can often expand. The larger the scope of influence the greater the need to be qualified. John Adams, second President of the United States, noted, "Because power corrupts, society's demands for moral authority and character increase as the importance of the position increases."

In the local church, **existing and emerging Spiritual leaders must be qualified.** Every person with the title leader (or assistant leader) in his or her roles [e.g. usher leader, children's ministry leader, youth leader, community group leader] is a spiritual leader. In the local church, the highest level of qualification relates to the office of elder (also referred to in the New Testament as bishop, pastor, overseer, and shepherd). **All leaders should aspire to develop the Christ-like character that is the essence of the qualifications for the highest-level spiritual leaders.**

What are some of the qualifications, and how qualified do you need to be to start leading?

What are some of the qualifications? Paul describes a snapshot of the qualifications for elders in his first letter to Timothy. The list reveals several of the qualifying **character traits** that spiritual leaders should seek to develop:

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil [1Tim. 3:1-7].

The twelve [12] traits noted below are presumably not intended as an exhaustive list. All the qualities deal with character rather than ability, with the exception of teaching. **Let's consider the traits that we are to display as leaders, and cultivate among emerging leaders:**

- 1. Be blameless [2]:** The essence is a good reputation, not perfection, so that you don't bring reproach to Christ, His Church, or self. Have a good reputation within the church community as well as the community outside of the church [7].
- 2. Be faithful (the husband of one wife) [2]:** Leaders are faithful to Christ and faithful to their spouse. This is not an exclusion of single people leading. Similarly, those who have been divorced may not be excluded depending on the circumstances.
- 3. Be temperate [2]:** Leaders should be sensible, and self-controlled in their behavior.
- 4. Be sober-minded [2]:** Be wise regarding spiritual decisions and avoid foolish choices. A person of faith should be led by the Spirit not fleshly impulse.
- 5. Be good (good-behavior) [2]:** There should be a sense of godliness and modesty to a spiritual leader's speech and behavior.
- 6. Be hospitable [2]:** Hospitality can be shown by willingness to open your home, and other tangible acts of love for strangers.
- 7. Be able to teach [2]:** Spiritual leaders should be able to communicate spiritual truth and explain the Scriptures to others.
- 8. Be sober (not given to wine) [3]:** A spiritual leader should not drink to excess nor be intoxicated.
- 9. Be gentle (not violent) [3]:** Christ's leaders are gentle, able to make peace, humble when criticized, and aren't looking for a fight.
- 10. Be content (not greedy for money) [3]:** God's leaders are to be content and not covetous. People who are drunk on money can be just as dangerous as those who are drunk on wine.
- 11. Be respected by family (rule his or her house well) [4-5]:** Spiritual leaders should have a godly home. Their children should have a reverence for Christ and therefore be submitted to authority in the home.
- 12. Be spiritually mature (not a novice) [6]:** A new believer, or one newly planted, should only be conferred with significant authority. The accolades and influence that flow from the authority are likely to produce pride. Pride led to Satan's fall, and countless leaders have followed the same destructive path. It is wise to ensure a spiritual leader's stability before conferring too much authority.

How qualified does a person need to be to get started as an emerging leader? I had been a follower of Jesus for less than six months when I was asked to teach a Bible study. That opportunity was critical to my development as a leader, and allowed for expanding influence as a spiritual leader. For more than 25 years I have been blessed to serve Christ, enjoy expanded influence, and the opportunity to develop other existing and emerging leaders. **I believe that the most important test is whether the emerging leader is submitted to Christ and accountable to godly authority?** As long as the leader is growing in character, and is under Christ's authority, and remains accountable to godly leaders, than progressive influence and authority can be conferred. Like a horse, don't hold the reins so tightly as to quench or break

the spirit of a thoroughbred. Similarly, don't completely let go of the reins and let a maverick cause damage.

Lifework: Three tests to see how qualified you likely are:

1. Pray that God would reveal any particular areas where you need to grow. Then read the list of character traits again. Share the insights with another person who can encourage accountability.

2. Ask your spouse or a close friend to grade you on a scale of 1-10 on each of the 12 traits, and use the results to help you see areas where you might need to grow.

3. A great test to determine whether the existing or emerging leader is submitted to Christ and accountable to godly authority is the 360-degree review. Provide the list of twelve [12] traits to a group of ten people that know you from various spheres of life [family, friends, work/school, church, community]. Ask them to anonymously grade you on a scale of 1-10 on each of the 12 traits. Receive the answers anonymously and use the results to help you see some areas where you might need to grow.

Lesson 10: Be an Example as a Next Generation Leader [1Tim. 4:12-16]

Millennial leaders can be a stellar example to existing, emerging, and prospective leaders. I thank God that I get to serve at a church with an abundance of healthy next generation spiritual leaders. Spiritually healthy next generation leaders are a catalyst to create a healthy leadership development culture. What example should a young leader give? In Paul's letter to Timothy, a next generation leader, we discover **three ways millennial leaders can be a healthy example as spiritual leaders: character, calling, and commitment.**

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit in faith, in purity. ¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶ Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you [1Tim. 4:12-16].

1. Character [12-13]: Older people, and your peers, will not despise your youth if you live beyond your years and beyond reproach. See that they look up to you rather than down at you by being a pattern or an example to other believers. You can **silence criticism by your character.** When Plato, the great Greek philosopher, was accused of dishonorable conduct he replied, "We must live our lives in such a way that all will see that the charge is false." The great evangelist, D.L. Moody observed, "If I care for my character, my reputation will take care of itself."

There are six [6] specific areas of character that provide a helpful list:

1. In word: your speech should reflect a tongue controlled by God.
2. In conduct: walk the talk. Live a life characterized by spiritual growth.
3. In love: by your love all will know that you are His disciple [Jn. 13:35].
4. In spirit: excitement and zeal for Christ and His kingdom.
5. In faith: a life characterized by confident trust in God and loyalty to Him.
6. In purity: honesty, self-control, and chastity set against immorality of the world.

2. Calling [13]: you will always be called to be a follower of Jesus and His ambassador. In different seasons you will serve in various areas of ministry in or alongside a local church. In a sense these areas may represent your calling in a particular season. Some will ultimately be called to the role of pastor and teacher. The best way to fulfill your calling, in every season, is to devote yourself to *reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.* Know the Scriptures and continue to read and discover more of Jesus in the Bible. Share with others what you are discovering. Apply the word to your life and encourage others to do the same with grace, humility, and respect. Make the effort to learn doctrine. You are called to **be radically biblical! Right doctrine leads to right thinking, right choices, and right life.**

Next generation spiritual leaders, like the next generation generally, want to radically change their world and this is a noble and good cause. Social justice matters such as caring for the poor, the widow, and the orphan are important to God and should be important to His people. Nevertheless, don't neglect to anchor your calling in a solid foundation of doctrine. It will take effort to learn the word and sound doctrine. Be a diligent worker who can rightly divide the word of God. It will require you to do more than simply read the Bible to develop a healthy understanding of doctrine or systematic theology. Identify a mentor(s), utilize resources (books on doctrine and systematic theology, commentaries, Bible College, School of Ministry, etc), and become a mentor to others sharing what you've discovered.

3. Commitment [14-16]: Spiritual leaders have been set-apart for a special purpose, and must commit to three key concepts.

a. Charisma [14]: *Do not neglect the gift [charisma] that is in you.* God has given you a spiritual gift(s), a desire to advance God's kingdom, and the ability to influence others for Christ. Commit to walk in your gift(s) despite the resistance from those you influence, opposition from the enemy, and the attraction of the material world.

b. Consume [15]: *Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.* The Hebrew idea of meditating, that was likely Paul's reference, has the idea of contemplating night and day [Josh. 1:8]. The essence of the charge is to be consumed with God's business. The work of advancing God's kingdom is a balance between inspiration and perspiration. The idea of *your progress may be evident to all* is literally to cut forward or blaze the way. Next Gen leaders who are consumed with Christ and the work of God will be trailblazers. Their spiritual growth will be evident to those who undoubtedly will follow.

c. Careful [16]: *Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.* Watch your life and doctrine closely. Sound doctrine and a godly life will lead others to Christ. **Remember to care for your own spiritual condition so that you can care for others.** As you accept the call as a next generation leader, be encouraged that Christ will work through you and your generation and bring salvation to many.

Lifework:

1. As a next generation leader, how have you grown this year in regard to character, calling, and commitment?

2. How would you like to grow this year in regard to character, calling, and commitment?

3. As one who is developing next generation leaders, how can you affirm them about their example?